

June 2010

NEXT SERVICE PROJECT:

June 19, Bench Creek Trail Deadfall Cleanup Project (p.6)

NEXT RIDES:

June 5: Nobletts (and 1 Horse Pack Clinic)
June 24-25: Blackhawk rides and camp-out (p.6)

NEXT MEETING:

Thur June 10, 7pm
[Cottonwood Retirement Center 1245 East Murray-Holladay Road \[4752 South\]](#) Bear/Wolf Safety

THANK YOU! RIDE LEADER: BOB BAKER

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Mountain Ridge

Back Country Horsemen of Utah

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E



Paul and Rory in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area of Montana, Spanish Peaks Unit 8/2009

We had our own set of chores a few weeks ago when I recruited Kathie, my wife and Erika my daughter for spring chores and fencing duty at our place in Island Park. Between the wind and the snow and the livestock, the fences up north take quite a beating and have to be repaired come spring time. We got the job done and were heading back south towards home when on the highway we came across a mature grey wolf. It has only been a few years since wolves were reintroduced into Yellowstone and now they are just about everywhere.

We have had three organized service projects in the past little while. We gathered to clean up the miner's cabin at the end of the trail that commences at mile marker ten in Tooele County. We gathered to work on trail maintenance in Dimple Dell and then a week or so later a large group came together to clean up and spruce up a section of the rail trail near 10600 S. in Sandy. It was fun to get together in a spirit of service and then to be able to see the fruits of our labors. It really does make a difference – and it is visible. I have just about come to categorize the human race into two categories – those who litter and those who clean it up. As we improve the environment even on a small scale, we bring to life the principles of leave-no-trace. At any rate, these service projects have left positive memories in the hearts and minds of those who chose to pitch in and help.

It is not uncommon to hear their noisy howling symphony at night in the backcountry. That may sound romantic to some, but what it means – together with the resurgence of the grizzly bear in the same areas of the backcountry – is that there is less game than there was some years ago. I remember as a kid, we would jingle in the horses from a morning herd of twenty or so elk they had been grazing with overnight. I'm afraid those days are gone thanks to increased wolf and grizzly predation of the young.

It also means that there is an increased need know how to travel in grizzly and wolf habitat safely – from avoidance techniques to the use of pepper spray to the use of firearms in the back country. This will be the topic of our meeting on June 10. Several of us will share related experiences during the meeting. You will not want to miss this one. Hope to see you there.

— Paul Kern

AS EVENING SETS ON THE YELLOWSTONE
BY PAUL KERN

For miles you hear the rising howl,
It sends down a fleshy shiver,
Wolves are coming off the prowl,
Over there across the river.

It starts off hauntingly slow,
Then mounts up to the sky,
The pack all joins in down below,
'Til the howling pitch is high.

It hits you first with forlorn notes,
Drawn out in a minor key,
A dominant fifth from two silver coats,
Accompanies eerily.

A she-wolf joins in all alone,
Throat thrashing at the sky,
Letting fly a syncopated groan,
As evening drifts on by.

The primal whine is wild and high,
A call from another age,
They alone know the how and why,
As it echoes through the sage.

It starts off hauntingly slow,
With a piercing mournful moan,
The pack all joins in high and low,
As evening sets on the Yellowstone.



WOLVES OF YELLOWSTONE
[From the National Park Service](#)

At the end of 2009, at least 96-98 wolves in 14 packs (6 breeding pairs), 1 non-pack grouping, and 2 loners occupied Yellowstone National Park. This represents a 23% decline from 124 wolves in 2008. Despite the decline the number of breeding pairs did not change (6 in both 2008 & 2009). Intraspecific strife, food stress, and mange were likely cause for the decline. So far, there is no evidence of distemper as a cause of mortality, unlike previous population declines in 1999, 2005 and 2008. Pack size ranged from 3 (Lava Creek & Canyon) to 17 (Gibbon Meadows) and averaged 7.1, down from the long-term average of 9.8 wolves/pack. The average number of pups/pack in early winter was 1.8 for all packs, but 3.8 for packs that had pups, also down compared to the long-term average of 4.0 pups/pack. Project staff detected 365 wolf kills including 302 elk (83%), 19 bison (5%), 17 deer (2%), 1 moose (<1%), 4 pronghorn (<1%), 1 bighorn sheep (<1%), 1 Canada goose (<1%), 1 bald eagle (<1%), 3 coyotes (<1%), 2 red foxes (<1%), 6 wolves (2%), and 8 unknown prey (2%). The composition of elk kills was 24% calves, 36% cows, 29% bulls, and 10% unknown sex and/or age. Bison kills included 7 calves, 4 cows, 3 bulls, and 5 unknown sex adults. Intensive winter and summer studies of wolf predation are continuing.

