



Hoofin' the Pony Express

Distance running » Utah's remote Tooele and Juab counties offer spectacular views along 100-mile route.

By **CHRISTOPHER SMART**
The Salt Lake Tribune

Faust, Tooele County » Ask long-distance endurance runners why they do it and you'll get all kinds of answers — but they're all based on this: They love it.

For some, like Stephany Green, 34, mother of four young children, running is the best therapy in the world.

"It's my free therapist," she said. "It's great. I get up in the morning and go running and I'm a happier mom."

But not all distance runners put it into

Please see **PONY EXPRESS, A4**



“**As a society, we view the marathon as a great accomplishment. But we can go a lot farther. A 100-miler is not that far.**”

JAY ALDOUS
Runner, 51, who last year ran the Pony Express Trail Endurance Run in 15 hours and 6 minutes

Online » Pony Express Trail Endurance Run

Get more information on the Pony Express Trail Endurance Run online. » ponyexpress100.org

Top » A runner breaks through the shadows as the sun rises Friday in the early miles of the Pony Express Trail 100 Endurance Run. About 75 entrants and their support teams will run the 50-mile or 100-mile course along the historic Pony Express route in the west desert areas of Tooele and Juab counties.

Center » Competitive-elite runner Lorie Alexander, 53, of British Columbia, Canada, runs wearing a floppy pony costume.

Bottom » Jay Aldous, last year's winner, grabs sunglasses and a drink from his wife, Adrienne, as he runs.

PHOTOS BY AL HARTMANN | The Salt Lake Tribune

Pony Express

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words. Like 51-year-old Jay Aldous, they just want to keep moving. Last year, he ran the 100-mile Pony Express Trail Endurance Run in 15 hours; 6 minutes. For folks like him, 26.2-mile marathons just aren't far enough.

"My view is that as humans, we evolved to run. We are uniquely engineered to be long-distance runners," he said. "As a society, we view the marathon as a great accomplishment. But we can go a lot farther. A 100-miler is not that far."

Friday morning, Green and Aldous and 73 others — accompanied by support crews — began hoofing it west along a picturesque route in remote Tooele and Juab counties in this year's Pony Express Trail 100 Endurance Run. Entrants can choose to go 50 or 100 miles along the unpaved course where horsemen galloped with mail bags from April 1860 to October 1861.

The race was formalized in 2006, but founder Davy Crockett — yep, that's his real name — stumbled into it several years earlier. One day, Crockett put on his running shoes and headed out the door of his Saratoga Springs home. As it turns out, the Pony Express Trail runs nearby.

"I just left my house and started running west," he recalled.

The 100-mile course for this year's event began about 10 miles west of Faust in Tooele County and continues west 58.2 miles through the rugged beauty of the high desert to Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge in Juab County. Competitors then turn around and run to the finish at Simpson Springs, 16 miles from of the start. They have a maximum of 30 hours in which to finish.

The optional 50-mile course takes the same route but ends at the Blackrock Pony Express station.

This is Green's first attempt at a 50-miler. Her support team includes her husband, Micah Green, her parents and her four children, including her 21-month-old son, Beck, who was born with a rare muscle disorder.

He was never supposed to be able to walk or eat, she said. But with a lot of therapy, he now can. "He is my little mir-



