

Hello from Mount Hope

By John Fant



Mount Hope Aid Station – Sat. Aug 20, 2016 (Elev. 12,563')

Well another Leadville 100 race is in the history books, but the Mount Hope Aid Station is looking forward to next year. It went real smoothly this year, and the weather was perfect. Only a couple of rain showers in the afternoons and one morning of frost! Even the fact that the station was breaking in a new water treatment tech from Arkansas went smoothly as well.

First a few details about this foot race. The Leadville 100 is a hundred mile race, where the runners run fifty miles one way, turn around and come back. The race starts at 4 AM on Saturday morning in Leadville, Colorado, and goes 30 hours until 10 AM Sunday where it ends in Leadville. The elevation starts at roughly 10,200 feet and runs up to 12,600 feet. The turnaround is the ghost town of Winfield, Colorado, at the fifty-mile marker. This race is world known. There were runners from France, Italy, Germany, Spain, US, and so on that ran this race. This year 848 people entered into the race. Out of that, only 20 people did not make the cut off time which was 4:15 Saturday afternoon [at Hope Pass] and could not continue on. The first runner came thru at 10:26 Saturday morning; yes, 6 hours and 26 minutes to run 45 miles! When the runner completes the race, they have the bragging rights and a belt buckle to show off for completing the race.

The aid station provides runners everything they need to complete the race, food, fluids, shelter, and medical care (if needed) for each runner. It also is home to a small group, who are responsible for setting up of aid station and daily operation, this year there were four of us.



Now the amazing part of this is, the food and gear is brought up by llamas and mule train, over 2000 pounds for this race alone. Race day the crew is responsible for the food and clean drinking water. There are two shifts of volunteers that hike up the mountain to help out as well. The new water tech this year processed over 470 gallons of purified water to drink.

Llamas carrying supplies and gear up to aid station

I would like to mention a very special group of people that went way above and beyond just volunteering to help out with everything.

1st Golden High School Track Team – They paced runners coming in and encouraging them on. Plus they resupplied the fluids the runner needed, while the runner had a snack to eat.

2nd Micheal Bigley, RN – Not only did he give great medical care, but he helped out with whatever needed to be done.

3rd Scott Burkhardt – Radio/Communications; he did everything that was needed to be done, including carrying water up to the aid station.

4th Logan and Lance Prewitt – these brothers worked almost every area. For two young men, they showed great maturity.

5th Tessa Maurer – This young lady was impressive! She worked all day cooking and serving with a big smile. This young lady put many of the adults working that day to shame, and she is only 13 years old.

The race has its rewards as well for the crew, like when you see a runner, especially from another country, knowing in advance about this aid station and its past history, the thanks they give is very heart felt and sincere. They remember everyone that works at this aid station. Plus,



the llamas are a great hit with them as well. There were a lot of pictures taken with the llamas that day.

Now for the serious part of this article, we could use and need help in future. The need is for more llamas and younger hands to help out. The youngest out of the four who went up Thursday to set up is 52 years old. So please if you want an adventure and to pack with your llamas contact RMLA. They will put you in touch with the right people to talk too!

Right: Solar/battery-power water purifier system running



To add another bonus, starting next year PLTA will be having a pack trial going on with this. So at the same time you can have an adventure and get your llama certified with PLTA. Then afterwards you have the bragging rights and proof that you can actually trek with your llamas.

Oh one last thing! The new guy from Arkansas (who lives at 682 feet elevation) did fine and

cannot wait for next year to come! So if a lowlander like him and his llamas could do it, you can too! He is now part of the Hopeless Crew!