WHAT WEIGHT WHERE? BY CINDY FURSE

Cindy & Carol have expanded the [packing page](#) to include lists of what TO take, how to take it, and (check the BCHU trail page) where to take it. Now the question is, just how much of this stuff can you take on your one trusty horse? One of the important considerations when packing all your gear on your riding horse is what NOT to take.

According to Jim Jensen, USU extension agent, 'Conventional wisdom says you should be able to go on extended trips with about 15% of a horse's weight and 20% on a mule as "dead" weight. [packs]. On loads where you are able to help balance the load, [saddle and rider] you usually figure 20-25% of the horse's body weight and 25-30% for a mule. That would mean a 1000 lb horse with about 150 lbs dead weight, 200-250 lbs of rider and saddle, or some kind of a blend for rider and pack. If you are going less than 20 miles per day or only a couple of days before you stop and set up base camp, you can add another 5% to those figures.' He also cautioned against excess weight behind the saddle.

When packing on your riding horse, distribute the weight so it is not all right behind the saddle. The horse's shoulders and hips are his strong points. The area right behind the saddle is relatively weak, with no rib structure to support dead weight. Support the saddle bags on the back of a Western saddle (which distributes the weight along the horse's back), or support at least a portion of the pack weight on the cantle of the English saddle. Also move some of the heavier items (high line, rain slicker/coat, water bottles, and heavier food or horse grain) to the horn or pommel. I also attach my tent and sleeping pad well behind the saddle bags, actually on my horse's hip. I try to pack 20 pounds or less in the

saddle bag, 5 pound tent/mat on the hip, and 10 pounds or less in the front of the saddle.

[Bernice Ende](#) rode over 7000 miles, first with two horses, and then with one. Outfitters' supply has a useful link on [packing saddle bags](#) And a lot of other [useful information](#).



The [US cavalry](#) were the masters of 'old time packing'.



'The complete pack and equipments for the American Cavalry weigh about 90#; and in comparison to this, the English packed saddle weighs 12 #; the German, 100 # or more; The Russian 120#; the Belgian over 102 #; and the Austrian appears to be the heaviest of all, weighing 137 #.' In light marching gear, the 150# rider and pack combined weighed about 200#. In heavy gear, 240#. According to the manual, an overloaded horse, as these surely were, could barely shuffle along. (From the Cavalry Horse and His Pack, by Lt. Jonathan Boniface)



JoAnn Lennox is a 'long rider' who rode the Pacific Crest Trail alone on a single horse. Read More [Here](#).

Her goal was to pack less than 220 pounds: 'I made my own packs out of Spectra cloth, a type of Kevlar, which is expensive but lightweight and very strong. They fit within the length of the saddle so that they would move with the saddle and would not rub on the withers or rump. The packing load mathematics are these: My riding saddle weighs 22 pounds; the blankets, halter, bridle, lead and reins weight about 5 pounds; my basic pack and contents weights 18 pounds (rain gear, flashlight, first aid kit, titanium pot, alcohol stove and fuel, hat, tarp with stakes, air mattress, Tyvek ground cloth, ditty bag with repair and personal hygiene items, fleece jacket and pants, pillow/small Thinsulite vest, warm underwear, bug bivy, maps, 1.5 lb. down sleeping bag, hobbles, bell, water purification, 2 water bottles, hoof pick, brush cut in half, high-line, collapsible bucket, saw, nose bag for feeding, easy boot). Since I weigh about 135 pounds myself, that brings the total basic load weight to 180 pounds (does not include feed or water).' She would then add 40 pounds of food and feed, which would last 4 days.

