



*Photo by Robert Dawson*

When Gail Zscheile and Brent Jensen fell in love with Foundation Quarter Horses and decided to breed for high percentage Foundation blood, Poco Bueno bloodlines, disposition, conformation, performance, and the grullo color, they had no idea what they were getting into. But after spending 18 years building one of the most unique broodmare bands in the US they are glad they took the challenge and stayed the course.

# Jaz Ranch A Labor of Love

by Debby Preso

“We went to buy Gail a saddle horse and me a mule.” says Brent Jensen of the mid 1980’s trip to the Rose Ranch in Slick Rock, CO. At that time Zscheile and Jensen lived in Lamoille, NV and Gail was looking for a saddle horse that was also a grullo. They had been looking for a

while but grullo is the second-most rare color in the Quarter Horse breed so they weren’t having a lot of luck. If they found the right horse it was the wrong color and if they found the right color it was the wrong horse.

Troy and Ione Rose were having a dispersal sale and the sale included some grade grullos and some mules. Since Zscheile and Jensen were looking for one of each they headed over to Slick Rock.

The trip to the Rose Ranch started a lasting friendship between Jensen, Zscheile and the Roses and it was on a later visit to Slick Rock that they saw a grullo two year old called Pocos Gray Comet. He was by Poco Blunder who was an own son



Jaz Ranch Photos

Left: The grullo who started it all - Pocos Gray Comet shown in his Slick Rock, CO corral.



Jaz Ranch broodmares on pasture in beautiful Joseph, OR

of Poco Bueno and out of Miss Gray Hick by Rain Hick. Gail and Brent fell in love with him but the Roses had just acquired him as a stud prospect and were not interested in selling.

A few years later Troy and Ione offered to sell the six year old Pocos Gray Comet to them but there was a catch – the deal included 14 broodmares. This was way more than Gail and Brent wanted to take on. The pair had a handful of broodmares and raised horses as a hobby. As Zscheile says, “The last thing in the world we wanted was 14 broodmares. We had no clue what we were going to do with them!” They talked it over. “We really wanted Pocos Gray Comet and that was the only way we could get him.” Gail says of their decision to go ahead with the deal.

The mares were all AQHA registered grullos and were all in foal to Pocos Gray Comet. At the time Brent and Gail were just wondering what the expense of keeping 14 broodmares would be and whether or not they would be able to sell the babies for enough to offset the cost of keeping the mares. Their plan had been to breed ‘Poco’ to their own mares not to embark on a full blown breeding operation. With this in mind Jensen and Zscheile sold most of the mares before they foaled.

Before they acquired Pocos Gray Comet Brent and Gail had followed the modern trend of Quarter Horse breeding with Three Bars, Impressive, Skipper W, Lucky Bar and Otoe bloodlines in their horses. Once they got the grullo stallion home and began to spend time around him they realized that he was a lot different than the Quarter Horses they knew. Jensen says, “He was just easy

to be around, comfortable to be around. He was full of energy but very respectful.” Gail Zscheile adds, “He was a different breed.”

They found out that Pocos Gray Comet *was* almost a different breed from their other Quarter Horses – he was 100% Foundation Quarter Horse. After researching ‘Poco’s bloodlines they started talking with other people who owned Poco Bueno bred

Opposite Page:  
Poco Lady Fran, one of the ‘Mail Order Brides’,  
by Poco Feed, with filly by Pocos Gray Comet.



Photo: Charles Hilton

“We are fortunate to have stud quality broodmares.” says Brent Jensen

horses and found that they felt the same way. Gail also began to realize that many AQHA registered horses were more Thoroughbred than Quarter Horse. “That thought had never occurred to me before.” she remarks. Comparing her own ‘modern’ Quarter Horses to the Foundation bred Pocos Gray Comet she also noted that there was a big difference in a horse with little or no Thoroughbred blood and horses that carried a high percentage of Thoroughbred.

