

Welcome to Ende of the Trail Archives
The following pages are from a previous website which offers a glimpse into previous rides, journal entries, and photographs.



Bernice Ende – Lady Long Rider

My deepest appreciation
to all of you who have helped
send me off this year.
~Bernice~



2009-2011 Ride - From the NW corner of Montana, we head West to the mouth of the Columbia River, Naselle, Washington.

Via the shortest route possible, we make our way to South Central Texas. From Wimberley TX we go North thru the panhandle of Texas into Oklahoma, Central Kansas, S.E. Nebraska into Iowa and into Minnesota (to visit family). The home stretch is westward across North Dakota into Eastern Montana and home before snow fly's into the northwest corner of Montana - Trego, MT.



"Live your life to inspire others and you too shall be inspired. Inspiration comes from within. Inspire yourself!"

--Cornelia Ende

**The 2009-2011 Ride
is dedicated
to Bernice's Mother, Cornelia Ende,
as are all of her rides.**

Please note, in 2009 when I set out on a 2 1/2 year ride covering 7000 miles, my route was to take me from the northwest corner of Montana to the Portland, Oregon area and then down to the Austin, Texas area. I had then planned on heading up along the Appalachian Trail, through the Adirondacks and back home, coming across Canada. We, Honor, my grey Thoroughbred mare, Essie Pearl, Claire and I made it as far as Austin where a misfortunate corral accident occurred and I lost my beloved Honor. This story is told in the current and archive pages of this website. Hart, my big, paint gelding that I now ride, needed road training and seasoning to the ways of long riding, so I changed the route, changed my ride, and we headed north into the wide open spaces of the Texas panhandle, then on up through the plains and upper midwest and finally turning back towards Montana after a visit with family in Minnesota.



End of a Ride thoughts and thank you

Rarely is the route, the journey, the road we set out on the one we actually travel. Plans are made preparations and details attended to. Arrangements and checklist all in order and then you're off and the journey is no longer really yours but rather you are the journey's. You must relinquish ownership and turn yourself over to the ride. Give up the need to control, replace it with faith and trust in your destiny. Pay attention, use caution, use skill.

If there is one word to best describe long riding it would be, in my humble opinion, the word "**uncertain**". The first half of the ride went well. We safely crossed the Cabinet and Bitterroot Mt. ranges of Montana and Idaho. Snow falling and in many places as much as a foot of snow remained on the ground as we rode into March spring weather. We entered Eastern Washington south of Spokane. Followed the John Wayne trail much

of the way as we headed west to visit the Gwinn family of the Yakima Nation in Toppenish, WA. I was granted permission to cross Tribal lands that took me and my tribe across the southern half of Mt. Adams. Where I nearly lost Essie Pearl on a dangerously foolish crossing of the Cascade Mountains at Look Out Peak. We stayed with the Cossman family of Battle Ground, WA. The horse's rested well for a week while I visited friends in Naselle, WA. Bob Cossman hauled us across Portland and I headed back east making good time across eastern Oregon...Rattlesnake country!! At Weiser, Idaho we plunged into the Salmon River mountain range and the Sawtooth Wilderness area. Some of the most spectacular country I have yet to ride. Two hundred miles of fence-less, pristine country from Weiser, Idaho to Arco.. Day after day the sun rose on our left remained hot up[on our faces the entire day then quietly rested then made its exit on the western horizon. I crossed the unforgiving barren Snake River Plain with a cracked rib from an accidental kick Honor thrust on me late one night. We crossed on to the Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Nation at Fort Hall where I was once again granted permission to cross tribal lands that took us south into Evanston, Wyoming. Dropping south yet again into Vernal, Utah, Grand Junction, the Uncompahgre Plateau, then into Durango, Colorado. Late September had set in by the time I crossed into New Mexico at Farmington. I reached my sisters home east of Albuquerque in late October. Stayed 5 weeks and continued on to Roswell, New Mexico with winter winds at my back. Crossed in Texas north of Andrews on Jan. 1st 2010. We faced the very heart of the Texas oil fields, a busy city of trucks, we passed thru Midland and Odessa, TX. In Menard Texas I met the Wright family(and many others who came to my aid later in the ride) Holly and her husband Tommy Nixon- ranchers..... took me in when a tooth abscessed, I lay safe, warm and dry in bed with Claire at my feet, recovering. The horses in comfortable stalls as unusually heavy torrential rains pelted the roof. The Nixon's were instrumental in getting us back on the road when I lost my horse Honor.

