

MUSTANGS

"Nevada's Mustangs: roughing up the range" by Archie Murchie, (Summer 2007) gives a very biased description of wild horses from an old U.S. Forest Service employee, who maintains the same old anti-wild horse tradition that almost eliminated the mustangs. Murchie's bias becomes plain when he describes the wild horses at the water hole. He should have mentioned how it is cattle who camp on the riparian areas and how the wild horses quickly drink their fill and disperse away from the water sources to cover a much broader area than do livestock in their procurement of food. Also he should have mentioned how the wild horses' pawing at seeps serves to enlarge

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watering holes so that many other animals, who could not otherwise obtain access to such, can drink. Like many with his negative views, Murchie overlooks the obvious problem: humanity's tampering with the natural balance here in the West.

Craig C. Downer, '76M.S. (biology)
Author: Wild Horses: Living Symbols of Freedom

PROFESSOR COONEY

Your article sure brings back memories: Professor [Donald] Cooney [47] was a fine professor. In spring 1949, I was taking a lower division botany class from him and there was only one other student in the class, a girl. One afternoon he advised me that the next day we were going on a field trip to collect thermal-



loving algae south of Reno. We went on the field trip, but the girl didn't come along. On the way home Professor Cooney reached in the back seat of his auto and under a blanket there were two beers. What a surprise! Sad to lose someone who did have

some measure of influence; he's why I took the road I choose.

Warren Sandau '54 (botany)

Editor's note: Donald Cooney '47 (biology), biology professor emeritus and department chairman, died Jan. 11, 2007. See Summer 2007, Remembering Friends.

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