### The Treasure Hunt

With this in both their minds Jensen and Zscheile began to search for Poco Bueno granddaughters. “It was like a treasure hunt.” Jensen says of the quest. Gail called AQHA and asked for the get records of Poco Bueno’s sons and then looked for their daughters. This would be a daunting task today with the Internet at your fingertips but in the early 1990s it was a huge undertaking.

The first thing Gail and Brent had to find was a complete set of AQHA Stud books; anyone who has ever tried to do this knows how hard it is. They found a set thanks to a tip-off from a friend and Zscheile would spend hours looking up the mares’ pedigrees to see if they matched the criteria. “We were really interested in granddaughters of Poco Bueno out of daughters of Beaver Creek (by King P-234). And because we wanted to breed grullos we wanted them to have black points. That did narrow things down.” she laughs.

Once they determined they wanted a certain mare the next step in the quest was finding her. They would call AQHA and get the last recorded owner’s address and attempt to locate the phone number. Many were dead ends, but when they found the owner they would ask if the mare were for sale. Recounts Gail “It was really interesting. All of our mares except one were bought on bloodlines alone, sight unseen – there was no e-mailing pictures

then. We would be so excited to see what she was like when she came, and we were never disappointed.” Zscheile says there was also a down side to the search, “We would call to find that for some reason – maybe the owner had died – to find that these mares that we would have paid anything for had been sold for nothing to someone who didn’t want the papers, probably to the canner. That part was heart breaking.” However they eventually found and purchased 14 granddaughters of Poco Bueno which they referred to as the ‘mail order brides’. “It was like finding gold.” Jensen says.

The ‘mail order brides’ included Poco Lady Fran a daughter of Poco Bevo, Miss Poco 013 by Poco Cuff, Poco Miss Dimple (dam of 1985 5<sup>th</sup> AQHA high point cutting in the nation) by Poco Bevo, and Poco Miss Feed and Poco Valentine Ann by Poco Feed, and Poca Espera and Pocos Tote Suite by Poco Papacita among others. Finding these mares was not the end of the challenge. “They were all older mares in their late teens to early twenties. Some of them had maybe only had one baby in their lifetime.” Jensen says. “It was difficult to get them settled and there were a couple we never did get settled. Buying these older mares was risky for that reason but it was worth it because their bloodlines were so hard to find.”

With the addition of each mare Jensen and Zscheile fell more in love with Foundation Quarter Horses and were now in the horse breeding business, “Whether we wanted to be or not!” They thought they should come up with a ranch name and Gail says, “We thought and thought and agonized over it. Then the obvious came to me Jensen And Zscheile – Jaz Ranch.”

With the present taken care of for the moment the ranch partners began to think about the future and the need for another stallion. “Now that we had these broodmares what would we do if something happened to Poco?” was Brent’s thought. Also they were hoping to have Poco’s daughters in a few years and they would need another stallion to breed them to.

They began to search again and were looking at the pedigree of a prospective stallion when Gail told Brent, "This is the horse we should be looking at." and pointed to the sire's name. It was Little Steel Dust.

"I'd never heard of Little Steel Dust before but he was everything we wanted. He was a high percentage Poco Bueno and he was a grullo." Gail says. He was also 100% Foundation bred. If Zscheile and Jensen thought they had had a tough time acquiring Pocos Gray Comet and the 'mail order brides' it was only a warm up for their pursuit of Little Steel Dust.

### Little Steel Dust

Little Steel Dust was by Poco King Tuck by Poco Bueno and out of a double bred Poco Bueno granddaughter adding up to over 40% Poco Bueno blood. He was owned by Jose Luis Bonilla who owns the Rancho Bonilla in New Cuyama, CA. When Jensen tried to call Bonilla he found the proverbial brick wall. He laughs and says, "I'd call and call but no one there spoke any English except to tell me that no one there spoke any English!" Brent found it discouraging but he never gave up. Finally he got lucky and got Bonilla's young daughter - who did speak English - on the phone. The girl told

them her father was not at home so Brent asked her if her father had any gray horses thinking gray would be more understandable to her than grullo. "She told me that he had lots of gray horses and it turned that he did. He owned over 80 Andalusians!"

