


National Pony Express Association - Hosting Guidelines

It's your state's turn to host - Now what!!

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(*) corresponds to items in the Hosting Planning Task list

National Pony Express - Hosting Year Deadlines/Milestones

See <https://nationalponyexpress.org/about/news-for-members/> for additional information

Item	Deadline	Who to coordinate with
Mochila	Mid May	Letter Secretary
Letter	Jan 1	Letter Secretary
Envelope	Jan 1	Letter Secretary
Pin	Jan. of Re-Ride Year	Les Bennington
Convention Registration Form	Feb. 28 of Hosting Year	Gazette Editor
Convention Registration Form	Feb. 28 of Hosting Year	Stablemaster
Determine Venue	Prior Year Convention	Delegates/Officers

Overview

This document is to help hosting states plan the Re-Ride and the Convention for the year that they are responsible as hosts. The states along the trail rotate the hosting responsibility, meaning each state will host every 8 years.

This document is not intended to be a complete list of tasks but a guideline of things to consider and provide when it is your state's turn to host.

The hosting rotation:

- Missouri
- Nevada
- Nebraska
- Wyoming
- Colorado
- Kansas
- Utah
- California

Any deviations to the rotation would be discussed at the annual convention, additional information is in the annual convention binder.

Re-Ride

In addition to the annual Re-Ride activities for your state, the hosting state is also responsible for providing the Mochila for the Re-Ride, content for the commemorative letter, and design of the envelope & pin.

Mochila (*)

The hosting state is responsible for ordering and paying for the mochila.

Note: It is a good idea to draw/sketch out the wording that what you want to have on the Mochila and what should be placed where, i.e. State, Year, etc.

- There are several saddle makers/leather workers who have the pattern to make the mochila and have made one in previous years:
 - Jake and Laura McCracken
 - (bluemoundcowboyranchllc@yahoo.com)
 - Gordie Musil (Gordie's Cut & Cover)
 - 41301 Highway 30 Gothenburg, NE 69138
 - 308 529 1128 or 308 5373203

Confirm the Mochila Spot Device receptacle size with the National President. The device size can change as new models are utilized. The pattern may not reflect the correct size.

10/2024 - Current Spot device size Spot gen4 3 1/2" long, 2-3/4" wide, 1" deep

- Patterns are available from:
 - Lyle Ladner
 -

Information needs to be identified to be tooled into the mochila, i.e. year, state, etc. The mochila needs to be sent to the Letter Secretary in order for the Re-Ride letters to be packaged into the mochila in time for the start of the Re-Ride. Please contact the Letter Secretary and National President for deadlines.

Pouch for the GPS device - check for measurement of current device with the National President.

Letters/Envelope (*)

Each year the annual Re-Ride carries actual mail that the association sells. This is a combination of personal & commemorative letters. The state will work with the Letter Secretary to determine deadlines for when the information is needed so that the letters and envelopes can be printed in time.

Personal Letter

The Letter Secretary sends stationery to folks who order this. They will write the letter and mail it back to the Letter Secretary to be included in the Re-Ride.

Commemorative Letters

The Commemorative Letter Is a vignette that is provided by the hosting state. The state chooses a topic regarding Pony Express history (rider, station, event, founder, stationkeeper). It can be two sided. Please avoid repeating topics from prior years; use these tips as helpful guides only.

The Commemorative Letter measures approximately 5-½" x 8-¾" on A5 size paper printed B&W "best", font size = 10.

Envelopes

Both the Commemorative and Personal Letter are put in an envelope that the state designs. Envelope size is 6 ½ inches x 3 ⅝ inches. Suggestions for graphics are below:

Front

- An image for the **bottom left corner** not to exceed 1 ⅝ x 2 ¾ inches
 - The image should be related to the Pony Express or the Commemorative letter topic.
- NPEA Pregnant Triangle

Back

- **Flap** - Re-Ride #; state; Re-Ride year (i.e. 162nd – Utah 2022) - approx 3 x 1 inches.
- **Bottom** - The Re-Ride map with the Pony Rider in the ride direction & **National Pony Express Association, Inc.**

Re-Ride Pins (*)

The annual Re-Ride pins are provided by National. The hosting state will need to provide design information to Les Bennington. National will design and order them and provide them to the states in time for the Re-Ride.

Design includes:

- Background Color
- Highlight color (silver or gold) - includes the color of the pin in back
- Pony Trail through state
- Pony Rider in ride direction
- Other (i.e. stars for special locations)

Re-Ride Swag/Handouts/Gifts (information only)

The annual Re-Ride swag is provided by National. The National President will order it and then provide it to the states during the Re-Ride.

Re-Ride Stamp for bibles (information only)

The stamps are ordered and mailed to each state president by the National President prior to the Re-Ride. These stamps are used to stamp the rider bibles. The rider on stamps are in the ride direction.

Convention

There is a lot of planning involved to make the Annual National Convention happen. The hosting state usually starts this 18 months before the Convention.

Dates

Convention is usually held in September, the Friday and Saturday after Labor Day. The Convention must be held prior to September 15th.