When I left on this ride in March of 2009, two years and 4 months ago with Honor, Essie Pearl and Claire dog, it was my intention to cover a route that reached into far eastern United States and took us into Canada, over 7000 miles. We had successfully traveled 3000 miles into the ride when fate had a different route in mind. At Wimberley, Texas (west of Austin 30 miles)while visiting my sister Carol I lost my long time companion Honor in a corral accident. I felt that I would crumble. That I would never ride again it was a painfully sobering experience. With the help of so many, like Madalyn Ward DVM and Sharon Murphy, The Austin Equine Clinic, Holly Nixon and so many others that offered support and encouragement to "get on with it" ,,,,,, who came to my aid and helped me keep moving because of them.... the ride continued.

The Odie Wright family of Menard, Texas generously offered a replacement horse. I felt it was far to dangerous to ride into the congestion facing me on the eastern side of the United States with a new horse. "Hart" as he came to be known(because he's from the "heart of Texas") was a big 14yr old Paint gelding that was soft as butter and had no real traffic or traveling experience. So I turned our heads north into the pan-handle of Texas into Kansas and Nebraska were we traveled slowly, conditioning

and introducing "Hart" to the world of long riding. I left not only my beloved Honor in Texas but a young pup named Francis that joined up with us for a short time, and then died shortly before leaving the Texas panhandle. Loss is sobering. It pulls hard at our hearts and makes us doubt our very existence. Why? we want to know Why must any of us lose that which we love most.

Never have I ridden such violent weather as I did in Kansas and Nebraska last year. Coming up through "tornado alley" as it is referred to-- in the spring-- was dangerous enough but to have waited any longer would have meant heat unbearably humid sultry heat to travel thru. In Nicodemus, Kansas I visited with historian Angela Bates for a few days and then took up a route I had ridden in 2006. Day after day I met folks that remembered "a woman on a horse riding south with a dog that was walking". Into Nebraska and Iowa smiles and handshakes even tears of joy met me. What I was so struck by as I recalled that earlier ride was how much I had needed their help, how little I knew. That it had only been through the kindness of 100s of people who passed me safely along from small town to small town from friend to neighbour that I accomplished those earlier rides. They filled me with encouragement and with hope to keep going . It was a long stretch of reflection.

In Minnesota Rayma Smith's hosted our stay at her lovely home west of Minneapolis while I visited family, attended a nephews wedding, gave talks in the area and waited out the worst of summers heat before heading back out. Before heading home. That was August 2010. I hauled out of the busy Minneapolis Metropolitan area and rode west into the setting sun each night crossing into north Dakota west of Fergus Falls. Another season unfolding as we moved slowly across eastern North Dakota. Westerly winds eased the still heavy flies and mosquito's. North Dakota is busy and prospering. And we were treated like celebrities (much of it due to to many women from the N.D.dept of tourism and the N.D.Chamber of Commerce). North Dakota is beautiful!!

By the time I had reached Miles City, Montana I was just plain running out of steam. The urgency of moving forward to cross the Rocky Mountains before a blanket of winter snow made it impossible began to fade, it was obvious I would never make it home to Trego until 2011. We wintered in Forsyth, Mt. In a tent, in a barn owned by 90 year old Bill Straw. With only a set of corrals and a stock tank on a section of land (640 acres) surrounded by a flat treeless ocean of sagebrush and snow we "hunkered down" for a winter of hibernation.

An unusually long winter kept us there until April 15Th when we, Claire dog, Essie Pearl and Hart and I finally headed home following the Yellowstone River Basin to Three Forks. Then North to Boulder where I met a woman who was my "best friend" from the ages of 6 and 10 back in Minnesota. We had not seen nor spoken to one another for 48 years, it was a profound "chance" meeting. The snow pack kept us from crossing the Jocko River Rd and I had to drop down thru Missoula and ride up a dangerous hwy 93.

BUT there were so many people that stopped -people from Trego- friends from home and there is just nothing like "coming home" . Oh how I cried when I finally reached the arms of my dearest friend Mel Evans and her husband Bill Stevens.

