

THE PONY EXPRESS NEWS

NOVEMBER 2017

VOL 16:2

[2018 Re-Ride Schedule](#)

[2017/18 Deadlines](#)

NationalPonyExpress.org

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Letter from the President

With the heat of summer behind us, we look forward to the fall colors, the leaves changing and snow on the mountain peaks. We try to get the last ride in before snow flies.

As we recap our past year we are happy to report that we accomplished a lot of our goals that we set for ourselves. Sign projects in Utah, 11&1/2 miles completed. An Eagle Scout Project completed. Sign project in El Dorado County, California is on going. Two Kansas signage projects will be soon be completed.

Our convention in Ogallala, Nebraska was a big success. Thanks to the hard work from the members of the Nebraska division. The support from The National Parks Service also made additional learning experiences.

Our media team lead by Petra Keller and Arleta Martin helped answer many questions about the Pony Express Spot Tracker and the accesses to the website was a huge contribution. Petra Keller, with the help of her computer, was instrumental in helping us navigate the National Pony Express into the future by tracking our every move. We were able to know at all times just where the mochila was, where it stopped and where the delays were.

I want to thank John Cannella and Kristin Van Fleet, of the National Park Service for all they did to help us in our effort to keep the History Alive and Preserving the trail. I feel that 2018 will be a big year. It is the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System and I hope we will have an exceptional year. Things are in the works to help promote the event. The re-ride schedule was moved around to help support Wyoming for their event held in Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Watch the Pony Express Website for more information.

Again, I want to thank the National Park Service for their support to the Pony Express Trail. And a big THANK YOU to Nebraska for hosting the convention and to all of you who make this organization a success. It takes a lot of hard work, sacrifice, dedication, time and money to make this organization work. It's all of you that make it happen every year.

Thank you for your support,
Dean Atkin
National Pony Express President

[NPEA News](#)

[Rider Reports](#)

(buttons are clickable, may not work on some smart phones)



2017 NPEA Convention

by Larry Carpenter, NPEA Corresponding Secretary

The Nebraska State Division Hosted the 2017 Annual National Pony Express Convention in Ogallala, on September 8 and 9. This was the 38th Convention the NPEA has held since the inaugural event in 1980 at Salt Lake City. It was the 6th held in Nebraska. Meetings were held on the Mid-Plains College Campus in Ogallala.

The Convention is held annually in a city and state on the Pony Express Trail. It rotates among the eight state divisions. It was a two day event: Strategic Planning Committee, Past Presidents and State Presidents Meetings on Friday morning, and a Trails Meeting on Friday afternoon, and the Board Meeting on Saturday.

Anyone could attend but only Directors could Vote in the Trails Meeting on Friday, and the Board Meeting Saturday. Each of the eight State Divisions sent three Directors. Seventy Four Registered for the Convention with Registrants coming from over 11 States.

The Trails Meeting on Friday afternoon dealt with Trails Issues including Reports of the 2017 Re-ride from each State President, and a report by Pat Hearty, NPEA Representative at the Trails Advocacy Week in Washington, D.C., in February. The National Park Service was represented by John Cannella, Deputy Superintendent, and Kristin Van Fleet, of the National Trails Intermountain Region Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico. They brought updates on the effect of Federal Budget Issues on trails, and a preview of the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act in 2018.

Saturday the Board Meeting began promptly at 8:30 AM with National President Dean Atkin Presiding. After the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, the group launched into a full agenda of Association business which extended to lunch and later into the late afternoon. Financial Reports and Committee Reports were received and accepted, and the 2018 Re-ride Dates proposed and accepted. The 2018 Ride will be June 20 to 30, beginning in Sacramento, California, and ending in St Joseph, Missouri. Wyoming will be the Honored State, building the mochila, and writing the Vignette. Wyoming will also host the 2018 Convention in Torrington, in September.

Among the decisions made was to recognize the 40th Anniversary of the Incorporation of the NPEA in 1978. The 2018 Pony Express Gazette will detail this historic event, and an enamel stick pin will be created to give to members. In addition, the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the National Trails System Act by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968, will be commemorated. The National Trails System Act established recognition and funding for our system of historic, recreational, and scenic trails. This historic event will be highlighted in the 2018 Pony Express Gazette and an enamel stick pin.

In other action of the afternoon, Arleta Martin (Kansas) was Elected a National Honorary Lifetime Member. Arleta was recognized for work as a Member of the National Historic Trails Designation Committee, Co-chair of the 150th Anniversary Committee, and Editor of the Pony Express Gazette, and most recently Ride Letter Secretary.

