

SECRET SERVICE COMMAND POST PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION UPDATE



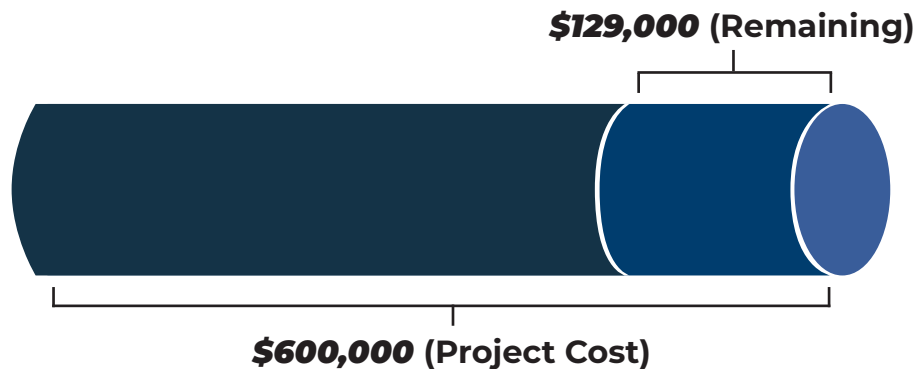
Young America's Foundation
Reagan Ranch

SEPTEMBER
2024

The Secret Service Command Post Restoration and Preservation project has made substantial progress. Considerable structural preservation efforts have been accomplished, encompassing the installation of new roofing materials, roof support trusses, gutters, siding repairs, flooring supports, entry steps, grading, and drainage systems. These enhancements not only shield the structure from environmental elements but also establish a solid foundation. Moreover, the recent replacement of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, complete with new ducting and an advanced filtration system, ensures optimal conditions for artifact preservation and ongoing collection activities.



FUNDING UPDATE



Since the beginning of our restoration and preservation project, we have received over **\$471,000** in committed gifts towards the **\$600,000** budget put in place. We are still seeking **\$129,000** in support to allow completion of the Secret Service Command Post Restoration and Preservation project by Fall 2025.

Through donations made by former Secret Service Agents, the Reagan Ranch Center has accumulated more than 1,000 artifacts including:

► **UNIFORMS/RANCH ATTIRE**

► **PHOTOS**

► **FIREARMS**

► **PASSPORT/INTERNATIONAL TRIP MEMORABILIA**

► **COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT** (I.E. RADIOS, WALKIE-TALKIES)

► **OFFICE EQUIPMENT** (I.E. TYPEWRITERS, PHONES, JOURNALS, ETC.)

► **ID BADGES**

► **SECRET SERVICE PINS AND AWARDS**

► **SADDLES AND OTHER HORSE EQUIPMENT**

► **BUTTONS AND PINS**

► **CHALLENGE COINS**

► **OVER 15 HOURS OF FOOTAGE FROM 22 INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS**

**WITH FORMER UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE AGENTS THAT
SERVED TO PROTECT THE REAGAN FAMILY**

U.S. SECRET SERVICE AGENTS VISIT RANCHO DEL CIELO, RECORD ORAL HISTORIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

From May 14 to 17, Young America's Foundation hosted nine former U.S. Secret Service (USSS) special agents at the Reagan Ranch—part of YAF's ongoing efforts to restore and preserve the remaining U.S. Secret Service Command Post at the Reagan Ranch.

All agents served on different protective details dedicated to Ronald Reagan between 1976 and 1997. The attendees included agents **Steve Ramsey** and **Terry Warfield**, who served with then-Presidential candidate Reagan in 1976 and 1980; **Shawn Campbell**, who served on the President-elect's and Presidential detail; **Joe Petro**, **Barbara Riggs**, **Rick Williams**, and **Lew Merletti**, who served on the Presidential protection detail; **Frank O'Donnell**, who supervised the former President's protective detail in Bel Air, California; and **Rocky Del Monaco**, a member of a specialized tactical team deployed at Rancho del Cielo during the Reagan Presidency.

The week's activities began on May 14 with a tour of the Reagan Ranch Center Exhibit

Galleries, followed by cocktails on the rooftop terrace and a group dinner at a local restaurant.

This was the first visit by most of the group to the Reagan Ranch Center. Many spent several hours perusing the interpretive displays in the Exhibit Galleries throughout the week. On May 15, the group headed to Rancho del Cielo, where Holland-Hills Production Company joined the tour to capture stories from the agents.