I have been home 3 weeks now, working my way around to friends that I have not seen in 3 years and 4 months. We are all changed some friends have passed away and others have brought new children into the world. It a dizzy pace even in this small corner of the world that they continue to live... which I have left behind as a long rider. Sometimes I find it hard to find the common thread and some days I feel hopelessly on the periphery. My heart already longs for the road, for the campsites, for the nomadic life at 4 miles an hour.

We head back out mid August. Will be heading back to eastern Montana to prepare for next years ride. unitl later Happy Trails to all who follow the ride

Your lady long rider,

Bernice Ende

Reflection, it is a natural part of any long ride. A time to say thank you.

I keep thinking " how will I ever thank every one?" How can I Ever thank them enough!?"

I hand-out cards say, "To each and every one of you whose path I cross, a hearty thank you for the help, the interest and the encouragement. I could not have done it without you." There are the veterinarians and farriers, the ranchers and the farmers, National Forest Rangers and Employees, Federal Postal and Library employees, the County Road/maintenance workers, Tribal Police and Highway Patrol, Sheriff and Fish Game and Wildlife Wardens. You all have helped in one way or another, giving directions, food, sometimes water, sometimes a smile and wave. There are 100s upon 100s of individuals who have helped me ride safely through small towns and communities. Across long barren stretches of road there were those who were stopped by curiosity at the sight of a lady long rider. And after satisfying their own curiosity have left behind much needed water and food from their car or pickup. Roads that you travel upon at 70miles per hour with heat or AC with radio or cell phone or even a movie watched by a back seat passenger. 70 miles an hour is for me a 3 day ride.

There are those companies who sponsor my rides and provide the working gear I use every day. The saddles, the pads, the bridles the horseshoes; the packs and boots the hat and the face creams; my home, tent, sleeping and cooking gear.

It is to these companies to which I am now stopping to thank...

To Outfitters Supply, who has been riding with me for the entire 7 years providing the durable, clean looking saddle packs. Light weight and sturdy hobbles, snaps, feed bags and water buckets, and the pack saddle. It is one thing to use your packing equipment for a weekend ride or for a 2 week trip into the wilderness. It is yet another thing to expect packs and saddles to hold up to daily use for months and months and months.

I am still not convinced after all these miles that my sponsor's **really** believe me when I tell them just how much I appreciate their products. These products are an integral part of my everyday life!!

The Tucker Saddles. I write often enough to let Tuckers know how it feels to ride 1000s of miles with their saddle's. But the saddle also doubles as a chair or a back rest at the end of a day. One saddle (the High plains saddle rode with Honor and I for over 10,000 miles. 10,000 miles of problem free comfort for both me and Honor.

I also use the **Skito saddle pads** which are custom fitted for the horses. It has not always been like this. I have used all sorts of padding. The padding and the way I pad for long riding is very, very different than a roping horse might have under its saddle or an endurance horse or a trail horse. It takes trial and error but the advice and suggestions from the folks at Skito have been a leap forward for me in providing an accurate fit of the saddle pads for the horses I ride.

Then there is the gear that I wear! **Sun-body Hats**. When Jimmy Pryor (owner of Sunbody Hats) mailed out the hat I am presently wearing (the one that Hart was interested in eating until the wind caught it and playfully ran off with it never to be seen again). I emailed Jimmy and said " I didn't feel like a long rider without the hat!" This hat protects me from sun, shades my eyes, cools my shoulders and... looks great!!

I will "step" down from my hat to my **Ariat Boots** to say thank you. When I first began these adventures I picked up shoes as I went, always at 2-nd hand stores. Anything from tennis shoes to ill fitting work boots. These days I walk 7-10 miles in my Ariat Ropers every day with out having sore feet. I use steel, horseshoe like cleats, that prevent wear and tear on the heels. Not only do I now have new boots as I need them, shirts and gloves are also sent out by Ariat. I no longer look like a wandering vagabond as I did in those early years. The frosting is provided by

Climb-On(Logo)skin care products. Lip gloss, skin creams, mosquito repellent. After a long 30 mile day of wind and sun my skin is parched, looks like leather feels like sand paper. I may ride 1000s of miles every year but my face does not have to look like it!!

....and still more thank yous,

Thank you to **DVM Craig King** of Fredericksburg, Texas. **DVM Nancy Haugan** of Eureka, Montana and **DVM Leslie Adler** of Madrid, New Mexico. These three veterinarians generously donated time and costs to vet check, vaccinate or recommend a treatment for a health problem concerning the horses or Claire. Thank you to **Sam Gooding** of Midland, Texas for hand crafting horseshoes and sending them out as I needed them.

