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Public Relations Contact:

Training the Whole Horse®

Missy Wryn

888-406-7689 Phone

503-630-3751 Fax

Info@MissyWryn.com

www.MissyWryn.com

## The Complications of a Rescue Horse

“It was an honor and privilege to be the featured speaker at New Options Equine Rescue’s first big fund raiser” Missy Wryn says. “Out of the many stories of rescue horses I’ve had in training over the years I couldn’t deny the most egregious story of my very own rescue horse Benny”. Missy continues “you see Benny was locked in a stall for two years that we know of and by the time he was rescued his front left hoof had grown out to a curl and had to be hack-sawed off. Benny had fecal matter from topline to hoof which could not be brushed or combed since his flesh was raw underneath his coat. He was born with contracted flexor tendons that went untreated so his hind feet were club-feet liken to stumps which resulted in his right hip sticking up and forward out of alignment. If that wasn’t enough Benny was suffering from the condition known as Stringhalt resulting in him kicking himself in the chest and falling down due to the spasms.

When I showed up to retrieve Benny from his foster pasture (I would be his fifth home in six months) I found him frantically pacing a fence crying and hollering, sweating and shaking due to the removal of a pasture mate just three days prior – he was all alone and had not eaten during those 3 days. As I approached Benny I noticed he was like a bobble-head toy, all head with a tiny skeletal body, he was a gastly sight. The foster home owner offered me a shot gun to catch Benny with which I shot him a scoffing look and said *I got this*. It only took a few minutes to catch Benny using my Wholistic Joining technique and I hurriedly got him in the trailer in between his Stringhalt spasms. I was careful not to tie him, but to let him loose in the trailer as he repeatedly collapsed with the spasms at every stop light and stop sign on our way home.

Months of detoxification, barefoot rehabilitation, dental and chiropractic care, along with intense nutritional support brought Benny to a physically healthful state with the Stringhalt cured, but training was a complicated challenge” Missy says. “I used every method from natural horsemanship to traditional training, but I could not get Benny to connect with me, to understand herd language. Any form of reprimand or discipline for dangerous behavior such as biting, rearing and space invasion (pushing me around, knocking into me) only made his behavior more dangerous. Most of the trainers I consulted advised me to hit him,

show him whose boss by means of violence and force or simply have him euthanized. Euthanized - because he doesn't conform to the ideals, the template for a domestic horse he should be euthanized? I couldn't heed that advice! Maybe my expectations were too high for Benny, but I was not going to give up. I felt challenged to communicate with him in a way that would make him a safer horse, thereby allowing me to provide him a quality of life all living creatures deserve. So how was I going to do this?

I was deeply perplexed when I became inspired to experiment by playing with Benny instead of training him. To dance, to chase, to play with him from fetch the jolly ball to a game I call *I'm a gonna gitcha*. When I set Benny free in the arena I began to play making sure I had a smile on my face and a cheerful countenance then I'd run up to him, touch him on the shoulder and run away. He saw this as a game of tag and came after me all excited with a sparkle in his eye. I called out *oh no Benny's gonna get me, oh no*, while waving my arms then suddenly I would turn around and say *BOO*. It was hysterical as he'd spring into the air, then spin around and run and now I was chasing him *I'm gonna gitcha Benny*. He was happy and goofy prancing around, chasing me, and then I'd turn around and chase him. I soon added music to our play time which turned into dancing that he absolutely loves (you can watch Benny & Missy dance on YouTube [watch here](#)).

*As I described to the audience at the New Options Equine fund raiser; think about a forest and all the various styles of trees. When in the forest some trees have bent branches which we recognize they are simply reaching for sun due to circumstances of being shaded – we notice blemishes on the trees due to insects, missing limbs due to snow and wind – we notice trees fallen, but new growth coming from stumps. We don't judge the trees to be inferior with their imperfections; the imperfections are actually perfection when you consider their circumstance. So is Benny, perfect for his circumstance and every rescue horse perfect in their imperfection. With the epidemic of horse homelessness the need is great so consider supporting your local horse rescues and sanctuaries and remember there is great learning in PLAY".*

For high res pics of Benny's condition at the time of rescue and branding pics contact [Info@MissyWryn.com](mailto:Info@MissyWryn.com) or call 503-630-3744.

Internationally recognized Gentle Horse Trainer and member of the Association of Professional Humane Educators, Missy Wryn provides comprehensive horse training, horse management, and effective communication workshops, clinics, and presentations across the globe and at her Zen Barn in Estacada, Oregon. For more information visit Missy Wryn's website at [MissyWryn.com](http://MissyWryn.com) or call toll free (888) 406-7689.