

Appaloosas lose an **AMBASSADOR**



Hall of Fame inductee Sir Wrangler's likeness became a Breyer collectible and his daughter's image appeared on a 1985 U.S. postage stamp. He's shown here with Bard children Linze and Sydney.

Sir Wrangler passed away in early March 2006, but not before introducing thousands of people to the color and diversity of Appaloosas.

BY STACY PIGOTT

If ever a horse was a true ambassador for the Appaloosa breed, it was Sir Wrangler. Prior to his death at the age of 29 on March 13, 2006, Sir Wrangler promoted Appaloosas in the show ring, as a sire and even as a Breyer model. He was inducted into the Appaloosa Hall of Fame in 2000—the crowning achievement in a lifetime of accolades.

FROM HALTER TO PERFORMANCE

Bred by Jess and Carolyn Moreno, Sir Wrangler began his halter career as a weanling. With Jess at the lead, Sir Wrangler, a 1977 son of Prince's Wrangler and Royal Ann, earned a Canadian National Championship before he was old enough to ride. He appeared to be on his way to a noteworthy career with Jess until fate intervened in the form of Joe and Jan Bard of Maple Valley, Washington.

In 1978, Joe offered to let Jan breed his Quarter Horse mare to the stallion of her choice the following

year, and Jan jumped at the chance. While Prince's Wrangler had drawn them to Jess' ranch, the couple got more than they bargained for. By the end of the day, they had booked two breedings—to Prince's Wrangler and Man Of Honor—and bought a long yearling colt named Sir Wrangler.

"We thought we could probably breed a few mares and make a little bit of money. We had no idea he was such an athlete," Jan says of "Wrangler," whom they sent to legendary Quarter Horse trainer Steve Metcalf. "I knew Prince Plaudit, and Sir Wrangler was a Prince Plaudit grandson, so we knew he had a good mind. And the other side was Royal Bar and Three Bars, and Joe knew that really well, so he was happy. We got the best of everything."

Steve soon fell in love with Sir Wrangler. Together, they won the Grand National western pleasure championship at the Cow Palace. However, most of Wrangler's show-ring success was accomplished by the Bards. Joe showed the stallion at halter, and

Jan in performance classes. The stallion showed throughout Washington, Oregon and California in the late 1970s and early 1980s, becoming the Northwest's first Club champion. He earned registers of merit in halter and western pleasure, with points in western riding and hunter under saddle.

SIRE WRANGLER

While he was showing, Wrangler was also breeding. The Bards bred him to two mares his 2-year-old year, and with Steve's help, booked about 20 mares for the next year. People were starting to notice the flashy blanketed bay stud, and when his daughter, Sirpent, arrived on the scene, they couldn't help but stare. As a 2-year-old, she won her halter division at both National and World shows. Two years later, she won a World championship in western pleasure with Clint Haverty. After that, she completed 350 competitive miles in one season to earn her gold medallion.

Yes—Sirpent made them sit up and take notice, but it was Sir Wrangler who kept them coming back. He produced 17 foals that have won more than 80 National or World show classes in open, youth and non-pro, including Sirpent, Canute, W.P.J., Sirnique, Chi Chi's Echo, Echo's Sirprize, TJ's Top Remedy, Echo's Wrangler, Sirafin, Wrangler's Lansir, Dude To Wrangler, Spank My Wranglers, Sirvived, Wrangler's Bear, I Be Wrangler, Sirplus Cash, Wrangers-richandfamous and Tex Ann Wrangler, who won the ApPHA non-pro/youth maturity.

Perhaps Sir Wrangler's most unusual claim to fame is as the sire of Wild Bay Be Blues, the Appaloosa filly depicted on the U.S. postage stamp in 1985. Wrangler was the leading living sire of non-pro and youth

horses, a title Jan believes is the stallion's greatest achievement. Wrangler has stamped his foals with great minds, smooth gaits and that trademark Wrangler eye.

"It really didn't matter what we crossed him to," Jan says of the many mares they bred him to through the years. "He was just a performance horse sire."

A MODEL HORSE

Obviously, a lot of people share Jan's opinion, as Sir Wrangler has supporters in every equine discipline and from every walk of life. His fan club includes Breyer model collectors who faithfully followed the stallion from one BreyerFest to another following the release of his model in 1999.

"We'd bring Wrangler to all these BreyerFests, and we'd actually let people climb on him for pictures," Jan says. "They were just thrilled; there would be *huge* lines. It's a whole different aspect of having a horse, when all these people idolize it. But he's immortalized because of it. It's pretty neat.

"Wrangler has made us some of the best friends in the world," Jan adds. "We were really lucky. He was phenomenal because he was pretty *and* he could move. His death took me by surprise. You start to think that something in your life that's always been there will continue to be there, but it won't. Without Sir Wrangler, life probably would've been a lot less stressful, but it would've been boring. And now, it's just a different chapter."

Editor's note: To read more about Joe and Jan Bard's Bar D Ranch and Sir Wrangler's continuing legacy, turn to page 48. 🐾

Sir Wrangler sire stats



Sir Wrangler stamped his foals with good looks, great minds and superior athleticism.

Registered foals	218
Performance point earners	49
Performance points	2,166.5
Halter point earners	29
Halter points	368.5
Registers of merit	64
Halter superior event titles	2
Performance superior event titles	6
Superior achievement certificates	3
Bronze medallions	14
Silver medallion	1
Gold medallion	1
Club champions	4
Versatility champions	5
Stakes-placed race starter	1

Youth Points : 7394

Non Pro : 1654