

ALBERTA WISH RIDE - MAJOR SUCCESS

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Story by Roger Matas, Photos by Bill Bruce

If improving on past achievements is a measure of success, then the 2nd annual Alberta Wish Trail Ride was definitely successful.

While the event, on August 21st at Little Elbow in Kananaskis about 45 minutes west of Calgary, attracted fewer riders than the inaugural ride, the initial fundraising total came in

hot dinner, entertainment, prizes and awards and, for the second year in a row, expenses were kept at about \$500.

"That's where the community support comes in," White said. "Our food, prizes and even the water was donated. We had a great crew of volunteers to help us set up and run the event. A group from King George Masonic Lodge in Calgary looks after all the cooking."

The organizing committee consisted of Irene, Ed and Mavis Greenberg, Sarah Johnston, Trevor Eagles, Larry Watmough,

Mark Bilawchuk, Wish Foundation representative Meagan Innes and Roger Matas.

There was some concern over air quality due to smoke drifting into the area from forest fires in B.C. which may account for the slightly reduced turnout, but it didn't seem to cause any significant problems. There were about 65 riders and horses who were able to choose from three trails through scenic Kananaskis country.

"There were a lot of happy faces at our base

\$25,000 for Wish Foundation

camp in the afternoon. A the most pledges raised great day on the trails followed by a delicious dinner, entertainment and lots of prizes combined to ensure all the participants had fun," White said. Calgary-based singer/songwriters Joni Delaurier and Troy Kokol along with 14 year old Angela McInnes and Larry Watmough cranked up the tunes and had everyone clapping.

There were prizes for



rider (16). The top prize, a customized saddle donated by Frontier Western Shop in Claresholm provided an international flair to the event as it was won by 16 year old Lia Meiseberg who visits her aunt



Larry Watmough and Angela McInnes

in Carstairs every summer from Germany. Her squeals of delight when her ticket was drawn echoed through the camp and her huge smile was infectious. She can't wait to show off the saddle to her riding friends in Germany.

"Putting on this event takes thousands of hours and lots of people, but it's all worthwhile knowing we're making a difference in the lives of children who are going through a rough time," said White.

The committee is looking at options for 2011, hoping

to find a different location for the event to keep it fresh for the participants, many of whom have already committed to return.



Irene White and Lia Meiseberg



Chuck Rose and other members of King George Lodge getting breakfast ready

at \$25,000—\$5,000 more than 2009.

"We're absolutely thrilled with the result," said committee chair Irene White. "Thanks to all the volunteers and our community support we put on an amazing event and kept our expenses to a minimum. It's heart-warming to know we are able to make this significant contribution to the Children's Wish Foundation in an effort which gave everyone such a great day."

The event featured a full pancake breakfast, a