Once they finally talked to Bonilla, Zscheile and Jensen found out that he did raise Andalusians but that his hobby was Poco Bueno Quarter Horses. At one point they thought they had Little Steel Dust bought. "Luis was ready to sell him to us when he said that Little Steel Dust had not been ridden for two years and asked if we would like him to ride the horse for us and we said sure. So he rode him and I rode him and after that he told us, 'I'm sorry, I forgot how wonderful he is. I can't sell him.' We went back home with an empty trailer and a knot in our stomachs because we realized Little Steel Dust was everything we wished for." remembers Gail.

Bonilla admired the work that Jaz Ranch was doing to preserve the Poco Bueno line and finally relented because of that. "We were out the door and in the truck headed for California with

the check in our hand!" They were still not sure whether Bonilla might change his mind again and hand their check back to them. He wanted them to stay for a couple days but Brent and Gail didn't press their luck and after a three hour visit they were back out on the road; this time Little Steel Dust was in the trailer.

Little Steel Dust was the horse of a lifetime for both Gail and



Photo: Roger Clark

**Brent with Little Steel Dust at age 29. "He was the horse that made Jaz Ranch." says Gail Zscheile**

Brent. "He was the horse that made Jaz Ranch." Zscheile says. "He made our program." With the acquisition of Little Steel Dust Brent and Gail made the decision to retire Pocos Gray Comet from breeding, partly because at 18 years of age Little Steel Dust was older and so they wanted to give him the chance to become a great sire while there was time, and partly because of the feedback they got when they talked to anyone with Little Steel Dust offspring. "I got on the phone and called about 30 people who owned get of Little Steel Dust and without exception they all told me the same thing. They said their Little Steel Dust's had great dispositions, were unfailingly gentle with children and had a willingness to work and to please. They were also light in the rein and extremely cowy. All but two

of these offspring were on working cow ranches. Little Steel Dust became the Jaz Ranch herd sire.

Little Steel Dust was crossed on the Poco Bueno granddaughters and the results were what Jensen and Zscheile hoped. Gail says, "We were hoping that Little Steel Dust would reproduce himself in disposition and conformation and he did." Once the babies were on the ground it seemed that Jaz Ranch was not the only ones with an interest in preserving these horses. "We never had any trouble marketing out Foundation babies. We sold every weanling we had for sale for the first seven years." states Zscheile.

It did take Jaz Ranch a little longer to get their trademark grullos though. "All our mares were bays or seal browns or dun. We only found one grullo when we were looking for mares, so we had to wait until we produced our own, which wasn't easy." Gail explains.

Jensen and Zscheile are well aware that mare power is the key to success for every breeding operation. Gail says, "Our broodmares are the key." Brent elaborates on this adding, "It is less difficult



Jaz Ranch Photo

Above: Cold weather takes lots of nutrition. Here the Jaz Ranch broodmares get their daily supplement.

Below: The new kid on the block - Jaz Poco Bravo



Jaz Ranch Photo

to find one good stallion than it is to find a band of stud quality broodmares. We are very proud to have a stud quality broodmare band."

There was one more big decision for Brent and Gail and that was moving the Jaz Ranch from Lamoille, NV to Joseph, OR. Although they both enjoyed Lamoille Brent says, "In Nevada our broodmares were running out on BLM land and we wanted to have them where we could keep a better eye on them." They had heard of Joseph, OR located in the scenic Wallowa Mountains.

"The ranch that we were looking at in Joseph had good pasture, an ample supply of fresh water plus it was very beautiful."

Brent made the move to Joseph first and replaced all the barb wire fencing with post and rail, pulled up 3,080 tree stumps and refurbished the barn. With help from their family and friends and three round trips the horses were settled in and so were Brent and Gail. The stallions each have their own large turn out and the broodmares and their babies have 170 acres of pasture. It is pretty close to horse heaven.

In October 2003 Gail and Brent had to say good bye to the horse who made so many of their dreams come true. Little Steel Dust was 29 years old when he died and had sired 211 horses registered with AQHA of which 147 were Jaz Ranch horses. "He knew he was special and he always carried himself that way; even the day he died. He just had that presence." Gail says.

