



**PNER Ambassador Award 2009**

## **PNER Ambassador Award Nomination Letters**

Don and Pat Perry truly exemplify the helpful, friendly and unselfish characteristics of endurance ambassadors. They have been avid supporters of distance riding in Southwest Idaho for over 20 years. From 1988 through 1999 they rode competitively on their horses: Prune, Precious, Buckshot, and Sheik. Don and Pat each accumulated more than 5000 miles and a 100% completion rate. Those of us who have been around long enough to have shared the trails with Pat and Don remember what fun they were to ride with—always encouraging new riders. During the 1980s and 1990s, Don and Pat co-managed some rides outside of Idaho City and in the Eagle foothills. And other ride managers could always count on them to help find and mark trail. Rides like Old Selam, Idaho Spuds, Pink Flamingo, and the Owyhee Canyonlands would not have run as smoothly without Pat and Don's help. I remember when Pat and Don endured 110 degree temperatures to help mark trail for the Eagle by Moonlight ride back in 1994. Since 1999, they have supported ride managers, often traveling many miles to rides, just to help out. For the past 10 years, if you were riding in southwest Idaho, you would run into Don at almost every vet check with a friendly smile and a stethoscope ready to take a pulse. Pat was often in the office helping with paperwork. Their selfless dedication and cheerfulness made being at rides and vet checks a pleasant experience for all riders. Even with Don's declining health in the past year, Don and Pat showed up at rides to encourage their friends.

**Karen Steenhof**

My first memories of Don and Pat Perry are from when I first started the sport, almost 20 years ago, and they showed up at every ride on their appaloosas, always cheerful and smiling. When they eventually retired from riding, they still showed up at every ride, but to help instead of ride. Until Don's failing health recently prohibited him from working the rides I can't remember a single ride in our region without Don standing there with a stethoscope around his neck, ready to take the horse's pulse, and always with a smile and a joke. Pat was always there too with a smile and helping out where she could. These are two very fine people, and represent the best of our sport.

Steph Teeter



The Perrys have been long-time PNER members and have always been incredibly supportive of AERC, PNER and SWIT&DR. I always love the story that their last year of campaigning, I think it was 19 rides they did? They surely went out in a "blaze of glory." Even since their "retirement," they have come to almost all the SWIT&DR rides and continued to contribute and support the sport of endurance. They were also fantastic mentors, my very first trail ride (Cottonwood Caper), someone said "follow that couple," and I did, and it was Don and Pat. Pat was coming back from her pacemaker implantation. They had on blue T-shirts with their names in block letters on the back. I will always remember that day fondly.

Pam Haynes



Don and Pat Perry have been involved in Endurance since at least the early 80s. When I started endurance I didn't know anyone involved. Don was one of the first riders I got to know. He was one of the first riders I knew I could trust to know "trail etiquette." I have ridden several rides with Pat. One of the most memorable was our top ten finish at the Lost Wheelbarrow Mine with Sheik and Tors Scotch Lass.

Don and Pat have always been ready to help whenever they could, marking trail, crewing, P&R at vet checks, just anything the needed to be done.

Don and Pat rode non Arab horses (Appaloosa cross) to top ten finishes, many year-end awards, and very few pulls over the years.

They have been an asset to Endurance all their years in the sport.

Dot Wiggins

Don and Pat Perry have long been dedicated to both the support of endurance and enjoying competing in the sport. Both started riding before AERC on line records but have collectively have over 11,500 miles recorded on line. In 1998, the last year they competed heavily, they placed 10<sup>th</sup> nationally in Bob and Julie Suhr husband and wife award for AERC along with many PNER awards that year.

For many years now, they have shared their love of endurance and have helped people too numerous to mention along the way. They have always helped a fellow endurance rider at the drop of a hat. They have been steadfast supporters of the sport of Endurance. They have worked tirelessly attending many County Fairs, Horse Expos, and training seminars, volunteering their time to man information booths at these events.

Personally they have been there for Steve and me many more times than I can think of in the last 12 years. The most memorable of which is the hours and miles they donated to help us put on the Idaho Spuds rides. In his late 60's Don ran a chain saw cutting trail open and Pat spent hours marking trail to help with Spuds.

One year we were looking for something "special" for completion awards. Pat and Don had boxes of old horseshoes and as they told it, these shoes came off their horses over the many years riding PNER and SWIT-DR rides throughout the northwest. We took these old horseshoes, shined them up and mounted each rider's photo from the ride and presented them as completion awards. A lot of endurance history went with those awards to people from all over the Northwest region thanks to Pat

and Don.

