

# MORMON PIONEER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA (MPNHA)

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## Carrying Forward the Power of the Horse

MT. PLEASANT—Horses played a key role in colonizing the West. The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) tells their story through agri-tourism and events that carry forward the power of the horse.

The Cleone Peterson Eccles Equestrian Center, which hosts inside events in the ConToy Arena, recently attracted professional team ropers who brought their world class talent to Mt. Pleasant City, the Chair Community for the MPNHA.

More than 500 teams flocked to the qualifier to compete on Friday and Saturday, May 17-18, and the large parking lot in front of the arena nearly swelled to capacity with camp and horse trailers.

Facility organizer Jack Widdison says this is the fourth team roping event held so far, and also the biggest.

Quinn Kesler, lifelong rodeo competitor and owner of Double Dollar Livestock, hosted the qualifier and says the Mt. Pleasant facility is extremely well suited to large events like the one he organized recently.

"We love coming here," he says. "The organizers are always very helpful and accommodating to our needs. If any changes have to happen, Jack [Widdison] handles it quickly. We love the small town feel from the community. It's a great fit for our events."

Widdison says he hopes to develop the equestrian center by adding men's and women's showers so overnight visitors have a place to clean up. He would also like to include a new PA system to be used not only inside the area, but also throughout the entire complex so outside events, including jumping, are able to use announcers and commentators. He would also like to make improvements to the stalls.



**Horses and livestock scrambled around inside the Contoy Arena as competitors sent their lassos flying in the team roping event at the Cleone Peterson Eccles Equestrian Center.**



**When the 2019 World Series of Team Roping qualifier took place at Mt. Pleasant's Cleone Peterson Eccles Equestrian Center on Friday and Saturday, May 17-18, more than 500 teams showed up to compete from all over the western U.S.**

Monte Bona, director of the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, says the equestrian center has a lot to offer the community and those who come to utilize it. He believes even in a modern society, the power of the horse can benefit the populace, just like it did for the Mormon pioneers.

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About the MPNHA:

The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area is a federally designated area of central and southern Utah running along the beautiful and historic U.S. Highway 89 — including the All-American Road Utah State Route 12, and Capitol Reef Scenic Byway Utah State Route 24, which both intersect with U.S. 89 and together form the MPNHA's Boulder Loop. The area includes the counties of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield and Kane.