Thank you to the website hostesses, **Lisa Eades, Marlane Quade "Alien", Desiree Garcia and now Emily McKee** who handle the website business and who will hopefully guide me through a book that needs to be written. Thank you to Theodora Rice (logo) who has helped me time and again with advice and products that has kept me healthy all of these miles with her valuable herbalist skills and knowledge.

Thank you to the **Confederated Tribes of the Yakima Nation** in Washington. To the **Confederated Tribes of the Shoshone-Bannock Nation** of Idaho and to the **Confederated Tribes of the Flathead Nation in Montana**. Thank you for kindly letting this long rider cross safely on your Nation's Tribal land which kept me off dangerously busy highway roads.

My goodness thank you to all of you that have made these rides possible, thank you. If I could I would line you all up in a very very long row, look deeply in your eyes and recall the kindness you bestowed upon 2 horses 1 dog and one woman, we were strangers that became friends. I would remind you that these rides are not about me they are about all of us, they are a testimony to our country and a reflection of the goodness that fills our lands.

Happy Trails.

Your lady long rider,

Bernice Ende

'I love my life as a lady long rider'

Woman talks about her adventures after 16,000 miles in the saddle
Bernice Ende of Trego rides the road in Logan, Mont., during her 6,000-mile journey earlier this year with her two horses and dog. This was Ende's fourth long-distance ride.

Posted: Wednesday, July 6, 2011 2:00 am | Updated: 9:04 pm, Tue Jul 5, 2011.

KRISTI ALBERTSON

Daily Inter Lake

Even after several years and 16,000 miles on the trail, Bernice Ende isn't sure why she became a long rider. She withstands shin splints, horrific weather and swarms of bugs

that make the local mosquito population hardly worth mentioning. She has been hungry and thirsty. She has lost four-legged friends along the way. But Ende has also seen breathtaking places as she, her horses and dog plod across the country. She has been the recipient of boundless generosity more times than she can count. And while she can't explain why she rides, she knows she's lucky to get to live a life she loves. "I'm just captivated by this," she said. "In my tent it says above my head, 'I love my life as a lady long rider.'" Ende shared photos and stories from that life during a recent presentation in Kalispell. About 25 people attended her talk at the Flathead County Library. That day, Ende had wrapped up her fourth long ride, a 6,000-mile circuit from Trego to Oregon to Texas to Minnesota to Montana. The trip, Ende's fourth long ride, took two years, three months and 10 days. She left March 20, 2009, riding her thoroughbred, Honor. Her dog, Claire, "a rare, one-of-a-kind Montana breed of unknown origin," rode in a box atop Essie Pearl, the Norwegian Fjord horse Ende enlisted on her third long ride to pack supplies. The quartet averaged about 20 miles a day at a gentle 4-mile-an-hour pace. When she first started long riding, Ende said she would "push out" 50 miles a day. Now, she's content to go a little slower. "Twenty miles a day, that's plenty any more," she said.

Much has changed since Ende's first ride, which she took on a borrowed Tennessee Walking Horse named Pride. The horse was loaded down with gear and supplies, Ende recalled, but even her carefully thought-out plans hadn't really prepared her for the rigors of long riding. "I prepared for [that] ride," she said. "Then I got out there and fell flat on my face." Ende said she cried every day of that trip and was ready to quit after crossing the Red Desert in southern Wyoming. She walked about half the trip. "I'm on my knees crying," she recalled. "My dog's feet are wrapped up in duct tape. My shins hurt; I can hardly walk." One kind stranger changed everything. "A rancher took me in and put me back on my feet, put me back in the saddle," Ende said. "He gave me lots of meat and said, 'You can do this.'" He was right. Ende wrapped up that first ride, a 2,000-mile journey, in 2005. "By the time I finished with that ride, I knew I was going to do this again and again and again and again," she said.

