

People & Places

# Cowboy practices what he teaches

Jim Keyes uses a horse to handle cattle using low-stress techniques

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

Growing up the son of a working cowboy, Jim Keyes thought he'd be a cowboy all his life, and he did a little of it when he was first married — until he realized “you can't make any money,” he said.

But years of watching his dad practice low-stress cattle handling, long before the concept came into vogue, has influenced his choices ever since.

It's been the backbone of his teaching career at Utah State University, his work with ranchers and 4-H youths and his own cattle operation, where he raises red Angus on rangeland in the Four Corners area.

Keyes spends half of his time working with ranchers, and much of that involves working one-on-one to solve problems — usually in regard to public lands ranching, he said.

He also gives as many as 12 clinics a year on roping and handling cattle to livestock groups, private interests and feedlots. His goal is to help people with their horseback skills to enable them to better handle cattle, he said.

“Dad was a working cowboy; that's where I started this way of handling cattle. It was very important to him,” he said.

He didn't learn the low-stress techniques from sitting in college classrooms. And while there are a lot better



Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press

Jim Keyes, a range and animal scientist with Utah State University Extension, answers questions after his cattle handling clinic at the Idaho Range Livestock Symposium in Twin Falls on April 20.

ropers and horsemen, “being able to teach it is different,” he said.

Handling cattle in a less stressful environment for the animal is his primary goal, but his first message is safety — of the person, the horse and the cow, he said.

He told cattlemen at a clinic in Twin Falls, Idaho, last week that he wasn't going to tell them anything they didn't already know, but he hoped to have them step back and consider what they do in a different light.

Then he proceeded to work cattle in a calm, unhurried manner, pointing out how different techniques produce different results.

Low stress cattle handling is good for the animal, the beef the animal produces, the

## Western Innovator

**Jim Keyes**  
**Profession:** Utah State University Extension range and animal scientist  
**Age:** 57



**Business:** Keyes Cattle Co.  
**Home:** Monticello, Utah  
**Family:** Wife, Linda; six children; six grandchildren

**Education:** Master's and bachelor's degrees in animal science with a minor in range management, Utah State University; post graduate work in agricultural economics, University of Arizona

**Affiliations:** Member and past vice president, Utah Cattlemen's Association; committee for private property and public lands rights, National Cattlemen's Beef Association

industry's image and building consumer confidence, he said.

In addition to promoting good stockmanship, Keyes wants to help people realize the importance of ranch horse-

es. All of the new research agrees range management and animal handling is best done by a man on a horse, he said.

“I'm helping them be better horsemen, stockmen.

That's where it's at for me,” he said.

While a lot of people are using four-wheelers to tend their herds, the man on horseback taking care of cattle on the range will never be replaced. There are just some places you can't get to any other way, he said.

Keyes said his work brings a lot of satisfaction.

“It's nice to be able to help people with their problems and solve that issue,” he said.

He also wants to help the next generation of cattle producers and developed a curriculum for young 4-H members titled, “4-H Working Ranch Horse: A Practical Guide to Livestock Handling.”

The book is in its third edition and is being used in many states and Canada.

# Annual horseback ride becomes ‘gentlemanly’ tradition

By MATTHEW WEAVER  
Capital Press

SPOKANE VALLEY, Wash. — What began nearly 60 years ago when a rancher and his son rode their horses from Spokane to Colfax, Wash., has become an annual tradition called the Gentlemen on Horseback.

Founded in 1948, the group is gearing up for its annual ride, this year set to be May 16-20 in Hay, Wash.

The group has 110 members. Roughly 45 to 80 riders go on 10- to 20-mile rides per day each year, on horses ranging from quarterhorses to draft horses.

“The purpose is for our

### Online

<http://gentlemenonhorseback.com/>

group to get together, pal around together, meet their friends, companionship,” said Scott Wiggins, who is trail boss. “Most of them are cowboys at heart.”

