



N.C. Transportation Museum Hosts “Hoofing It By Mule Across North Carolina” April 25

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Man And His Mules Tell The Story Of A Very Slow Journey Across The Tarheel State

SPENCER – The N.C. Transportation Museum, in association with the North Carolina Humanities Council, will host “Hoofing It By Mule Across North Carolina,” Saturday, April 25, featuring Bernie Harberts. Though the museum features trains, airplanes and automobiles, this program will focus on a more traditional form of transportation. Harberts will appear with Woody The Mule, the beast of burden that carried him across North Carolina, and Maggie The Pony, who joined the pair on their later trip across the nation.

In these days of high speed interstate travel, back seat DVD players and directions at the touch of a GPS, Bernie Harberts decided to cross the Tarheel State on the back of a mule. The unusual decision made to celebrate the state’s vanishing rural culture. It also was a way for Harberts to reconnect with people after spending five years sailing around the world alone.

Harberts and Woody began their journey March 15, 2004 in Oriental, N.C. After arriving on the North Carolina coast, the westerly trek began. Despite an uncooperative mule and the elements, it was a successful journey. Over the next 600 miles, Harberts met and learned about the state’s rural families. He discovered that Pin Hook, N.C. was named for the way early residents fished. He learned that Hell Town, N.C. has nothing to do with the devil. He learned that flour burgers, where flour is substituted for meat, are nearing extinction. Harberts collected pictures, recipes and other memorabilia, ending his Tarheel State travels in the Great Smoky Mountains.

Then Harberts and Woody decided to extend their journey. Thirteen months after departing Oriental, N.C., the pair reached San Diego and the Pacific Ocean. Harberts’ book, “Too Proud To Ride A Cow” documents his 3500 mile journey, the people he met and the addition of Maggie the pony to his menagerie. A children’s book, “Woody and Maggie... Walk Across America,” also tells the story.

A graduate of N.C. State University and a resident of Southern Pines, N.C., Harberts has embarked on several adventures. Before crossing the country by mule, Harberts circumnavigating the globe in a 35 foot sail boat, a trip recounted in the DVD documentary “65 Days Alone At Sea.” Most recently, Harberts traveled by wagon from Canada to Mexico, a story soon to be released in print and on DVD. Harberts’ website, www.riverearth.com, describes him as a “good writer, a fair horseman and a lousy judge of distance.”

Harberts, his mule Woody and his pony Maggie will tell their story and show photos of the journey across North Carolina at 1 p.m. in the Bob Julian Roundhouse Orientation Room at the N.C. Transportation Museum. The program is free and open to the public.

The N.C. Transportation Museum, located in historic Spencer Shops, the former Southern Railway repair facility, is part of the Division of State Historic Sites, Department of Cultural Resources. The museum is located just five minutes off I-85 at Exit 79 in Spencer, N.C., and about an hour from Charlotte, Greensboro or Winston-Salem. Visit www.nctrans.org for more information. The N.C. Department of Cultural Resources is celebrating the 2009 theme of “Treasure N.C. Culture.” For information on the Department of Cultural Resources, call (919) 807-7385 or visit www.ncculture.com.

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