CORNER CANYON RIDE

May 15, 2010

Thank you to Clark Naylor, Draper Trails advocate, who introduced the various equestrian trails in Draper, and to Bob Baker who led a great ride! Clark told us that only about 4% of the use of the Draper trails is equestrian use, and that we need to keep using the trails in order to maintain our access. There are two watersheds we have to stay out of (Ghost Falls and Bear Creek), but they have made good trails around both of these, one of which we took on our ride. The watersheds are clearly marked. The only other request was to avoid riding boggy trails, as it damages them. Want to know where you can ride in Corner Canyon? Visit the [interactive online map](#) (we started at Andy Ballard Arena), or contact Clark or Bob. Also, I put the GPS file for our ride up on the BCHU GPS sharing site.



MOUNTAIN RIDGE BCHU 2010 SCHEDULE

*Blackhawk Flowers, June 25-27*

June 5, Nobletts (Uintas) Ride & 1-Horse Packing Clinic (Steve Johnson / Cindy Furse)

From the IGA in Kamas, go to the stop light, turn R. Go to next stop sign (this is Francis). Turn L (this is Wolf Creek Rd). Go 11-12 miles. Watch for the horse trailers in the big paved parking area on the L side of the road.

Bring lunch and water. Horses should be shod. Ride is medium difficulty (a lot of uphill) about 3-4 hours.

Be ready to ride at 10.

When we get back to the trailers, Cindy will show anyone who is interested what she is using/taking for packing with only one horse.

June 10, 7pm Monthly Meeting, Bear and Wolf safety. (Paul Kern) [Cottonwood Retirement Center 1245 East Murray-Holladay Road \[4752 South\]](#)

June 12-14, Pony Express 150th Anniversary Celebration (Diana van Uitert) (see p. 6)

June 19, Bench Creek Trail Deadfall Cleanup Project (Fred Leslie 801-484-3253, 801-450-2905, fredleslie101@gmail.com)

We'll be clearing the trail up Bench Creek in the Uintahs. This is the area we have ridden and packed in over the last 5 years. Each year there is extensive dead tree fall over the trail.

Some of this due to fires there years ago.

We are taking in chain saws to clear the trail. If you have a well tuned and sharpened chain saw please contact me. We will be meeting Saturday June 19 at 8:30 am in the IGA grocery store parking lot in Kamas. We will then caravan to the trailhead (It's an easy trailhead to miss). Lunch will be provided, bring your own drinking water, there is plenty of streams for the horses to drink.

We need lots of people, not just chain saw operators, we'll need people to hold horses, move cut logs etc, etc. Also this will be some great riding. Please call or e-mail me if you have questions.

June 25-27, Blackhawk Ride & Wildflower photography (& optional campout) (Cindy Furse 581-9225 cfurse@ece.utah.edu) Reserve a campsite in horse loop E at reservations.gov or call 1-877-444-6777. Members of BCHU have currently reserved sites 3-7 so choose another close by if you would like to camp close to friends.

If you don't want to camp, there

is a day parking area (there is a fee, I think \$5).

Friday we will meet at noon to discuss trails and be ready to ride by 1. It is a full moon, so we may also do a short evening ride. Please RSVP for Friday rides, so we know who will be coming. Check with [UDOT](#) on construction delays.

Saturday & Sunday be ready to ride at 10. Bring lunch and water. Rides will be 5-6 hours, medium difficulty.

