

BOARD MEETINGS:  
3rd Thursday, 6 PM

GENERAL MEETINGS:  
3rd Thursday, 7 PM

Springhill Church  
4769 West Babcock, Bozeman

## OUR PURPOSE:

Shall be to perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in the back country and assist the various government agencies in their maintenance and management of the resource and to educate, encourage and solicit active participation by various members of the general public in the wise and sustaining use of horses, commensurate with our heritage and the back country resource.

## 2016 OFFICERS, 1 YEAR

### PRESIDENT

John Mutter ... 285-0516  
mutterranch@q.com

### VICE PRESIDENT

Carmen Matzick ... 600-1379  
cmatzick@msn.com

### TREASURER

Sharon Fraser ... 539-2783

### SECRETARY

Tamara Erickson ... 451-8186

## DIRECTORS

### ONE YEAR TERM

Harry Huntzinger ... 580-2788  
Chris Nygren ... 546-7550  
Carl Blaskovich ... 388-4640

### TWO YEAR TERM

SUE GESKE ... 581-6058  
Mike Haugen ... 539-0538  
Lawrence VanDyke ... 586-2440

## STATE BOARD MEMBERS

Rich Inman (2 year) ... 388-1564  
Henry Glenn (1 years) ... 578-2084  
Dan Marsh (Alternate) ... 587-7578

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Brant Robey... 222-5971  
pbr@wispwest.net

## BCH WEB MASTER

Dan Marsh ... 587-7578  
webmaster@bchmt.org  
<http://gvbch.bchmt.org>

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

WEDNESDAY TRAIL CREW : JUNE 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY : JUNE 4

Garnett Mountain; Contact Chris Nygren 546-7550

FUN RIDE : JUNE 11

Contact Dan Porter 539-0879

BOARD & GENERAL MEETING & ICE CREAM SOCIAL : JUNE 16, 6:00 PM  
1655 Harper Puckett Road

PONY POKER RIDE : JUNE 18

Sitz Angus Ranch, Harrison

GVBCH Poker Ride pre-registration:

<http://www.bchmt.org/gvbch/poker.htm>



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

I just got home from our "Equine Safety" clinic at the Fair Grounds. It's a Forest Service requirement that we attend one of these trainings periodically. Our club hasn't put one on in quite some time and I have to say, "Thank you, Janice. You did an outstanding job!" I'm not certain but I believe she's planning to add to today's session at the July meeting. I, for one, am looking forward to it.

Last Wednesday, Larry's crew made a good start on the season by going up Falls Creek Trail 'till they hit snow just above the falls. Rich & I cut out several trees that were blocking the 401. All in all, it was a great day with beautiful weather and a good time had by all. Next week will be up Garnet Mountain in Preparation for our effort on June 4th National Trails Day. Everyone is invited to come up Garnet Mtn with us on the 4th where we will be continuing the improvements we started last year.

This year, our annual Poker Ride will be on July 9th and Tamara still has a few positions to fill. Please give her a call at 451-8186. Remember, this is our only fundraiser all year and we need your help to make it a success.

On another note, Rich and Henry (Our State Board members) attended the first quarterly BCHMT meeting. They will report on that at our next general meeting.

That's about all I have for now. 'Till next time.

*Happy Trails, John Mutter*

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

MAY 19

John Mutter called the meeting to order and took roll call.

Sharon Fraser, Tamara Erickson, Chris Nygren, Carl Blaskovich, John Mutter, Henry Glenn, Rich Inman, Sue Geske, Carmen Matzick, Dan Marsh, Lawrence VanDyke, and Jim Allbright, were in attendance.

### MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING:

Chris Nygren made a motion to accept minutes from last board meeting, Lawrence Van Dyke seconded, and the motion passed.

### FINANCE REPORT:

Sharon Fraser reported one new bill received from Insty Prints for brochures for the safety clinic.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

A thank you letter from the PLWA was received, thanking GVBCH for our \$20 donation.

### STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

### ISSUES:

Dan Marsh reported on issues.

### OLD BUSINESS:

Safety Clinic/Defensive Horsemanship Clinic will be held Sunday, May 22 at 1 PM at the fairgrounds indoor arena.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Partnership/Volunteer Meeting with the Forest Service: Rich Inman reported.

Forest Plan Revision: Rich reported, no new information was available.

State Board Meeting: Rich and Dan reported on what topics will be on the agenda for the next state board meeting including: RTP, the constitution revision, a discussion about mountain bikes, and Webb Lake resolution follow up.

National Trails Day: Nothing is on the schedule for National Trails Day on June 4th. Some possibilities were discussed, including finishing the top of the Garnet Mountain Trail. It was agreed to discuss with Larry Thomas and send an email to members once a decision has been reached.

