

Beartooth Back Country Horsemen Trail Tales

PRESIDENT'S PEN

A rebuilding year,
2020

If the professional athletic team owners, owned a Backcountry Horsemen Chapter they would at least call the last half of the 2020 year, a rebuilding season,



Why? Many reasons they have rebuilding seasons are that if they lost several of their team to a sickness or a couple of key players to broken bones, free agency, or even old age. These owners must arch their backs and hold up their chin and find some new ideas. New horses! Well hopefully this coming new year our group of horse enthusiasts will continue to be a part of the USA rebuilding year. My horse shoer tells me his profession is one of Montana's essential businesses. His horse care business goes hand in hand with our BCH mission statement.

Our mission to "Perpetuate the commonsense use of Equine in the Backcountry" is not to be taken lightly. Our efforts to help keep ourselves sane by continuing our presence on the trails in remote areas of our beautiful State should not be taken carelessly or forgotten by anyone, especially ourselves. We can all participate in this endeavor to keep our identity as WE help sustain and protect this gift from our ultimate benefactor. "Yes, Virginia there is a Santa Clause".

Yes, we did have a good athletic year, even though it ended early; we didn't have the run and gun offence of the professional basketball or the high-speed passing games of the college football powers. Those guys score a lot of points and of course if they don't someone is in trouble. It would be

BBCH PO Box 614, Absarokee, MT 59001

BBCH DIRECTORS

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- President- John Simmons
328-4163
- Vice President- Randy Thomsen
328-7355
- Treasurer- John Jenkins
855-0238
- Secretary- Nancy Thomsen
328-7355
- Director- John Chepulis
322-4823
- Director- Bonnie Chepulis
322-4823
- Director- Cathy Reck
690-9066
- Director- Mary Sybrant
328-9112

STATE DIRECTORS

•••

- Director- John Simmons
328-4163
- John Jenkins (Alternate)
855-0238

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

•••

- John Chepulis
322-4823

hard to be a member of that kind of group, there are not many of the players there who ultimately are able to get themselves to the finales and then become hailed as having achieved their goal.

I like to think of our chapter as being similar to a Baseball or Hockey team. We are defined more as being persistent and methodical. We do not need many scores to achieve a win. Our enemy spends as much time pushing back as we push forward. Every year after the winter off season we start over, the wind, rain and snow have left us chores many ordinary folks would not want to tackle. This playing field is full of traps like the sand traps and water traps of a common golf course. If we start early in the year cleaning a trail, that allows us the opportunity to later carry out more trips to the backcountry ferrying supplies for an advance trail crew. That can develop into a long-term accomplishment. Even though this 2020 was such an unusual year; our members still achieved much, early in the summer. Some were able to just visit old places and catch a fish or two.

Even though many of us at this time in our life may be seldom able, or care to push to make the ultimate three miles an hour, it is still good to be there and try. For those that worry about not having a pack animal and not being able to help the projects that require a packer, remember it is still true that 2 can do much better than one. A diamond hitch works great for many loads and it easier to tie if a friendly helper is standing on the far side of the equine just to hook the manty rope, thrown over the top, to the chinch hook for the lead packer.

This note of mine is a thank you to all the folks who contributed this year and to the future younger generations who will someday step up to the plate to continue safeguarding the successes achieved by those older cohorts. I want to encourage everyone's eternal vigilance, and willingness to be prepared and ready to maintain and defend the value of these beautiful natural places, stepping up to the plate and calling for the ball is many times not an easy task. These are must do projects if we are to preserve our freedom of visiting our beautiful, natural backcountry. This right is looked on as a privilege by many more folks than just us.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed to scoring a goal this past year, small or large. And I hope you all will help and do the same, in some small or large way for our next Chapter President.

As ever,

John Simmons Current President

The January 18th, General Meeting has been cancelled. Our Board of Directors plan to meet to elect officers.

