

NATIONAL PONY EXPRESS ASSOCIATION



2018 National Convention

2018/19 Deadlines

nationalponyexpress.org

Letter from the President

June 20, 2018, Sacramento California, 3:00 PM, Pacific Time, the ride headed out for St. Joseph, Missouri. With the fan fair and speeches from Aaron Mahr, National Parks Service and Senator Ben Allen from California, there was great excitement. The crowd was eager to send the riders off along the American River Parkway and over the Sierra Nevada and into Nevada.

Woodfords, California was teaming with spectators as the mail was handed off to the Nevada division. More people gathered in Genoa, Nevada, it was great to see people waiting for horse and rider. Nevada riders with family and friends paid tribute to Dale Ryan at Cold Springs with horseless rider and eulogy.

This year we moved the starting time around so those previously riding in daylight had an opportunity to ride at night. That helped to accommodate events in other states. A change for some. The mail moved along through Nevada and Utah arriving in Wyoming at the scheduled time greeted by a 33-degree morning. Little did we know what was ahead of us with rising temperatures, heat and humidity. The mail moved along and went through Atlantic City, Wyoming and was handed off to the next Wyoming group at Jeffery City, Wyoming. The Owen's family honored their father for his 40 years of riding with a horseless rider tribute done by sons and grandsons.

Heat and a South wind hindered the riders in Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska. Making for a miserable ride for both horse and man.

The Spot Tracker was lost for a time around Hershey, Nebraska and it took some doing to locate. Thanks to Arleta Martin who was able to direct us to the exact spot it was lost. THANK YOU, ARLETA!!!!!! Once the Spot Tracker was again back in the Mochila, we were back on the trail. With a lot of people following every movement along the trail, it kept us busy making sure things were as they should be. Our web site was a great tool and was used by many to follow along and generated a lot of interest along the trail.

The best comment I heard was "I'll never complain about riding at night after a hot ride in the day". Temperatures ranged from high 90's to over 100 with 90 percent humidity.

We had great support from news and local papers. At Martin's Cove, Wyoming, Fort Laramie, Wyoming, the trails center in Casper, Wyoming, the parks at Scotts Bluff, Chimney Rock and Fort Kearny, Nebraska. (And I'm sure I've missed a few). News coverage available on our website.

Rider Reports



NPEA News

Letter from the President continued

Kansas was able to make up the lost time. We had a good crowd at the Pony Express Museum in Seneca, Kansas where they served us breakfast. With evening coming, so did the rain. We rode into St. Joseph, Missouri in a downpour with a light show for all to remember. With horse and rider wearing the evidence of the storm we had a great crowd at the Pattee House to welcome riders.

A big Thank You to Petra Keller for her dedication with the web site and making it a big success.

This was a hot and hard ride for horse and man this year but the job was accomplished by great riders and support groups.

The re-ride can be an overwhelming task at times but everyone pulls together to make it happen. All should be proud of the part he or she played in "Keeping the Pony Express Spirit" alive.

Thank you ALL (too many to name) again for all you do to make it a success.

Sincerely,

Dean Atkin, National Pony Express President

Media Team is Global

By Arleta Martin

The National Pony Express Media team consists of four NPEA members from different parts of the country and the world.

Petra Keller, lives in Nevada and followed most of this year's re-ride and provided footage of the re-ride and interviews along the Pony Express National Historic Trail which engaged folks on Facebook. She also provided several live updates from the trail. Check out the **Videos** on our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/pg/expressrider/videos/?ref=page_internal)

Sally Taylor lives in Nevada and when she wasn't carrying the mail, she monitored the re-ride and posted updates to the **Website** (<http://www.nationalponyexpress.org>) and the **Facebook Page** (<http://www.facebook.com/expressrider>)

We were again joined by Heather Payne, formerly of Nevada Division, who is living in Germany at the present time while her husband is serving with the military. She also monitored the re-ride for the full ten days, mostly during our nighttime hours, and posted updates to our website and Facebook page. She used the NPS map and Spot Map to determine where the pony was.