Her second ride took her on a 5,000-mile, 22-month circuit. She traveled light, with no pack horse, and slept on the ground without a tent. At the end of that trip, Ende decided to change her traveling style. She wanted Claire to be able to ride, too; a pack horse would solve that problem and allow Ende to travel with more supplies. She, Claire, Honor and Essie Pearl traveled 3,000 miles in 2008. On their next trip, they made it from Trego to Wimberley, Texas, before tragedy struck. Essie Pearl kicked Honor and shattered the thoroughbred's leg. When Honor was put down, Ende was at a loss as to how to proceed — but she knew she had to keep going. "I felt if I didn't keep moving, I would have just simply crumbled," she said. Several people offered her horses, and Ende ended up gratefully accepting the gift of a 16.2-hand paint quarter thoroughbred mix. Hart, as she christened him, hadn't been used for 10 years and wasn't conditioned for long riding. They had only made it as far as Kansas when sores on his back made the saddle too painful to wear. So Ende shipped the saddle ahead, fashioned a pad to sit on

and rode Hart bareback for 300 miles. "What else do you do? Stop?" Ende asked. Stopping wasn't an option, she said. Hart would have lost the conditioning he'd been building, and she had already been delayed too long in her journey. By the time they reached Minnesota, the horse's back was healed and he was ready to wear a saddle again.

Other trials along the way were more challenging. Bugs drove the horses berserk, even when they were covered like children dressed as Halloween ghosts. The weather was another threat; Ende woke up in a barn after one windy night to find the roof missing and all the trees outside flattened. Weather eventually forced the travelers to hunker down. Ende spent the winter in her tent outside Forsyth. Bags of leaves banked the tent, which was inside a barn, and Ende wrapped her shelter "like a yurt" in dozens of blankets. "It was like hibernating, like living in a cave," she said. When she added a space heater, Ende was quite cozy — so much so that she hopes to spend the next winter in Forsyth, too. Even now, at home in Trego, Ende doesn't plan to spend much time indoors. She doesn't sleep in her cabin; she sleeps in her tent where she can hear her horses outside, just as she does on the trail. "That's my home right now," she said. "I love that. I love that life. I'm not willing to come out of that."

Her next ride will take her on a 2,000-mile trip through Canada. Ende expects the journey will take about six months, but she never knows for certain what turns the ride might take. That's what she explains to people who want to know how to prepare for their own long rides. "All the preparation in the world is never going to prepare you for a long ride," she said. "The word for long riding is uncertainty."

Nostalgia and inspiration are other words that might sum up Ende's rides. Everywhere she goes she is reminded that the image of a horse and rider is branded into the American West mentality. She is a symbol of days gone by. "It's a reminder of freedom," she said.

Reporter Kristi Albertson may be reached at 758-4438 or by email at kalbertson@dailyinterlake.com.

JUNE 11Th, 2011 (Journal) " took 3 days to cross the Garnet range, roads were washed out - streams flowing d down roads like rivers, not at all sure I was going to make it across. reached ClearWater Jct.(south of Seeley Lake, Mt.) with soft rain and thick fogs hanging between mountain peaks. Can not cross Jocko rd- snow avalanche road washed out. Must now go around thur Missoula and up hwy 93, a busy dangerous road that is known for its fatalities."

Well we have made it past the most dangerous stretches of hwy 93 The horses.. quietly maneuvered the ditches and narrow passes, the heavy noisy traffic and honking horns, I am humbled by their steadfastness!! I should be more like them. I emailed ahead to the Confederated Tribes of the Salish and Kootenai Tribes asking for permission to cross their tribal lands and was met with hospitality, handshakes and

many smiles from Tribal members as we made our way up the Flathead reservation, along the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, Flathead lake!
Most of the talk around the area is about weather! such a spring it has been, yet the winds have softened and the air has warmed and we move north slowly, carefully nearing the end of the ride. I must admit I have the "end of the trail jitters". Now staying 3 nights here in Big Arm with Reg and Kay Wearley after giving a talk to an enthusiastic group of people who turned out for a potluck and get together at the newly renovated one room school house here in Big Arm, Alison and Jeff Meslin from the Big Arm Association are the ones to thank for arranging the festivities. What we must have looked like as we rode in I can only imagine, only minuets before we were hiding under a large protective fir tree waitng out the hail and rain .Montana looks and feels more like the west coast of Washington state!!
We head out in the morning- a 3 day ride to Kalispell and then another 4 day ride to Trego. Will stay in Kalispell for talks at the Fairgrounds if possible. Horses need new shoes and we all need a few weeks off. I can't believe its nearly over, but then I always say that at the end of a ride... Happy Trails Bernice Ende Long Rider

These pictures below were taken spring for 2011 - courtesy of Ed Thomes Photography.
more of his photography please visit: <http://www.edthomesphotography.com/>





Outfitters Supply has helped to sponsor Bernice through her travels by setting her up with quite a few items such as a TrailMax Saddlebag System, a picket line, a collapsible water bucket and more!