Location (*)

The venue decision is up to the state. The location should consider a hotel(s) that can accommodate 100-125 people, conference/meeting room facility with audio visual capabilities. The hosting state needs to secure the hotel venue and ask them to reserve a block of rooms. Wi-Fi, meal catering (Friday - lunch/dinner and Saturday - lunch/dinner), meeting rooms.

An optional meet and greet may be planned for Thursday as people arrive. Companion events and other suggestions are helpful for the spouses / partners who are not attending the meeting. The location should be announced at the prior year convention.

It is up to the state to determine the cost of the convention to delegates.

Traditionally, the state puts together a goodie (swag) bag that includes local information and goodies.

Saturday evening the state hosts a dinner and auction (silent/live). The format of the event is up to the hosting state.

Consider establishing a planning committee including an email address for questions with vendors/hosts.

Budget/Financials (*)

The hosting state is responsible for determining the budget and covering the costs. You will work with the National Treasurer to determine what National will be able to provide towards the cost. Consider applying for grants from local groups to help subsidize funding towards the cost of the convention.

Registration Form (*)

State will provide an online registration form to the Gazette Editor and the Stablemaster. The information on the form should include dates, location, accommodations including camping options; cost (for attending all days; for attending the evening meal only; companion event cost - as applicable).

Determine where the registrations need to be mailed and how the payments will be recorded for your state.

Convention logistics

Registration (*)

Location for attendees to register, table for material, swag bags.

- Master list of Registrants (multiple copies)
- Name tags/Lanyards/Blank Name tags (extra)
- List of extra meals
- Swag Bags

Logistics - Name tags with lanyards. The state should print name tags for all registrants. The information on the badge should include first and last name, member's state, and member's role.(delegate, officer, etc.)

Provide a Cover Sheet for the convention binder to the National Secretary by August 15th.

Example

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zxaiHXYN9-QWnEeOISvIJHU5xTosdDtCx0u5dLi-tH4/edit?usp=sharing>

Online Schedule (Optional)

Provide an online schedule for folks to reference and see leading up to Convention

[Convention Schedule](#)

Meetings (*)

Meeting room(s)

Setup tables, American flag for the pledge, projector, screen, microphone. Each table needs to have the state printed on a place card to indicate where states need to sit. Check with National President for any requirements

- American flag for the pledge
- Projector/screen/microphone
- Computer & connection cords
- State table cards
- Current year's mochila and stand

Special Meetings (Optional)

Check with the National President if there will be any special meeting requirements during convention, i.e. President's Meeting, Strategic Planning, etc.

Trails Meeting

Objective - Discuss Re-Ride and any trails issues

Logistics - Meeting room set up should be such that the state delegates can sit at tables together. Work with National President and National Secretary to determine what equipment they need (i.e. overhead, screen, microphone)

Board Of Directors/Delegates Meeting

Objective - meeting of national officers and state delegates and trail partners to discuss, manage and administer the affairs of NPEA

Logistics - Meeting room set up should be that the state delegates can sit at tables together. Work with National President and National Secretary to determine what equipment they need (i.e. overhead, screen, microphone)

- Consider highlighting information about the location and how it relates to Pony Express. This will help educate folks that traveled from out of state/area.

Silent/Live Auction (*)

The state planning committee will determine if your state will hold a silent or live auction. Traditionally, this is on Saturday evening.

- Reach out to NPEA states to see if they can bring silent auction items.
- Supplies needed:
 - Bid sheets and descriptions
 - Clip Boards? Something to mount the sheets on for bids
 - Pens
 - Cash Box/Credit Card processing
 - Stands/Saddle racks/etc for auction items
 - Extra Bid Sheets for things brought to the Convention
 - Be ready to have space/time to make extra bid sheets for items people bring with them to convention.

Communication (*)

What needs to be communicated to whom/when in email communications about the event.. Include NPS, BLM, state presidents, national officers.

Publicize the convention locally to help folks in town identify the Pony Express members

NPEA Convention - Nevada Registration Confirmation

Dear Pony Fan,

Thank you for your registration for the National Pony Express Convention in CITY, STATE on September X and X, 20XX at the **HOTEL/CONVENTION INFO**

For more information: [WEBSITE](#)

[Group Info for hotel/code/price/etc](#)

Reservations must be made **before Deadline** to receive the group rate.

The Convention Planning Committee has been working hard to arrange a memorable event, and we look forward to seeing you.

If you are interested in helping during the convention, please let us know. We are looking for volunteers to help with:

- [Registration \(Thu PM , Fri AM/PM, and Sat AM/PM\)](#)
- [Silent Auction \(Sat PM\)](#)
- [Outreach event at the California Trail Center \(Fri Afternoon\)](#)

[Museums](#)

[Other](#)

[Shopping](#)

[Antique Stores](#)

[Restaurants](#)

On behalf of the committee,

[NAME, Chairman](#)

Sample Comms

Subject: *Request for Donations for [20XX](#) Annual Convention –*

Dear Pony Express Members,

I hope this message finds you well.