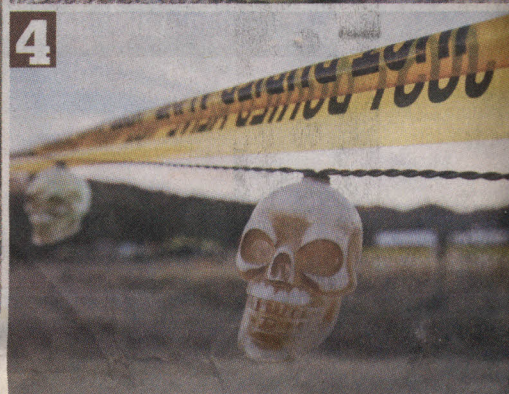
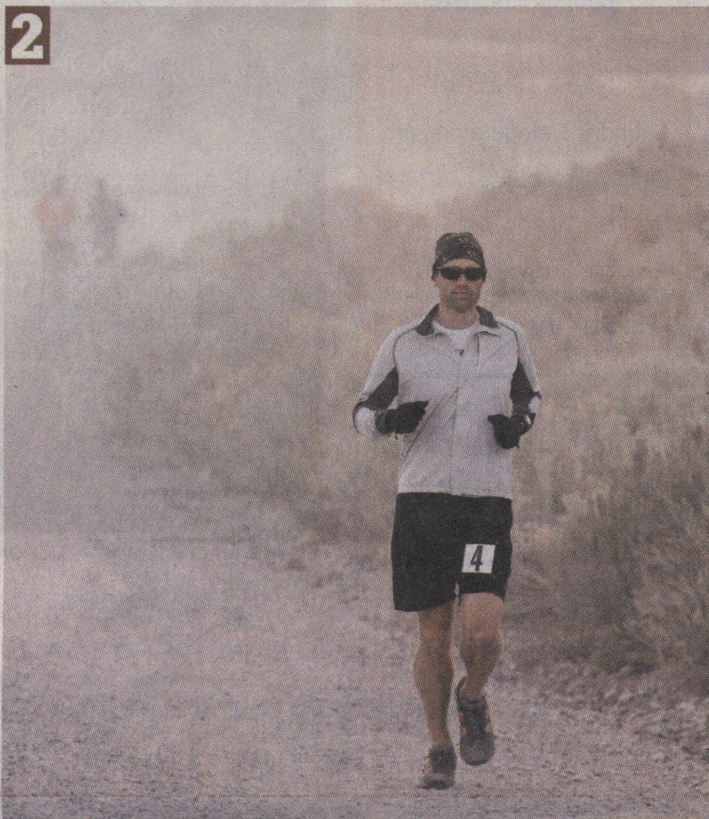
PHOTOS BY AL HARTMANN

1 & 5 » The west desert's mountains and valleys dwarf runners in the Pony Express Trail 100 Endurance Run. Dozens of their support teams began the 50- or 100-mile course Friday morning along the historic Pony Express route in Tooele and Juab counties.

2 » Runner Brian Janeck, of Portland, Ore., eats some dust.

3 » A runner in the competitive-elite class wears new running shoes with 1-inch cushioned soles.

4 » The starting line of the Pony Express Trail 100 Endurance Run is lined with glowing skulls Friday morning.



ONLINE » SEE A PHOTO GALLERY OF THE PONY EXPRESS TRAIL ENDURANCE RUN » SLTRIB.COM

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Runners take on Pony Express Trail

Endurance runners follow the historic Pony Express Trail in Utah's west desert. The race offers a 50-mile run and a 100-mile run. The event began Friday morning.

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He was never supposed to be able to walk or eat, she said. But with a lot of therapy, he now can. "He is my little miracle boy," she said.

She hopes her 50-mile run will inspire her kids.

"I had to prove to Beck that you can work hard and accomplish great things in life."

Another busy mother, Suzanne Dalebout, 42, lives in East Millcreek with her husband, two young sons and five dogs. She began running about 10 years ago, after she moved to Utah from Liverpool, England. She also owns and operates a financial planning practice that specializes in women's needs.

Dalebout likes running because she doesn't have to go to a gym or make plans.

"I have a busy lifestyle," she said. "The only thing that's easy to do is put on my shoes and run out the front door."



ONLINE » SEE A PHOTO GALLERY OF THE PONY EXPRESS TRAIL ENDURANCE RUN » SLTRIB.COM



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"There is nothing left in me after a marathon," she said. "The 100-miler, I'm just intrigued to run as far as I can."

Marathoners often drink during races but typically do not eat. Not so for 50- and 100-mile endurance runners. For Dalebout, she refuels with fruit, yogurt, chocolate and chicken-potato soup.

Another participant, Adam Hall, a 33-year-old general contractor from Spanish Fork, ran his first 50-miler in March — The Buffalo Run on Antelope Island.