Below is an article written in the Outfitters Supply Catalog which you can order here: <https://www.outfitterssupply.com//inforequest.asp><https://www.outfitterssupply.com//inforequest.asp>

Bernice Ende, Lady Long Rider

We first met Bernice in the spring of 2006. She came into our shop "just to look" and get some ideas for her upcoming ride. At that time, Bernice had one 2,000 mile ride already under her belt using a borrowed horse, but somehow she still considered herself "a beginner". After that first meeting, we had Bernice set up with a set of TrailMax

Saddlebag System, TrailMax neoprene hobbles, a picket line, a collapsible water bucket, a new Tucker High Plains trail saddle, and some advice that may or not have been helpful.

Bernice began that ride in May 2006 (See photo at left). We trailered her and her young new rescue Thoroughbred, Honor, to the east side of the Continental Divide. Our thoughts upon seeing her ride away were, "She'll never make it out of Montana with that horse." While Bernice had already worked wonders with the horse since rescuing her from the racetrack, she still looked too skinny and was frighteningly skittish.

Thankfully we were wrong, due to Bernice's patience and a lot of early miles without much automobile traffic. Bernice, Honor, and Bernice's also-rescued dog, Claire, traveled over 5,000 miles together, and arrived back in Montana in September 2007 in better health and spirits than before they started.

For her next adventure, Bernice procured a Norwegian Fjord pack horse, Essie Pearl. Finding enough water in the summer months had often been an issue on the previous ride, so having the ability to carry water was important. Being able to pack a tent and more bedding was an added bonus! We ended up outfitting Essie Pearl with one of our pack saddles, a pack pad and our TrailMax canvas panniers.

At the time of this catalog printing, Bernice is heading home to Trego, Montana, finishing her fourth long ride, ready to plan the next. Sadly, Bernice had to cut this last trip short due to the devastating loss of her riding horse and best friend, Honor, last March in Wimberly, Texas. Hart, a beautiful paint horse, was donated to Bernice by the Wright family of Menard, Texas so that she could continue her journey, but Bernice was not confident enough on a new horse to risk the busy traffic and freeways of the East Coast.

Now with 18,000 miles of traveling under her belt, Bernice is excited to prepare for next year's ride, possibly through Canada. Read more about Bernice's travels, tribulations and joys at www.endeofthetrail.com. For more information about becoming a long rider, visit www.thelongridersguild.com.

Cover Photo of Bernice, Hart, Essie Pearl and Claire copyright Amanda Breitbach, Photographer. October 2010.

May 20th, 2011

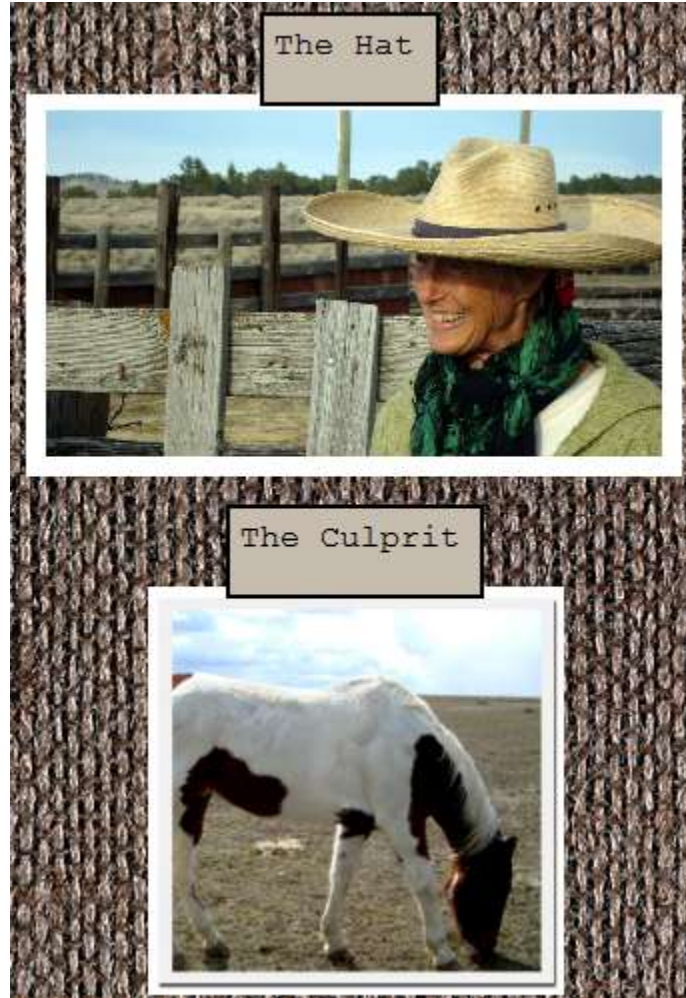
How I lost my hat...

