

KeizerCommunity

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Keizer teen, her horse, 1st in wild makeover

By LAUREN MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

The transition from being a youth to being a full-fledged adult can be long and awkward. After two years of competing in the youth division, Keizerite Elisabeth Burleson made the jump into the adult division of the Mustang Yearling Washington Youth competition – where she took first place.

Prior to this event, she participated in the Extreme Mustang Makeover for several years. In March, Burleson bought horse number #4748, whom she renamed Glimmer. The 12 contestants got to choose from about 20 horses to train and show at the competition in August. All of the contestants got 30-second videos of all the horses and sent in an application for the horse they wanted to train. The horses were sold on a first-come first-served basis.

“We listed our choices first through fourth in the order that we wanted them. And then most people actually got their first choice,” Burleson said.

Due to complications from COVID-19, injuries and loss of interest the pool of competitors shrunk; only two made it to the final competition.

“Instead of being an in-person competition it was entirely virtual. It was kind of a huge change,” Burleson said. Normally competitors camp at the horse park for two or three days while the event is going on – COVID restrictions made that impossible so competitors had to send in videos of themselves completing events.

“You had to sign up for a specific time. And then when you started your pattern, you had to show on your phone the time at the beginning and at the end to make sure you didn’t edit any part of the



video,” Burleson said.

Contestants also needed to find the right place to film the videos. If a recording was too dark or dimly lit the video would be disqualified. For events that included obstacles contestants had to provide and properly space out all obstacles.

After 130 days of training Burleson took first in the adult division in early August. Normally after the competition the horses are auctioned off, but because of the virtual format Burleson was allowed to sell her horse out-right.

“I found the most amazing home, or I guess the most amazing home found us

because I posted about it on my Facebook page,” Burleson said. Someone who saw the post messaged her and soon Glimmer was on her way to her, “perfect home.”

When she’s not training personal horses for competition Burleson works at her day job, as a horse trainer. Most of the time she doesn’t spend at school, church or with friends is spent working with and training horses, but that doesn’t mean she’s seen it all.

“[Glimmer] was five years old and the oldest one I’ve had for one of these competitions is two,” Burleson said. The youngest she had was less than



Submitted
Keizer teen Elisabeth Burleson trained a wild mustang, Glimmer, in a little more than four months.

a year old.

Because Glimmer was older she didn’t suffer from what Burleson calls “baby brain,” Burleson described baby brain as “inability to focus or looking all around saying, ‘where’s my mom.’”

In fact, Glimmer treated Burleson as one of her foals at first, “I really had to set a boundary and let her know I was her leader. I was not

someone she could push around, and that was something I hadn’t encountered,” she said.

Though she put hours of blood, sweat and tears, Burleson attributes the win to God.

“Somewhere in there say ‘glory to God,’ because God is the one who provided all this,” Burleson said. She also wanted to thank her family and friends for helping her along in her journey.

Diamond dancers



Keizer’s France School of Dance celebrated its 60th anniversary recently. LEFT: Owners Linda Martin and Carole Janes.

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