July 8, Monthly Meeting, Firearms for Backcountry Safety (coordinator: Paul Kern)

July 9-11, Currant Creek Trail Project (Paula Hill)

July 22-24, Island Park Ride (15 riders max) (Paul Kern) Need Coggins, Health & Travel Permit

Aug 12, Monthly Meeting, Backcountry Tents and Tipis (Kirkhams), (coordinator: Ray Smith)

Aug 13-14, Crystal Lake Corduroy Packing Service Project (Fred Leslie)

Aug 19-21, Bryce Area Ride (Ray Smith)

Sept 9, Monthly Meeting, Dutch Oven Cooking (coordinator: Rinda Black)

Sept 18, Hemagog Trail Maintenance (Bob & Lisa Baker)

Sept 25, Soldier Hollow Ride (Bev Heffernan)

Oct 14, Monthly Meeting, Mustangs or First Aid with USU (coordinator: Cindy Furse)

Oct 23, American Fork Ride (Pat Wilson/Tom Smith)

Oct 29-30, Antelope Island Bison Roundup (30th) / opt campout (Paul Kern)

Nov 11, Monthly Meeting, Bare Foot Trim (coordinator: Tom Smith)

Nov 20 weekend (tentative), Wild Bunch-Robbers Roost Ride (Bruce Kartchner)

Dec 4, Stansbury Petroglyphs Ride (Paul Kern)

Dec 9, MR-BCHU Christmas Party (Tom Smith)

PONY EXPRESS CELEBRATES ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

By Diana vanUitert

Although the Pony Express lasted for only a brief 18 months, it is one of the most cherished and celebrated events in America's history. It is also a big part of Utah's history. 2010 marks the 150th Anniversary of the first run which was on April 3, 1860. Since I have been a member of the National Pony Express Association for almost 20 years, I have learned a thing or two about this great event. Hopefully, most of it is factual, but many tall tales have mixed with the truth over the years and it is difficult to separate them now. This is what I think I know.

After gold was discovered in California and during the Civil War, the mail was carried by steamship and stage-coach from the east to the west, which took a long time. Using horses and riders as a way to move the mail faster was the idea of William B. Waddell. He went to Alexander Majors and William Russell for financing. Together, they organized the Pony Express and recruited riders by advertising with posters that said, "Wanted, young, wiry, skinny fellows, willing to risk life daily. Pay is \$25 per week." Riders lined up for the job.

Each rider had to take an oath and swear to God that while under the employment of the Pony Express, he would not use profane language, drink intoxicating liquors, quarrel or fight with other employees, and in every respect, conduct himself honestly, be faithful in his duties and direct all acts as to win the confidence of his employers.

Then they were each given a small New Testament to carry with them on all their rides.

On April 3, 1860, Johnny Frye took off from St Joseph, Missouri towards Sacramento, California. In Sacramento, Harry Roff spurred his white horse on towards St Joseph. Riders went both directions simultaneously and the route went through eight states; California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, and Mis-

souri. This route was approximately 2000 miles long and it took the mail 10 days to travel the distance. The fastest run ever made was when the mochila (mail pouch) carried President Lincoln's inaugural address. It was called the Lightning Express and only took 8 days.

The mail was carried in a leather pouch called a Mochila. It was made to fit over a western saddle and the rider sat on it. It had four pockets called cantinas that held the mail. The postmaster

locked all, but one of the pockets, which was left open for loading or unloading mail along the way. The mail was wrapped in oiled silk cloths to protect it from horse sweat, weather or dirt. The mail was weighed and it cost \$5 per ½ ounce to send by pony. Many of the horses used for the Pony Express were of the Mustang breed because they were tough and had good endurance. These horses were well cared for and the company paid high prices for them. They were also coveted and often stolen by the Indians. It is rumored that some stationmasters kept the horses safe inside the stations while the riders had to sleep outside.

Indians were a problem for the Pony Express, especially in Utah and Nevada. In addition to stealing horses, they sometimes burned stations, and killed stationmasters and riders. Despite the troubles, it is said that only one mochila was ever lost. Stations were usually spaced about 10 to 20

miles apart, depending on water availability. A fresh horse was waiting for the rider at each station. Most riders would go for an average of 30 to 60 miles before retiring themselves. One rider by the name of Pony Bob, claims to have ridden over 300 miles after being shot with an arrow by an Indian before turning the mail over to another rider. Riders rode day and night, in all kinds of weather and over all types of terrain. Despite its best efforts, the Pony



PONY EXPRESS (CONTINUED)

Express started losing money right from the start. For every letter carried, the company lost \$13. William Waddell was sent to Washington to get money to bail the Pony Express out of bankruptcy. He was successful in obtaining the money, but lost it in a scandal and went to jail. Also, at that time the telegraph lines were making their way to California at a rate of 20 miles per day. Soon, the services of the Pony Express were no longer needed and the company went out of business in October of 1861.