In final action, Dean Atkin (Utah), was re-elected National President, Dean appointed Carl Schultz (Wyoming), 1st Vice President; David Kittle (Nevada), 2nd Vice President; and Melva Sanner (Kansas), 3rd Vice President. A complete listing of NPEA Officers can be found on the National Website: NationalPonyExpress.org.

The Convention is a place where the business of the Association is conducted, friendship renewed, and friends made. While it was two days of meetings, field trips to local historical sites were squeezed in, a dinner at Front Street Friday night was held, and 84 attended a more formal dinner Saturday night. Planner Mary Cone of Paxton, Nebraska, and Lyle Gronewold, of Gothenburg, Nebraska, and the Nebraska State Division are to be commended for a great convention and welcome. See you in Torrington, WY!

A Heartfelt Thanks

By Alicia (Martin) Keegan

I need to say thank you to all of you, on how welcome you made me feel at the 2017 Pony Express Convention. Everyone I met over the weekend was really very friendly, welcoming and easy to talk too. I always heard about these "pony" conventions from my mom & dad on how much fun they had. Them getting excited on the next new events to plan for; the excitement of reconnecting with far away friends. I did do my own thing on Friday. Saturday I went on the tour, and I had so much fun with a great bunch of gals. The night gatherings for the evening meal were perfect. Nice people to visit with, the entertainment and the meals were also great. I have personally thanked a few individuals, but wanted to let you all know how accepted I felt, that I would not pause to say, 'yes' I would travel with mom (Arleta Martin) to another convention. Thank you & keep your boots in your stirrups!

Scout's Trail to The Pony

By Scout Murphy

My name is Scout and I am 8 years old. I am unschooled. That means all my life experiences are my classroom. I love learning how horses played a part in history. A few years ago my friends and I learned about the pony express.

I live on a farm in the woods with 7 horses. I decided to recreate the pony express. I have a woodland playground full of trails in my backyard. First, my friends and I created a bag full of mail. We collected brushes, lead lines, food and water and created outposts along the trails. With a combination of a real pony, a miniature horse, and a few stick horses we were ready to ride the pony express. All the kids ran to their outposts with their horses and supplies.

I hung the mailbag over my shoulder and jumped onto Tonto. We rode to the first outpost. I handed the mailbag to the next rider. They raced off with the mail. Now it was time to take care of my horse. I fed, watered and brushed Tonto. We were all excited when the mail was finally delivered.



Scout & Tonto

Recently, my mom told me about the Pony Re-ride. She heard about it on Facebook. I was really excited! I hoped my mom and I could do it together. At first, it didn't seem likely because we live so far away. We live on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. We kept talking about it though.

After a few days my mom decided we were going for it! I couldn't believe it! We are really going to Pony. I am really looking forward to seeing what that part of the country looks like. I hope I will meet some other kids at pony or during our travels to get there.

What is going to be the best though? Reliving history. Riding the same trail as the pony riders. I hope I will see some old buildings or artifacts from the original ride. I think I will feel like I have gone back in time, through a time portal, to the old west.

Scout Murphy is young author. Her first book, A Magical Friendship Journey, will be available November 5, 2017 on Amazon. Her second book, Tindma Ella a Mongolian Cinderella, will be available in early 2018. You can follow Scouts adventures: www.facebook.com/ScoutsTrail www.YouTube.com/ScoutsTrail www.twitter.com/ScoutsTrail and her author page www.facebook.com/ScoutMurphy



2017 Colorado Division Report

By Cheryl Nein, Colorado Division VP



The Colorado Division stayed busy in 2017, beginning with membership recruitment early in the year. June's re-ride and BBQ promoted community XP pride, followed by participation in area parades, participation in Nebraska's Sesquicentennial celebration at Ash Hollow and attendance at September's National Convention in Ogallala, NE. (The convention was well organized and memorable –Thank you Lyle and Mary). And as another year winds down we will end our year with our annual Christmas Card Ride in December. We may be few in numbers but we remain committed to the Pony Express tradition.

Colorado's two special projects of interest to share from this year: first in July at Ash Hollow, and the second a special interview this fall with some "Old Time" riders from the re-rides of the past.