### Jaz Ranch Performance

Jaz Ranch horses are much more than color and bloodlines, they do everything. "We wanted to raise all around using horses that anybody can ride." states Gail. She and Brent do just that. Jaz Ranch horses do everything from trail riding to high performance classes.

Nadine Land of Aberdeen, NC owns Jaz Poco Gray Stone by Pocos Gray Comet. She bought him as a weanling. "Brent had sent me a video of a black colt and a couple of pictures of a grullo. I took one look at that grullo baby and said, 'I want that one.'" Nadine laughs. Her choice was a good one. Jaz Poco Gray Stone was sent to Texas to trainer David Weaver to become a cutter.

"He went down there as a two year old and was a little slow to pick it up but after he turned three it was like a switch came on and he was just a natural cutter." She says Weaver liked 'Stony' because he was just a good horse. "He just went out and did his job." Land says. The stallion was a consistent AQHA performer and in 2004 he won the IBHA Reserve World Championship in cutting.

'Stony' shows off his Foundation horse versatility these days by being Nadine's trail horse. "He is very good on the trails, good with the other horses and very sure footed."

Jaz Poco Espejo is another IBHA Reserve World Champion but he won his title in the reined cow horse event. Jaz Poco Espejo is a 1998 dun gelding by Little Steel Dust and he is owned by Michael and Kathleen Walker of Golden, CO.

"We bought him as a four year old after losing our first horse to colic." Kathleen Walker says. "We had been riding lesson horses and they were not very good. We were getting pretty frustrated so our trainer said, 'Why don't you ride my stallion?' Michael and I looked at each other and wondered if she was crazy!" she laughs. Although 'Espejo' was still pretty green Kathleen says, "He was a blast to ride. He loves to have fun and he takes really good care of his riders." The Walkers ended up buying the stallion and took him to a reined cow horse trainer. "He led us to reined cow horse. That's what he was bred for."

Photo: John Brasseaux

Clockwise from top:  
**Jaz Poco Graystone** - IBHA Reserve World CH Cutting; **Jaz Poco Picante** - outstanding rope horse; **Jaz Mighty Mouse** - AQHA ROM Reining; **Jaz Poco Espejo** - IBHA Reserve World CH Working Cow Horse; **Jaz Poco Goldun Blue** - AQHA & IBHA ROM Reining; **Jaz Bronze Bueno** - AQHA 2002 8th High Point Junior Ranch Horse Versatility; **Jaz Destind For Gold** - Winner Extreme Cowboy Race; **Jaz Ranch horses** high in the Eaglecap Wilderness; **Jaz Slick Rock & Jaz Dun Deal** with TJ and Taylor Cannon - National High School Finals Rodeo horses.

Kathleen is hoping to compete Jaz Poco Espejo in reining in the future but right now she works full-time and only gets to ride about once a week. "My horse's skill level is way beyond mine right now. But he is a good teacher."

Jaz Silver Comet owned by Larry and Kevin Geer is an NRHA money earner and has achieved his AQHA ROM in reining. He is shown by Andy Shafer of Milton-Freewater, OR and in 2005 & 2006 the pair won the NRHA Open Northwest. 'Silver' was ready to defend his championship in 2007 when Shafer fell ill. The 2004 grullo stallion by Pocos Gray Comet is very close to his AQHA Superior in reining and that is the goal for 2008. "We bought him because we needed a stallion for our own mares and we also wanted a performer." says Larry Geer. "He has done a little reined cow and a little cutting but our main focus has been on reining."

Jaz Destind For Gold is owned by Bob and Linda Banks of Roseburg, OR. The Banks bought the Little Steel Dust son from the Jaz Ranch as an unbroken two year old. Bob was showing and team roping on the dun gelding when he heard about the Extreme Cowboy Race. He entered 'Destin' in a race in Texas where they won the first go around. They then headed for Sacramento where they won the Extreme Cowboy Race III and a trophy saddle. "I was the oldest competitor there and one of the few who doesn't make a living on horse back But I had Destin." said Bob about the win.