About a third of the current members are involved in agriculture, and the rest have 5 to 50 acres where they keep their horses, Wiggins said.

The last generation of members was roughly 60 percent ag, and moreso before that, he said.

The group is one of the

longest continuously active men's riding groups in the country, as far as Wiggins knows.

The group started when a rancher and his son wanted to ride from Spokane to Colfax, Wash., for the Washington Cattlemen's Association annual meeting, Wiggins said.

“The next year, about 25 guys wanted to do it,” Wiggins said. “It caught on and they did it every year.”

After four years, it became a yearly ride from Spokane to such locations as Ellensburg, Wash.; Missoula, Mont.; and Aberdeen, Wash.

“It's not possible to do that anymore, with the high-

ways and fences,” Wiggins said.

Members come from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Riders average 65 to 70 years old. The oldest is 87.

Hay, Wash., resident and fire chief Dennis Moore has been a member for three years.

The town of roughly 12 residents invited the group to ride across several ranches to the Snake River. Moore said his neighbors welcomed the group on their land.

“A lot of them seem to be misplaced farm boys, like myself,” he said.

The group held its annu-

al banquet earlier this year in Spokane Valley, Wash. Wiggins said the group just hopes to continue to ride and maintain its numbers.

Wiggins said the group is always looking for new members. There are no membership fees. Rides cost \$250 and include food and entertainment.

The group leads to friendships and die-hard involvement, Wiggins said, recalling a member who broke his ankle during one ride.

“He spent the rest of the four days sitting in a lawn chair drinking beer, because he wouldn't leave,” Wiggins said. “He wasn't going to miss being with the guys.”

## Calendar Sponsored by: OXARC GASES / WELDING / SAFETY / FIRE 20 Northwest Locations

To submit an event go to the Community Events calendar on the home page of our website at [www.capitalpress.com](http://www.capitalpress.com) and click on “Submit an Event.” Calendar items can also be mailed to Capital Press, 1400 Broadway St. NE, Salem, OR 97301.

**Saturday, April 30**  
Chelan High School Agriculture Education Department Spring Plant Sale, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Chelan High School, 215 W Webster Ave., Chelan, Wash. Students have raised over 11,000 plants since late January and have bedding plants and vegetable starts.

Sammanish Valley, Wash., Spring Celebration, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Visit [sammamishvalley.org](http://sammamishvalley.org) for more information, a map, and links to each farm and business.

**Sunday, May 1**  
Sammanish Valley, Wash., Spring Celebration, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Visit [sammamishvalley.org](http://sammamishvalley.org) for more information, a map, and links to each farm and business.

**Thursday, May 5**  
2016 Animal Agriculture Alliance Stakeholders Summit, 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Westin Arlington Gateway, Arlington, Va. [www.animalagalliance.org/summit](http://www.animalagalliance.org/summit)

**Friday, May 6**  
18th Annual Cinco de Mayo Golf Classic, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Silverado Resort & Spa, 1600 Atlas Peak Road, Napa, Calif. This is the only fundraising event in Napa Valley exclusively dedicated to the needs of migrant farmworkers. 707-227-2641

2016 Animal Agriculture Alliance Stakeholders Summit, 7 a.m.-noon. Westin Arlington Gateway, Arlington, Va. [www.animalagalliance.org/summit](http://www.animalagalliance.org/summit)

**Saturday, May 7**  
Reducing Fire Risk in the Wildland-Urban Interface, 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m., University of Idaho Extension office, Orofino, Idaho

**Thursday, May 12**  
Washington FFA Convention, Washington State University, Pullman

**Friday, May 13**  
Washington FFA Convention, Washington State University, Pullman

**Saturday, May 14**  
Washington FFA Convention, Washington State University, Pullman Washington FFA Convention

**Saturday, May 21**  
2016 Goat Academy, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. A full day of classes followed by an auction on May 22. Camping available. Half Creek Farm, Goldendale, Wash. [www.columbiabasin-goatguild.org](http://www.columbiabasin-goatguild.org)

