

Volume 34

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL PONY EXPRESS ASSOCIATION

April 2023

‘Saddling up’ for the Pony Express!

GOTHENBURG, NEBRASKA – An original Pony Express Station located within a picturesque city arboretum has been welcoming history enthusiasts from all around the world for more than 90 years. Located just a couple of minutes off I-80, an estimated 40,000-50,000 people visit the historical building/museum each year. Now they’ll have one more reason to make the journey – a unique Pony Express bronze statue.

“The past few years, our non-profit

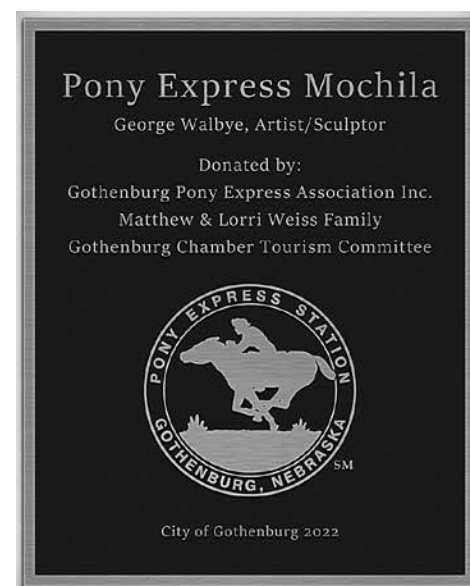
organization had been searching for an artist who’d be able to create a truly unique, one-of-a-kind bronze statue for us” said Matt Weiss, president of the Gothenburg Pony Express Association. “Last fall, we finally found that special someone, a well-known bronze sculptor from Loveland, Colorado, George Walbye.”

Walbye is an artist whose work au-

thentically reflects life in the American West. He has sculptures in private and corporate collections in Europe, Canada and throughout the United States. He’s one of the original group of artists who envisioned and brought together the first “Sculpture in the Park” show at the celebrated Benson Sculpture Park in Loveland, Colorado. His original bronze

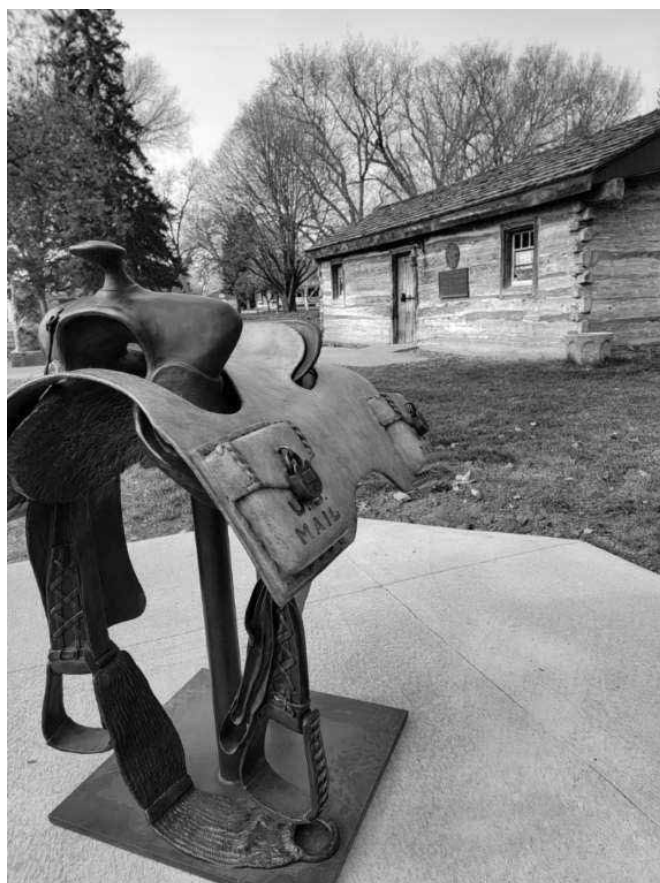
artwork piece “High Plains Warrior/Wind Song” was the first sculpture in 1985 to be installed there. His creative talent, experience and knowledge of the American West was exactly what they had been looking for in an artist.

“Pony Express Mochila” is the official title given to the life-sized bronze statue. The word mochila (pronounced mo-chee-lah) is Spanish for “knapsack” or “pouch” and was the name given to an essential tool specifically designed for the Pony Express mail service in 1860. Mochilas had four locked, hard leather boxes and were designed to carry mail for the entire 10-day, 1,966-



mile journey. Built to evenly distribute the weight of the mail, it would sit on top of specially designed saddles and allowed for quick and efficient transfer from horse to horse. Speedy exchanges were crucial to the “lightning fast” Pony Express mail service. The artist cleverly used two contrasting bronze patinas within his design to highlight the mochila portion.

This bronze artwork is the only one of its kind that will be created. The casting mold was purposely destroyed after the original piece was cast. Walbye has strong feelings about how others will be able to interact with his art. The sculpture design wasn’t meant to be observed from a distance or to be mounted up high on a pedestal. The design was intended for ground-level installation so it will be



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SEE **SCULPTURE** PAGE 3 ►

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2023 Re-Ride Schedule

June 7 to 17, East-Bound

Wednesday, June 7	
Depart-Old Sacramento, California	2:00 p.m. PDT
Thursday, June 8	
California/Nevada Line (Woodfords)	1:00 p.m. PDT
Sunday, June 11	
Nevada/Utah Line (Ibapah)	1:00 a.m. PDT
_____ Time Change (PDT > MDT) _____	
Salt Lake City, Utah	10:00 p.m. MDT
Monday, June 12	
Utah/Wyoming Line (South of Evanston)	6:30 a.m. MDT
Wednesday, June 14	
Wyoming/Nebraska Line (Lyman)	2:30 p.m. MDT
Thursday, June 15	
Nebraska/Colorado Line (Chappell)	2:30 a.m. MDT
Colorado/Nebraska Line (South of Big Springs)	6:00 a.m. MDT
_____ Time Change (MDT > CDT) _____	
Friday, June 16	
Nebraska/Kansas Line (Tri-County Marker)	10:00 p.m. CDT
Saturday, June 17	
Kansas/Missouri Line	7:00 p.m. CDT
Arrive-St. Joseph, Missouri	7:30 p.m. CDT

The Pony Express Gazette is the official publication of the National Pony Express Association, a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to education and the preservation of the Original Pony Express Trail.

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Fairbanks Monument – 25 Years

July 25, 2023 will mark the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Fairbanks Pony Express Memorial at “This is The Place” Heritage Park, east of Salt Lake City, Utah. The project was 51 years from concept to completion.

Dr. Avard T. Fairbanks was born in Provo, Utah, in 1897. He became a world-renowned sculptor, creating more than 100 public monuments, and hundreds more masterful sculptures. After a distinguished international career, he returned to his native Utah in 1947. That year marked the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Mormon Pioneers in the Salt Lake Valley, and Dr. Fairbanks wished to offer some fitting tribute to the centennial celebration. He chose the Pony Express.

His creation depicts a young rider mounting a fresh horse, while a weathered station keeper looks on, wishing him Godspeed and holding the tired mount. It was done life-size, in paper mâché and placed on a float for the “Days of ’47” Parade in Salt Lake City on July 24, 1947. It was displayed and exhibited in a variety of locations around the state, but eventually fell into disrepair. Dr. Fairbanks’ plan to have it cast in bronze was never carried out.

Around the time of his death in 1987, members of the Fairbanks family contacted the Utah Division of NPEA. Their plan was to cast a bronze scale model, about 4-feet high, to be placed in an appropriate location on the trail. They sought our help in finding the right spot. Why a scale model, was our response. Can’t we have the big one?

So began about a 10-year quest. The bulk of the funding came through the generosity of the J. Willard Marriot Corporation, with significant contributions from Fidelity Investments, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and This is The Place Foundation. Sculpting was done by Robert Shure and Skylight Studios in Boston, MA, and the bronze was cast by Adonis Bronze in Orem, UT.

The dedication was a high-profile event. Speakers included Dr. Jere Krakow from the National Park Service, NPEA National President Wayne Howard, Dr. David N.F. Fairbanks, son of the sculptor, and Michael Leavitt, Governor of Utah. Dedicatory prayer was offered by Gordon B. Hinkley, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Fred Abernethy read the Riders’ Oath, and a mochila exchange was re-enacted with Jeff Hearty as Pony Express Rider, Matt Hearty as station keeper. NPEA members from across the trail traveled to Utah to celebrate with us.

The monument, now done in heroic scale, stands as you enter the Park from the west. The site has been enhanced with lighting, landscaping, interpretive plaques, and a replica Pony Express station. The station cabin was moved to this location after having been built for the Western Experience Village at Soldier Hollow for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. A second casting of the statue can be seen at the Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, WY.

Submitted by Pat Hearty, Utah



Sculptor with models of Pony Express Monument in a studio at the University of Utah, 1947.



Sculpture

continued from page 1

easily accessible for people to touch, feel and even briefly sit on. “I’ve always enjoyed watching people interact with my sculptures,” said Walbye, “You know it’s liked when the bronze patina becomes shiny over the years from people touching and handling the piece. I hope that’s what happens here.”

The statue was commissioned and purchased by the Gothenburg Pony Express Association, a non-profit organization that operates the Pony Express Station Museum. In addition, a personal donation from the Matthew & Lorri Weiss family along with a grant from the Gothenburg Chamber

Tourism Committee were given to assist with the purchase. It was formally donated to the community of Gothenburg in October 2022 and then promptly installed by the city parks department in Ehmen Park next to the Pony Express Station.

“This was such a fun project for us mostly because of George. Not only is he talented, he’s also such a nice, down-to-earth guy. We became quick friends right from the start,” Weiss said. “Our hope is that the gifting of this statue will encourage others to share, donate and bring additional artwork into our beautiful community.”

Additional information on the Gothenburg Pony Express Station and its museum is available at the website www.ponyexpressstation.org.

40th Anniversary - 1983 Slide Ride

In April of 1983, a unique and historical activity took place. The National Pony Express Association was asked by the U.S. Postal Service to carry the mail. That exchange of mail along the Pony Express Trail was to become known as the Slide-Ride.

On April 9th of that year, a huge landslide crashed down along The American River Canyon. Dirt and rocks dammed the river and covered U.S. Highway 50 between Whitehall and Kyburz. U.S. 50 was a vital link between the Sacramento Valley and South Lake Tahoe. The closure of the highway affected the mountain communities of Pollock Pines, Pacific House, Kyburz,

Strawberry, Twin Bridges and Little Norway. Millions of tourist dollars were lost and public services disrupted.

One of the most important service impacted was postal delivery. From Pollock Pines, a 115 mile detour was necessary to get mail into the towns located above the slide. After a conversation between the Pollock Pines Postmaster and an NPEA member, carrying the mail by horseback was a no brainer, as the Pony Express Trail bypassed the slide. The Pony was off and running in less than 48 hours.

A contract was signed between the U.S. Postal Service and the NPEA. Although the riders volunteered for

the job they had to put an amount into the contract. They settled on \$2 a day!! Riders carried approximately 1,000 piece of mail each day. One of the most important pieces of mail were income-tax returns.

This event drew worldwide attention. News of modern day riders carrying the US mail appeared on the front page of a Japanese newspaper in Tokyo, and the Stars and Stripes military newspaper in Djakarta, Indonesia. A radio talk show in Sidney, Australia toasted the event as did Diane Sawyer on CBS Morning News.

- 1983 - Old Washington Post Office Dedication

The old building at 12th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Washington, DC was constructed between 1892 and 1899 to house the Post Office Headquarters and the city's Post Office. The Old Post Office Building is the second-tallest structure in the nation's capital, after the Washington Monument.

For most of the twentieth century, it seemed that the massive Romanesque Revival structure was destined to be demolished, but through the efforts of dedicated preservationists, it has become one of Washington's favorite landmarks.

In honor of our nation's bicentennial in 1976. The private Ditchley Foundation of Great Britain presented a set of English change ringing bells to Congress. In April 1983, the bells found a permanent home in the Old Post Office clock tower. They were dedicated as an everlasting symbol of friendship between the two nations.

At the dedication on September 13, 1983, Mac McFarland and Chips Franklin, representing the National Pony Express Association, led the parade down Pennsylvania Avenue.

Stamp collectors flood revived Pony Express

Newspaper recap of the Slide Ride in 1983

POLLOCK PINES, Calif. -- Letters from stamp collectors around the world are cramming the saddlebags of riders during a brief revival of the Pony Express in the high Sierra Nevada.

Alongside the traditional pistol and Bible in the leather pouches of riders are hundreds of envelopes sought by international philatelists for the hand-cancellation made with a single ink stamp whose use will be halted in about a month.

The cancellation shows the silhouette of a scruffy Pony Express rider, whip in hand, on a galloping horse.

The service originally ran between St. Joseph, Mo., and Sacramento, Calif., for 18 months in 1860-61.

It was revived last month after a huge mudslide closed U.S. Highway 50 east of Pollock Pines, cutting traffic between Sacramento to the west and South Lake Tahoe to the east.