From April of 1860 to October of 1861, Pony Express riders rode 308 runs between Sacramento and St. Joseph. The total distance covered was approximately 616,000 miles. This is the equivalent of riding 20 times around the world by horseback!

Regardless of whether what I have written is the truth or a little stretched, the fact is that the Pony Express served the purpose it was created for and it is a romantic part of our colorful western heritage. The National Pony Express Association is a group of people dedicated to keeping the memory of the Pony Express alive. This group participates in preserving the national historic trail, service projects, education of schoolchildren, and historical events. I am proud to be a member and I enjoy riding in the annual mail

re-ride. When I am galloping my horse on the historic trail near Simpson Springs, at 2AM and I can't even see the ground my horse is running on, it is easy for me to imagine what it must have been like for those brave young men to have been a part of the great Pony Express. What a rush!

COME AND BE A PART OF HISTORY BY ATTENDING ONE OR MORE OF THE FUN CELEBRATIONS!

Here is a list of the dates, times, and locations where celebrations are going to be held in Utah.

Times are unfortunately only our best "guess-timations" as we are subject to unforeseen delays sometimes. You can follow the reride via GPS link at

xphomestation.com

Saturday June 12, 2010

5:00 PM – Utah division receives the mail from Nevada in Ibapah.
8:30 PM – Mail arrives in Callao where a big celebration will be in progress including entertainment, food, a car show, teepees, dancing, and fireworks. Camping is available at the Willow Springs Ranch with a porta potty provided.

Horses will be contained by the campers. Riding is limitless from the ranch

Sunday June 13, 2010

8:00 AM – Mail leaves Callao.

4:30 PM – Mail arrives in Simpson Springs. BBQ provided by Tooele County.

7:00 PM – Mail stays overnight at Lookout Pass where rural camping is available.

Monday June 14, 2010

8:00 AM – Mail leaves Lookout Pass.

10:30 AM – Mail arrives in Fairfield.

Breakfast and brief celebration by BLM.

11:00 AM – Quick Stop in Eagle Mountain. ***Pony Express Days are celebrated this May 27-31 with concerts, vendors, crafts, a parade, and new this year, a PRCA Rodeo.

2:45 PM – Mail arrives at the Sandy City Museum. Celebration starts at 2PM with food, entertainment, and Chad Booth from "At Your Leisure".

5:00 PM – Mail arrives at This is the Place Heritage State Park. Big celebration to be hosted by the National Park Service and Salt Lake City.

Brief stops will be made at the East Canyon Resort 8:00 PM, Henefer 9:30PM, Echo 10:15 PM, and the mail will reach the Wyoming border at 2:00 AM on Tuesday.

For more information, contact Diana vanUitert at

dvanwhatever@gmail.com.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
[BCHU.com](http://www.BCHU.com)

HOW TO JOIN BCHU

The membership form to join Mountain Ridge BCHU is in the January newsletter. This is on the web at www.BCHU.com. Go to the Mountain Ridge chapter page, click on Newsletter Archives, then January 2010. It is on the last page of the newsletter. OR contact Cindy Furse (cfurse@ece.utah.edu) 801 581 9225,

SANDY PRIDE DAY – PORTER ROCKWELL TRAIL BY DORIS RICHARDS

Thanks to everyone who came to the May meeting and helped with the Porter Rockwell trail cleanup. A special thanks to Bruce Kartchner. He and his group of cub scouts and some parents spread several loads of wood chips in an area designated high priority by Sandy City. BCHU received special thanks from the Parks and Recreation department director, maintenance di-



rector and the Sandy Pride committee. Kathy and Larry Peterson, Paul Sanderson, Tom Smith, Paul Kern, Bill McEwan, Paula Hill, Jim Spreiter, Jo Stoddard, Dlane vanUitert, Pat Wilson, Becky Rock and Doris Richards were among those participating.