A motion was made by Tamara Erickson to adjourn the meeting, Dan Marsh seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

—Submitted by Tamara Erickson

## PONY CLUB POKER RIDE

Hello PHC Poker Riders,

This year, 2016, the location of the Poker Ride has been changed. I didn't think we (the PHC) would be able to find a location that would be as beautiful of a ride as the one we have been riding for the last few years, but I was wrong.

The Sitz Angus Ranch is hosting the Poker Ride for 2016. It is about a 10 mile ride and has GORGEOUS views! Breathtaking! Bring your camera, if you don't, you will be wishing you had! Here is the information on when/where it is being held:

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2016

Horseback Poker Ride

Pony Homecoming Club Fund Raiser

Saddle up the horses and put on your poker face!

Held at:

SITZ ANGUS RANCH

7 Miles West of Harrison on Norwegian Creek Road

Physical Address: 37 Sitz Road

Harrison, MT 59735

Look for signs! If you have questions, please send me an email.

More information is posted on the [www.PonyMontana.com](http://www.PonyMontana.com) site.

See you there on June 18th. YOU will be in awe of the BEAUTY!

Nancy Nellis, PHC Treasurer

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

MAY 19

John Mutter called the meeting to order and welcomed guests including a number of 4-H participants and Gallatin Valley Saddle and Harness Club members.

### PROGRAM:

Janice Cartwright and Rich Inman presented the first installment of Defensive Horsemanship Safety Training, required by the Forest Service for all volunteers working to clear trails. The second installment will be provided Sunday May 22nd at 1 PM in the indoor arena at the fairgrounds.

### MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING:

A motion to accept the minutes from the April General Meeting was made by Marianne Meyer, seconded by Carmen Matzick, and the motion passed.

### FINANCE REPORT /NEW BILLS:

Sharon Fraser reported one new bill from Insty Prints for brochures for the safety clinic.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

A thank you letter from the PLWA was received, thanking GVBCH for a \$20 donation.

### STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### MEMBERSHIP:

Marianne Meyer reported that current membership is 63, including 50 paid memberships and 13 honorary memberships issued to founding members.

#### POKER RIDE:

The Poker Ride Committee began planning for the 29th Annual Poker Ride in March, and Tamara Erickson reported on progress.

The Poker Ride is scheduled for Saturday July 9th at Bridger Bowl. Please mark your calendars, and spread the word. All members are invited to help set up the evening of Friday July 8th, and join us for a pot luck supper afterward.

Help is needed! Many hands make light work, so please join in the fun and help put on the best poker ride in Montana! Many key spots still need to be filled on the day of the event, including help in the food tent, registration tent, and cleanup crew. Contact Tamara Erickson at 406-451-8186 or TamaraErickson@msn.com to learn where your talents can best be utilized.

Prizes at the GVBCH Poker Ride are legendary, and it's time to begin collecting them! We have been honored with great support from the business community, and strive to be respectful by organizing one contact person to solicit donations for each supporter, so that they are not bombarded with requests. If you have collected prizes from a business in the past, please reach out to that business now, or contact Tamara Erickson to request someone else to handle it in your stead.

Donations to the GVBCH are tax deductible, so please complete a 501(c)3 form for each sponsor, including the name and address of the business or individual, a complete description of the item donated, and approximate value. Please contact Tamara Erickson, Dan Marsh, or John Mutter for 501(c)3 forms.

Prizes will be gathered at the June General Meeting/ Annual Ice Cream Social at Janice Cartwright's place, so please bring your prizes, with a complete 501(c)3 form attached.

#### TRAIL CREWS:

Larry Thomas reported the trail crew went out Wednesday May 18, and ran into a lot of downed trees that needed to be cut. Members are welcome and urged to participate on Wednesday trail crews. Please contact Larry Thomas by Tuesday evening if you plan to ride to verify where the trail crew will be meeting and get directions. Please be ready to ride and depart the trail head by 9 AM unless otherwise specified. Bring work gloves, water, and lunch, but tools will be provided if needed.

GVBCH will celebrate National Trail Day on Saturday June 4th by doing maintenance work on the upper portion of Garnet Mountain trail. The Wednesday trail crew will clear the trail prior to the event. It is 3- 4 miles to the work site, and hikers are welcome to participate. Please meet and be ready to depart the trailhead by 9AM. Contact Larry Thomas or John Mutter for directions.

