

# ***The Pony Express***

**Newsletter of the Ellensburg Rodeo Hall of Fame Association**

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**Howdy Pardners!** We deeply appreciate your continuing support. Here's your semi-annual Ellensburg Rodeo Hall of Fame (ERHOF) *Pony Express* newsletter!

**Newsflash!** As members, you are the first to hear: The 2017 Inductees to the Ellensburg Rodeo Hall of Fame are John Payne and the Smith Family. Payne--known as the "One-Armed Bandit"--is a talented horseman and animal trainer who has been entertaining Ellensburg Rodeo audiences for two decades. For over 70 years, the Smith family has served the Ellensburg Rodeo in an impressive number of posts that include rodeo board membership, event timing, rodeo marching band and concert productions, night shows, ushering, Gold Buckle Club, "Tough Enough to Wear Pink," and many other tasks. John Payne will be inducted in ERHOF's "Participant" category while the Smiths will be inducted as a "Pioneer Rodeo Family."

**ERHOF and the John Clymer Museum:** The Ellensburg Rodeo Hall of Fame Association recently opened two new exhibits spotlighting rodeo history at the John Clymer Museum and Gallery, 416 N. Pearl, in downtown Ellensburg. The Ellensburg Rodeo Wranglerettes all-girl mounted drill team is featured in the Clymer's window, while a wall display about John and Doris Clymer's ranch and rodeo connections and Ellensburg Rodeo poster art is found inside. The Hall of Fame is storing its valuable collection of rodeo artifacts in an archival space created upstairs at the Clymer Museum. Board members moved their 350-cubic foot collection from the CWU Regional Archive in December. Nip Tucker, ERHOF museum committee chair, noted ERHOF staged a major exhibit in the Clymer's McGiffin Room last August and September titled "Rodeo Icons: The Greatest Show on Dirt." "We plan to regularly display our collection in seasonal shows at the Clymer alongside our window and wall displays," Tucker states. "We know local folks and visitors will really enjoy viewing these treasures from our rodeo past." ERHOF curator Mia Merendino developed the present exhibits and the recent McGiffin Room show.

**Upcoming Clymer Exhibit:** This summer, ERHOF will launch a two-month show featuring Ellensburg Rodeo entertainers---trick riders, specialty acts, announcers, and clowns---to run through the rodeo season. In addition to the Clymer exhibits, Hall of Fame artifacts are on display each year at ERHOF's Western Village Ellensburg Rodeo weekend headquarters (at the north entrance of the rodeo grounds) and the Ellensburg Rodeo and Chamber of Commerce headquarters in the Driver Home on North Main Street.

**ERHOF Activities:** ERHOF **President Joel Smith** has spent the past two years working with ERHOF board members to strengthen our committee structure and continue to bolster our finances. Much of the fall and winter have been devoted moving our collection into the Clymer Museum. This April is our annual **Board Retreat**.

**Coming Up: Our Sixth Art Fundraiser Auction--And Much More:** Look for another fundraiser featuring local artists and a western theme. Our **Induction Press Conference** is slated for June at the Clymer Gallery, and the **Art Auction Program** and **Induction Biographies** will appear in July and August issues of the *Ellensburg Daily Record*. A new show will open in the Clymer's McGiffin Room in July. This year's twenty-first annual Hall of Fame **Induction Banquet** will take place Thursday, August 31, 5:30 pm, at CWU's SURC ballroom. And, of course, we'll continue to produce and help distribute the **Ellensburg Rodeo Royal Court Poster**, work the **Repp Weststar Ranch Roping**, and mount exhibits at the Ellensburg Rodeo's Driver House headquarters and Western Village during rodeo weekend.

**Thank you to retiring board members Brigid Clift, Jack Wallace, Joe Crawford, and Julie Virden.** These four are such hard workers, and they collectively gave over forty years of combined service to ERHOF! Now, we welcome **new board members Zora Peterson, Donna Hougnon, and Keith Winter.** Zora is a local businesswoman and banker who has long been active in community affairs and the Ellensburg Rodeo. Donna, a member of the Diefenbach family, was born and raised in rural Kittitas County and recently returned home to work and volunteer in the community. Keith is a contractor and roper whose family is committed to the ranch and rodeo lifestyle. ERHOF welcomes these new members' energy and dedication to preserving the history of the Ellensburg Rodeo.

**Don't Forget Our Website and Facebook Page:** Our site provides historic photographs, biographical essays of ERHOF inductees, a virtual museum tour, ERHOF membership info, important links, and much, much more c/o [www.ellensburgrodeohalloffame.com](http://www.ellensburgrodeohalloffame.com). We are on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BootsOfFame>.