As we prepare for the [20XX](#) National Pony Express Association Annual Convention, scheduled for [September X & X in XXX](#), we are reaching out to request your support in gathering donations for our fundraising efforts for the silent auction on Saturday evening. National Pony Express Association - [ADD YOUR EIN - EIN\(\)](#).

Donated items help make the convention a success, allowing us to support NPEA programs and activities throughout the year. We kindly ask each state to consider contributing items for our

auction. These can include handmade goods, regional specialties, memorabilia, or other creative items that showcase the spirit of the Pony Express.

To assist us in organizing and preparing the necessary materials (such as bid sheets and item descriptions), please email us a description and photo of your donation(s) by **August 15**. This will allow us time to create accurate and appealing donation sheets ahead of the convention.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to preserving the legacy of the Pony Express. If you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Please remember to mail in your registration for the convention, here is the link for additional information. <https://nationalponyexpress.org/npea-events/upcoming-convention/>

Facebook Posts (provide to Media team) - example

 **Reminder!** 

Don't miss your chance to join us for the **NPEA Convention** happening **September X-X, XXXX in XXXXXX, XX.**

✅ **Early registration discount ends August 1st** – save your spot *and* save money!

Convention Highlights Include:

 **Public Day at the XXXXX**

Enjoy a day open to the public with exhibits, presentations, and hands-on activities celebrating our Pony Express heritage.

 **Friday Dinner (Registration Required)**

Savor an authentic Basque meal followed by live traditional dance performances—an Elko tradition!

 **Workshop (Registration Required)**

Create a custom-burned hat/purse and embellish it during this fun workshop.

 **Saturday Dinner/entertainment (Registration Required)**

Wrap up the convention with great food, lively music, and a silent auction featuring unique items and memorabilia.

👉 **Register now** and take advantage of the early bird rate: [NPEA Convention](https://nationalponyexpress.org/npea-events/upcoming-convention/)

Whether you're coming to connect, learn, or lead, this year's event is one you won't want to miss.

Press Release - Convention (example)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pony Express Riders Gallop into **XXXXXX** for National Convention

City, State — Date— The National Pony Express Association (NPEA) Convention returns this year to the historic American West, taking place **September X–X, 20XX**, in **City, State**. Hosted by the National Pony Express Association, this annual gathering brings together history buffs, equestrian enthusiasts, and Re-Ride riders from across the nation to celebrate and preserve the legacy of the legendary Pony Express.

A highlight of this year's convention is **XXXXXXX**. This free, family-friendly celebration invites locals and visitors alike to step back in time and witness the reenactment of a **mochila exchange**—a live changing of the mail saddlebag carried by riders, just as it was done during the original Pony Express of 1860–61.

“Determine a quote for the convention,” said NPEA Convention Committee Chair, **CHAIRNAME**. “The Pony Express mochila exchange is not just a reenactment—it’s a living tribute to the spirit of the West, and we welcome everyone to come and experience it.”

The full two-day convention also includes member-only sessions, historical presentations, and awards recognizing dedication to preserving the Pony Express legacy. For more information about the convention and the National Pony Express Association, visit: www.nationalponyexpress.org

Media Contact:

Contact Name

Convention Email to Attendees (example)

Dear Pony Convention Attendees,

We're delighted you'll be joining us at the **20XX Pony Express Convention**, happening **September XX in City, State**. Get ready for a fantastic lineup of events!

** Explore the full schedule here:**

[View the 2025 Convention Schedule](#)

**** Here are some highlights:****

- **Thursday, September 4 (Evening):**
Meet & Greet at the **Location/Address/Time**. Enjoy event details, i.e. cash bar, food etc
 - **Friday, September X:**
 - **8 AM** Registration Opens
 - **9 - 12** Committee Meetings
 - **1- 3:30 PM** Trails Meeting
 - **5:00–7:00 PM:** Dinner & entertainment
 - **Saturday, September X:**
 - **8 AM** Registration Opens
 - **9 AM - 4 PM:** Delegates Meeting
 - **5:00–9:00 PM:** Silent Auction in the 2nd-floor ballroom—bring your checkbook!
 - **5:00–9:00 PM:** Dinner & entertainment featuring Southwind band
-

Please note that a separate email for those volunteering will follow soon.

See you in **CITY**!

Convention Email to Volunteers (Example)

Hello Pony Volunteers

Thank you for volunteering to help make our Convention a success. Please find important information below.

The [Convention Schedule](#) is online for easy reference

We are keeping in mind that **XXXX** are delegates and trying to not assign them during the relevant meetings.

Contacts/Phone Number

Chair

Event	Date/Time	Volunteer(s)	Location	Coordinator
Thursday September XXX				
Meet & Greet				
Meet & Greet				
Friday September XXX				
Registration				
Companion Activity				
Dinner				
Cleanup				
Saturday September XXX				
Registration				
Workshop				
Companion				

Activity				
Silent Auction - Setup/Cashier/Runners/Tear Down				