The wind from the west blew with determined force, impossible to keep a hat on, impossible to walk with out a lean into the relentless stream pushing at your chest. I had tied the sturdy broad-brimed Sun-Body hat to my pannier the far side out of the wind. I've done it many times.

Hart has had a particular interest in that hat from the get go. He was tied also to the pannier, on the far side. Strong wind is deafening, scarf tied tightly on my head with a cap over that, couldn't hear a thing, couldn't hear the tear and pull when Hart ripped with one great tug my perfectly seasoned, 1000s of miles still remaining in that hat... Hart releases it into the hands of the laughing Northwest Winds, the stampede string

was all that remained. He would never admit to it, we had a long talk about it but no.. he wouldn't admit to it... But I know that big Hart of mine and what kind of mischievousness He can pull.

Sunbody Hats was gracious enough to send a new one!



Monday May, 16th - Bozeman Fairgrounds

Arrived on the 12th, riding into town on a clear warm sunshining day that had the whole town in smiles. Weeks of rain, held us up 4 days east of town on Jackson Creek Rd. in vacant hay shed, had to ask for help from a nearby home. The Daniels family- Mrs. Daniels drove me into town to give a talk at the Bozeman Senior Center on wednesday the 11th.

Weather-- long riding is all about weather.
Bozeman, Montana. You get a "blue ribbon award".

Briefly.... FRIENDLY. Exceptional Senior Center. Bustling, open air feel of the historical downtown. Huge fairgrounds, well kept and great location. Dog friendly. Bicycle friendly. Many small clean parks. Mountain views.

AN OBVIOUS COMMITMENT TO THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE HERE TO CREATE A QUALITY COMMUNITY.

What can I say....but Thank you I had wonderful visit...

Happy Trails

Bernice

April 30th, 2011

Joilet, Montana

Home of Jamie and Brian Ostwald

Two weeks out. Rode the north side of the Yellowstone River from Meyers,MT. to the Bundy Bridge near Worden. Winter winds swept through struggling tree buds, grass reaching for shimmering rays of hope from occasional warm sunny days. Two snow storms(snowing now). Thank you to the Wilhelm farm for coming out to the end of their long driveway as I rode past their feed lot near Meyers, they sent out a package of food and well wishes.

Channel 8 news cameras from Billings followed us as we rode into the town of Worden, MT. Becky Brist (manages the grill at the Flame Bar) and others welcomed us into town. Ken Le page brought the horses hay. Berry and John made arrangements for the haul across Billings from Lockwood to Duck Creek,Greg from the grocery store sent us out with full packs of food. We spent 3 days in Worden - rode into town a stranger - rode out with many new friends, to all of you a hearty thank-you.

Claire and I stayed warm in the laundramat. The horses sheltered from the winds. The Flame Bar and Grill offered us hot food and drink and lots of company as we waited out the storm. Cowboy John trailered us safely to Duck Creek, a fishing access, where I camped for a night before riding south to Joilet to visit Jamie and Brian Ostwalds, old friends from Trego that I have not seen in 15 years. I had meant to visit a couple of days - its been a week now. Larry Graber was kind enough to come up to the Ostwalds and reshoe the horses. The horses needed a good professional set of shoes put on, I can do my own shoeing but when I start out I like to have a set done by a Farrier that knows what they are doing. Thank you Larry.