They also coached me through the years with helpful endurance hints, help transport and cared for my horses while I took other horse to endurance rides. They have, at their own expense traveled great distances to attend rides just to help the ride managers pulsing down horses, finish line timing and helping with records. They are always smiling and interested in everyone competing.

I don't know persons more deserving to be awarded the Ambassador award in the northwest.

Cindy Bradley



Sonny and I managed Old Selam for >12 years and there was not a year Don & Pat did not show up to help. Often for the week ahead of the ride, marking trail, hauling water, making sandwiches for crew and vets, P&R, being timers even if it meant sitting at the start or finish line by themselves in the heat for hours. Bob & Lurina Equisquiza managed the Idaho Spuds Ride from 1990(ish) until Steve and Cindy Bradley took it over. Don & Pat always helped with that ride no matter who was managing it. Even if they rode the ride, they came ahead of time, stayed after or came out the following weekend to help clear ribbons. When they quit riding endurance and wanted to do a trail ride, they always worked the timing so they could help with the bulk of the riders before they worried about their own ride. Or they rode the day before and again on Sunday so they could ride and pull ribbons. They truly understood what it took to manage a ride and you could depend on them to support the rides in any way they could. I could ask ride managers and vets that have managed/vetted at rides over the past 20 years within the PNER region and they would say the same thing. We cannot miss this opportunity to honor Don & Pat now.

Marilyn Hornbaker

Don & Pat Perry were our support during the 12 years we did the Idaho Spuds Endurance Ride in Idaho City. The first year they were part of the management team and spent the summer weekends helping find, clear and mark trails. They were there several days before the ride to help mark trails and spent Sundays after to take down ribbon. They were a huge help and support to us. We became great friends and since we quit the ride, they have continued on their support to subsequent ride managements. You could always count on Don & Pat when they made a commitment, and have always been a friend you can count on. We love them a lot and cherish those memories!

Lurina Egusquiza



Don and Pat Perry were two of the first persons I met when starting Endurance in 1991. Without exception they have always been two of the friendliest, most helpful and thoughtful persons I have met over the years. They were "riders" when I first met them...and quite competitive. However, over the years, between aging and medical conditions both have had to "cut back" on riding...but have never cut back on attending rides. They are always there....if they did not ride, they had a stethoscope in their hands, monitored the finish line and always cheered riders on. Don always referred to me as "Pat #2" and had a big hug for me. Pat #1 always had a smile and encouraging words. Both had a "what can I do for you" attitude and you always knew that their love for horses and endurance was only surpassed by their love for each other. I can truly say, I love these two people and know they are who this award was originated for. The Perry's have been involved in our sport for many, many years and deserve recognition for their dedication and true sportsmanship. Please consider them for this honor, as they truly have earned it.

Pat Murray

I remember the first time I met them...I had just purchased my place in the Eagle Foothills from a, let's say, an interesting fellow with a lot of creative business dealings and in the first week of living way out there this old open Jeep pulls up to the ranch house with 4 scruffy looking folks all bundled up in Carharts. I answered my front door with my shotgun hidden behind the door since I wasn't sure if they were looking for the previous owners of my property. When they asked if Rowland was home I told them, as I was shaking in my boots, "No, the Rowland's didn't live here anymore and they had moved to town". A warm smile came over their faces and they introduced themselves to me as Don Perry, Bob Lyons with their wives, Pat and Joanie, who were still all bundled up in the back seat of the open Jeep. Don told me they were scouting for trail for an endurance ride and just wanted to make sure that Rowland knew so he didn't shoot at them. (Which was a possibility...).

I was fairly new to the sport of endurance and Bob Lyons, Don & Pat Perry totally took me under their wings. Even with all the whining I did (or maybe it was screaming) while trying to keep up with Don on Buckshot, they still invited me to come out and ride with them again. I was thankful my mare was such a smart trail horse since I had my eyes closed most of the time I rode with the Perry's.

Don and Pat Perry were always helping with the rides SWIT&DR and their members put on. No matter if it was 5° below zero or 110° above zero,

Don and Pat were always there to help with either finding, clearing, marking, and/or unmarking of the trail. If they didn't have anything else to do you'd see them pick up a stethoscope and jump in to help with registration, P&R or scribe for the vets.

Even with Don's illness, you'd see them at all the rides either helping, assisting, or they would just take a drive to check on things. Their warm smiles and laughter were always a welcoming sight.

We are so lucky to have such fine "Ambassadors" to the sport of Endurance and to our community.

I would like to thank you Don and Pat for everything they have done for me personally, SWIT&DR, PNER and for the sport of Endurance.

Sally Tarbet