'We've gotten over 20,000 pieces of mail,' Postmistress Patricia Peterson said while standing in the early

morning fog outside her one-room post office. 'And there's more coming. We probably have 10,000 letters backed up.'

Letters are pouring in from 'as far away as Australia, Japan, Norway and Sweden,' Mrs. Peterson said.

'One hundred years from now it will be a major item,' says Cliff Horrell of the Camellia City Philatelic Service in Sacramento. But the immediate value of the cancellation was set by several stamp collectors at closer to \$1.50 or less.

'This is heavy volume,' said postal worker Anita Henderson, who does the special cancellations in Sacramento. 'I've already done over 7,000, all by hand. I still have five trays, holding 3,000 to 4,000 letters, yet to be canceled.'

She worked in Pollock Pines for several days but found the tiny post office too cramped. 'She had a blister on her hand the first day,' Mrs. Peterson said.

The riders, members of the

National Pony Express Association based in Pollock Pines, carry up to 1,800 letters a day along 40 miles. Part of the route was the original Pony Express trail.

The organization is paid \$2 a day on a contract extended week by week. The riders keep mail trucks from having to detour the closed highway 114 miles over winding roads between Pollock Pines and Kyburz, Pacific House, Little Norway and Twin Bridges.

The California Department of Transportation has been trying to reopen the busy trans-Sierra highway by Memorial Day but progress has been slow.

'We've had everything from sleet, hail, thunderstorms, snow and, yes, even some sunshine,' says rider Malcolm McFarland, 49, who helped organize the Pony Express run.

'You almost feel like the outlaws and Indians are coming after you, especially when you get up into the pine trees,' adds Davey Wiser, a 41-year-old Placerville resident who has gone on the trail every day since April 15.

WANTED



**MEMBERS TO SEND
VIDEOS LIVE FROM THE
TRAIL DURING THE
RE-RIDE.**

Please contact us at:
nationalponyexpress@gmail.com

NEWS FROM WYOMING

by Les Bennington
President, Wyoming Division

Central Wyoming had quite a few events going on during the year. The day after the re-ride went through Casper, Wyoming, several of our members were present and greeted the public from horseback for a 5K run sponsored by the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center.

On July 2, 2022 about a dozen members and riders carried thank you cards and letters to veterans in the VA Hospital in Cheyenne, WY. A talk was given about the original Pony Express and information on the NPEA.

Many of our members rode in the State Fair Parade in mid August and 2 riderless horses were led for recently deceased members Ann Smathers and Bill Sinnard.

Two days in late August several members of NPEA attended the Shepherders' Rendezvous at the town park in Glenrock, WY. Mail was delivered and pamphlets and information on the Pony Express and

NPEA was discussed with the people in attendance.

A few days later in Casper, WY the national meeting for the Oregon-California Trails Association was being held and about 6 NPEA members did several mochila exchanges and gave a talk on the Pony Express and the NPEA and also handed out brochures, at Fort Caspar, WY.

On December 10 three members delivered Santa's mail from children at the "Holiday on the Homestead" celebration held at the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper and over 450 people attended that event. History on the Pony Express and NPEA was also explained.

We had several Christmas card rides in December and we plan on having a Valentine's Day card ride in early February, 2023.

Thanks to all of members that make these events and our annual Re-ride happen.

NEWS FROM KANSAS

by Connie Ladner

With activities increasing after covid restrictions, we have been actively promoting the Pony Express. January was our annual soup supper for members and their families.

In April we carry letters between selected 3rd & 4th grade classes of schools along the trail. The students study about the Pony Express the week before we attend the school. After answering questions students have the opportunity to ask the letters the students write are collected and are then carried by horse to the other school. Students are also given honorary membership cards.

Kansas had a great turn out for the annual reriide with no major issues.

We assisted the Hollenberg Station with a mochila exchange for a busload of German tourist and also helped at the annual Hollenberg Festival held in August.

Our Christmas card reriide was in early December. Cards were picked up by horseback, stamped, dated with a Pony Express logo and carried to the post office. Monies donated were given to the local food bank.

We are currently receiving applications for our college scholarships. They are judged by a scholarship committee. We currently are awarding 25 scholarships.

NEWS FROM UTAH

by Patsy Lange
Vice President, Utah Division

NPEA Utah is excited to display the 2022 mochila and also the torches at the Tooele Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber gets a lot of people coming in to get information on things to do in Tooele County, so the display will get a lot of exposure. We heard many comments about how well-made and how well the mochila rode this year. It was made in Utah by Mark Soper Custom Leather.

The 1996 and 2002 torches are displayed with information and pictures, etc.

Details of the 2002 torch embodies several themes:

"Land of Contrast - Fire and Ice," "Light the Fire Within" and "Taming of the West - the Past and Present." It is like a fiery icicle in motion, its curvature representing the dynamics of speed and fluidity. The hoofbeats of George Lange's and Pat Hearty's horses were echoed around the world on Feb. 6, 2002 as the Olympic flame rode through the town of Eagle Mountain to Fairfield. George Lange, National President of the NPEA at that time; left Eagle Mountain at approx. 8:30 AM on Feb. 6. He rode Apache, his daughter's trusty Pony Express horse, 4.8 miles where Pat Hearty, and his Pony Express horse, Fred; were waiting. Pat Hearty, Nat'l Historical Comm. Chairman; and Trails Comm. Chairman of NPEA, sped on to Fairfield. In addition to passing the flame, in true tradition of the Pony Express, Lange and Hearty relayed a mochila (a leather satchel) containing special letters, which was delivered to town officials and local school children in Fairfield. The temperature that morning, if I remember right, was -10 degrees. With all the excitement, the temperature was hardly noticed.

The 1996 torch was designed to celebrate the hundred-year anniversary of the modern Olympic Movement. It was designed to reflect the simplest of ancient torches - a bundle of reeds bound by twine. It features 22 aluminum reeds, each representing one of the modern Olympic Games, bound by a center handle of Georgia pecan wood. A gold



The Tooele Chamber of Commerce is excited to display the 2022 mochila and the Olympic Torches from 1996 and 2002. The display also includes pictures and information about the exciting times the NPEA made news around the world. The office is located at 154 S. Main St., Tooele, Utah.

band at the base of the torch lists the names of each Olympic Games host city. Another gold band near the top features the logo of the 1996 Olympic Games and the Guilt of Leaves motif. The NPEA carried the Torch by horseback 533 miles. The rider relay began on May 13, 1996 from Julesburg, CO and arrived in St. Joseph, MO on May 16, 1996. 325 riders averaged 10 mph to complete the ride in 56:15 hours. In addition to the Olympic Torch and Flame exchange, a mochila was exchanged, which was built by a Nebraska saddlemaker just for the Olympics.



URGENT
E-mail your ride reports to:
nationalponyexpress@gmail.com

Fourth Generation Riders in Utah

When fourteen-year-old Elizabeth Brown stepped into the saddle at Emery in eastern Utah, for her first leg of the 2022 NPEA Re-ride, she completed four generations of Re-ride participation by the Brown family of Grantsville, Utah. It started with her great-grandfather, Maurice (Meece), who signed on in the early 1980s, and her grandfather and step-grandmom Richard and Angela (more than 5-year participants), followed by dad Anthony (veteran of half a dozen or more Re-rides). The tradition includes great-uncle Cory (who wears a 30-Year patch), and her uncle Thomas (20-Year patch). Cousin Phil Brown and his family from Idaho have also helped out at times.

Beth comes from a livestock and ranching background, and is an accomplished equestrienne. More than qualified to take on the challenge of the Re-ride. She and her trusted horse, Henry, made excellent time, riding two two-mile legs. The second was a tricky spot through the narrows at the mouth of Immigration Canyon and down to "This is The Place" Heritage Park.

The daughter of Anthony and Casey Brown, she attends Grantsville Middle School, and her winter pastime and passion is basketball. In summer she raises

and shows prize sheep. She has built up a little herd of lambs of her own, and the sale of stock show winners is giving her a nice college fund, although she is not sure what her college goals will be. Beth is very shy, but breaks into a broad grin when asked about her ride with the Pony Express.

The Utah Division had the honor last year of welcoming another 4th-generation rider, Isabelle Hearty. Isabelle is the daughter of Matt and Tiffany Hearty, and the granddaughter of Pat and Linda Hearty. Matt has been a rider since 1995. Her great-grandmother, Gert Hearty, rode in the Re-ride of 1997. Like Beth Brown, she comes from a strong Pony Express family which includes uncles Jeff and Gregg Hearty and Kevin Kimber, and Aunt Kellie Kimber, who have all been involved since turning 14.

Isabelle, who is also 14, attends Fort Herriman Middle School, where history is her favorite subject. She is a very busy girl, with dance taking up most of her leisure time during the school term. In summer she enjoys hiking and bicycling. She rode her dad's beloved gelding, Sonny, on a stretch near Echo, Utah, and is already excited about her part in the 2023 Re-ride.

Submitted by Pat Hearty



Beth Brown & Henry



Matt & Isabelle Hearty

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National: www.facebook.com/expressrider

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Wyoming: www.facebook.com/groups/172788402881897/
and/or National-Pony-Express-Association-Uinta-County-WY-Chapter

Utah: www.facebook.com/National-Pony-Express-Utah-Division

Nevada: www.facebook.com/National-Pony-Express-Nevada-Division

California: www.facebook.com/xp.ponyexpress



Sacramento Marriott Rancho Cordova

Nearby attractions include Folsom History Museum and Sutter Street Shops (8 miles), Folsom Outlets (6 miles), B.F. Hastings Building and Old Sacramento (17 miles), American River Parkway (2-4 miles).



National Pony Express Association Convention

September 8-9, 2023

Rancho Cordova, California

REGISTRATION FORM

This year’s convention will be held just a few miles off the trail between Sacramento and Folsom at the Sacramento Marriott Rancho Cordova. All meals will be buffet style, so no food choices are required.

Attendee Information

Names: _____

Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration Cost

	# Attending	Price	Total
Early Registration due before Aug. 1, 2023	_____	\$160.00	_____
Registration Due Before Sept. 1, 2023	_____	\$180.00	_____
Saturday Dinner Only	_____	\$60.00	_____
Saturday Amazing Excursion and lunch	_____	\$25.00	_____
Names: _____ _____ _____ _____			
Grand Total	_____	\$ _____	

Make checks payable to CA NPEA and mail to
P.O. Box 236, Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Hotel Information

Sacramento Marriott Rancho Cordova
11211 Point E Dr. Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

Group reservations under National Pony Express can be made online using the following link <https://book.passkey.com/event/50404730/owner/9323/home> or by calling 1-800-228-9290 or 916-638-1100. Reservations must be made no later than August 17 to receive the group rate.

One King Size Bed Standard room	\$133.00 per night*
Two Queen Size Beds	\$143.00 per night*

*Room rates are subject to applicable state and local taxes in effect at the time of check out (currently 12% occupancy tax, 4.5% of gross room tourism assessment fee and \$0.40 California state tax)

Other nearby hotels:

Holiday Inn Sacramento Rancho Cordova	916-635-4040
La Quinta Inn & Suites	916-638-1111

How a Dutch girl got to live the story of the Pony Express Trail

The first time I heard of the Pony Express was 6 years ago when I met Kansas Rider Doug Berkley. Doug is a confirmed Pony Express rider for 30 years. He and his son Tyler share 16 miles in Kansas to bring the mochila further west, as part of the group of riders headed by trail captain Dave Sanner. Their section starts right after the pony has crossed the Missouri River.

I'm from the Netherlands, where I live. Since Doug and I met, I've come over to Kansas several times a year to see him and enjoy the Kansan way of life. I had never sat on a horse my entire life. To me, the Pony Express Association annual reride and its other activities seemed an interesting tradition to which he was very attached. And I didn't mind helping him fix the pavement (and at the same time visiting) the Pony Express Museum in Seneca, Kansas, of which he was and is a board member. But at that point in time, I didn't know that in 2022, he and I would be following the Pony Express trail for 1966 miles, all the way from Saint Joseph, Missouri, into Sacramento, California. Not just him and me, but also his two Morgan horses Zeus and Jack.

Right time, right team

Doug had developed this idea over time. His wish was to follow the entire trail during the 10-day reride, and, if possible, ride on horseback in every state. During each reride, other people follow the mail the entire trail, but they never brought horses with them to ride at the same time. Covid kept him waiting two more years, but finally 2022 was the right time. Doug had turned 60 and his horse Zeus was 22. If he wanted to do it, he had to do it now. And meanwhile, I had turned into a 3-year member but I had never carried the mail!

In order to make it happen however, he needed a travel mate. One that had at least 13 days to spare; 10 for the reride and 3 for the return drive. One that could drive a stock trailer through rough landscape, with horses in it behind a truck with a hand gear stick. One that wouldn't mind missing sleep during those 10 days. One that would agree to live in a stock trailer and share it with 2 horses. One that could handle horses and perhaps ride some too. And one that he felt he could be close to, very close, during the whole trip without it ending in a huge fight. It



turned out I was the right candidate! So, Doug set planning the event. And I joined him.