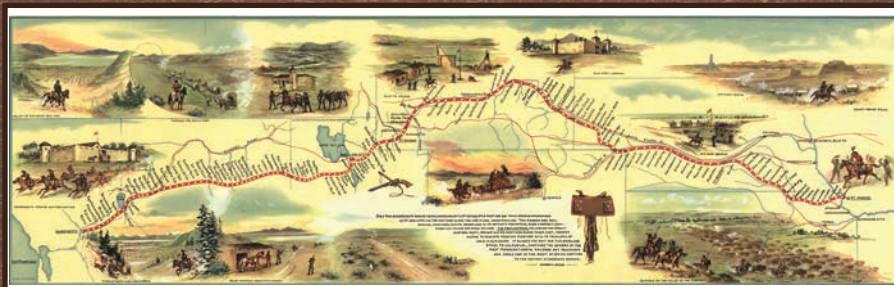
Ash Hollow

2017 is Nebraska's 150th anniversary of statehood. Many celebrations were planned but one of special significance to us, *Convergence on Sacred Ground*, was planned at Ash Hollow National Park just north of our area east of Lewellen, NE. in the latter part of July.

Colorado's XP was approached to set up an informative education booth with pamphlets and letters stamped with commemorative XP insignias from both NE and CO. The letters were carried in the MOCHILLA during a short hand-off re-ride enactment during the celebration by riders from Julesburg, CO and Big Spring, NE, during a point in the celebrated. Colorado XP President, Linda Dolezal, headed up the project and Nebraska's Mary Cone assisted as well as acted as MC during the demonstration and gave an exceptional interview to Nebraska's Public Television on the historical significance of the Pony Express.



The event lasted three days with hundreds in attendance and in a way was a bit nostalgic for Linda (Dolezal) and Cheryl (Nein) as they both had ridden in the 1967 XP re-ride and had participated in the first Ash Hollow Pageant in 1967 for Nebraska's Centennial Celebration. They rode as XP riders for the re-ride but for the pageant rode bareback as Indians attacking the wagon train from the hills at night!



Old Time Riders

Late in September, another interesting project presented itself. The remaining three riders in our area from the 1960 Colorado XP re-ride were able to meet and share their participation of the 1960 event. Lee Kizer, owner of the "Old Ford Garage" and historian extraordinaire of Julesburg, CO; Darris Cumming, Cumming Cattle Company and Cumming Realty, now retired, and living in Arizona, and Jim Parker, a long-time rancher of Ovid, CO. were interviewed in the first of we hope to be a number of videos sharing their Pony Express experiences.

Here are a few of the comments shared:

Lee said, "I was a barber in Boulder (CO) when he met a customer/author, by the name of Robert Ahearn, who was researching material for his new book entitled "Union Pacific". When he learned I (Lee) was from Julesburg (CO), he told me that the families of the Pony Express founders—Russell, Majors, and Waddell—were planning a Pony Express re-ride in 1960 for the 100th anniversary of the Pony Express and they needed an organizational leader from our area in Colorado" Lee told them he would help out and enlisted Jim Stretesky—another long-time resident of the Julesburg-- area to head up the committee. They met with some of the XP founders family members at that meeting in Sedgwick County to get it organized. They ended up selecting 8 riders from Sedgwick County to ride but ended up with 9 as one additional rider borrowed a horse for the ride. However, in the historical brochures it only showed 8 riders because the rider that borrowed the horse didn't have a horse to set for the picture.

Darris Cumming was a young cattleman in Julesburg when he rode in 1960. He was asked how fast they rode the re-ride legs. Darris said, "Hell bent out!" Darris said he also rode the same leg in the 1979 re-ride the first year it became an annual event.

Jim Parker was the youngest of the 1960 riders and his family ranched south of Ovid (CO). Jim still a shy cowboy with a dry sense of humor added that, "I couldn't ride hell bent out, my entire portion of my leg, because my horse had to swim across a portion the South Platte River south of Ovid which had flooded. Jim also said he had ridden in the 1979 re-ride.

Another interesting fact that Lee shared was that the riders in 1960, simultaneously started in St. Joe MO and rode west and Sacramento, CA and rode east. They intersected on the plains somewhere in between.

We hope to have these three original 1960 riders in attendance in Julesburg (CO) at the 2019 National Convention in Colorado. Meanwhile we intend to add additional interviews to our records from these men. Surely there are other living riders from the 1960 celebration in each of the eight XP states with stories to share. Colorado challenges each of your state officers/members to seek out these 1960 riders and preserve the memories in XP history.



Congratulations to
the Members of the
Sweetwater County Pony Express,
First Place Winners,
Mounted Division
at the Buffalo Bill Parade
in Cody, Wyoming!

Go Pony!