Tamara made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Janice seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

— Submitted by Tamara Erickson

JULY PROGRAM: BITS, AND MAY TOUCH ON TOPICS  
NOT COVERED AT SAFETY REVIEW SESSION



## DEFENSIVE HORSE SAFETY CLINIC

Forty-five people attended the Defensive Horse Safety Clinic sponsored by the Gallatin Back Country Horsemen Sunday afternoon at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds. The Attendees entering the indoor arena were met by two trailers with six horses, one packed mule, a display of saddles, bridles, bits, halters and other assorted tack and horse equipment items. Most of the group attending were carrying their green book or the BCHMT Defensive Horse Safety Course Manual which was acquired beforehand and used during the previous workshop at the Thursday GVBCH meeting. The troops gathered around Janice Cartwright, the presenter, who started with introducing her horses and their individual stories. All four horses had histories and a personal story, making each horse full of character and personality...and they were exceptionally calm and well behaved.

The next item in her presentation was acknowledgement of her partner Ron, and his role in getting the horses ready for the tack presentation. Grooming and getting rid of dust, dirt and making sure the horse does not have deterrent type debris under any of the equipment is important. Her commentary: A comfortable horse is a cooperative horse or a "happy horse". Thus this horse makes for a safer horse.

Then, Janice emphasized while working with a horse, it was important to acknowledge and understand about personal space, the horse's space and of course the space of the individual working with the horse. Both the horse and the individual must recognize what is the comfort zone

and what is safe. Both the horse and the person handling the horse must learn to respect this space. This segment of information included the proper way of handling, tying, touching and generally the movement around the horse. Always understanding that horses are prey animals and even though, they have been domesticated, their instincts are still intact. If they become uncomfortable or feel threatened, then, they can become an unsafe horse. Next, she took one horse and fitted it with different examples of tack, explaining the benefits and shortfall of the different types, starting with different types of halters, bridles, various types of bits, blankets, saddles, and cinches. Information was presented which gave the observer (horse owner) much to think about.

Also as an aside, Janice had numerous helmets on display. Safety for every rider includes finding the right fitting helmet and wearing it.

Finally came the mounting and riding the horse. Again Janice showed many correct examples and incorrect examples, always explaining the "whys" or reasons for both.

The four hours went by quickly. And since, there were many experienced horsemen around (Rich, Larry, Henry, John, Jim, to name but a few) and that they were invited to tell their stories, (i.e., crazy horse wrecks and what should not happen, some tips on how things should be done, and tips that make trips with horses easier and safer, etc.); This made for a very informative, exciting and interesting afternoon. In short, fun afternoon!

—Brenda Kessler



Rich demonstrates the use of hobbles







photos by Molly Glenn







photos by Dan Marsh

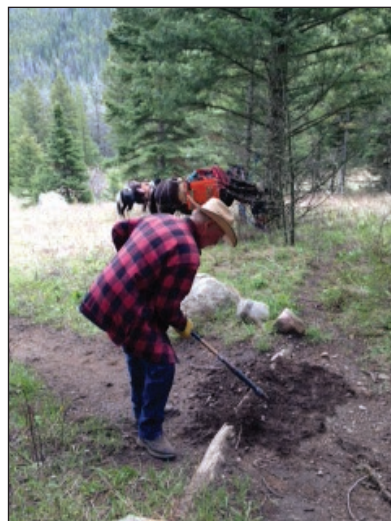




## SPANISH PEAKS TRAIL CLEARING



photos by Barbara Mutter





## SPANISH PEAKS TRAIL CLEARING



photos by Dan Marsh





## SAFE TRAIL RIDING

Safe trail riding makes for fun riding. When there are unsafe conditions or either rider or horse then no one is having fun. Let us review some common problems we see on our trail rides.

Riders: Think about the weather, we can have every kind of weather in every month in Montana. Prepare for the worst and you will never be caught unprepared. Take extra clothes to layer up and always have a rain coat and hat of some kind. I always have some way to start a fire with me. Sometimes things don't go as planned. You could find your self spending the night in the back country? Will it be the night from hell or will it be an adventure that you tell your grandkids about. How you were prepared will determine which story you have to tell. A fire, water and a space blanket could determine how your story ends.

In our fast paced modern digital world we often forget that Montana back country is missing all this technology and help is not minutes away. We must be prepared to survive on our own, 911 is not an option.

A trip through my saddle bags is a journey through my past experiences. I carry a Leartherman, knife, flashlight, leather string. Nylon cord, fire starting tool, GPS, space blanket, food and water. Food is usually jerky and granola bars.

Someone on the ride needs a first aid kit and know how to use it.

Boots are a very critical part of our equipment. I wear boots that are both safe to ride in and comfortable to walk in. Imagine walking several miles in uncomfortable boots over rough terrain and the blisters that you would get and the picture becomes clear. Practice with the fire starting tool of your choice, it is of no value if you can't use it. I tend to go with things that can't break because Murphy is like a mole on by back. Remember preparing is also fun and makes the ride memorable for the scenery instead of the wet cold and miserable day that you forgot your slicker.