Arleta Martin lives in Kansas and she too monitored and posted updates and stories to our website and Facebook pages.

As you know, a Spot tracker (pinger) is inserted in a pocket on the rear of the mochila and gives out a signal every 10 to 30 minutes. There is a map on our website where anyone can **Follow the Ride** (<https://nationalponyexpress.org/annual-re-ride/follow-the-ride/>) The team could watch the pulsing of the tracker on either their phone or computer and could see where the horse and rider were at all times. We also received emails from the Hotline, other members and from the general public. We would then post the status of the horse and rider and post reports from the trail. We also posted newspaper articles and television clips that gave publicity to our re-ride. If you have a report from the trail – please share it! You can see this year's reports on the **Reports From the Trail** page our website. (<https://nationalponyexpress.org/annual-re-ride/reports-from-the-trail>)

Thanks to everyone for providing us information to share with all of our followers. If you are interested in participating during the 2019 re-ride please contact us!



(L to R) Tony Zamora, Gene Ockert & Wendy Anderson

Nevada's Schellbourne Re-riders Trail Work Day

By Wendy Anderson

The Schellbourne Re-riders had a trail work day on April 22, 2018. They worked on the trail from Schellbourne rest area over to the turnoff to White Rock. Cutting down branches along the trail and installing new signage. Participants were Gene Ockert, Tony Zamora, Wendy Anderson, Justin Welch, and Brandy Ware.

Tidbits from the Trail

By Arleta Martin

While posting to Facebook during the re-ride, we had several colorful conversations with our followers. Michelle Hansen, one of our followers, was excited as she had mail in the mochila! Her 3X's great grandfather, John Meyers ran the Bear River Station in present day Wyoming. Her message to us was : "John Walker Myers had Nellie Myers Leonard who had Clara Edna Leonard Hutschenreiter who had my grandma Florence Emma Hutschenreiter Maggard who had my mom Nellie Fern Maggard Reichen Sweet. My mom is turning 90 next week on July 3rd and you are carrying my letter to her! Such wonderful history!! Thank you for riding!"

Though the U.S. mail contract and several other sources identify Bear River as a station, the exact location of this site is currently unknown. According to Raymond and Mary Settles, a Mormon named Myers managed station operations there. Located 12 miles from Quaking Aspen Station on the Bear River, Bear River Station was the last station in Wyoming with the next station to the west, Needle Rock Station, Utah.

Wyoming Division Honors Roy Bennet During 4th of July Parade

Congratulations to the Southeast Wyoming Pony Express Association--the second place winners in Guernsey's July Fourth Parade. This year's entry included a riderlesshorse (middle of the group) carrying the saddle of Roy Bennett, longtime Pony Express rider who passed away in February of this year. Roy and his family were honored as this year's Honorary Parade Marshals. Many other family members are also riders and have a cumulative total of 118 years of carrying mail.



photo courtesy of Guernsey Gazette

Importance of the 'Pony'

By Jim Phelan

As a relative newcomer to the Pony Express re ride (only 6 years) I wanted to take the opportunity to express my appreciation of my own experiences and the quality of the individuals throughout the country that participate in this event. Though I am by no means a professional rider I have spent enough time with horses to have a healthy respect for the animal that plays such an important part in this historical event.

I own 2 full blooded Arabians but have experience with the Quarter Horses, Morgans and Paints. Though my Arabian gelding at age 26 does not want to run much, (but has a nice trot), he will outclimb many horses at altitude and enjoys every minute of it. The mare enjoys a good run after she is done with her initial 'rodeo' at the beginning of the ride. The point I wish to make is that the horses we use for this event need to put up with weeks of "legging up", test riding trails/roads they have never seen before, the high energy around the Mochila exchange, riding at night, heat, rain, snow, etc. all at the urging of their rider. Well it is not all bad when it is just you and your horse in the middle of the desert at sunrise.