Improvisation from the very first day

On June 16 2022, we loaded 3 horses in the trailer and Doug, Tyler, his oldest daughter Elisabeth and I drove to Saint Joseph to see the official take-off of the 2022 reride. We hurried back the 2 miles over the bridge and soon Doug and Tyler took alternative turns to ride their share of the Kansas miles. The plan was to be back home at around 11 PM. We would get some sleep in our own bed, then early in the morning reload the trailer for the

rest of the trip. We would leave 1 horse Mongo behind and drive on with Zeus and Jack in the trailer to catch the pony somewhere on the trail into Nebraska. However instead of going home, Doug rode some more miles in the next sections in Kansas, as they were short of riders. When we got home it was already light. So, it was with very little sleep behind us that we set out to do a total trailer makeover.

Doug divided his big stock trailer in two halves. The back part was for the two remaining horses Zeus and Jack. The front part would become the living quarters for

him and me. In there, he mounted a table with a sink and a tap. Water fed to it from a higher placed bucket. He loaded and secured his grill so we could cook. The days just before, he had mowed and bailed some 15 bales of hay, which he piled up inside the trailer. With a board on it, that was the base for our bed; a comfortable mattress. He left a space between the hay to slide in a big ice-filled cooler. He even thought of a piece of carpet on the floor. Corn for the horses, buckets of drinking water, salt, gear, tools, reserve tire, food for ourselves, clothes... we all put it in containers and totes and loaded it. Doug had even thought of a solution to shower with the help of a 5-gallon bag to be heated in the sun.

Our trip became a total immersion

We caught up with the pony in Oak Nebraska. That first night en route we got treated to a tremendous storm. That was a good test for the boards Doug had designed. We could mount them on the openings of the stock trailer to prevent water from running in. It worked, and we slept some that night with two horses chomping hay inside the trailer and right beside our ears.

From the very start in rainy Nebraska, we found wonderful friends all along the entire trail. Several states could use an extra rider, and Doug was happy to chip in and carry the mail a few miles each time the local teams decided it would be useful. The landscape changed from green rolling hills in Kansas, and fertile plains in Nebraska, to dry and overwhelming open spaces in Wyoming, more and more mountains and spectacular rock formations in Colorado and Nevada, the harsh salt plains in Utah and into the woods of the Sierras in California. All in all, Doug carried the mochila over 46 miles. We received very warm welcomes and got fed and encouraged at many places along the route. Sometimes we camped at a fairground or a place off the roads, sometimes we joined an existing camp, like in Nevada with Tony Zamora's team. There, more than 100 miles from the nearest fuel station, near Ibapah, we celebrated team captain Wendy's birthday. The riders and supporting members were all so encouraging that even I found the guts to ride a short stint carrying the mochila, and

SEE DUTCH GIRL PAGE 9 ►

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Pam Dixon-Simmons, President
National Pony Express Association*



Pam Dixon-Simmons

I would like to thank the wonderful National Pony Express Association (NPEA) members for your confidence in me as your new 2022-2023 National President. I will do my best to live up to this honor. I have a wonderful Board which includes First Vice President Fred Leslie, Second Vice President Mary Cone, Third Vice President Daniel Pralle, Secretary Amanda Svoboda, and Treasurer Lyle Ladner. Thank you, officers, committee chairs and members for joining me on this journey.

For those of you who may not know me, let me tell you a little bit about myself. I was raised on the stories and history of the Pony Express. In the 1950s my grandparents purchased a ranch known as the Pleasant Grove House in the small town of Rescue, CA. The ranch is now registered as California Historical Landmark No. 703, a Pony Express and stage way station. My grandmother, Lillian Dixon, took great pride in the history of the house, barn and blacksmith shop and provided barn and ranch tours to continue educating anyone who asked or would listen about the Pony Express. I grew up surrounded by history and during the early days of the NPEA, you would find me at NPEA meetings with my dad, doing homework in the back of the room. I was my dad's shadow in everything having to do with the ranch, cows, horses, or Pony Express—from warming

up horses at events to tagging along when he did school presentations. It helped that he used my horse at some of those events.

My grandmother was an honorary member of the California Division of the NPEA for many years, and my dad was a member and rider for over 30 years. In 1991, I became a member and rider, making me the third generation of Dixons to be involved in the NPEA.

At the NPEA State level, I have served as a California board member for many years, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chair of multiple events, and member at large. At the National, I had the honor of serving as the National Secretary for nine years and Vice President for the last three years.

A highlight from last year included the re-ride as I had a chance to travel with then President, Melva Sanner, and her very patient husband and past National President, David Sanner, along the trail. This was my first time traveling the entire route from St. Joseph to Sacramento and I enjoyed meeting so many members, volunteers, support crew and HAM operators and seeing the great teamwork each state exhibited to get the mail through. It was truly a great experience and helped me understand the unique challenges each state faces during this monumental event. I look forward to seeing everyone again this year as I follow the mail from California to Missouri.

I also want to give a shout out to the Utah members for putting on a wonderful 2022 convention in Midway, Utah. I truly enjoyed the conversations and time spent with those whom I only get to see in person once a year. We were able to

take care of business during the Trails and Delegates meetings and then enjoyed the Cowboys Museum, a very educational tour of Kohler Creamery Dairy, and wagon ride through the local area.

As your President, I have been working on projects including working with the National Park Service to draft a new five-year Cooperative Agreement, one-year Task Agreement and budget. I also had the honor of speaking at the Kansas Missouri District Postal Customer Council's 2022 Mailer's Conference with Lyle Ladner regarding the past present and future of the NPEA.

Thank you NPEA members, your families, HAM operators and supporting organizations for making NPEA what it is. All your hard work and time is so very much appreciated. I look forward to seeing you along the trail, at NPEA events or at the 2023 Convention in Rancho Cordova, California. Until then, Happy Trails!

Dutch Girl

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earned my first Pony Express reride pin from Nevada. Pat and Linda Hearty hosted us for a few hours at Grantsville in Utah, and let the horses catch their breath in a pen, and us have a real shower and do our laundry. Through the gentle intervention of Petra Keller, we got to stay our last 2 nights at the Celio ranch in California. There, third generation owner Chris and Tom allowed us to leave the horses roll in green grass again, as we unhooked the trailer and drove the truck to see the final arrival of the pony in Sacramento.

Good surprises from start to end

We were surprised by many things. The perfect organization of the reride: executed with a slightly different touch in each state. The incredible vastness of the Wild West: it made us even more aware what an enormous achievement it

was for emigrants on the trails to make it by foot and with only a cart. The speed of the pony: each time we took a break to rest a few hours, we had to hurry and drive like crazy to catch up with the horse. 10 miles per hour doesn't seem much, but in rough landscape it carries you pretty far pretty fast. The friendly people, their solidarity and commitment: riders and their supporters all worked together to make it happen. There are just too many names to mention everybody individually. Thank you all!

And so, after 3 more days of driving back from California to Kansas, we are back home. The horses were tired, but they did well. They joined Doug's other horses in the Kansas pastures. Our mobile hotel has been returned to a plain stock trailer. Doug and I are still friends. And as Doug put it "when I was driving back, I thought, "never again" but as soon as I pulled in my driveway I started thinking about another round."

Submitted by Annemiek Wortel (Netherlands)

INSURANCE

National Pony Express Association, Inc.
Policy Effective 10/1/2022 to 10/1/2023
Capitol Specialty Ins. Corp.

**For all things pertaining to
INSURANCE CONTACT:
FRED LESLIE**

801-450-2905 • fredleslie101@gmail.com

- An event without horses you do NOT need to notify me.
- An event WITH horses I MUST be notified!!!!
I need Date of event, Type of event, Location
- Waivers (state specific) must be signed and kept by Division President.
- What/who is COVERED by the NPEA Ins. policy? Any member who signs the waiver is protected against any recourse of any accident or incident they are deemed responsible for (ie, lawsuit).
- When should Fred be notified of an event?
THE SOONER THE BETTER
- Who do you contact concerning anything about INSURANCE?

FRED LESLIE
801-450-2905 • fredleslie101@gmail.com

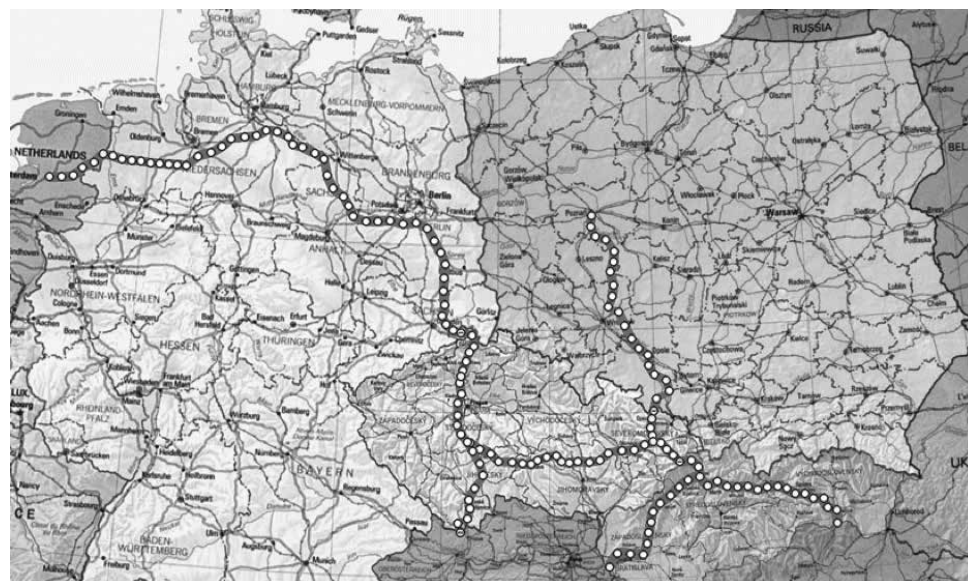
International Trails Report - Riding in Utah, Nevada, California, and Germany

by Petra Keller

As a little girl growing up riding horses in the German countryside, I never dreamed I would one day ride my horse across the Pony Express trail. Growing up in Bremen, Germany, we had several horses at a nearby stable. This is where I learned to ride and where my love affair with horses began. I was enamored by everything to do with horses — from the quiet moments in the stall when my horse's breath would warm my hands to the sound of the starting bell for the jumping competition. There is an expression in German, "Das Glück der Erde, liegt auf dem Rücken der Pferde," which means "The happiness on earth lies on the back of a horse." My favorite childhood memories all revolve around horses — racing bareback on the dikes, lying in a grass meadow with my horse grazing next to me, and cantering across freshly plowed fields. We rode English and I loved to show in dressage, jumping & eventing. The closest I came to west-

ern riding was watching the Old Shatterhand & Winnetou western movies (based on Karl May books). Little did I know that I would ride in the western US as a Pony Rider as well as in Germany.

As a teen, my family moved from Germany to Miami, Florida but I never forgot my love of horses and the dream of riding again. I later relocated to Washoe Valley, Nevada near Carson City; a landscape completes with wild horses roaming the hills — true horse country. It was there that I learned about the Pony Express 150th Anniversary Re-Ride in 2010 and have been hooked on the Pony Express Re-Ride since then. For years I rode with Team Jares between Cold Springs and Railroad Pass, Nevada for years. The trail goes through Edwards Creek, riding through that canyon, I always had flashbacks to those early movies I watched growing up. Imaging stagecoach shoot-outs was easy, and those movies could have been filmed in that canyon. I was surprised to learn that there was a "re-ride" in Europe and was



Map of the European Pony Express Route

intrigued to learn about it. It is not a historic route, but a route cobbled together by International Pony Express fans. I found out it ran close to my hometown (Bremen) and on one of my visits back to Germany I met up with a few Pony folks and we exchanged information. The idea came to me to figure out a way to ride in Germany as part of the European re-ride. Fast forward a couple of years and Heather, a Nevada Ride Captain and friend of mine moved to Germany and we started dreaming about riding the Pony together in Germany. Originally, we planned for a 2020 ride together. Covid happened and our ride did not, we had to postpone it. In late 2021, we started dreaming again about riding the German Pony together! Great timing, as Heather now had 2 horses and lived in Bavaria, closer to a section of the ride in Saxony near Dresden.

Planning for the German Ride

I had stayed in touch with several of the organizers and riders from the Germany group and reached out to them about riding a section. They were great and understood our scenario and were able to give us a section to ride! Yay! It was a night leg scheduled from midnight to 2 AM! In all the years of riding in the US, I had never done a night leg. Add to it that it was on a trail I was not familiar with and on a horse I didn't know. True Pony Rider experience! Our planning started - what would be the route we should ride. Luckily, I was in touch with someone who had ridden this route before and could provide a GPS file. Phew! The other logistics started, where would

we camp/overnight the horses as the ride was about 4 hours away from Heather's place. We were lucky to have a trail angel, Gabi, that was able to help with all those logistics. Heather and I started ordering gear for our night ride and I booked my flights! This time it was going to happen! The European Pony is in August but first I would ride my horses in the US for the June Re-Ride.

