

Forward

1st Annual Children's Writing Competition 2011
Inspired by Atticus ~ The Wild Stallion From Deadman Valley
British Columbia, Canada

Competition Starts
Oct 1, 2011
January 31, 2012

Subject
Wild
Horses

Open to ALL Children across
Canada and the United States

Grand Prize: Trip for Two to ISPMB
(International Society For The Protection Of
Mustangs and Burros) Sanctuary

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BECOME A VOICE FOR THE HORSE

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2011 was a year of great adventure for Voice For The Horse (VFTH). After many years of networking and researching our fabulous world of horses, it became very clear the best way we could ever fulfill our mission of “forever bridging the gap between horse and humans in our modern day world” would be through equine education and promoting fine art projects for our youth, thus this is how the wild horse writing competition for children came about. Inspired by Atticus – the wild stallion from Deadman Valley, British Columbia, Canada captured in the early winter of 2011, lent itself to be a subject of fascination for many. However learning of this beautiful stallion whose life had been spared to include several of his herd members, only slightly touched on this vast world of wild horses. Although we knew there were concerns with our wild horse populations in Canada we knew we had to cross our borders into the United States to gain the knowledge and expertise we would need to successfully produce and host this writing competition. This is where our journey truly began.

What came to pass was one of the most exciting years one could have as a true lover of the horse. Over this period of time many new people came into the life of VFTH enabling us to put forth our best work in developing a sound curriculum for children to study from. VFTH would like to thank these individuals for their time and efforts in helping us in achieving our goals in 2011: Margrit Coates, Julie Lines, Mara Legrand, Mary Ann Simonds, Barbara Wheeler and Liz Mitten Ryan. Our panel of judges from our Wild Horse Writing Competition did an amazing job and great thanks go to the volunteer efforts of our Professional Stable of Judges: Valerie Ormond, Jonathan Boudin, Liz Mitten Ryan, Julie Lines, Angela Dorsey and Connie Funk.

Throughout the months we were accepting the children’s story submissions what became very clear to me was in no which way, shape or form would I be able to be a part of the judging team. Deeply touched by the children’s enthusiasm, commitment and determination conveyed throughout their writing, I decided to step down from our panel of judges. With every story submitted I was overwhelmed with the genuine care, love and idealistic attitudes our writers exhibited for the wild horses with our range of writers starting as young as 8 years through to age 18.

We would like to thank all of our participants for taking part in this free learning writing experience. Your efforts put forth for the sustaining of our wild horse populations throughout

both Canada and the United States has been battled over for many years, yet this did not discourage you from being a voice for our wild horses. What was very obvious with the essays received was the excellence in which they were presented, exuding keen interest with a personal responsibility to take on challenges such as the case with our wild horses, which requires great courage; not always the easiest.

A Few Comments on Writing and Children's Literacy

Through the power of writing as demonstrated by our competitors, we are enabled with the opportunity to further develop our natural creative abilities which in turn teaches us more about who we are; this is true for anyone who decides to dedicate their time to putting their thoughts on paper. When one writes down their deepest thoughts whether it is through journaling activities or in essays such as what has been written by the children who participated in the VFTH Children's Wild Horse Writing Competition, doors open up to further creativity presenting us with more opportunity for growth. Through writing we have the opportunity to let our minds run freely in thought, especially when the subject is one in which we are passionate about. In today's fast moving world, it is becoming rare for many to actually take the opportunity to read and write as our lives are filled with Google, YouTube videos and other technologies to intrigue our minds. For our future growth it is imperative we never lose our abilities to read and write fluently, for this is what is required for those who wish to make a positive impact in our world and to become successful in ones chosen field. As is the case for our wild horses, there are many other causes and world issues which need to be continually addressed. To make the highest and most educated impact for any cause or in one's career, we must continue to evolve ourselves through literacy, reading and writing and never stop utilizing this most important skill set.

On behalf of VFTH and our Directors, I would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to a number of select individuals: Karen Sussman, President of the ISPMB (International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros) for both sponsoring and hosting a "retreat for two" for our winning writer Matthew McCormack; special thanks to Grant Pearson from Cold Fire Canada for sponsoring the airfare for Matthew and his sister Molly, making it possible for them to enjoy their stay with Karen at the ISPMB which allowed them the opportunity to mingle with several different wild horse herds. Big thanks to photographers Barbara Wheeler who contributed the most amazing cover photo for our promotional poster for our 2011 writing competition and to include this e-book; Tony Stomberg for the amazing photographs displayed throughout the pages of this e-book which has truly brought this e-book to life in a very special way; Johnny Obaid from DEVCO COPY who has designed all of our writing competition posters; Eddie Fernandes from Pictures Of Vancouver who has contributed amazing photographs to VFTH which include the images of Canada Place with the beautiful Five Sails adjoining, which captured the eyes of many during our 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, B.C.; Jonathan Boudin from JB Max Publishing who has given much of his time and efforts through his generous sponsorship of our wild horse e-book; award winning author Valerie Ormond who tutored me in 2011/12 sharing with me her expertise in the field of literacy and writing and teaching me the proper etiquette to host professional writing competitions; CritterAid/Project Equus for sharing the accurate account and

experience of the roundup of Atticus's herd members from Deadman Valley, B.C. and Atticus – for if it was not for him, this writing competition would never have come about. Lastly, we would like to add a special thanks to the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel (SVGH) and General Manager John Kearns for their sponsorship of VFTH. Whether our events were big or small the SVGH continually supported us in our efforts to help create a kinder and more respectful world for our horses.

We are hopeful we have ignited the hearts of many new lovers of the horse through the efforts of all those involved in this project. VFTH certainly has been inspired by the unity demonstrated by the many who came together to be a voice for the wild horses. We look forward to hosting many events in the future to include children's writing competitions where we will forever encourage our youth to express themselves through this fine art.

Yvonne Allen

Founder, Writer and Director of Voice For The Horse

On behalf of the VFTH Board of Directors and our team of Ambassadors

Yvonne initiated the writing of VFTH in 2007. Yvonne has trained as an equine practitioner and uses massage, aromatherapy and various other healing modalities to enhance and facilitate in rehabilitating the lives of horses who have suffered injury, trauma and neglect. Yvonne has an optimistic approach to life where she believes "all things are possible" and hopes to inspire many to fully embrace and harness one's highest potential through believing in their dreams and taking the positive action steps required to make these dreams become a reality.