I have a great deal of appreciation for the people in the NPEA organization and their respect for and their respectful treatment of their horse(s). Throughout the year we constantly remind the public and school children of the Pony Express and its historical significance but I have found other than the excitement around the Mochila exchange, the horses themselves are what attract the attention especially with the children.

So, as we bask in the success of each years re ride let us not forget to thank the horses that were both used historically and the horses we use today, because let's face it, without them the event would not be the same.

p.s. also let's not forget the support crews that get the thankless job of towing horse trailers all over the countryside.



Here comes
the mail!

Off into the
sunrise.





Chloe Young - Ride for the Heroes, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Nevada Youth rides in Wyoming during Re-Ride and Ride For the Heroes

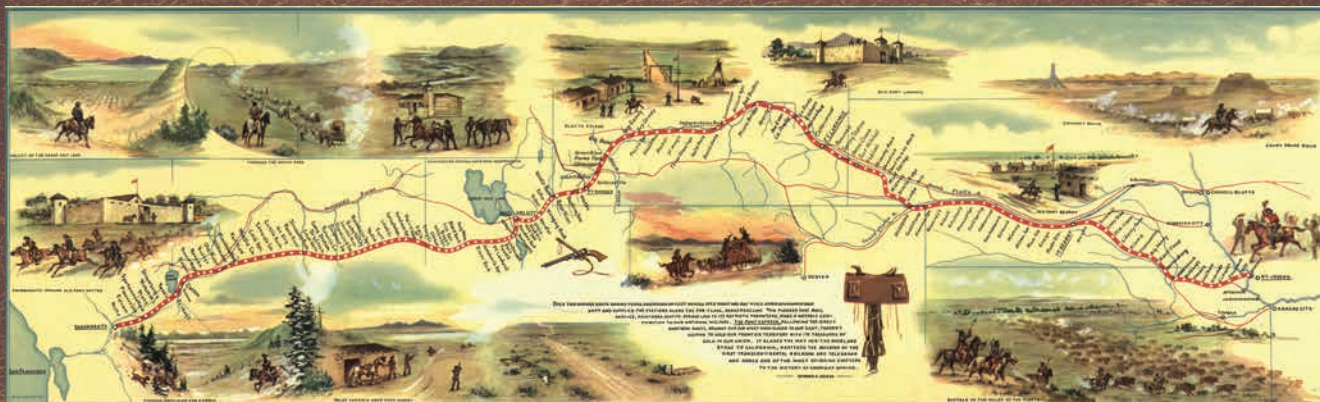
By Chloe Young

Pony Express 2018 was an amazing adventure! Instead of riding in my home state, Nevada, Petra Keller, the National XP Stablemaster, gave me the opportunity to travel with her through other states and follow the re-ride. Petra picked me up in Salt Lake City and we followed the pony riders from Salt Lake City, Utah to Rock Creek Station, Nebraska. In Wyoming I met some incredible people and they gave me the opportunity to ride! First, I rode Bob Liechty's horse, Abbie, and then Les Bennington's (Wyoming State President) horse, Belle. Both horses were rock solid! During my leg on Belle, I got to shadow Anne, a 16 year-old who had been riding horses for a while just like me, she was so much fun to ride with! The routes were mostly on the highway, but one took us directly into the

city of Casper and the other was through baseball fields – while games were being played! We saw many historical sites such as Fort Bridger, Fort Laramie, Rock Creek Station and Chimney Rock. During one of our nights camping we were woken up by an electrical storm. It was both awesome and scary because the Northeastern Colorado sky is so expansive and with Nevada's mountains I'm used to only seeing parts of storms - not all of it!

