



**DATE 28 July 2011**

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This is part of an occasional series by the Sanpete County Travel and Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance on the people and places along U.S. Highway 89.

## **Riders Prepare for ATV Run Into Remote Mountains**

*By Lori Smith*

*For the National Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area*

MANTI – Manti City invites ATV enthusiasts of all ages and abilities to explore pristine wilderness areas during the seventh annual Manti Mountain ATV Run Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 4-6.

Volunteer guides will lead participants on rides through the scenic Arapeen OHV Trail System. The trails wind through the Manti-LaSal National Forest from 5,600 feet to over 10,000 feet above sea level with some of the most beautiful mountain vistas in the state. Photos, descriptions and maps of the trails to be covered during this year's run are available at the event website: [www.mantiatvrun.com](http://www.mantiatvrun.com).

On each day of the event, rides will begin and end at the northwest pavilion of the Manti City Park, 200 N. 400 W. in Manti. Since Manti, Ephraim and other Sanpete towns are OHV friendly, you can begin riding right from your hotel parking lot or campground.

Gary Chidester, an event organizer who has been riding ATV's for about 20 years, says Sanpete is a "pretty unique area. There are not too many places in Utah where you can ride from your house and in half an hour be up in the mountains with hardly anybody around."



Organizers of the yearly ATV run cater to riders of all abilities, with special emphasis on new riders from the Wasatch Front who want to become familiar with the extensive Arapeen Trail System. *Photos from Manti Mountain ATV Run.*

Alvin Kilmer, another event organizer, says last year's event attracted approximately 150 participants. This year, Kilmer says, organizers expect about 100 riders, due to higher fuel costs. Event organizers cater to new riders each year, with the purpose of introducing more riders from the Wasatch Front and throughout Utah to Central Utah's vast trail system and inviting them to return with groups of their own.

Kilmer has been riding ATVs for about 10 years. “I just enjoy it... You can get to areas that you can’t get to with just a [standard road] vehicle. It’s great for older people, for people that can’t hike or ride horses. It gives them the opportunity to see country that otherwise they couldn’t.”

On Thursday, the ride is a half-day tour designed especially for beginners. Riders will leave the park at 1 p.m. and return by 5 p.m. Riders will travel by Gunnison Reservoir and Palisade Park and return to Manti via the “old dump road.” Anyone can join the group for this ride at no cost.

The rides on Friday and Saturday are more suited for intermediate riders, but inexperienced riders should be able to handle them as well. Registered participants will begin each day with a continental breakfast at the park and then choose from among the following daylong rides: Loveridge Trail, Patton Poker Run Trail, Beaver Creek Trail, Harmon and Forbush Cove Trails, and Fishing Trail Ride. All of these trails are new rides for the event. Each ride is approximately 40 miles long, and most of the rides go up to Skyline Drive.

The tours on Friday and Saturday will begin between 7-9 a.m. Lunch will be provided on the trail. Riders will return by 5 p.m. On Friday night, dinner will also be provided at the park pavilion.

Event prices are \$75 for each rider, \$50 for children 11 and under. Group discounts are \$140 for two riders or \$270 for four. Price is per person, not per machine. The package includes guided tours Thursday, Friday and Saturday, breakfast and lunch Friday and Saturday, dinner Friday night, and a T-shirt.

To register or to find more information about ATV rentals, lodging, camping, dining and other travel information, visit <http://www.mantiatvrn.com>.