

The Mutt & the Mustang - True Tale of a Horse-Riding Dog



By Judy Archibald

The Mutt & the Mustang, the recently released picture book about a dog who rides a horse every day is based on a true story. Colorado author, Judy Archibald, writes about her poodle mix dog and an old mustang she rescued from a rental stable. For fifteen years, the old horse had worked twelve hour days carrying tourists up rocky mountain trails. "Because Raven never had a saddle that fit him right, his back was injured," said Judy. "I've seen him buck so hard that a wrangler flew into the air like a rocket. He even bucks magpies off."

Determined to provide Raven with a comfortable retirement home, Judy bought him and his buddy from the stable and moved them to three acres of horse heaven, where they were both officially retired. The 26-year old black mustang quickly bonded with Judy's 10-pound mutt, Kody. One day, Kody jumped on Raven's back while he was lying down and started pawing the horse's neck and chewing thistles out of his mane.

Since Raven didn't mind, the next day Judy plopped the dog on the mustang's back and led him around the pasture. That was four years ago. Ever since, Kody

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gets a daily ride on "his" horse.

Last fall while leading the pair around the arena, a bell went off in Judy's head that her horse-riding dog would make a delightful children's story. So Judy, who spent twenty-five years as a feature writer for national magazines, wrote the story about a mutt who is sad because he fails at tasks his big dog buddy can do. But after making friends with a rescued mustang who lets him ride every day, the mutt discovers that by being himself, he is special.

To keep control of the book's illustrations, Judy started Pet Pals Publishing and found the perfect illustrator in Patricia H. Greenberg, who captured each animal's personality in classic color pencil drawings. There is also a page of photos featuring the real mutt riding "his" horse.

The Mutt & the Mustang, appeared in the fall, 2011 issue of *The American Dog Magazine*, where reviewers stated, "[*The Mutt & the Mustang* is] ... Truly a fantastic book."

The book is selling extremely well in bookstores and western-themed shops across the west. It is also available on Amazon on line and at Judy's website, www.petpalspublishing.com, where sample pages and a video of Kody riding Raven may be viewed.

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Based on a true story



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