BBCH – BOARD ELECTIONS 2021

Following are the votes received for board positions, as submitted to John Chepulis:

There were no write in ballot's

BBCH Board Position:

Melissa Codner 17

Charles Spencer 17

Randy Thomsen 16

State Director:

John Jenkins 17

Alternate State Director:

Louise Jenkins 17

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**Current list of Board Members:**

**State Board**

John Simmons Senior State delegate (2020 President) term 2020-2022

**Newly elected to State Board**

John Jenkins Junior State delegate (2020 treasurer) term 2021-2023

Louise Jenkins Alternate State delegate, term 2021-2022

**Chapter Board**

Nancy Thomsen (2020 secretary) term 2020-2022

Mary Sybrant term 2020-2022

John Chepulis (2020 National delegate) term 2020-2022

**Newly elected to Chapter Board**

Randy Thomsen (vice president 2020) term 2021-2023

Charles Spencer term 2021-2023

Melissa Codner term 2021-2023

## BBCH – 2021 DUES

Yearly dues for 2021 are:

- Business Membership \$40
- Family Membership \$35
- Individual Membership \$25

Since we will probably not be having meetings for at least a couple of months, or possibly even longer, please send your checks to BBCH, PO Box 614, Absarokee MT 59001. Please send updated email, address if your contact information has changed. This information is only used for the BBCH and BCHMT Newsletters and is not shared.

## FOR SALE/WANTED TO BUY

As a hand weaver, I have been creating tapestry Fibersketches© as my interpretation of our glorious MT landscapes. Have started making small ones (about 5x7") and then mounting them on old solid straight mouth bits. I call this piece, *Into the Woods*. Looking to buy more bits, though I can only justify paying up to about \$5 each. Snaffle or curb would work, but the mouthpiece cannot be jointed or have a port. Susan Leaverton: 328-6520 or 321-1711 (cell/text) [seleaverton@nemont.net](mailto:seleaverton@nemont.net)



BBCH – BOARD/GENERAL MEETING ~ NOVEMBER 16, 2020

**DRAFT**

“Goto meeting” called to order at 7pm

Board Members in attendance were John Simmons, Randy Thomsen, Nancy Thomsen, John Jenkins, John Chepulis, and Bonnie Chepulis.

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes – John Chepulis moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve them. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed.

Treasurer’s report – Report in Minutes. Balance \$28,581.63. \$440 was received from FWP. Randy Thomsen moved to accept Treasurer’s report. Jesse Ericson second. Motion passed.

John Simmons sent a letter to Ken Coffin about the history of the West Fork of the Stillwater, pertaining to bears and the Castle Creek Trail.

Website has been updated thanks to Jesse Ericson. Information prior to 2014 is needed. Randy Thomsen moved to pay for the renewal of Jesse’s 2021 membership. John Jenkins second. Motion passed. John Simmons will send a past membership list for the website.

Discussion on the GAOA monies. A plan will be needed for next year on how to respond and which trails to support.

The “John Simmons Motion” that has been discussed and tabled the last couple meetings was rescinded by John Simmons.

John Chepulis moved to give BCHMT a donation of \$1000 to go to the Educational Committee. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed

John Chepulis moved to give BCHA a donation of \$1000 to go towards Randy Rasmussen’s wages. Motion was tabled for January meeting.

John Simmons will mail out a proposal for advertising in the BBCH newsletter.  
Discussion at next meeting.

Nominating Committee – Elections are in November. There are no nominations so far. John Chepulis and John Jenkins will come up with a plan for voting and nominations. Email or mail in ballots are being considered.

The Christmas party has been cancelled due to Covid-19.

Randy Thomsen moved to donate \$440 to the Billings Food Bank. John Simmons second. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 8:47pm



December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020: McNaley Road – Open Range

While I generally see more wildlife and cows than humans riding remote county roads, on occasion I am pleased to meet up with other equines. These two are adorable and generally behind the fence to the west – not today. They were so happy to see Beau! A person can park by the State Lands on Whitebird and ride this fun county road loop – Whitebird, Maki, and McNaley.

I generally stop at the Old Maki School for a lunch break.

Please send any submissions for the Newsletter to Robin Morris, [junkerette@msn.com](mailto:junkerette@msn.com),  
by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Thanks!

**Thank you to these local businesses for their continued support!**



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