

PAUL ZARZYSKI BIO

Paul Zarzyski places Honesty on the pinnacle of cowboy virtues and, thus, proclaims his hybrid-cross occupational ratio these days as 1 part *cowboy* to 99 parts *poet*. Although, as a bareback bronc rider from the mid-'70s into the early '90s, he missed qualifying for the NFR by ***BILLions & BILLions of light years***, he considers his 22 consecutive National Cowboy Poetry Gatherings in Elko a comparable honor. In 2005, Paul joined a stable of esteemed writers (Norman Maclean, Stephen Ambrose, James Lee Burke, etc.) when he was selected as recipient of the Montana Governor's Arts Award for Literature. His 10 books and chapbooks include, most recently, **WOLF TRACKS ON THE WELCOME MAT**, winner of the Western Writers of America 2004 Spur Award for Poetry. He's collaborated, as a lyricist, with Ian Tyson, Tom Russell, Wylie Gustafson, and others, and has recorded 4 spoken-word CDs, including **ROCK 'n' ROWEL** and **COLLISIONS OF RECKLESS LOVE** (2007). Paul plays the role in the cowboy poetry arena as an enigmatic edgetester, a fence-buster. He attributes everything he knows about writing to his two mentors, Richard Hugo and Wallace McRae.