Horses: So often I see inappropriate tack headed into the back country. What looks good in an arena or around the barn where the consequences are a trip back into the tack room may not work in the wilderness. Remember Murphy lives in the back country so those bridles with pretty spots and Chicago screws could leave you with an uncontrolled horse or worse no horse as he runs toward the trailer without his bridle or you. Reins that snap on are a no no. They seem to come unsnapped at the most inopportune time. The best bridle is a working or ranch bridle with a brow band and a throat latch. The throat latch is important because it keeps the horse from rubbing the bridle off on a tree. A curb strap is also important to keep the bit from pulling through the mouth. I prefer split reins with a keeper tied on with a leather string. Should your horse step on the rein all that is broken is the string and I know that you have several with you.

Halters are another piece of equipment that we take for granted. I only use rope halters with a tied on lead rope no snaps or buckles, they break at the most inconvenient time. More specifically I use the best 8MM climbing rope halter and a yacht rope Lead 12' long. This way I can tie my horse securely or pony him if need be. I know that this is an expensive halter and lead but it will not break.

Something I see all too often is a loose horse because the person changing from the bridle to the halter doesn't have control of their horse. Never let your horse go loose in the back country or you may get to test you choice of boots. The proper way to transition from the bridle to halter is to tie the lead rope around the horse's neck near the ears and then remove the bridle and replace it immediately with the halter. Always maintaining control of the horse. Some riders prefer to simply ride with a halter underneath the bridle. This is ok provided the halter does not rub or sore your horse. I personally use an 8mm climbing rope 15' long for a get down rope this is light, simple and easy to use but your horse and you need training before you go into the back country.

Hobbles are a part of my gear, so often when we get to the most beautiful high places there is nothing to tie to so I hobble my horse. Also sometimes you need to hobble your horse to keep it from pawing and damaging the soil. Back Country Horsemen encourage you to practice Leave no Trace. Be sure you and your horse are trained in the use of hobbles or a wreck is sure to happen.

Now let's move back to the saddle pad. A good saddle pad is essential gear natural materials are best wool fleece or wool felt. The saddle should be one you have ridden in several long days to make sure it fits your horse and you. Good natural fiber girths are a must.

I have had several bad experiences with neoprene girths making horses sore.

They are great for the arena and training horses because you can wash them but have no place in the back country. Cruppers or britchen to keep your saddle in place on steep slopes are a good thing but must be tested at home to see your horses reaction to them. You don't want your horse bucking when you are going down a steep rock slide nor do you want your saddle slipping over your horses head guess where you might be? Most horses do best with some type of shoes on. Remember you can't just go around the rock slide. A sore footed horse is no horse at all. Yea you get it, you brought the horse to ride not lead and you wore good boots just in case, not to really walk 10 miles in.

I have attempted to help make your next trip into the back country safe and enjoyable by sharing some ideas with you. This is not the final authority on back country travel with horses nor is it the only way to outfit you or your horse. I hope it has opened your mind to evaluate your gear and make your next trip into Montana's Back Country memorable for the scenery not the things you forgot.

*—Respectfully submitted by Henry F. Glenn*



**GVBCH IS INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES & MEMBERS  
WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2015 POKER RIDE:**

TOP POKER HAND PRIZES:

Rocky Mountain Hat  
Madison River Propane  
Ardesson Boots & Shoes  
Montana Canvas  
Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply

SILENT AUCTION PRIZES:

Bridger Mountain Plumbing  
Mission Ranch Beef Company  
Knife River  
Steer In Trailer Sales  
Chuteside Veterinary  
Freeway Enterprises  
DJ Bar Ranch  
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Dan Marsh & Alice Pilgeram  
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Ben Masters  
Keri McGinley  
Farnam Company  
Owenhouse Ace Hardware

4 Corners Saddlery  
Montana Equine

RAFFLE PRIZES:

Freeway Enterprises  
Big Sky RV  
Montana Horse Sense  
Double Diamond Veterinary  
Lee & Dad's  
Sorensen Veterinary Hospital  
Café M  
Three Forks Saddlery  
Treasure State  
Anduril Boarding Kennels  
Dan Porter  
Loft Spa  
Mountain Arts Pottery  
True Value Belgrade  
Chalet Market  
Rocky Mountain Truck Center  
Kountry Korner Café  
Bozeman Saddle Outlet  
Corral Steak House  
Rocky Mountain Supply  
Ag Depot

Outback Steak House  
Double Diamond Halter Company  
Jan Elpel  
The Boot Barn  
Barbara Mutter  
All West Veterinary

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Bank of Bozeman  
Allegra Printing  
Lee and Dad's  
Big Sky RV  
Lehrkinds Coca Cola  
Bridger Bowl Ski Area



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