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## Ride of Passage

*Matt Parker travels American Discovery Trail, nearly 6,800 miles on horseback*

By Rebecca Aistrup Gerber  
*Dodge City Daily Globe*



Matt Parker travels east on U.S. Highway 50 between Cimarron and Dodge City Tuesday afternoon. After graduating from college Parker decided he wanted to see the country, so he is traveling the American Discovery Trail which stretches more than 6,800 mile across 15 states from California to Delaware. Michael Schweitzer/Dodge City Daily Globe

horseback. The trail stretches more than 6,800 miles across 15 states from California to Delaware. This trail is the only coast-to-coast, non-motorized recreational trail.

On Tuesday Parker traveled to Dodge City from Cimarron, where he was staying the night before continuing his trip East.

"There are a lot of things that turn you into a man, but not a lot of rights of passage," Parker said standing along U.S. Highway 50 Tuesday afternoon.

Although his trip began in May of 2003, Parker had to stop for the winter in Utah because his mule became lame.

When he continued his trip in the spring he was given a Missouri Fox Trotter horse from Dennis Remington with the Remington Ranch in Utah.

"She has been holding up well," Parker said.

After receiving a fine arts degree from Hope College, Holland, Mich., Matt Parker said he wanted to see the country.

And what better way to see the country than on horseback. So in May of 2003 Parker saddled his horse and mule and began a journey of a lifetime.

Parker wants to become the first man to cross the American Discovery Trail on

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Along the way Parker, who is 24, has met a lot of people especially going through the desert. He had to find areas where there was water and feed for his horse and mule.

"I have met a lot of interesting and amazing people," Parker said. "Some that are life long friends. Others have taken me into their homes - just wonderful people."

Parker is always in need of donations which are used for supplies to care and feed his horses and other expenses related directly to the trip. He is also in need of a mule.

For more information about Parker and his trip along the American Discovery Trail, visit his Web site at [www.rideofpassage.com](http://www.rideofpassage.com).

"I am trying to be the first man to ride the American Discovery Trail and it looks like it is going to happen," Parker said.

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