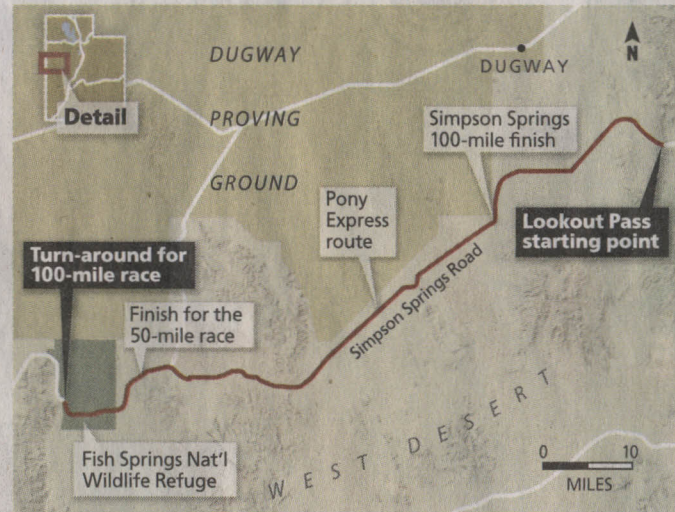
"My toenails have almost grown back," he said with a smile in Friday's pre-dawn darkness near the start line.

He trains two to three days a week with runs of 10 to 20 miles.

The endurance races are

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Source: Pony Express 100

The Salt Lake Tribune

a "pride thing" for Hall. "I do it just to see if I can do it," he said. "It makes me feel good to

do something not a lot of people can do."

After The Buffalo Run, he

ached for days and his toenails turned purple and then fell off. "It's going to hurt," he said before setting off Friday at 7 a.m.

Fifty-three-year-old Lorie Alexander, from Vernon, British Columbia, has run 14 100-mile races and two "Bad Waters" — the 135-mile runs in the Mojave Desert.

Why does she do it? "Because I can," she smiled. "And because I can beat everybody younger than me."

She hopes to complete the Pony Express Trail 100 in 20 hours.

Like many endurance runners, she has no set training regimen. "I run on the weekends," she said.

But Graham Correia, 33, of Rochester, Mass., does have a regular training schedule. And so does his friend, Keeler North, 32. North also is a Massachusetts native but now lives in Colorado Springs. The pair hooked up in Utah for the Pony

Express Trail run and hope to finish the 100-miler together.

North didn't take up running until 2006 in an effort to quit cigarettes and chewing tobacco. He's now run a number of marathons but never anything farther.

"Sometimes I feel terrible after a marathon," he said. "Other times I feel like a million bucks."

North said his strategy is to go out slow. "I just want to take it nice and easy," he said. "I just want to have a good time."

His friend, Correia, is a fitness trainer and runs about 100 miles a week as a means to a healthy and safe lifestyle.

"I have had a little bit of a checkered past," he said. "Running helps me get through tough moments."

Beyond that, he said endurance running provides a feeling of well-being. "Once you've done a long run — it's the best high you can have."

Nursing

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operates a nursing program in West Haven.

These two are hardly the only Utah nursing programs with unacceptable pass rates for NCLEX, the exam graduates must pass to work

in the upper 80s and lower 90s, almost always in line with the current national average. Under DOPL rules, programs are in violation if their pass rates remain five points below the average for three quarters in a two-year period.

Stevens Henager administrator Vicky Dewsnup contends the quarterly report-

rate was 4.4 points higher than the national average.

Three times a year, Henager takes on new cohorts of between 15 and 20 students.

Last quarter, three new graduates chose to take NCLEX "cold," or without preparing, Dewsnup said, and only one passed, giving the school a miserable 33 percent pass rate. The failure of

In August, Broadview officials told state regulators it was shutting down its nursing program, citing "a lack of resources" shortly after many of its faculty quit. A small group of Broadview students nearing graduation will be allowed to wrap up their studies this fall at the West Jordan school.

programs graduated 252 students last year who passed the NCLEX. That number is sure to grow as these programs become more established. Everest College in West Valley City, Fortis College in Salt Lake City, Eagle Gate College with campuses in Murray and Layton, and Nightingale College in Ogden are now training students while seeking accreditation to nursing

their public counterparts — often in excess of \$40,000. Their credits and degrees are not readily transferable to a traditional university because the for-profit schools typically lack regional accreditation. Another limiting factor: finding the clinical placements that give them real-world experience. Schools rely on providers to offer spots and have little control over access to them.