



Courtesy Mark Bedor

MARK BEDOR, AUTHOR AND FILM MAKER

Mark Bedor is the creator and host of *Today's Wild West*, an award-winning documentary-style TV series on all things Western, airing on PBS stations, YouTube, My Home TV and other platforms. *Today's Wild West* is a two-time winner of the National Cowboy Museum's Western Heritage Award for Outstanding Western Lifestyle TV Show. Bedor is also a freelance magazine writer-photographer, whose work has been published in *True West* and many other publications. He's also the author of two Western coffee table photography books, and spent a career in local TV news before focusing on the Great American West.

of it so much fun! The horses, history, the land, wildlife, ranches, culture—it goes on and on, and it never gets old.

I love Western ranches. The White Stallion in Tucson was one of the first I ever visited and remains a special place.

Dutch oven cooking—nothing better on a pack trip!

Nothing like a guitar around the fire after a great day on horseback.

The Chief Joseph Trail Ride with the Appaloosa Horse Club was an unforgettable experience. Great people, beautiful country, but tragic history.

What history has taught me—People in every age are flawed human beings who usually do the best they can. We need to think twice before we judge those who lived in an often harsh and difficult time and place. And we all need a Savior.

Growing up I always wanted to be a cowboy. I was in third grade when *How the West Was Won* came out. I was hooked. Growing up in Minnesota, the only place I ever wanted to go was out West. I still haven't been to New York. I don't think I'm missing much.

My parents bought me a toy Winchester for Christmas that shot plastic bullets. Coolest gift I ever received! I can remember my mom ironing in the basement, while I turned the picnic table we brought in for the winter into a covered wagon.

A teacher—Roger Paskvan—was the head of the TV Production Department at Bemidji State University. It was his encouragement that led to a career as a local TV news reporter, then freelance magazine writing and photography about the West, and *Today's Wild West*, the TV series I'm doing today.

My first time skiing in Jackson Hole was truly awesome. Shoulda stayed.

My favorite Western is *How the West Was Won*. I can almost recite it. It has all the elements of the Old West, the greatest actors of our time, and the Indian attack on the wagon train still puts me on the edge of my seat!

John Wayne set the standard, rode for the brand, and there's never been anyone like the Duke.

I've ridden so many great horses on cattle drives, horseback adventures and dude ranches. I have a 16 by 20 riding Tracker while team penning at the White Stallion Ranch. And I rode a palomino named Trigger for years in L.A.'s 4,600-acre Griffith Park. Galloping flat-out on the last run up to Mount Hollywood was always a rush!

Riding the Custer Battlefield in Montana at U.S. Cavalry School is a unique adventure, and provides an unmatched understanding of what happened there.

TV news gave me a great foundation for what I do today, both for print and TV stories. And being in the media can give you a front row seat to some very cool stuff. Despite its flaws, there are still many good, honest people working in TV news. I ignore those who are not.

If I don't have great pictures, I don't have a story. I appreciate those who are true artists with a camera. I'm always working to get better. I never regret taking pictures. And it's fun when people appreciate my work.

There's no place like the American West. I love everything about it—especially the people—who make all the rest

