KATHLEEN HOFFMAN

PLEASE JOIN the ApHC in congratulating Kathleen Hoffman of Paradise, Texas, for being inducted into the Trail Rider's Hall of Fame in 2015. Kathleen earned her automatic induction by completing an impressive fifty-two ApHC-approved trail rides that were a minimum of five days in length.

For Kathleen, this accomplishment was not only years in the making but perhaps inevitable. From childhood and Illinois summers riding ponies and horses with friends, dashing off to ride the game trails through ravines and valleys to go fishing and swimming, her passion for both Appaloosas and trail riding was set. In 1978 when she went on her first "100 Mile Trail Ride" with the Illinois Stock Horse Association in the Shawnee National Forest, she was hooked.

Kathleen has been riding on ApHC associated trail rides for 26 years. In the early years, financing her hobby and finding the vacation time to go were the biggest obstacles. "In reflection," Kathleen said, "there are three proudest moments for me, years apart. The first was receiving my Sheltowee belt buckle from Embry Curry at the first Sheltowee trail ride I attended in Kentucky. The second was receiving the

All-Around Top Hand buckle award from Hugh Williams on the 2007 Apache Land Trail Ride in New Mexico. The third was when my best trail horse, Brothers Fire, 'Poncho,' received his 1000 Mile Medallion in 2013. He now has recorded more than 1,900 miles with the ApHC distance program."

"Rock strong" is how Kathleen describes the partnership trail riding has cultivated with her horses. About Appaloosas she said, "I will forever stick with them as the best trail horses I have ever had." And about the sport she continued, "Trail riding is a wonderful community of really great people. It is eye opening to ride to new places, and fun to return to those you love and enjoy. It's all about being outdoors on the back of a horse with like-minded folks. Be prepared, think safety, above all take care of your horse first, and enjoy the journey. Get out there and ride!"