Photo courtesy of Carl Schultz

California Division Report

By Christine Starr



It's hard to believe that school is back in session and fall is in the air, which means that Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas are all just around the corner; and that means next year will soon be upon us. It's time to gear up for the Christmas parades and Christmas Card Ride in California as we begin looking towards the new year coming up, but not without a look back over our year. It seems like just yesterday it was the beginning of 2017 and California Division was looking forward to our first events of the new year. We have remained busy throughout the year beginning with many of our favorite events such as American Heritage Day at Mount Vernon Mortuary and Memorial Lawn in January where we are usually greeted by President Washington as we enter, or sometime throughout the day while we are there. Folks stop by to learn the history of Pony Express and we have several members who come out and are always happy to answer questions. Follow that up with the usual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Old Sacramento in March, the many school events throughout April & May, California Pioneer Heritage Day in Coloma also in May, some of our other favorites are three to four days of Folsom Pro Rodeo, followed by the 4th of July Parade in Pollock Pines, our annual Play Day, and four (4) days of Gold Rush Days in Old Sacramento, not to mention our Annual Re-Ride!

This year, we added several other events as well, such as Smartsville/ Timbuctoo Heritage Day (yes, it does exist!), Clarksville Days was brought back again this year, National Night Out, Old City Cemetery Tour (for those who don't know, Warren Upson is buried here in Sacramento), and a new favorite of the year (there is no such thing as a new favorite because as we all know, all the events are our favorites) was adding a new school to our events... Pony Express Elementary! Each year we look forward to our events, and begin planning as soon as we can to be sure that we have the coverage and to let our followers know where we will be.



At Gold Rush Days in Old Sacramento this year, we were offered a rare opportunity to photograph a 1964 Colt .45 Pony Express Commemorative pistol with a 7-inch barrel, 3 cylinders and maple wood grips, only one of 1004 made. One of the patrons of Gold Rush Days always comes by our booth each year to pick up a postcard that he sends to his grandson along with a photo of him holding the postcard while in his Gold Rush costume (his grandson really likes the Pony Express). Two of our younger members Chantel and Raeven (Mari) were manning the sales table when he came in asking for this year's postcard. The girls explained that they did not know of any postcards, but as soon as I got back to the tent, they pointed him out & I took one of our shrunk down "Wanted" Posters to him. He explained to me that he had a commemorative pistol that he would bring in the next day for us to view and photograph for our archives because he was so grateful that we could keep his tradition alive with his grandson, he felt it only right that he shares this with us.



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Sure enough, the very next morning, he came in with the pistol and allowed me to photograph it for our archives. If you haven't seen this pistol up close, it is amazing... it comes with 3 cylinders, each engraved, one with the map of the trail from Sacramento, CA to St. Joseph, MO, the second cylinder is engraved with a Pony Rider with the following engraved under the rider "120 Celebrated Riders rode 650,000 miles" on one side, while the other side has the Founders, Russell, Majors and Waddell, the third barrel in the pistol is blank. There is also a two-sided coin with a gold Pony Rider on one side stamped with the following "The Pony Express, United States, Commemorative Medal, Founders Medal 1960 National Pony Express Centennial Association", on the other side is Russell, Majors and Waddell also in gold with the words "Founders, Owners, Operators". He has added a couple of other items in the case such as a Pony Express rider hat pin, a gold nugget, and two coins, one from Wells Fargo/ Pony Express 150 Anniversary with the following stamped around a Pony Rider "Lightning Fast Wells Fargo and The Pony Express 150 Years", the second coin is a little smaller and has the Wells Fargo coach with "Wells Fargo Since 1852". On the barrel of the pistol is engraved "~Russell, Majors, Waddell~ Pony Express Presentation Model". As I said, it is an amazing piece, I have seen the set of pistols, but never the one, and never this close. I am thankful for the friendships we make at the events we do because those we get to know think of us and what we do, and when they have something like this, they want to share it with us so we can take photos to archive it. Who knows, maybe one day something like this will be left to National Pony Express Association, but until then, we have photographic archives.

Last year California Division rode from Pollock Pines to Placerville, and delivered just over 2100 letters going as far as Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy as well as throughout Europe. This year we hope to have the same amount if not exceed that for the ride into Old Sacramento. For the 2017 Christmas Season, California Division has chosen to ride from Folsom to Old Sacramento, and will soon place the Christmas Card Boxes in businesses throughout El Dorado, Sacramento and Amador counties to be filled with cards and letters to be sent all over the world.

Our members will come together for the Christmas Parade in Placerville the first weekend of December with our Christmas Card stamping during the following week and followed up by the Christmas Card Ride to round out our year.

All our events are great fun, learning experiences for those of us who are new to the Pony Express family, and a wonderful way to make new friends who share the same love of horses and history as you do, what more could you ask for?

You can follow the California Division on Facebook (XP Pony-Express), Twitter (@PonyExpressCA) & YouTube (Pony Express) to see some of our events and see where we will be next.

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