

NEVADA APPEAL

Local News

Politics

Nevada

Nation/World

Opinion

Region

Sports

Personal Appeal

Dayton

Your Town

Obituaries

Business

Outdoors

Events Calendar

Real Estate

Classifieds

Write the Editor

SERVICES

Today's Ads

Photo Gallery

Archives

Subscribe

RSS Feeds

Email Headlines

Legal & Public

Notices

Autos

Jobs

Yellow Pages

SPOTLIGHT



SPECIAL SECTIONS

Health and Wellness
2005

Carson Discoveries

The Bride to Be
2005Enter To Win the
Perfect Package!!!Home Style
Magazine

NEWSPAPERS

Lahontan Valley
News

Record Courier

Search:

[Classifieds](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

August 10, 2005

Discovery Trail a challenge for lone rider

by Susie Vasquez, Appeal Staff Writer

June 17, 2003

  [Print](#)  [Email](#)

Matthew Parker spent two weeks following the American Discovery Trail from Sacramento into the Sierra. He faced a bear and mountain lions, one of which was intent on eating his horse, Smokey.

Within the next few days, Parker, a Michigan native, will follow the trail south of Highway 50. The area is remote and waterless.

Parker studied the scratches and nicks on Smokey, a Tennessee walker, in the safety of a Carson City corral Monday, some of them left by a night-time mountain lion attack.

"Smokey snapped his picket line like dental floss," Parker said. "I had to chase him down in boxers and boots.

"This is the hardest thing I've ever done," he said of his ride. "It could be the hardest thing I'll ever do, in my life."

Snows near the summit, not the wildlife, that finally stopped Parker. He spent two weeks traveling northeast along American River to Squaw Valley, but was snowbound two miles east of Lake Tahoe and had to have Smokey trailered out.

The two are recuperating in Carson City before the next leg of their journey across the Great Basin's deserts.

"I'm nervous about it, but I know it's possible," he said. "I just can't be stupid about it."

Ask the 23-year-old college graduate why he's taking the risk, and he's ready with the answer. He calls himself a romantic who loves history. No one has completed this trip alone before on horseback. He's on a quest.

He said, historically, this type of journey was a rite of passage, adding life in the United States has become too easy and less rewarding.

"Society has whittled down all the challenges in life until there are none," Parker said. "The biggest rite of passage now is getting a driver's license. Then kids move on to cigarettes, sex and drinking."

Parker sold his car and guitar to make the trip. Selling the latter was the worst part.

He rode for 10 months to prepare for the journey and purchased the large, steady horse in Tennessee about eight months ago.

He's taking about a month to get through Nevada, the most difficult area in terms of water and forage for his horse. He hopes to be in Michigan by September or October.

He wants to be home in Ann Arbor for Christmas.

ADVERTISEMENT



[The Tahoe Real Estate Group](#)

[VIEW FULL AD](#)

Sierra Sun
Tahoe Bonanza
Tahoe Daily Tribune
Tahoe World
VISITOR INFO
Reno.com
Tahoe.com

 [BACK](#)  [TOP OF PAGE](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Archives](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) 

Visit our other [news and portal sites](#).
All contents © Copyright 2005 nevadaappeal.com
Nevada Appeal - 580 Mallory Way - Carson City, NV 89701