2022 US Pony Re-Ride - quite a year for me

My ride captain called me early in the year, to let me know that he was retiring! I was so sad hearing this news, as riding with Team Jares was always a fun family affair. So many amazing memories from all the years I rode with Team Jares. After some thoughts about the news, I set my sights on riding in different parts of the trail. Thanks to help from Dean Atkin and Fred Leslie, I was able to find a ride team to ride with in Utah. I was assigned to the ride team from Simpson Springs to Ibapah. I knew that traveling back from UT it would be nice to check out some trail on the eastern part of Nevada. I reached out to ride captain Andy Boyer (NV) to see if I could ride as part of his team, the timing would work out since I would be returning from Utah and allow time to ride in California. Andy covers the section from Overland Pass to Grubbs Well. It all lined up the distance from Utah there was doable after my ride and gave me time after Nevada to be able to make it for my California leg. It was going to be busy (and exhausting) but doable.

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Organizer meeting in Berlin – Jenny, Siegfried, Manne & Petra 2022

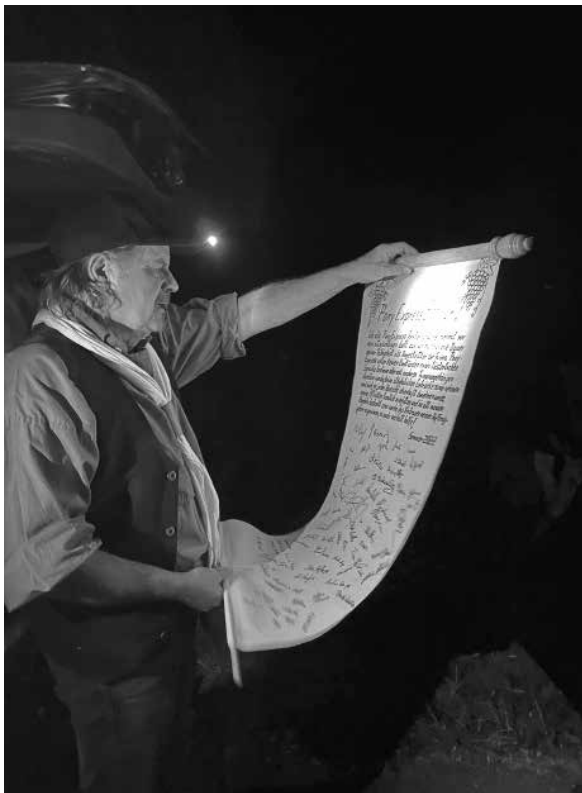
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Cali (horse), Siena (dog) & I hauled to Utah and thanks to Dean & Dione were able to have accommodations and Dean would provide ride support for my Utah legs. We drove out to Simpson Springs where we met Fred's ride team. Discussed logistics and what legs I would ride - the ride team does 2-mile leapfrog sections. Cali and I would get the mail at the historic Simpson Springs station and another section a few miles later. There in the distance we see a cloud of dusk and you could see the inbound riders. The whole ride team came charging in! Cali was a bit uneasy but we managed to get the mochila and off we went. Our first leg was wide open desert jeep trail, thankfully it was dusk, and the day was cooling off! We rode down the trail and I was hoping to see some vehicles follow or see some parked ahead to know what road to ride down. Cali was eager to move out and I figured at some point I would see something to give me an idea of which trail to ride. Finally, in the distance, over a knoll I saw my rig waiting at the exchange. A swift exchange and loaded Cali up to get to our next leg. As we were driving down



Start of the second leg - German Pony Express riders with the oath scroll, every rider signs it

the dirt road a massive herd of wild horses ran alongside us and then crossed the road at a full gallop - what a sight to see! We rode our next leg and after a round of goodbyes headed back to Dean's and arrived around midnight. Got everyone settled in as next morning would be an early start to make it to Eureka to meet up with my Nevada ride team. The ride



Peter Palm reading the Pony Express oath at the start of our leg. The riders sign the scroll.

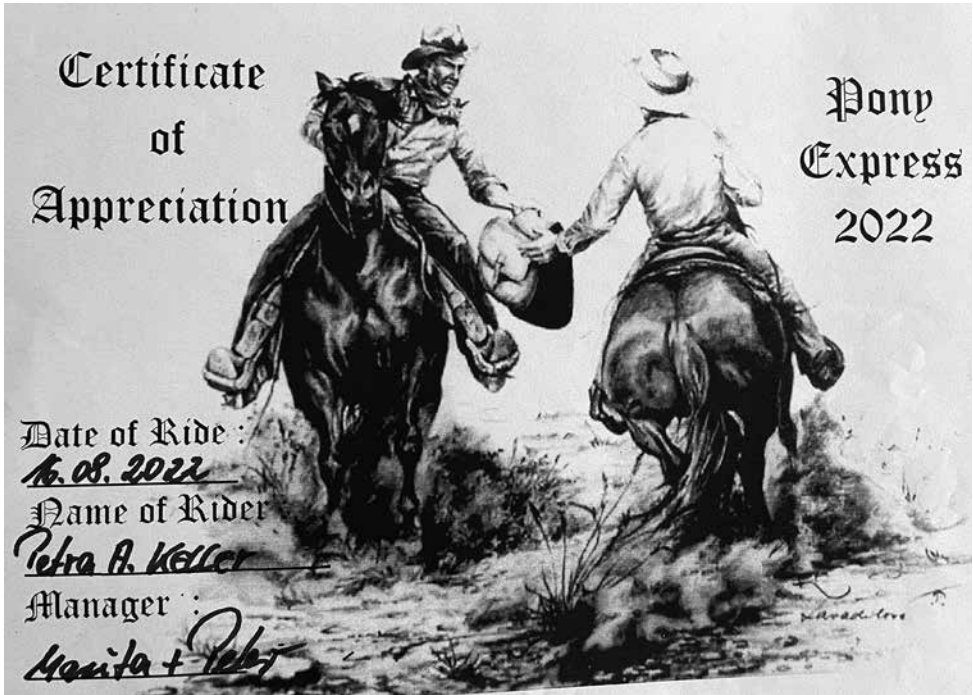
team met outside of Eureka for a met and greet and potluck. My scheduled ride was early the next morning into Grubbs Well, Andy took me to my overnight camp spot. I set up the panels for Cali and got her settled in for the night. The camp spot was in the middle of nowhere, but thankfully on a dirt road that headed towards a mine. This was great as it

meant there was cell reception to be able to check on rider progress. Heather, ever since she moved to Germany, did the US Re-Ride night support for the media team. She knew where I was camping and was keeping an eye on progress to alert me to times. At this point the mail was running late, and we weren't sure of when it would arrive. Finally, she messaged me that the rider was about ½ hour away. I was already saddled, and we rode towards the inbound ride, transferred the mochila onto Cali and off we went to Grubbs Well. Hand off went well and visiting with a couple folks at the ride captain handoff. Cali and I rode back to our campsite, we packed up and loaded to head home to leave Cali at house and get Red for our Cali-fornia leg. When we got near Austin Nevada, I realized I was exhausted and really needed to take a break before continuing the drive home. Stopped at the Austin Rodeo Grounds and found a spot for Cali and we all took a much-needed nap! Rested and ready to keep going, we headed home. Cali was happy to be on home turf and Red was ready to go. We had an eve-

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Postcard carried on the 2022 European Pony Express



What a journey and how special to get this certificate

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ning ride over Echo Summit, I had arranged to camp near there and we went to the ranch first to set up before heading to our starting point. Our leg was through part of the Caldor Fire (2021) burn scar and it was sad to see so much devastation. We got saddled up and rode to our starting point to wait for the incoming mail. The trail crosses Hwy 50 and for safety reasons, the mochila is carried across the Hwy. We got the mochila on Red and of we go. Since the mail was running ahead of schedule, and I thought I'd let Red walk up the steep climb over Echo Summit but he was eager to go. He loves his Pony job and looks forward to it every year. At Echo Summit some friends had gathered to cheer us on and that was all Red needed to run a bit faster! We finished our leg in great time and got back to the trailer.

Back at camp, Red enjoyed the paddock, and I was happy that my three state Pony Adventure was completed. The next morning, we headed to Folsom & Sacramento to cheer on the California riders and the finish at old town Sacramento.

Enough about my US Pony Adventure – on to my German Pony adventure! In August, I flew to Hamburg, Germany and stayed with friends. This worked out well to experience several things related to the European Ride and to experience so many aspects of the Ride. I am so grateful that I got to witness so many Pony Express things on my trip. I learned about the organizers meeting in Berlin, timing worked out and I was able to attend. The Berlin group has a wonderful community garden club house where they hold their meetings. While I was in Berlin, Heather called me to let me know her one horse is lame and the other had an open head wound! She did not expect recovery in time for the ride. Thankfully, the organizers had a list of riders and their numbers, and I started contacting folks to see if anyone had a suggestion for a mount. Luckily Katja, the rider that shared our section, had a solution! We were able to borrow a horse from their trail riding business and although



Martin & Kerstin stamping the post cards at end of the German leg.

Heather & I could not ride our section together as we had planned, we would be able to share the same horse and each ride a portion of the leg. Our section is nearly 20 KM (12 miles) long so plenty of miles to share. Did I mention the section was a night section? Midnight to 2 AM! In all the years I have ridden Pony, I have never ridden a night leg! Plus, a section that I had never been on, so grateful that Katja had scouted out the section before, was leading us.

German logistics

The route, when heading east, starts at Rütenbrock at the Dutch border and heads north, towards Berlin and then south to Sebnitz at the Czech border. For planning the trail is divided into 3 sections that different ride captains organize and assign riders to each section. During the ride the Organizers & Funker (HAM operators) support the ride. There are 4 teams each and they support in 6 hours increments the entire ride. The German trail is approximately 850 KM (530 Miles) long and it takes 5 nearly days to complete. Sections are ridden in teams and each section is about 20 KM (12 miles). Riders are responsible to determine their route before the ride, they are given a start & end point. The ride goes

24x7, one of the riders will carry a satchel with the mail, these are postcards. Fun Fact – the mail cannot have postage stamps on them, as they are carried across country borders! At the end of the ride, the destination country has to put the postage stamps on the post cards. The uniform is like the one worn by riders in the US Blue jeans, Red Shirt & yellow scarf (no vest).

Night Ride in Saxony

Made it to Heathers and we managed to get in a ride at her old barn to get ready for our ride section. The next morning, we drove to meet up with Katja & Andrea at their trail riding barn. What a great place Andrea has in Saxony – offering trail rides and overnight guests at their “Bauernhof” (Farm). Having not met them before, they were so gracious and helpful to make our dream of riding the German Pony a reality. We arrived in time for their farm style dinner with their guests and we joined them to talk about Pony Express experiences. This was Katja's first

time to participate and Andrea was her support driver. We were so lucky that they were able to provide Heather & I a horse to ride. After dinner, we figured out the tack we needed and loaded up the horses to travel to our starting point. About an hour away. We called the ride organizers to check on status and things were on schedule. Our ride's start time was midnight, and we made our way to our start location. The mount that Heather and I were to ride was “Co-Jack”, a Konik gelding from Poland. When we arrived at the start location our ride organizer had us repeat the German Pony Express Oath and presented us with our official Bible and Rider Certificates. You could start hearing the hoof beats coming closer. The saddle bag was given to Heather and off they went. The first part of the leg (approx. 9 KM) Heather rode and I followed Andrea to where we would meet and do a rider exchange. Thankfully, we had great weather, and it was dry and cool. They arrived at the exchange spot, and I got on “Co-Jack” and off we went. What a amazing horse, we rode down many dirt farm roads enroute to our destination. At this point it was about 1AM and pitch dark out. Riding down the farm roads and through the

forest over the plowed fields was amazing. Grateful for some of the light from the illuminated martingales and gear we had! As we rode through the forest you could hear rustling in the leaves. I am sure the critters thought what is going on here! Our guess was deer that had bedded down in the forest. Thankfully, Katja had scouted our route and had a great sense of direction to get us to our destination! About 2AM we arrived to meet our ride captain and we were happy to have had such a great ride. We cooled down the horses and loaded them up and said our farewells to Andrea & Katja who were heading back to the farm. Heather and I were heading to the Western Village in Sebnitz, this is where the German team hands off to the Czech team, and is the end of the German section. We arrived about 4 AM and I found a sofa in the club house to catch some sleep. Heather managed to sleep in her sleeping bag in the parking lot.

German riders finish in Sebnitz and hand off to Czech riders.

After a couple hours of sleep, the club house is coming alive. Folks are arriving, coffee is brewing, and breakfast is being made. What an amazing place for the handoff to the Czech riders. Heather and I explore the Western Village and the great facilities. Waiting for the inbound riders, after breakfast the German and Czech Post Office are set up. Here comes the mail! The inbound riders arrive and hand off the Saddle bag with mail to the Postmaster. Each postcard gets stamped at the exchange station by both the German and Czech Pony Post Masters. It is quite the assembly line to get that completed. Then the mail gets put back into the saddle bags and handed to the Czech outbound rider. The ceremony included the Oath, the Pony Express song (but this time the lyrics are in Czech!). As I write this, I can still hear the melody! We see the riders hear towards the Czech border and we say our farewells to the amazing group. I take Heather to the train station and then return back to the western village to exchange tales from the trail. What an amazing end to an adventures 2022 Pony Express experience.