After we left the Pony at Rock Creek Station, Nebraska, Petra and I drove back to Cheyenne to see XP Wyoming's "Ride for the Heros". This is a ride event started by XP Southeast Wyoming 3 years ago that carries letters written to veterans by 3th and 4th graders during their Wyoming history class. I was surprised and honored to be a part of this event being able to ride and carry the Wyoming Flag.

I can't wait for next years re-ride. Even though I will be probably riding Nevada's trails, I look forward to swapping tales with other XP Riders around the campfire somewhere in the middle of Nevada!



Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System

by Wendy Anderson

In honor of the 50th trails commemoration, Lisa Gilbert, Archeologist Technician, Kurt Braun, Archeologist, and Jessica Phelps, Archeologist, conducted an awesome presentation based on the excavation of Jacob's Well in Newark Valley on June 2, 2018. Gilberts presentation was based on the excavation in the 1990's. Brauns presentation was based on exploration of the trails and how he followed some of the trails. Jessica's presentation was a history of how it was in the valley 1200 years ago, and how it is so different from nowadays. She had some very interesting artifacts to look at as well.

We had a few attendees from around Nevada and a few Pony Express riders were on hand to demonstrate mail exchanges. Participants for the mail exchanges were Gene Ockert, Wendy Anderson, Tom Love and Rebecca Mossow. Tony Zamora was our speaker who gave a great presentation on the Schellbourne Re-riders and what happens for the Pony Express re-enactment ride held every June as it pertains to Schellbournes' group.

Also on hand for the event, Petra Keller and Carla Hammonds of Carla E. Photography from the Carson City area. Both participated and took a lot of great photos and video to share on the National Website. It was a great event for learning about the history of Jacobs Well, trails and of course Pony Express.

Thanks to all the BLM specialists for hosting this awesome event. Hopefully, everyone can learn something about Jacobs Well and pony express by checking out the video of the event on **Facebook**. (<https://www.facebook.com/sfpkeller/videos/10156390205672505/>)



Kurt Braun, BLM archeologist shows artifact from the area



Tom Love & Gene Ockert demonstrate a Mochila Exchange



Utah Division installing signage

Utah prepares for National Trails Day

By Dean Atkin

The Utah Division of the National Pony Express was busy getting ready for National Trails Day (June 2nd) and the annual Re-Ride (June 20-30th). They installed signage provided by BLM at Boyd, Dugway, Canyon, Fish Springs & Black Rock Stations.

Ride for the Heroes

By Petra Keller

On June 30th, after the Wyoming Pony Express Division completed their section of the re-ride and the mochila was in Kansas on it's way to it's eastern terminus in St. Joe, MO; the Southeast Wyoming division carried heartfelt messages written by 3rd, 4th & 5th graders for the veterans to the Cheyenne VA.

Thank you Cheyenne Mayor Marian Orr for speaking at the event.

Video of the event is on our **Facebook Page**.
(<https://www.facebook.com/expressrider/videos/1965445943526848/>)



Les Bennington speaking to a Veteran at the Cheyenne VA Hospital

2018 Re-Ride Preparations in Julesburg, CO

By Cheryl Nein



Jessica Martinez and her horse Bert talking all things Pony Express



The Eagle Scouts & Colorado Re-Rider Jessica Martinez at the Pony Express statue at the CO Welcome Center

The Eagle Scout Troop 260 from Castle Rock cleaned & polished the Pony Express Statue to be ready for the Re-Ride coming through Julesburg June 28th. Thank you Boy Scout Troop 260 for your hard work in getting the Statue cleaned and Pony Express Trail Cleared. The troop was lead on a hike by Colorado Division President Linda Dolezal and were given a demonstration by Jessica Martinez and Bert. Jeana Johnson, head of Fort Sedgwick Museum spoke to them at Ft. Sedgwick location, and local bank President, Jay Goddard told them about the history of the Italian Caves on his property just west of the Welcome Center. Indians and bandits would lay in wait at Devil's Dive by natural caves when XP riders and Overland Stage would race by and give chase!