Jaz Dun Deal and Jaz Slick Rock have carried Tina and Tim Cannons sons Taylor & TJ from Junior rodeo to High School rodeo and the High School Rodeo National Finals. Said Tina, "We bought Jaz Dun Deal as an 18 month old colt which was not what we were looking for - we wanted an older, finished horse. But he was so good that we thought, 'We need another horse like this!' and we bought Jaz Slick Rock."

Jaz Ranch has produced numerous AQHA ROM Reining horses, many NFQHA National high points earners and National Show and National Year End winners, IBHA Reserve World Champion Working Cow Horse, and Cutting Horse, Extreme Cowboy



Photo: Jeff Kirkbride



Jaz Ranch produces color, performance and most important - Versatile using horses.



Photos: Robert Dawson



Photos: Charles Hilton



Jaz Ranch Photo

Race Winner, IBHA ROM Reining, IBHA ROM Color, AQHA Top Ten Team Penning, outstanding Rope horses, NRHA and NCHA money earners, and many other performers.

Jaz Ranch horses do excel in the arena but they are just as happy to go on a trail ride. Gail Zscheile likes to tell a story about Poca Espera and Poca Lufax whom they pulled out of the brood mare field at ages 14 and 21, put shoes on and took for a day ride in the Eaglecap Wilderness. "We had some friends visiting from California who wanted to go trail riding in the high county. Their geldings had been ridden all summer in the mountains and were well legged up. Our friends looked very doubtful about our two broodmares which had not been ridden for several years. However while their geldings balked at bridges and log and water crossings our girls set the pace with a no nonsense attitude and never wavered. About half way through the ride one of our guests turned to me and said, 'All right Gail, you win. I want one of those.'"

While both Little Steel Dust and Pocos Gray Comet are gone Gail and Brent have adhered to their original plan and are introducing a new stallion in 2008, Jaz Poca Bravo. Bravo is 100% NFQHA, 31.25% Poca Bueno, and of course grullo. A son of Poca Bueno Milagro and Bains Showdown Dun, he is not closely related to any Jaz mares and can be bred to all the mares on the ranch.

Jaz Acero Hombre, a slate grullo stallion and a son of Little Steel Dust out of Poca Miss Feed, is the other current Jaz Ranch herd sire. All but two of the original 'Mail Order Brides' have been laid to rest on the ranch, but Brent and Gail have kept as many of their grullo and black daughters by Little Steel Dust and Pocos Gray Comet as possible and Acero and Bravo are being bred to them. The ranch also offers one stallion to the public, Jaz Poca Silverado, a silver grullo AQHA ROM Reining stallion. Silverado is a son of Little Steel Dust out of Poca Miss Smoky. Silverado is double dominant for the dun gene, so their customers are guaranteed color.

Jaz Ranch horses have been featured on the cover of *The American Cowboy*, and in Robert Dawson calendars and books, as well as in a David Stoecklein coffee table book. One horse, Jaz Poca Salsa, is featured in the Charles Wilhelm's book *Starting Baby Jaz*.

Their horses have been sold all across the nation as well as into Canada, Mexico, France, Germany, and Luxembourg. The Jaz Ranch horses are their own best advertisement so the ranch has many repeat customers. "I would say the majority of our customers are people who have already bought from us. The reason for this is that once they buy one of these horses and experience what they're like, they want another one." Brent explains.

That is the goal of the Jaz Ranch. Right from the beginning when they fell deeply in love with these horses, they have had a purpose behind their breeding program. "Our horses are bred first for disposition, second for conformation, third for pedigree, and forth the black and grullo color, while keeping a minimum of 25% Poca Bueno blood, and between 95% to 100% Foundation Quarter Horse blood per NFQHA standards. We have been steadfast in this breeding philosophy from the beginning. We are so proud of these horses that they all bear the name 'Jaz'" These goals have helped them preserve what Zscheile called "a different breed" the fabulous Foundation Quarter Horse.



[www.jazranch.com](http://www.jazranch.com)