This beautiful, wind swept country with spectacular views of the majestic Rocky Mountains, snow covered, daunting can snap and bite with cold westerly winds. Jamie is riding out with me in the morning as is "QuackGrass Sally" from Bridger. Hope they are dressed warm, Montana is not giving up on its winter grip..not yet. Livingston and Boseman are next... Thank you Jamie and Brian for taking my herd in,(and me) always good to reconnect with old friends...

Happy Trails

Bernice Ende

Greetings to all of you that follow the ride....

Winter is losing it's strength, it's desire to bully. Today arrived with brilliant sunshine and the temperatures have soared to the mid 40's. Soon the horses will be shedding. Soon I will be looking at maps, planning routes and preparing for spring horse-traveling. This has been a respite for me for the horses for Claire, we have been on vacation!! We share the barn and corrals with 6 rabbits, 3 mice, 1 porcupine, an occasional lone coyote and a small herd of mule deer. We are not alone. I venture into town each week with or without the horses, to use the computer at the Forsyth Senior Center, mostly I go in to hear the soft chatter of the elders and to play piano. I swing over to the library, check out more and more books, pick up mail, receive more smiles and "hello how ya doing out there, are you surviving OK, not to cold are you?". Here I must stop and thank all of you that have sent packages filled with care and concern and love. The letters and 'best regards' all of which have helped me thorough a long cold, snowy eastern Montana winter. Thank you so much, really you send me to much and I feel I do not deserve it, after all, " I'm on vacation".

I have had news this week of Odie Wright's passing. Odie and Hedi Wright were the folks from Texas that donated the handsome paint gelding, Hart, after losing Honor.(see archives 2010). Odie's big, kind, gentle smile will be missed. I know the whole community of Menard, TX. is filled with sadness for the loss of a friend a father a husband, someone whose absence the whole community will feel. My condolence to the entire family.

This is also about the time, last year that I lost my beloved grey thoroughbred mare Honor while at the rodeo grounds in Wimberley, TX.(again see archives for story). It still brings me sorrow when I see photos of Honor and the years we traveled together. Today I received a letter from a friend, Linda Zims, of Zillah, WA. She says " I am seeing life from a different point, live each day as if it is your last, always tell those you love that you love them...often".

Loss is sobering, it is a reminder of the life we love, a reminder to pay attention, embrace gratitude.

Sincerely, your lady long rider Bernice Ende.







March 29th, 2011
Forsyth, MT

Greetings to all of you that follow the ride,
Either this week or next, I must pack it up and head west, good weather or not. I would like to be back in Trego by the first of June, Mid-June at the latest.

It is going to be hard as often times it is to get back on the road and ride, leaving behind new found friends, safe and familiar surroundings, a routine that is closer to "normal" for a life that is anything but normal.

The six month " winter over" in Forsyth, Montana was a chapter in itself. I survived the cold, bitter, sunless snowy days of winter in my tent, reading and writing, dashing out to care for my two horses returning to a warm cozy tent and my Claire dog.

Forsyth, Montana is the seat of Rosebud County, spread out along the historical Yellowstone River, surrounded by wide open sage brush country. "We have plenty of elbow room to enjoy the best of small town living, along with the kind of recreation that only the wide open spaces of southeastern Montana can offer" ... That's what the brochure says. I might add to that, " a town rich in smiles and handshakes." The historic city is tucked away behind hundreds of beautiful trees in the heart of the fertile Yellowstone Valley. The website www.goforsyth.com offers a warm welcome to visitors and a list of annual events and things to do. I may have to winter over here next year as I prepare for a Canadian ride. I have come to love this open big sky country, so different then the mountain life of Trego, Montana.

My route: Because the snow pack will prevent me from using Forest Service roads to cross the Rocky Mountains I will take a westerly route along the north side of the Yellowstone River Basin. Stopping in Billings, Livingston, Boseman maybe Butte. Once I cross the Anaconda area I will head north along the west side of Flathead Lake into the Kapisell area. A leisurely 2 month ride, about 550 miles.

The horses are fat and wooly and full of twirling spring wind, I am not sure but I think they would just as soon stay where they are. They like their corrals and wide open spaces that surround them, they have a "home". Claire dog on the other hand love's the travel and is all bark and dance when ever we start out for a ride. Up rooting my family, off we must go.

A hearty thank you to all of you here in Forsyth that extended a warm, friendly place for a lowly lady long rider to rest for a winter. Happy Trails to all of you.

Sincerely, Bernice Ende