The group toured the adobe house, tack barn, hay barn, and Secret Service Command Post, followed by a mechanized "trail ride" throughout the 688-acre Ranch. Each agent recounted stories from their time on duty with the Reagans, including the drive up and down Refugio Road, tacking up horses, horseback riding, brush-clearing, Queen Elizabeth's visit, Ranch intrusions, pranks played on the President and by the President, and President Reagan's quintessential storytelling.



Former United States Secret Service special agents enjoy a memorable reunion with family and friends at Rancho del Cielo, where they helped protect President Ronald Reagan.



(Left) Former Director of the United States Secret Service, Lew Merletti, recalls his experiences at Rancho del Cielo in the Command Post Radio Room.

(Right) Former USSS special agent and counter assault team member Rocky Del Monaco visits Guardian Point, a strategic location at Ranch del Cielo used by the USSS to protect the 40th President of the United States.

Terry Warfield relayed how he was with candidate Reagan in 1980 when he went to “Heart Rock” to conduct restoration work on his heart carving. Barbara Riggs stopped at a point on Ridge Road to explain Mrs. Reagan’s “Just Say No” protest directed to the press on Bald Mountain, which the USSS referred to as Newsy Nob.

Joe Petro discussed the April Fool’s prank the USSS played on President Reagan. Both Lew Merletti and Joe Petro related notable chain saw incidents. Steve Ramsey marveled how much the California Oaks had grown in the 50 years since he had been to the Ranch, which at the time did not include the enclosed porch on the house, Lake Lucky, the fencing, or the dock.

Later in the day, the group enjoyed lunch at the recently inaugurated Moore Family Retreat Center adjacent to Rancho del Cielo. On May

16, each former special agent recorded hour-long oral interviews. One of the goals of the USSS Command Post Project is to capture the unique and special relationship the USSS operational agents and uniformed officers maintained with the Reagans and to capture this history before it is lost.

Excerpts from these interviews will be incorporated into an interpretive display in the restored USSS Command Post. The week’s final event was a Wendy P. McCaw Series Roundtable luncheon, titled “Protecting the President: A Conversation with the United States Secret Service Agents Assigned to President Ronald Reagan”.

Young America’s Foundation is grateful to each agent for their service to our country and gift of time and words to ensure future generations understand the important role the USSS plays in protecting our nation’s Commander-in-Chief.

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S FORMER SECRET SERVICE AGENTS HEADLINE

WENDY P. MCCAW REAGAN RANCH ROUNDTABLE LUNCHEON

As we approached the 20th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's passing, Young America's Foundation hosted a unique Wendy P. McCaw Reagan Ranch Roundtable luncheon on May 17 at the Reagan Ranch Center.

The program, "Protecting the President: A Conversation with United States Secret Service Agents Assigned to President Ronald Reagan," featured a panel of retired agents, including Barbara Riggs, Joe Petro, Lew Merletti, and Stephen Ramsay.

Reagan Ranch Board of Governors member Mark Larson moderated the conversation, during which the agents captivated the audience with stories about their service in the Presidential Protective Unit at the Reagan Ranch. The memories they shared showcased the agents' special relationship with President Reagan and how deeply he loved the Ranch.

As Joe Petro shared, President Reagan's personality changed. I think he felt a burden lifted when he stepped off the helicopter... [The Ranch] gave him a chance to decompress. You could see it really in his eyes; he was just a happy guy there. He integrated us into his weeks and visits there... He included us in all of his outdoor activities, particularly... It was such an honor for all of us to be that close to him. He treated us like part of his family up there.

Before the panel, YAF Program Officer Alejandro Flores provided the 160 Roundtable guests with an update on YAF's pro-Israel efforts on college campuses nationwide and recapped how UCLA recently blocked a YAF event featuring Robert Spencer (see page one).

Prior to the luncheon, YAF's President's Club and Rawhide Circle members enjoyed a reception in the Exhibit Galleries with the former Secret Service agents.



Former United States Secret Service special agents participate in a special Wendy P. McCaw Reagan Ranch Roundtable panel discussion, emceed by Reagan Ranch Board of Governors member Mark Larson (Right). Pictured from left: Steve Ramsey, Barbara Riggs, Joe Petro, and Lew Merletti.



Thank you for your generous support of the Secret Service Command Post Restoration and Preservation project. This historic facility is already a compelling part of the Ranch, and because of your contributions, it will be even better preserved and enhanced for future generations to experience and appreciate.

A special thank you to **Barbara Riggs, who continues to spearhead this project and has brought so much support and dedication to its success.**



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