In 2023, the European ride starts in Sebnitz on the 18th of August and arrives in Rütenbrock on the 23rd. If you have a chance to go, I highly recommend it. Happy to answer any questions you may have.

NEWS FROM THE STABLE

Website

by *Stablemaster Mary Cone, NPEA*

We continually try to keep the “Stable” clean and stocked to accommodate all website visitors as they search for information about the Pony Express and our Association. Basic maintenance we strive to keep current is each State Division’s information, including Events, Membership Forms, Insurance Forms, Current Officers, Ride Schedules, etc. It is very helpful if each State Division monitors your webpage to make sure that we have the correct information posted. Your corrective feedback is greatly appreciated!!

Many parts of the website are historical, telling a bit about the Pony Express stations, riders and how the mail delivery system worked. We continue to update and research these things to make the website more interesting and fresh. Check regularly for updates and additions. Thanks to Pat Hearty for supplying us with a cumulative listing of Pony Riders, as they have been highlighted in various books and publications. <http://nationalponyexpress.org/historic-pony-express-trail/notable-riders/> We’re working on adding information regarding the 2010 Pony Express Sesquicentennial to the CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS page (under the Heading PONY EXPRESS).

Facebook

by *Pam Dixon-Simmons, NPEA*

The NPEA page was created to help keep our members engaged with each other and the public to further our educational outreach, but I need your help. We need someone who would like to take the lead on keeping our Facebook page updated. This includes regular postings and searching other pages and news outlets that are reporting on Pony Express history and events.

Those of you who are posting on your state and personal pages, please don’t forget to tag our page for that post. To tag our Facebook page type either @expressrider in your post or @national pony express and then select our page which has the pony rider

Also look for news articles that highlight our Association and the Trail under RESOURCES: NPEA PRESS. These are added as we get “google alerts” from the system or are otherwise told of press coverage.

As the yearly website visits activity report clearly shows, the most used webpage on our website is the interactive map that National Park Service helps to provide us for each year’s Re-Ride: “Follow the Ride”. The GPS “pinger” that we carry in the mochila sends a signal to the satellite and then it bounces to the tracking software to show up on the maps for anyone to see where the Pony is at a given time. We will be using a brand new “pinger” this year!

Here is how Brian Deaton, our NPS expert sums up the mapping system:

“The annual Pony Express Re-Ride conducted by NPEA is a truly special event that highlights the Pony Express National Historic Trail. Through the Re-Ride, the public and NPEA members get to experience the trail, however, thousands of people experience the event through the NPS mapping application that the National Trails Office supports yearly. The NPS Pony Express Re-Ride Annual Re-Ride mapping application serves important functions including allowing the public to follow along as the re-ride proceeds 24/7, allow the public to estimate when a rider will go through their area in order to view the event in person, allow NPEA riders to anticipate the time of exchange station arrival, and allow NPEA to mon-

itor the rider location for safety issues, including weather. This is all enabled by the NPEA Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver/satellite transmitter SPOT device (aka pinger). The pinger, kept in a special pocket of the mochila, gets its location from the GPS satellites every 5 minutes and transmits that location to the SPOT device internet xml feed. This data is transferred to spatial data for the NPS Pony Express Re-Ride Annual Re-Ride mapping application. Based upon the current rider location, next exchange station distance (as the crow flies) and past rider location, miles per hour and estimated time to arrival calculations are conducted. The next exchange station schedule time and distance are determined by the location of the current rider within rectangular areas assigned to the next exchange station that span the distance from one exchange station to the next.

These rectangular areas are not seen within the mapping application, but are essential to the calculations and information presented within the mapping application. Based upon the exchange station (Blue Dot) schedule time and the ETA, the pop up window displays if the current rider is On Time, Late or ETA Unknown. The NPS mapping application depends

on the accurate planning of the re-ride including the exchange station schedule and route. Location changes for exchange stations, deviations or unknown adjustments to the route can cause the re-ride to display incorrect ETA information.”

So, reiterating Brian’s message of the importance of accurate planning, please be sure to let us know if your planned Re-Ride route has changed from the information that you have previously provided us! If the Pony Rider goes outside the unseen assigned rectangular areas, the calculations will not function properly.

Be sure to send us Reports from the Trail throughout the year and especially during the Re-Ride. nationalponyexpress@gmail.com

We welcome input from the membership, ideas, suggestions and comments. See you on the Trail...

The Magic of the Ride

The moon is setting high in the sky
My horse moves away as the Mochila is placed
I step up, my toe searches for the stirrup
Now my horses hoofs are echoing in the night, I feel
The magic of the ride

With a cool night breeze in my face
The trail is opening before me, by the light of the moon
How many times, just how many have ridden this trail
Taking me back in time
The magic of the ride

As my horse floats across the flats
The moon is lifting me into the past
Has any rider ever felt what I feel
My horse and I are feeling
The magic of the ride

Our new rider has the mail and riding down the trail
The moon is aglow casting shadows along his way
His heart is pounding as he re-members the riders of the past
He is riding hard and feeling
The magic of the ride

I am up now and feel the night calm my spirit
Shadows fly by as I canter down the trail
I slow for the rocks, a shadow moves across my path
My horse stumbles, but I go on feeling
The magic of the ride

The last riders appear in the dark, the mochila is passed
They canter out of sight, the sound of hoofs are gone
Alone I stand in the glow of the moon, my ride is done
As they ride to the next ex-change do they, feel
The magic of the ride

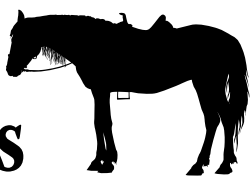
Author & Cowboy Poet Ron Bell

in a light brown circle. This will allow even more people to share in all that is done to promote NPEA and preserve our historic trail. If you would like me to add information to the National Facebook page directly you can email information about the event, including date, location, and names of those in the pictures if available, to me at NPEAPam@gmail.com along with pictures.

Since August 1, 2022, through February 26, 2023, there have been 35 posts on our page which reached 65,772 people and created 7,696 engagement actions which include reactions, comments, or shares.

Thank you to everyone who has shared information and pictures regarding your events along the trail and I look forward to seeing many more posts. For anyone who may have questions or is interested in taking the reins for our NPEA Facebook page, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Empty Saddles



Paula Kay Bath

Paula Kay Bath, born in Denver, Colorado, Dec. 6, 1950, passed away peacefully Tuesday, March 15, 2022. Paula was preceded in death by her parents Harry Bath, Julia Smilanich Bath, and her infant brother Earl.

Paula loved the rodeo scene especially barrel racing, winning many ribbons. She had a great love for her horses, Plenty Lil Shiner aka Casey Dualin Tempesta, Strait Dice aka Toby, Straight Dreamin' aka Parker and Starlight's Diamond, aka Payton to name a few.

She delighted in passing the mailbag while riding the Colorado route of the Pony Express National Historic Trail going through Julesburg.

Paula was an artist, sketching horses and cowboys. Most were in pencil and she did at least 6 in color.

Family and friends were invited to her graveside service April 2, 2022. She was interred alongside her parents at Olinger, Thornton, Colorado.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Dumb Friends League of Denver, where Paula often donated to.



Lee Terrance Hofer

Nov. 8, 1956 – July 22, 2022

Lee Terrance Hofer of Lincoln, California unexpectedly passed away July 22, 2022, from injuries he sustained while saddle breaking his beloved mule Bobcat. Lee or "Bwana," "Creek," or just "hey Buddy" as many knew him, was born Nov. 8, 1956, in Sacramento, California, to Raymon and Naomi Hofer. He lived in Sheyenne, North Dakota, and Anaconda, Montana, for his first several years.

Settling in Lincoln, California, where he became a "Fighting Zebra" Lincoln High School graduate in 1975. He was well known and loved in school for all his fun loving antics, one of which was playing donkey basketball while riding backward on "his ass" to score points. HEEHAW!

He married Suzanne Harris and together were blessed with three beautiful children Jamie, Jeromy, and Joshua. Devoted to his family, he spent time with all the kids' activities and adventures, teaching them to fish, dive for abalone, ride horses, raise animals for 4 H, camp, hunt, and play sports. He volunteered many hours helping coach Little League and being a 4 H leader for all "his children" making a positive impact on many young lives who crossed his path.

Successfully reaching one of his dreams, he bought property near Camp Far West Lake and built his home with Mandy Hofer. Together they worked hard developing the ranch and took time to relax with many fun adventures.

During Lee's last year here on good ol' mother earth, he found peace in finding his forever soulmate Sissy Dawson. Together they created a lifetime of precious memories, with unconditional love, in riding Lee's "final trails" with horses and mules, Wagon Trains, the Pony Express Ride, and Harley and "The General" rides. Treasured, will forever be their last adventures to Bodega Bay and kayaking on Camp Far West Lake with their beloved pets before his final departure to explore his heavenly trails.

Lee worked as a union carpenter for several years. He then began his career of 31 years as a Correctional Officer starting at San Quentin State Prison for a short time and finally retiring from Folsom State Prison in 2019. He was well liked by staff, and yes, inmates as well. Lee worked hard at treating others as he liked to be treated with respect and kindness no matter what their "rank" in life was. He enjoyed



working the prison tower on the river keeping close eyes on security boundaries while taking in all the beautiful wildlife that he so loved as they ventured along the river path.

Many clubs and organizations filled his schedule with activities and fun adventures. Sierra Ghost Riders, Pony Express, Native Sons of the Golden West, Sierra Muzzle loaders, Just Riding America, Thermalands Community Center, and the Appaloosa Club to name a few. The folks he met along these trails became lifelong friends. He loved volunteering and often rode that extra mile in all events and loved working side by side with everyone. Ending each year with his beloved stuffed "Mr. Grinch" on the front of his Harley, he delivered with much JOY, toys to many children for Christmas.

Lee was very giving and faithfully donated gallons of blood throughout his years. He kept his selfless act even in death and made his final donation of skin and bone tissue for those in need.

He is survived by his forever soulmate Sissy Dawson, children Jamie, Jeromy, and Joshua (Michele), stepdaughter Jennifer Gaede, (Albert), grandchildren Chase, Rylee, Jalis-sa, Zander, Mike, Julia, Adam, and great grandchildren Ivy and Bjorn. Brothers David Lightfoot, Rex and Kim and Sister Janet Masters (Gary), many nephews, nieces and cousins, and countless friends.

The last quote found in Lee's phone: "Tell someone you love them today because tomorrow is not promised. To my friends and family, I love you!"

Roy Lyles

1950 - 2022

On June 6, 2022, Roy Lyles passed away of Hodgkin's Lymphoma at Regional West Medical Center surrounded by his loving family. Roy was born Truman Roy Lyles Jr. on February 10, 1950 to Alma and Truman Lyles in Mercedes, Texas. He grew up in Weslaco, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley on the Texas/Mexico border.

In high school he became active in the FFA, and that was the spark that began his lifelong passion for agriculture and conservation. In 1969, he married his high school love, Judi Mae Vance As newlyweds, they headed for Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas, where Roy studied Range and Animal Science. His first job out of college was with the Magic Valley Rural Electric. Climbing poles in storms was exciting, but when a position with the Texas State Vegetable Inspection Service opened up, he jumped at the chance. The criteria for the job required him to report to any vegetable packing plant in Texas within 24 hours. The mere size of Texas made it difficult to get a family packed and on the move. When he was offered a full time position with LLC, an international vegetable packing plant, the family settled into the Texas Panhandle town of Dimmitt. In 1979, Roy and his family made the big move to the Nebraska Panhandle for him to manage the farming part of a potato operation. The family settled in Gering. Roy brought his knowledge of pivot irrigation, and was instrumental in expanding the number of pivots used in crop production in the area. During this time, he entered into a partnership that purchased the Linn Ranch in Kimball, Nebraska, and began to manage that operation, as well as the expanding acres of the Shaver Seed Potato Company. Roy had a life changing offer to work for the North Platte Natural Resources District to head their tree planting operation. He planted trees and worked on conservation projects for the next 28 years. In 1995, he and Judi purchased their first land in Banner County, and began to fulfill Roy's lifelong dream of creating a sustainable ranch. He had been gifted the Circle Arrow brand from the Linn Ranch. Texas was always in Roy's heart, so it was natural that they would purchase Texas Longhorn cattle. The seed herd was purchased from Charlie III at the famous YO Ranch in Mountain Home, Texas. The Circle Arrow Longhorns grass-fed beef company was born. Roy continued to work at the NRD and Judi continued teaching at Gering Schools, driving in together each day until they both retired. They often laughed that they had built their ranch mostly in the dark!

