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Presented by  Tucson  
Medical  
Center

**18<sup>th</sup> Annual 24 Hours in the Old Pueblo Dedicated to Laird Knight**

*Paying respect to the man who dreamed up the original 24 hour mountain bike event in 1992*

(TUCSON, ARIZ.) December 15, 2016 – Today Epic Rides announced Mountain Bike Hall of Fame inductee Laird Knight as the dedication recipient for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual 24 Hours in the Old Pueblo p/b Tucson Medical Center held in the Sonoran Desert northwest of Tucson on Feb. 17-19, 2017.

Knight is credited with holding the first 24 hour mountain bike event, the 24 Hours of Canaan, back in 1992. But Knight's influence on the mountain bike industry runs far deeper than just his creativity in promoting a mountain bike event modeled after the legendary 24 Hours of LeMans. Knight is also credited as being one of the very first and most successful mountain bike event promoters in America, starting back in 1983 when he held one of the very first East Coast mountain bike events permitted on U.S. Forest Service land.

“We had twelve riders start, including me. None of us finished,” said Knight.

Even though everyone either wore-out or flatted out of the race, for the next 32 years, Knight continued to produce some of the most successful mountain bike events in the country, right when the sport of mountain biking was becoming an international sports phenomenon. In 1989, Knight and his mountain-state, race-promoter cohorts, created the West Virginia Mountain Bike Association, an organization still going strong today as one of the original and longest running non-NORBA/USA Cycling-sanctioned mountain bike series in America.

Simultaneously, Knight's Granny Gear Productions (GGP) became the premier American mountain bike promotion company through the heyday of the early 1990s when mountain biking was the hottest “extreme” sport in the nation, if not the world. Knight rode this wave, capitalizing on it with the 24 Hours of Canaan near Davis, West Virginia, the very first 24 hour mountain bike race held in 1992 that has become folkloric in its tales of bloody shins and mud-covered, sleep-deprived grins. Canaan was so

successful that GGP expanded to a six-event national 24 hour series including destinations Moab, Utah, Temecula, CA, Conyers, GA, Big Bear, WV, Killington, VT, Landhal, KS and Lake Tahoe.

“Without Laird Knight, there'd be no Epic Rides,” said Todd Sadow, president and co-founder of Epic Rides. “It's truly an honor to dedicate this year's 24 Hours in the Old Pueblo to Laird. I can't think of a more fitting dedication recipient than the man who started this whole crazy fun round-the-clock experience on mountain bikes.”

Although Knight's event promotion days are over, he is fielding a five-person co-ed team with friends for the event creatively named “RIP Granny RIP”. Granny may be resting peacefully as an event production company, but the experiences Knight and his crew have provided thousands of mountain bikers will live on forever.

Epic Rides invites the public to join a celebration of Knight's event production career on Friday, Feb. 17 in the exchange tent at 6:45p. Fellow Mountain Bike Hall of Fame member Nat Ross will guest speak and introduce Knight while Blue Banjo BBQ will serve attendees dinner. Tickets are \$25 per person and are limited to the first 100 people. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

For more information on the 24 Hours of the Old Pueblo, visit [epicrides.com](http://epicrides.com) or follow @epicrides and @24hourtown on Facebook, and search #epicrides and #24HOP on Instagram and Twitter.

For media inquires, contact Todd Sadow, Epic Rides president at [tsadow@epicrides.com](mailto:tsadow@epicrides.com) or (520) 623-1584

### **About Epic Rides**

Founded in 1999, Epic Rides has become world famous for producing events that celebrate the many positive aspects of mountain biking. Events such as the 24 Hours in the Old Pueblo presented by Tucson Medical Center, Tour of the White Mountains, Grand Junction Off-Road, Whiskey Off-Road and the Carson City Off-Road are popular with participants because they offer challenging, fun riding and emphasize the joy and camaraderie inherent in the sport.

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