



EMPIRE RANCH FOUNDATION NEWS

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Members Are Key

May marks the start of our membership drive for the Foundation's 2014-2015 membership year. I urge you to renew your membership, or join us if you are not already a member! Your support is key to continuing important work to preserve the Empire Ranch and share its heritage with future generations. This issue of *ERF News* provides many examples of the accomplishments of the Empire Ranch Foundation and the benefits of membership, from events such as the Trail Ride or Heritage Discovery Day to opportunities to help out during volunteer days.

In February, ERF was honored to meet with Steve Ellis, BLM Deputy Director of Operations, during his visit to Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. He was greatly impressed by the beauty and history of the Empire Ranch and asked me to convey his appreciation for all that ERF members and volunteers have accomplished in partnership with BLM. It's delightful to see this interest at the federal level as we push forward with Empire Ranch preservation.

If you haven't visited the Empire recently, plan to do so to view the new Cowboy Life Exhibit. The Empire Ranch House is open any time during daylight hours. We also invite you to our docent-led tours, now held at 11am on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month.

Saving the Empire takes the hands of many—join us for upcoming Volunteer Days (June 14 and August 16). Be sure to respond to this membership appeal—our members are the key to our success.

Happy Trails and Thank You!
Ron Martin, ERF President



Horseback and wagon riders head out (top); honoree Steve Boice with Faith Boice & Ron Martin.

Riding the Empire Ranch

The Sonoita spring winds were gently blowing, skies were clear and the temperature was perfect for those who attended the 2014 Spring Trail Ride on April 5th. The father and daughter trail boss team of Steve Boice and Faith Boice led two rides with 56 riders who enjoyed the wonders and beauty of Las Cienegas National Conservation Area.

Gail Corkill and Steve "Bunker" deFrance entertained the participants in the morning wagon rides with tales about the rich history of the Empire Ranch as they explored a route north of Empire Ranch headquarters. Gerald Korte provided tours of the Empire Ranch House and shared stories of his experiences as an Empire cowboy in the late 1940s. A casual barbeque lunch was served in the shade of the Stone Corral, with musical entertainment provided by Maria McArthur (fiddle) and Laura Barry (guitar).

After lunch ERF President Ron Martin presented 2014 Trail Ride Honoree Steve Boice with the Heart of the Empire Award and shirt. Steve was honored for his many contributions including helping to found ERF (1997), serving multiple terms on the Board and as President (1999-2001). He began the Trail Rides at the Empire Ranch, has been a key organizer and supporter of the Roundup & Open House, and has unfailingly worked to preserve and protect the Empire Ranch. When accepting the award Steve, who grew up on the Empire Ranch learning ranching traditions from his grandparents Frank and Mary Boice and his father Frank ("Pancho") Boice, spoke

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