He always made time for family, friends and fun. He was an avid hunter, and was determined to preserve wildlife for future generations, and promote responsible gun ownership. He was active in Pheasants Forever, and taught Hunter Safe-



ty, and loved sporting clays. He loved his horses, and rode in the Pony Express and organized many trail drives to promote nature and conservation.

His greatest legacy is his family. He never tired of teaching his children and grandchildren the skills he thought they needed to be successful. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Judi; daughters, Tina (David) Worthman, Chrissy (Elton) Randall, granddaughters Taryn Lackey, and Paige Lackey; grandsons Divin Randall, and Tye Randall. Siblings Joyce Guedalia and Damon Lyles. He is preceded in death by his parents, and his many beloved animals.

A celebration of a life well lived will be held at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Saturday, June 11 at 2:00 pm. To honor Roy, please plant a tree, and you may donate to the Nebraska Game and Parks for the promotion of the Hunter Safety Program. Fond memories and condolences may be left at www.geringchapel.com. Gering Memorial Chapel is assisting the family with arrangements. Published by The Star-Herald on Jun. 8, 2022.

Ruth Anne Smathers

May 5, 1954 – March 25, 2022

A Celebration of Life for 67-year old Ruth Anne Smathers of Lost Springs, Wyo, will take place Friday, April 1, 2022 at 2 p.m. in Douglas, WY, at the American Legion.

A gathering of friends and family will be held immediately following at the same location.

The daughter of Ruth (Grant) and Tom Mitchell, Ruth Anne was born May 5th, 1954. Our mother, grandmother and loving friend to all passed away on Friday, March 25, 2022 in an auto accident taking her best horses and dogs with her.

Anne was a fourth-generation rancher raised in the Harney Hills, where her love for animals was firmly established. In August of 1971, she married Jim Bartschi. This marriage was blessed with Anne's only two children, Gynette and Toby.

Anne was a proud member of the Pony Express for over 25 years. She loved to share stories of her many rides and always got a reaction when she shared her adventures of sale barns, ranching, hunting, and time spent with those she loved.

Anne was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her brother John Mitchell; Daughter Gynette King of Douglas; grandchildren Melissa King and Samuel Mittleider; son Toby Bartschi (Kit) of Lusk, WY; grandchildren Derick Young (Brittany), Bryan Bartschi (Annahlis), and Shelby Bartschi; great-grandchildren: Airelynn, Jackson, Michael, and Wacey.



Lyle Edward Hosford

1935-2022

Lyle Hosford was a longtime member of the California Division of the National Pony Express Association.



Thomas Lee Sherwood

Feb. 9, 1939 - Dec. 12, 2022

Thomas Lee Sherwood, 83, of Carson City, Nevada, passed away peacefully at home on Dec. 12, 2022. He was born to now deceased parents, Elbert Owen Sherwood and Ruth Evelyn Jones Feb. 9, 1939 in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

He served as a Corporal in the US Marine Corps and was



honorably discharged in 1968. Tom worked for the Local 16 Union of Asbestos / Insulators workers of Northern California and Western Nevada for 35 years. He was an avid horseman and ultra-runner, participating in endurance riding competition for 50 years, Ultramarathons, Ride & Tie, back country horse packing, Pony Express Re-ride and Nevada Day Parades. He holds the coveted 1000 mile 10 day buckles for the renowned Western States Tevis Cup and the Virginia City 100 mile endurance rides, as well as the Western States Ultra 100 Mile Run from Squaw Valley to Auburn, Ca. He was a conservationist, explorer and trail blazer. He spent many hours building, restoring and maintaining trails in the Sierra and local area. He was a member of the Nevada All-State Trail Riders, American Endurance Riding Conference, National Endurance Driving Association and the National Pony Express Association.

Tom is survived by his beloved wife of 26 years, Sala (Firth) of Carson City, his brother Sam and sister-in-law Judy Sherwood and his sister Susie Lindstrom.

A celebration of life memorial will be held later this spring, the place and date to be determined. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in his name to the Western States Trail Foundation, 150 Gum Lane, Suite 103, Auburn, CA 95603 or Nevada All-State Trail Riders, Inc., P.O. Box 4014, Carson City, NV 89701.

Sally Hirsch Taylor

Sally Hirsch Taylor was born March 26, 1956. She was married to Doug Taylor for nearly 40 years. Two sons were born to this union.

Sally was a Nevada Division member and rode with Team Jares, and was on the media team during the re-ride.

She was also active in community outreach and other volunteer activities, such as the Douglas Animal Welfare Group (DAWG).

Sally was a horse enthusiast and attended many horse clinics. Sally and a friend had signed up for an 8 day horse-back trek, in Ulanbaatar, Mongolia. She passed away June 19, 2022, halfway through the ride.

A celebration of life was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Oct. 23, 2022.

Sally is survived by her husband; sons Scott Hirsch Taylor and Daniel (Anastasia) Hirsch Taylor; and one grandson Anton Nicolas Taylor.



Steven Dixon Notterman

5/12/1952 – 12/29/2022

Steven was born in Grass Valley, California, to Henry and Edna Notterman. He was raised in Highland, California, where he met Carolyn at San Bernardino Valley College. They were married in Redlands, California, April 12, 1974, at the Church of Christ.

Steven entered the military on 6/12/1972 and served in the Army until 11/1/1979. He spent a year in Korea, 1974 to 1975. He then served in Augusta, GA in 1975 – 1976. Steven was transferred to Naples, Italy from 1976 – 1979. He and Carolyn had two children, Tammy born in Augusta, GA in 1976 and Scott who was born in Naples, Italy in 1978.

In 1979 Steven moved his family to Reno, NV after leaving the military. Steven was an electrician working for his uncle until 1990, then went on to get his license and became an electrical contractor. He stopped working and retired in 2016.

Steven joined the Pony Express in 1997. He rode carrying the mail for over 20 years. He was President of the National Pony Express, Nevada Division from 2007 to 2009.



Damage to Pony Express Trail caused by the Caldor Fire

A follow-up report

In last years Gazette I had reported to you concerning the condition of a section of the Pony Express Trail running through the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This section had been damaged by the Caldor Fire. At the convention in September of 2022 I had discussed the condition of the trail to the delegates and members attention. I had ask for a sum of \$10,000 to be allotted, if needed, to clear the trail. The request was approved.

Last year we had a relatively mild

winter and work could have been started on the Trail. It never fails Murphy's Law kicked in and so far this winter we have had record breaking amounts of rain and snow. As result no trail work as started, However, planning has occurred to set the stage for this spring and summer.

Some Nevada and California members suggested using prisoner's for the trail wok. I contacted the California Department of Corrections. I was directed to a Conservation (prison) Camp called Growlersburg located in Georgetown about 30 miles north of Placerville. The prisoners at this camp are used to help

fight forest fires. They are willing to help clear the trail. There is state fee of \$230.00 per day but this is for a 12 man crew with their own hand equipment, which is a deal. I told the Administrative Captain I will be accompanying the crew, show them the trail and work with them. I will try and wear a Pony Express jacket so I don't get rounded up, put on the bus, and sent to camp.

I also met with the California Back Country Horseman's Association. They were very willing to volunteer some time and equipment to help restore the trail. I have been told Congress has allocated

money for rebuilding the five bridges destroyed on the Trail. I have not been given a time table as to when this project will begin or be completed. If the trail gets clear, we will be able to use the trail for the annual re-ride. We can work around the lack of bridges for the time being.

With a little luck and a warm spring, the snow will be gone. The trail work can start and hopefully be completed on the National Historical Pony Express Trail.

I will keep you posted,
Jim Swigart

National Pony Express Association Abbreviated Trails Meeting Sept. 9, 2022

2021 Trails Meeting Minutes

Gene Ockert/Nevada moved to accept the minutes as written.

Rich Tatman/California seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

National Trails Office Report – Carole Wendler

Carole is attending as the acting superintendent for the National Trails office. She is typically the deputy superintendent, but Aaron Mahr is working at another park due to the death of another superintendent, so she is filling in for him for a couple months.

Some of you may have met or interacted with Chad Ennis, who is a new GIS person on their staff. He and Brian Deaton are the ones in charge of the re-ride app that the public uses to track the re-ride. Chad is based in the Salt Lake City office.

Nicole Kemler, a new intern on their staff, is specifically working on road signing with the California Department of Transportation. She will be working on this project for at least 18 months for the Pony Express trail and other historical trails in California.

The parks service has a series of auto tour route guides for some states. They are working on finishing the one for California and it should be done in the next few months.

They are working with the Nevada Department of Transportation hoping to do a state wide sign plan. This will be signing for the state wide roads in 2023. They have just completed a similar project in Wyoming last year, so if you are driving on the state highways in Wyoming, you will see the new signs. Corey Donnelly manages the sign planning in their office and she would like to make the Pony Express Trail a focus this next year for getting signs up along the roads. If you know of a place that needs signs, please get in touch with her.

In 2019, Les Bennington set in with them at a large meeting with the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Parks, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at the Sweet Water, Devil's Gate, and Rattlesnake Pass area and put together a plan to make it a little more inviting for people to come to that area. The church has added a lot of new signing so people know where to park and where to walk. They will be having another meeting soon to talk over more ideas.

They may be doing some project with the state of Wyoming at Independence Rock and a few other sites that the Pony Express trail goes through. They are hoping to bring more attention to the trail there.

In the Eldorado National Forest, in

California, the fires there recently have burnt five bridges and also some time ago, the very large Brockliss Bridge was taken out by the forest service. She knows that was a large concern for the Pony Express and they applied for some special project funding. We gave that money to the forest service and they hired a contractor to come up with a plan to replace the bridge. The cost estimates came to around \$2,000,000 to replace. So not sure if there will be any more follow up on that or not.

They enjoyed partnering with us on the re-ride to develop and present the mapping app to us and the public. There were more views this year than ever before. Over the ten day period of the ride, there were 31,047 views on the app, with an average of 3,105 every day. Feedback included while using it in the field, it was a little hard due to having to click through several screens to get to where you wanted to be, but they are working on simplifying that.

A fair number of people have asked about signing. One of the National Parks biggest challenges is they don't know where the signs are all up roads or where they are missing from. They do have an app where you can report signs to them. You take a picture of the sign, answer a few simple questions, and the location of the sign shows up on a map for them in their GIS software. If anyone is interested in participating in this, please contact Brian Deaton.

Park Service also has a program called Vanishing Treasures. They have been working with the Bureau of Land

Management to perform condition assessments and stabilization of Cold Springs and Sand Springs Pony Express stations in Nevada. Cold Springs for sure needs stabilization, as one of the walls is slowly collapsing. They conducted an inspection earlier this summer and they are currently reviewing the report and recommendations.

Lee Kreutzer would like to thank Jim Swigart for helping to identify Pony Express stops in California for the auto program guide. To help with promoting the trail, we are working on a series of short videos for trail sites. We hired a contractor a couple of years ago to drive around the country and take video of sites all along the national historic trails. They then will produce a video library of short 2 to 4 minute videos that they can put together to be played on YouTube, Facebook, and websites to help promote trails and advertise the re-ride. The first Pony Express video will be of the Hollenberg Station in Hanover, Kansas. She will be here today through dinner, then tomorrow till dinner, for anyone who may have any questions or need any contact information.

A question was asked as to why, if the Forest Service took the Brockliss Bridge out, why aren't they responsible for having it replaced - especially since it's part of a historic trail? Carole said it is really up to the Land Management Agency as to what they want to do on their land and there are a variety of issues around that site. Another ques-

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tion on the Brockliss Bridge was since the price tag is around \$2,000,000, does that mean that the project is dead in the water? Carole said she doesn't know the answer to that. She does know that her office does not have the ability to fund anything like that. It will be solely up to the forest service to decide if they can come up with the money to rebuild the bridge or not. Another question of the bridge was what type of bridge would be built for \$2,000,000. Would it be a foot bridge, swinging bridge, car bridge, etc.? Carole will try to find the answer to that and let us know.

State Reports

Missouri - Quackgrass

Gary Chilcote would prefer daytime again so they can have people come to the museum. Melva mentioned that Missouri needs to make sure they respect the time listed on the schedule. There were members of the National Parks service that were there to see the beginning of the reride and they missed it because they were in the museum when the Pony left 15 minutes early. Also, the pinger had not yet been placed in the mochila yet.

Kansas - Lyle Ladner

We got the mail on time and it went to Nebraska on time. It was pretty uneventful with a couple detours and a couple showers. We ran most of the mud routes due to the weather forecast and cloud cover, but the weather held out and it went fairly smooth in Kansas.

