

*In Memory of Jack Allen Green – December 7, 1933 – December 31, 2008*

The Altoona Trail Riders, the Lake County Sheriff's Mounted Posse and many other local horsemen are all grieving at the recent loss of our dear friend and neighbor, Jack Green. The news of his passing spread quickly to many of us who were out of town celebrating the New Year at various trail rides. Phone messages and emails have been traveling to and fro to those who knew and loved this cowboy.

Jack was born in New Mexico and grew up on a farm where he learned to ride. As a youngster he had a pony and spent time riding the local terrain, always wanting to be a cowboy. He served in the Air Force and did a tour of duty in Vietnam. Jack worked for Eastern Airlines for twenty-five years retiring as Manager of Seat Shop. He lived in Miami and then Homestead, moving to Altoona in 1990. While in Miami, he was a member of the South Florida Trail Riders of Dade and later a member of the South Florida Trail Riders of Broward. In 1995 when Glenda Dawkins organized a group to re-construct the Altoona Trail Riders, Jack was right there in the middle of the action serving as the small group's treasurer and helping with the organization of the rides. Jack was a member of the Lake County Sheriff's Mounted Posse and proudly rode with them at their events; in parades, patrolling the mall, searching for missing people and participating in competitions. He looked quite "spiffy" when he was all decked out in his posse uniform. He was also a member of the Florida Outlaws SASS Mounted Shooting Organization and participated in cowboy mounted shooting events. For the past five years or so Jack worked at Marsha Schloesser's Carousel Workshop assisting her with the restoration of carousel horses. Jack found it to be a challenge to re-create just the correct piece of a horse that needed repair. He carved, sanded and painted those ponies and always stepped up to the challenge regardless of how damaged a horse was. He told Marsha that the he looked forward to getting up each day and heading off to her place. His proudest achievement was when he turned a stallion into a mare for a client. He carved and chiseled at just the right places!

Before I got my own horse trailer, Jack offered to haul me and my horse to quite a few rides. He was very generous in that regard and I was grateful for the rides. We were at the grand opening of the Land Bridge back in 2000 and spent time marveling at the construction of the nation's first land bridge over an interstate. The next week we were back there riding it with the horses. It was quite the adventure. The Altoona Trail Riders held a ride in Sept. 2007 with a "cowboy" theme. We rode the old Fechtel Ranch area (Lower Wekiva River Preserve) and it seemed fitting to have a cowboy theme. Jack came all decked out in a wonderful authentic cowboy outfit and won the prize for the best dressed cowboy. He was a handsome guy, ever the gentleman, who loved the ladies, dancing, chocolate chip cookies and riding. His beloved horse, River, would do almost anything that Jack wanted. River was named the Altoona Trail Riders' Trail Horse of the Year in 2008 and Jack received the perpetual trophy at our banquet last June. He was extremely thrilled with that award and said it meant the world to him. River was the perfect horse for this, our perfect cowboy.

Jack is survived by his brother Bill (Cathy) Green of Minnesota, step-daughters Debra (Ron) Ambrose of Melbourne and Dori (Nick) Barbella from Colorado and four

grandchildren; Jordan Ambrose, Devon Ambrose, Jack Barbella and Brandon Barbella. He is also survived by many, many dear friends who will miss him so much. A memorial service will be held for Jack on Saturday, January 10 at 10AM at the home of Bill and Denise Makielski on 18207 West Lake Dorr Road, Altoona. All his friends and neighbors are invited to come and celebrate his life and remember our Jack. Folks will be given a chance to say a few words if it is in your hearts to do so. The Lake County Sheriff's Mounted Posse will be there in full uniform on horseback, members of the Altoona Trail Riders will be in attendance on horseback as will the SASS Mounted Shooters. At the conclusion, there will be a toast of Jack's favorite beverage and snack and a trail ride in the forest. Friends and neighbors, not on horseback, who are attending are asked to bring a chair. Some chairs will be provided but we are anticipating a large crowd. In lieu of flowers the family is requesting donations towards funeral expenses.

I have a plaque in my den that says "Some people come into our lives and quickly go... and then some stay for awhile and leave footprints in our hearts... and we are never, ever the same." Well he not only left footprints in our hearts, Jack Allen Green danced on our hearts. Godspeed gentleman cowboy. Riding those trails beyond the pearly gates.