The troop plans to return this fall and help erect the new XP signage, when they are completed and received from National.



Tribute to Schellbourne Re-rider Carol Hunt

By Wendy Anderson

On June 22, 2018 the Schellbourne Re-riders conducted a tribute to Carol Hunt who passed away exactly a year ago on this day.

After we held our swearing in for new members, Ride Captain Gene Ockert shared some thoughts about Carol with the group while her daughter Keran Cook, her husband Frank and granddaughter Nicole Cook accepted a Pony Express Memorial Stake in her honor. Carol started living in the Las Vegas area in the early 1970's. She wrote for the Las Vegas Sun and Las Vegas Review Journal newspapers. She was also very active in the area 4-H programs helping children learn.

From there she began driving school bus for the Clark County School District. When she retired from driving bus, she retired to the Lund, Nevada area. Later she moved to Ely, Nevada.

Carol was a member of the Ely Ghost Riders, Guns for Hire for many years, where she entertained us always as "Wicked Lil."

She loved to gamble and also ride pony express. In 2017 she attended her ninth year as a pony express rider and passed from this life shortly thereafter. Her true passion in life was her family and horses. Tom Love held a celebration of life in Carols' honor on July 28th, 2017 at the Ely Elks Lodge where family and friends could gather to remember Carol.

For the re-ride on June 23, 2018, Tom Love, Keran, Frank and Nicole Cook had Carols' horse Eagle on the trail with Carol's boots, in backwards, in her saddle. Tom Love rode his horse Johnny and was leading Eagle down the trail from the mine road to the Ruby Marshes.

Carol could be quite blunt about how she felt about politics and a few other topics, but she will be missed in White Pine County for sure. I know, that I, Wendy Anderson have missed her. Happy trails Carol, until we meet again.

**Do you have a story, photo or a
report from the trail you'd like to share?**

**Please submit to:
NationalPonyExpress@gmail.com**

Czech-Australia-USA Pony Express the Final Chapter

By Pat Hearty



L to R: Beda (the phantom translator), Jim Swigart, Jindrich Bilek (speaking), Pat Hearty

Have you been following the travels of those globe-trotting Express Riders, Jim Swigart and Pat Hearty and their intrepid spouses, Ginger and Linda? You'll be excited to know that they completed the final chapter of their 2-year 3-continent adventure.

You will recall that the 3-pronged event, planned by Czech promoter Jindrich Bilek, started in the Czech Republic in May of 2017, with some adventures that only Jim can adequately describe. Round two was in California in June of last year, at the culmination of the NPEA Re-ride. Chapter 3 took us "down under" to Australia in April of 2018. An incredibly good time, but a horse-less Pony Express. We were not able to gain access to a single horse for any kind of symbolic Pony Express ride. Dang!

But Jindra was determined to carry his message as best we could. He spoke about Tomas Masaryk and the founding of the nation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 at a gathering at the Czech Embassy in Canberra, and before four other groups of people from Sydney to Adelaide. At each event, Jim and Pat wore red shirts and vests with logo, and talked about our Pony Express history and NPEA today. We also did an interview for Australian radio station SBS (Seven Billion Stories). It is Jindra's hope, and ours, that some spark might have been ignited, and someone down there will start a commemorative horseback mail similar to our re-ride and the ride which spiders all over Western Europe. Who knows?

In between all the talking, we visited Sydney, Canberra, Jindabyne and the Snowy Mountains, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Wonderful country, wonderful people. Linda got to pet a koala, and Ginger fed kangaroos right from her hand. Long miles, close quarters, and less-than-impressive lodging at times, but what an experience, with the Pony Express linking three continents. Unforgettable and then some.

2018 NPEA Convention Torrington, Wyoming September 7-8, 2018

Registration Fee: \$90.00 per person by August 1, 2018
\$100.00 after August 1, 2018

Registration forms can be found [HERE](#)