Nebraska - Cathy Stevens

Pony Express riders were ready to go for Nebraska. Kevin's group goes pass the Rock Creek Station, where the media was waiting and took pictures. Then the mochila was passed on to Richard's group. They had a lot of fun on their leg of the trail. John's group rode into Oak Grove where they were able to take a group photo during the day. The newspapers were also there. They rode into the night where severe storms with hail made them stop for a little over an hour to take cover. When the storms let up, the ride continued on and they then passed the mochila on to Nadine's group. They rode into Fort Kearney that morning. They also had a breakfast

provided for them by Gene Hunt and friends. Then Audie's group took off on the next leg of the trail and passed the mail on to Cathy's group, who then passed it on to Frank's group south of Cozad. When the Cozad riders were done, they rode letters into Veteran's Park in an extra mochila. The Cozad Ambassadors provided a lunch and there were newspapers there to cover it. Frank's group handed off to Terry's group. This group was very short of riders so the two groups worked together to get the mail into North Platte. Angie's group took it from there. They had a couple mishaps with one horse and rider falling in a ditch and another rider had the stirrup break and the saddle rolled. In both cases, horses and riders were not hurt. This group passed the mochila on to Mary's group at Paxton and they continued the ride through the night and passed it on to Colorado.

On the other side of Colorado's ride, Doug's group met up at Chappell and carried the mail past Sidney and Mud Springs. Doug's group was short riders, so a Kansas rider helped that group out. Max's group took the mail next and rode into Bridgeport and was able to take a group photo there. They carried the mail past Chimney Rock and on to Scott's Bluff National Monument. On the last leg of Nebraska's route, Casey Debus, led Roy Lyle's horse to the monument for a memorial ride in his honor. Cathy also did an interview at the monument.

Colorado - Linda Dolezal

They picked up the mail 3 hours late from Nebraska due to the storms. They were able to make up over an hour and had a great ride. They were actually happy about receiving the mail late because that meant they got to ride in the daylight and take pictures. One of the new riders, Carlie Brandt, said she had a great time and rode three different horses.

Wyoming - Les Bennington

They received the mail about 2 hours late. Stephanie's group didn't have any trouble and had a good ride and even had a little bit of moon light. The next group had a new ride caption due to the death of Bill Sinnard in February. The ride caption who took Bill's place was

tragically killed in a truck accident, the next ride caption wasn't able to continue with the position, but the fourth captain did a tremendous job and they even made up some time. They handed the mail off to Joel Chamberlain's group between Douglas and Glen Rock. They took it on into Casper and gave the mail to Deidra Homann's group. They handed off to the group that takes it from Jeffrey City to Atlantic City and got it there in good time. Howard's group picked it up from there about ½ hour late of schedule and they made that ½ hour up plus another hour and ended up 1 ½ hours ahead of schedule by the time they got to Farson. Between Farson and Granger, they lost the time they had made up due to some stretches going slower than other sections, but everyone ran their horses and had a good ride. Kristine Hayduk's group took it from them. Les found out later after the reride that Kristine's horse had went over backwards on her and she ended up in the hospital having the muscle around her aorta fixed. They were able to make up some time before handing off to Utah.

Utah - Jamie Marvidakis

Utah received the mail about ½ hour late. They didn't run into any issues and handed it off to the next group about 10 minutes late. By the time they got to Murray Park, the mail was pretty much on time. They had some really good media coverage at Murray Park. Team 2 took it from Murray Park to Simpson's Springs. The weather was really hot with 40-50 mph winds blowing dirt and sand on the riders who couldn't keep their hats on or see very well for several hours. The weather didn't slow them down though, and that group dropped the mail off on time to Fred's group. This group had a lot of young riders and they handed off at the Nevada state line early.

Nevada - Gene Ockert

Nevada picked up the mail about a ½ hour early. Most of the ride went really good except for a couple spots. There is a prairie dog village coming into Tibet. It doesn't show up on a map but there's about 5 to 6 miles of it. It is dangerous to ride a horse through and ends up looking like a lake when it rains. Tony

rode up on the side of the road beside it and his horse still stepped in a prairie dog hole. Across Hidden Valley is a real rough ride also. Sometimes they have had to unload the horses to get the trucks across due to the soft dirt and rain makes it worse. At White Rock, which is actually Pony Springs, you cannot take a vehicle across it. BLM is working on the road up there for us. You can only get through with a horse or on foot. This year he took the snow route and went straight through. This group then passed it off to a rider in Andy's group. This group rode through the night. They lost a little time due to it being dark and the trail is pretty rough through there. They got through their leg of the trail alright and passed it on to Arthur who had two sections, one of 6 miles and one of 7 miles on to Railroad passing. Kristine's group took it from there in the night. They were lined out on Hwy 50 and this group was able to make up two hours. This group was really moving and the riders can't wait to do it again next year. Then Sam's group took over and they did really well. They kept the time up and turned it over to California. All the riders in Nevada did really well. Melva talked about two riders who got on two thoroughbreds and rode for 12 miles and then got off of those horses and got on two more and went another 13 miles. Tony told us you can't go across their part of the trail without needing fuel, little bit of feed, and water. They do not have any access to supplies during their part of the ride. There is hardly any radio service either. He thanked Geno for hauling all their supplies.

California - Rich Tatman

They took off at 5:30. The Caldor fire took out 23 miles of trail and 5 bridges. They contacted the California highway patrol for an escort, but they wanted a permit and large fee this year. So unfortunately, for the first time in over 25 years, they had to trailer the mail. Before they took off from Tahoe, they had two riders cancel their rides and then a rider later on, wasn't there to pick up his leg of the trail due to vehicle trouble 70 miles away. Other than that, everything went ok and they got into Old Sacramento 10 minutes ahead of schedule.

National Pony Express Association Delegates Meeting, Sept. 10, 2022

Called to Order

9:00 A.M. - National President, Melva Sanner

Invocation

Pat Hearty

Introduction of Past National Presidents

Wayne Howard
Dean Atkins
Les Bennington
Jim Swigart
Pat Hearty
David Sanner
Lyle Ladner

Introduction of National Vice Presidents

Pam Simmons 1st
Tony Goulart 2nd
Howard Schultz 3rd

Introduction of State Presidents/Delegates

Missouri - Quackgrass Sally
Kansas - Lyle Ladner / Dan Pralle, Allen Pralle, Wade Miller
Nebraska - Cathy Stevens / Gary McCoy, Wayne Howard
Colorado - Linda Dolezal / Sherri Brandt, Cheryl Nein
Wyoming - Les Bennington / Howard Schultz, Stephanie Goulart
Utah - Jamie Marvidakis / Fred Leslie, Patsy Lange
Nevada - Gene Ockert / Andy Boyer, Anthony Zamora,
California - Rich Tatman / Marcia Stumpf, Gordon Crowder

Introduction of National Park Service Representative

Carole Wendler

Remembrance of Deceased Members and Moment of Silence

Thais Mary Fritzemeier, John Benjamin Harsha, Lee Terrance Hofer, Doug "Hooligan" Holle, Lyle Edward Hosford, Roy Lyles, Hubert Duane "Pete" Pickett, William Henry "Bill" Sinnard, and Ruth Anne Smathers

Announcement

Les Bennington announced that all Officers, Voting Delegates, Past Presidents, and State Delegates need to fill out the expense reimbursement form and return

them to him or Lyle Ladner by the end of the meeting.

2021 Trails Meeting Minutes

Corrections – There were no corrections to the 2021 minutes.

Gene Ockert/Nevada moved to accept the minutes as written.

Rich Tatman/California seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Treasurer's Reports – Lyle Ladner National Account - 2021

The 2021 report, which was tabled from last year, was updated after last year's convention and then reaudited.

Rich Tatman/California moved to approve the 2021 Treasurer's Report.

Tony Zamora/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

National Account - 2022

The 2022 report shows how the funds have been split into three separate accounts to help better keep track of how the monies are spent.

Gene Ockert/Nevada moved to approve the 2022 Treasurer's Report.

Rich Tatman/California seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Open CD/Lifetime Members Reserve CD

Rich Tatman/California moved to approve the 2022 CD report.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Commemorative and Personal Letter Sales Report - Connie Ladner

Instead of handing the checks for letter sales out at Convention this year, she will mail the checks out after Convention to the State Presidents unless you instruct her otherwise.

Rich Tatman/California moved to approve the 2022 Letter report.

Cheryl Nein/Colorado seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Quartermaster Account — Melva Sanner for Scott Wolf

Scott Wolf does a good job getting the

patches and grave markers out as needed. If you need any of these items, please contact him.

Gene Ockert/Nevada moved to approve the 2022 Quartermaster Report.

Quackgrass Sally seconded the motion. Motion carried.

National Corresponding Secretary — Larry Carpenter

Now a days what he does he feels is minor due to our online presence. However, our press release is important. This year the cost for that was \$272.94. Every year he sends out a press release that includes a national brochure to newspapers, radio stations, visitor centers, and museums. Newspapers don't always let him know if they are going to show up or not. They just show up depending on if it is daylight or not, if they have the time, and/or the staffing. However, whether they are weekly or daily publications, they help publicize the Pony Express to thousands of people. With the 600 riders or more, including their family and friends, we need to keep talking to the media. He has handed out brochures to each state. If you need more, please contact him and he'll get them in the mail to you. Also, if you want copies of the National Park Service Map and Guide Pony Express, you can go online to the Pony Express National Historic Trail, and you will see where you can email them to request a copy of the brochure and map. This is a great resource to get members and visitors centers. These are the large maps and guides.

He started collecting newspaper articles when he first became a member and people would also send him articles. He has finally organized them in five oversized scrapbooks and he could fill two more once he finds a couple more. He hopes to donate what he has to the association. He is hoping to have them at California next year for us to look at.

Pony Express Gazette — Arleta Martin

She thanked everyone who had sent in submissions to be published. After many years of publishing the Gazette, she would like to step down. If anyone would be interested in taking over or know of someone who would like to take over, please let her know. She would be glad to help the new person stepping up. Cheryl Nein thanked her for doing an outstanding job. Dean Adkins told her she has been amazing with this. They were lucky to find the Transcript to print the Gazette. They are really great to work with. There were

a lot of members who did not receive the Gazette in 2021 due to a problem at the post office, but this year, most everyone received theirs. The extras usually go to Larry Carpenter and to Les Bennington to distribute as needed.

Partnership for National Trails and National Park Service Reports — Amanda Svoboda

She thanked everyone who sent her all the information she requested and for everyone's patience with all of her questions. The reporting format was new this year and she thanked those in the National offices for all of their help and guidance to get the reports completed correctly. All the states are represented in the reports. She did request that if you send her any pictures, to please also add a description so she knows for sure what the picture is representing.

Melva emphasized how important it is to make sure you send information in to be included in the reports. This is how we get our support from the National Park Service and she knows there are things going on that are not being reported. If you have the information, go ahead and send to Amanda when you do it. You don't have to wait for her to send out a request.

Website Report — Pam Simmons for Mary Cone

Mary has a lot of good statistics and numbers in her reports. You can see we've come a long way with our website and social media, and the map. Pam was constantly on her laptop watching where the Pony was during the ride. Mary is absolutely amazing with all she does. And if she doesn't know something she will research and learn it and get ahold of anyone she needs to for help. During the ride, she follows it during the day and Heather Payne in Germany follows it at night. One of the most used pages is the Follow the Ride page. It has the map and updates from the trail on it. Please email Mary at the national email any pictures and any details of your ride because people love to read about how the ride went, what you ran into to, what you saw, etc. When it comes to the website, Mary would like one representative from each state to keep an eye on their state's page and let her know what's going on, like an event or a membership drive. Also keep Mary up to date on any officer changes so she can keep that information up to date also. If you have an event coming up, and

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would like to advertise it, she can put that on too. Pam thanked everyone for sending Mary information. Mary is looking forward to seeing current events on the website.

Facebook Report – Pam Simmons

Pam received so many positive comments from nonmembers on the pictures and following the ride. Like Dave Sanner mentioned yesterday, try to have members in uniform. She couldn't really use some of the pictures because there were members not in uniform. She thanked everyone who let her take pictures and thanked Dave Sanner for stopping all the time so she could take more. Her posts were actually down this year from last year, but she has had a lot more activity on the posts. She has actually had more people interacting with our Facebook page. Her goal is to have a couple posts a week through the whole year and then during events like the reride, lots of posts. Take lots of pictures and text or email them to her so she can use them on our National Facebook page. Her new email address is npeapam@gmail.com. She thanked everyone for sending her pictures. She loves seeing everything that the states are doing. Les Bennington noted how interesting it is that there are so many other countries interested in the Pony Express. Pam also pointed out that in the breakdown of ages, it shows we do not have a lot of activity from the younger generations. We need to address and figure out how to get them interested in our history and current events.

Budget 2023 – Melva Sanner

This fall, Lyle Ladner will be turning in a budget request for the year 2023. We did not have a task agreement for 2021 and have been working off of the 2020 budget numbers. National Parks doesn't need a budget if we do not have a task agreement with them. We now need to work up a budget for 2023.

The budget for 2023 will look similar to our last budget. We are going to attempt to increase our travel expense and insurance expense lines. The request will probably be more around the \$55,000 to \$60,000 range. The other line items will all be about the same. We will budget for nine months, then will try to get back to the September 15th to September 14th schedule. We will be working with National Park in hopes of getting a new task

agreement.