**Sunday, May 22**  
Oregon Cattlemen's Association's Midyear 2016, 1-9 p.m., Sunriver Resort, 17600 Center Drive, Sunriver, Ore. The event will host Ethan Lane, executive director of the Public Lands Council. [www.or-cattle.com](http://www.or-cattle.com)

**Monday, May 23**  
Oregon Cattlemen's Association's Midyear 2016, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Sunriver Resort, 17600 Center Drive, Sunriver, Ore. The event will also host Ethan Lane, executive director of the Public Lands Council. [www.orcattle.com](http://www.orcattle.com)

**Tuesday, May 24**  
Oregon Cattlemen's Association's Midyear 2016, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Sunriver Resort, 17600 Center Drive, Sunriver, Ore. The event will also host Ethan Lane, executive director of the Public Lands Council. [www.orcattle.com](http://www.orcattle.com)

**Wednesday, May 25**  
Noxious Weed Control Workshop, 6-8 p.m., OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Ore. (541) 776-7371, Rachel.werling@oregonstate.edu

**Saturday, May 28**  
Alpaca Shearing Day & Sale, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Alpacas of Oregon, 21345 SW Aebischer Road, Sherwood, Ore. Visitors can chat with four long-time livestock breeders who've raised llamas, horses, sheep, and goats. 503-348-6954

Western States Dorper Associ-

ation Show and Sale, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Chico State University Farm, 311 Nicholas C. Schoute Lane, Chico, Calif. Cost: Free [http://wsdorpers.com/2016\\_wsda\\_show\\_and\\_sale\\_info](http://wsdorpers.com/2016_wsda_show_and_sale_info)

**Sunday, May 29**  
Alpaca Shearing Day & Sale, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Alpacas of Oregon, 21345 SW Aebischer Road, Sherwood, Ore. The Citizen Fire Academy statewide program is for pro-active forest landowners, concerned residents in fire-prone communities and the public. Learn how to create safe, more fire-resilient homes through online sessions, field trips and by working on a personalized wildfire preparedness plan. Registration is due May 20. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/cfa>

**Friday, June 3**  
Citizen Fire Academy Meet and Greet, 5-8 p.m., OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Ore. The Citizen Fire Academy statewide program is for pro-active forest landowners, concerned residents in fire-prone communities and the public. Learn how to create safe, more fire-resilient homes through online sessions, field trips and by working on a personalized wildfire preparedness plan. Registration is due May 20. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/cfa>

**Saturday, June 4**  
AOSA SCST Joint Annual Meeting, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Embassy Suites, Airport Way, Portland. <http://www.seedtechnology.net/>

**Sunday, June 5**  
AOSA SCST Joint Annual Meeting, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Embassy Suites, Airport Way, Portland. <http://www.seedtechnology.net/>

**Monday, June 6**  
California Poultry Federation Summer Meeting, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Cliffs Resort, 2757 Shell Beach Road, Pismo Beach, Calif., <http://cpif.org/2016-summer-meeting>

<http://www.seedtechnology.net/>

**Sunday, June 5**  
AOSA SCST Joint Annual Meeting, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Embassy Suites, Airport Way, Portland. <http://www.seedtechnology.net/>

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AOSA SCST Joint Annual Meeting, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Embassy Suites, Airport Way, Portland. <http://www.seedtechnology.net/>

**Saturday, June 18**  
Ketchum Kalf Rodeo, 1 p.m., Glenwood Rodeo Grounds, 63 Trout Lake Highway, Glenwood, Wash. <http://Business.gorge.net/glenwoodrodeo>

**Sunday, June 19**  
Ketchum Kalf Rodeo, 1 p.m., Glenwood Rodeo Grounds, 63 Trout Lake Highway, Glenwood, Wash. <http://Business.gorge.net/glenwoodrodeo>

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