Educational Miles and Hours – Lyle Ladner

A couple states stepped up with their reporting this year so they received more reimbursement than they have in the past. For the third quarter, he reached back and paid some expenses that hadn't been paid yet from the years 2020 and 2021. Everyone needs to report your education hours and mileage so they can be reimbursed their expenses. Thank you to everyone who turns in their forms and for any information he can't use for education, he turns over to Amanda Svoboda for the National reports. Cathy Stevens asked if she needed to send her education hours to both him and Amanda. Lyle automatically forwards all education hours on to Amanda so the states can just send them to him.

(10 minute break)

Insurance – Fred Leslie

Fred handed out homemade cookies and pointed out that there were not two exactly alike. They were all different but they all tasted good. Just like we are all different but we all work well together to make this organization work.

He reemphasized the fact that we need to make sure everyone is wearing their uniforms. We are representing a great organization and we should be proud to be wearing our uniforms. We should be making sure new members can ride a horse and know how to run their horse. A lot of members join just to ride, however, it takes a lot of people to make this organization work. There are so many people working behind the scenes to make sure things get done. It is just not the riders. It takes the efforts of everyone, including our sponsors.

He handed out the form he sends to our insurance company. Please look over the bottom part that lists the additional insured. If there are any listed that you no longer need, please let him know so he can remove them. Remember, if there is an event with a horse, contact him as soon as possible. He needs the date, the type of event, the name of the event, and location. Last year we had 58 events. Before COVID we average around 80. Wyoming had 22 of the 58 events this year.

Melva reminded everyone that is very important for states to keep the waivers that the riders sign. The waiver is only good if you have it. Each member needs a waiver for each state they participate

in. Lyle Ladner asked if you need a new waiver if there is a name change. You should ask for a new one, however it is not a necessity if you have one with their other name on it.

NPEA HAM Coordinator—Ron Norton

Ron has a detailed report in the binder. He talked about some of the highlights of his coverage. He thanked all of the HAM operators who helped throughout the ride. A lot of people do not realize the time, effort, and all the equipment that goes into the HAM radio side of the Pony Express. Melva thanked all the HAM operators for volunteering their time to make sure we have coverage throughout the whole reride.

Postmark for St. Joe - Lyle Ladner

At St. Joe, he talked with two representatives from the Central Missouri Postmasters Association. They are wanting to step forward and help us. He has already talked to two representatives from the upper level of the Central Missouri Postmasters Association and has attended a zoom meeting with them explaining what we do. They are more than willing to help us with a postmark for St. Joe. We have been asked to present an hour long presentation at their official meeting at the Lake of the Ozarks, October 11th and 12th. Lyle credits Atchison's postmaster for helping us last year and that's probably what brought attention to us. We are hoping that next year we will have a St. Joe postmark to use.

Old Business

Strategic Plan – Jim Swigart

We were asked to create a Strategic Plan by putting in writing our missions, goals, and visions. The National Parks Service and the states can refer to it when they are asked what we are all about. It states what we have done from the past to present. It is reviewed annually and edited as necessary. All of our goals are marked as ongoing because things are always changing.

Re-Ride Hotline – Melva Sanner for David Kittle

David was unable to attend, but his report is in the binder. The numbers are down some due to the website and Facebook.

GPS Tracker – Melva Sanner and Lyle Ladner

You have to really schedule to connect up with the horse and mochila to change

the battery when needed. Melva changed to a lithium battery since they last longer and sometimes, she would change them early if it was going to need changed in a location where she wouldn't be able to get to the horse and rider. She has been in contact with Brian Deaton, who has suggested a new tracker be purchased for next year since the buttons are worn out. Lyle has the new tracker and it is purchased with Pony Express funds, not the National Parks funds.

Olympic Mochila – Melva Sanner

The Olympic mochila is currently in the Marysville, KS Museum. Would anyone want to display it elsewhere or should we leave it there for another year? Les Bennington suggested we leave it in Marysville one more year.

Rich Tatman/California moved to leave the mochila in Marysville one more year.

Jamie Marvidakis/Utah seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Sidney Monument at Cabela's Bass Pro – Pam Simmons

There is a detailed report in the binder, with a write up on the background of the monument and the issues we are dealing with. There are colored pictures attached and these pictures do show some of the tattered flags. This is a NPEA monument and every state is equally represented at the monument, therefore we need to maintain it as a NPEA monument. The Vice Presidents have talked this over and have come up with three options. Pam went over the three options with the pros and cons of each one. Option A) Increase national dues by \$5.00. Option B) Each state provides national with three or four flags per year. Option C) Each state solicits donations. Each option was discussed in detail. It was decided give the members time to talk about this over lunch and we will revisit this when we reconvene.

New Business

Honorary Membership - Tony Goulart

Patrick Hearty nominated Dr. Joseph Hatch. Pat's nomination began with "I elect to nominate Dr. Joseph Hatch for National Honorary Membership. I don't think anyone deserves it more. The only copy of the national bylaws that I could find was pretty old but it states national honorary members shall be those determined by the board of directors as having contributed in an exemplary manner

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promoting the association and its purpose through special services, deeds, contributions, or length of service shall be awarded for life without national dues." He also states that Dr. Hatch has been a member of the Pony Express since 1997. He is now 92 years of age. He served as the Utah division president from 2007-2011, was a longtime reride caption, and instrumental in writing Utah's division by-laws. He is the co-author of two Pony Express books, has given numerous presentations on the trail to many different organizations, has carried the NPEA flag, among many other contributions. He is totally committed to the NPEA. The Vice Presidents agree with Pat Hearty and would like to put forth the nomination of Dr. Joseph Hatch for National Honorary Membership.

Fred Leslie/Utah seconded the nomination.

Nomination was accepted.

Permits for the Annual Reride – Rich Tatman

Rich addressed whether or not the states should be responsible for the permit costs or should National be helping with or paying for the permits. Most of the states do not have to pay for a permit. California and Utah have been having to pay quite a bit of money for permits. This was not an issue years ago. Carole Wendler was asked if that is something we can put in the budget. She will have to look into that, but told Lyle to go ahead and put that request in the 2023 budget proposal and they will see what they can do.

Obituaries - NPEA

Time was taken by all to reminiscence about those who have passed away this last year. There were a lot of good memories shared.

Break for Lunch – 11:40 A.M.

Reconvene - 1:03 P.M.

Discussion continued regarding the three options for the NPEA monument in Sidney, NE, that the Vice Presidents had worked up. Some of the concerns were the cost of a set of flags, the size of the flags, would raising dues be a hardship for families, what if every state doesn't follow through with providing their set of flags, soliciting funds is probably not the most reliable option, just to list a few.

Rich Tatman/California moved to raise the membership fees by \$5.00.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

The Treasurer will need to make sure to move this extra fee to the Flag Account in our budget.

2023 Re-ride Schedule – Melva Sanner

The moon is really odd for 2023, so in order to catch the full moon, we would have had to start the reride at the end of May. Scheduling with the blue moon would take us later into July. So, this schedule isn't exactly a full moon schedule, but close. Pam emailed this out to all the state Presidents before convention.

Rich Tatman/California moved to accept the 2023 reride schedule.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

2023 Re-ride pin, Vignette & Envelope

California is in charge of the pin, vignette, and envelope for next year. The 2024 convention is scheduled to be in Missouri.

Future Delegates Meetings

2023 - California

2024 - Missouri

Caldor Fire – Jim Swigart

Melva announced that this fire may have taken place in California, but it is a NPEA issue as well. It is very upsetting for California to have to trailer for part of the reride due to the trail being so heavily damaged by the fire. Jim would like for National to donate some seed money to show other organizations and companies, that he has talked to about clearing the trail, that we are serious in getting the trail rideable again. Whether National donates or not, he will continue to solicit funding to get the trail cleared and fixed. He is just working on getting the trail cleared for right now. He also has to honor Eldorado National Forest's criteria on who can work on the trail. He had to be certified just to go out and look.

Our Strategic Plan for the NPEA states we are to preserve the trail. He strongly feels that if companies see that we have invested time and money into clearing the trail, they would be more willing to help. There is about 23 miles of the trail that need to be worked on. Some places are worse than others. It will take a few years to get everything fixed, but clearing the trail is the first step. He feels we can get most of the trail opened up to be ridden. He will oversee and make sure the com-

pany he hires does what they say they will do. There are other horse clubs that might be willing to volunteer their time also.

There is one spot where we aren't going to get a horse and rider through, but he has contacted someone who is willing to build a temporary bridge that we would just use the day of the reride if the Eldorado National Forest will let us. Hopefully we can get at least 20 miles ridden and only have to trailer for 3 miles. Carole said National Parks did provide \$98,000 to do the study on the Brockliss bridge. They could potentially, depending on the forest service, apply for funding but this would be a couple of years out and would depend on a number of variables.

Rich Tatman/California moved we have the NPEA put up \$10,000 or hold in escrow for repair of the Pony Express Trail, Caldor Fire footprint in California.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Dan Pralle amended the motion to add up to \$10,000.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Jim thanked everyone and said he would keep us updated on the progress.

Other Business

Jamie Marvidakis asked if we could revisit the permit fees that California and Nevada are having to pay. Melva said the new budget is going to try to get that line item put back in and we will see where we are after that.

Melva received an email from the new curator from the Marysville Museum. He would like for the employees there to wear our uniform. Melva feels they should have to become members in order to wear our uniform. The consensus is that they would have to become a member in order to wear our uniform. Melva will speak to him regarding our decision.

Quackgrass Sally was part of a project for children's education. She has been a member of the Western Writers of America and has been on the board of directors. They have been wanting to get western literature and western history back in the schools. They have created a project called Packing the West. They were going to have authors come with a trunk that had items in it and literature for the kids to look at, along with a program presented. There are four categories: Legends of the West, Women of the West, Indians of the West, and Trails of the West. Then

COVID hit and they weren't allowed to go to the schools, but the teachers still wanted the program. So, they received a grant and were able to film eight, seven to ten minute videos. There is school curriculum for each video. They are trying to get these videos into charter schools, public schools, and home schools. In the videos, today's kids meet historic people. They are looking for feedback, so if you know of anyone who is interested in this material, please contact her.

Jerry Miller spoke about the Ham Operators in Nevada. Two years ago, he was presented the opportunity to head up the Pony Express communications in Nevada. Himself, along with all the other HAM operators, appreciate every time that they are thanked. They are here to support us in any way they can. They cannot make the ride safer for us, or take away all the hazards for us, but they will be there for us if something happens. Due to their group having fewer and older members, they are reaching out to 4x4 clubs to help them get on top of mountain peaks and other places they need to be with relay signals. They try to keep people at a distance and they ask the ride captains where they want them to be. They are fortunate to have a group from Las Vegas and a guy from Florida come and put up antennas on the tops of the mountains. They have people manning the base station 24 hours a day to not only be able to get a distress call out, but also to be able to call one in if there's an emergency at home. There are around forty people that run the operation in Nevada. They maintain twelve different frequencies and have eight to ten repeaters and also rely on the repeaters from Utah. It is quite an operation and the volunteers are happy to do it and enjoy it doing it.

Gifts of Appreciation – Melva Sanner

Melva presented gifts to Lyle Ladner and Jack Davis for serving as Treasurers, to Amanda Svoboda and Wendy Cobb for serving as Secretaries, and Pam Simmons, Tony Goulart, and Howard Schultz for service as Vice Presidents.

She has enjoyed her time as President and it has been an honor to serve as our President the last few years.

Report of Nominating Committee-Dean Atkin and Lyle Ladner

Dean and Lyle presented Dave Sanner with a gift as the spouse of the outgoing

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President. They then presented Melva Sanner with the President's belt buckle for her time serving as our President and thanked her for all of her hard work and time.

Dean announced that the committee has selected Pam Simmons as the nominee for President.

There were no further nominations from the floor.

Les Bennington moved by acclamation to accept Pam as President.

Rich Tatman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Presentation of Officers – Pam Simmons

- 1st Vice-President - Fred Leslie
- 2nd Vice-President - Mary Cone
- 3rd Vice-President - Dan Pralle
- Treasurer - Lyle Ladner
- Secretary - Amanda Svoboda
- Gene Ockert/Nevada moved we accept the new officer team.

Rich Tatman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pam has asked Dean Atkins to serve as the National Parks Service Trail Project liaison. She would like for him to work with Dan Pralle on more signage and any repairs to the trail. Dean will be the point person to work with the Parks.

Pat Hearty will continue as National Historical Committee Chairman and Trails Committee Chairman.

Larry Carpenter will continue as Corresponding Secretary.

Fred Leslie will continue as Insurance Coordinator.

Mary Cone will continue with the NPEA website. She would like for someone to help her out, especially during the ride.

Arleta Martin will continue with the Gazette for another year. She would like for someone to help with the Gazette and/or take it over.

Announcements/Adjournment

Les Bennington reminded everyone to please turn in their expense form to him or Lyle Ladner by tonight.

Pam thanked Utah for the great convention they hosted.

Rich Tatman moved to adjourn the meeting.

Gene Ockert/Nevada seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

The National Pony Express Association
a non-profit organization, is dedicated to the preservation and marking of the Pony Express National Historic Trail.



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