

Beartooth Back Country Horsemen Trail Tales

President's Pen

October 2021

The work projects are finally over. We had it all this spring and summer! Heat, pandemic, drought, fire and fire restrictions, rain, and on the last project, even snow. We ought to be ready for anything next year. The last pack project was up the East Fork of Mill Creek south of Livingston. That's two years in a row my "last week of the summer" trip resulted in a "too cold and icy for summer" ride. But we were rewarded with some beautiful views, and gorgeous fall colors. You can read more about this inside the newsletter. I did take a few liberties in the narrative. Enjoy.



We're back to regular meetings and have some good educational programs to wind out the year. In October we're changing venue to Absarokee for better WIFI for our *live videoconference*. Greg Schatz will lead a panel discussion with several newer (younger) BCHMT members. Greg is a recent co-recipient of the BCHMT Founder's Award for his work developing the youth packing clinics. This *live interactive teleconference* will focus on membership in the BCHA for a younger generation, and how we might encourage this. We all want to see the opportunities we have had in the back country for stock use and the BCHA mission perpetuated to future generations. There will also be an internet link if you want to view it at home – but you'll miss potluck!

In November we're back in Fishtail. We'll have the Project Leader Ben Daley from the Absarokee-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation (ABW) speak about their trips and work in the ABW. It's been a real pleasure to work with Ben Daley and Patrick Cross, Executive Director, the last couple of

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years. These two have replaced the former staff many of you worked with in the past. The ABW is very grateful for the support we provide. Ben does several educational programs for the ABW as well and will probably share some of that information. I have asked they bring copies of the recent publication for sale, *Voices of Yellowstone's Capstone*.

Last, we'll have elections in November. If you're interested, there are board positions open. Talk to any board member and inquire about how you can serve. See you soon.

Happy Trails

John Jenkins



October 18th – 6:30 P.M. Potluck – Video Conference begins @ 7:00

**NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE - MOVED TO THE PARISH HALL AT IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
301 S MONTANA AVE, ABSAROKEE**

**This is a one-time location – Needed for Internet Access
No alcohol please, after all it is in a church parish hall 😊.**

LIVE VIDEO CONFERENCE: Building Confidence Through Opportunities; Empowering the Next Generation of Back Country Horsemen

Greg Schatz, panel moderator and long-time Back Country Horsemen member. Panelists and Youth Back Country Horsemen members: Ally Pike, Elle Eberts, Marion Wilmus, and Melissa DiNino

I truly believe that BCH is an outstanding organization. There have been massive changes in the past 30 plus years. We do a lot of things right, yet we have never been able to attract young people to join us. My challenge to you this evening, is for you to make a conscious decision, to be the leader in your chapter, who steps up to change the tone of the conversation to make sure everyone is welcome in our organization. G Schatz.

FIRST AID/CPR TRAINING: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Our First Aid/CPR certifications expired but were temporarily extended last year due to COVID. Recertification is now due.

Remember that work projects should include 2 individuals with First Aid/CPR training.

CPR training is also required of any crosscut- or chainsaw- sawyer.

Connie Long RN with BCHMT will lead the training again. She'll bring the State's resuscitation dummies with all the electronic gizmos that let you know if you're doing a good job at CPR. They are a great training tool.

Send a text or call John at 406 8555 0238 so we can get a head count.



ANDERSON RIDGE PACK IN – PACK OUT – 9/16-20/2021

Submitted by John Jenkins

I tried all week to be prepared to be at the trailhead the night before the Thursday pack in. It was not in the cards. I drove over early in the morning to the trailhead south of Livingston. The ABW crew trickled in, with two being almost a couple of hours late. I particularly liked one member's cap that read "Will Work for Wilderness". He offered to negotiate over a bottle of whiskey for a ride on a pack mule to their camp. That didn't pan out for him.

Brad Molnar, David and Chris Heinle and I packed the crew in Thursday. On the following Monday Dave and I packed them out. More on that below. The trail is pretty much straight up the E Fork of Mill Cr. None of us had ever ridden this trail before, though we have packed out the W Fork of Mill Cr for the ABW. This is a really "nice" trail. Easier than many we ride on the east side of the ABW - definitely not what I'm used to. Not steep and not a lot of long climbs. If you have ever been to Chicot Hot Springs, and not travelled these Mill Cr trails which are close by, either on horse or afoot, you've missed an opportunity. The fall foliage was turning this weekend. It was quite beautiful. Anderson's Ridge was on the south side of the creek. There were spectacular views of the exposed cliffs. The crew was working on a spur trail about 6.5 miles in that went up the ridge from the East Fork of Mill Cr.

There is a long private inholding that borders the creek near the trail head. This is known as the Snowy Range Ranch, formerly a dude ranch. The owners and caretakers were gracious enough to befriend both the trail crew and us back country horsemen and women/packers. They allowed the trail crew to drive across the property and save some distance hiking. They provided pizza for the trail crew on their return. There's a nice view of the ranch along the first mile and half of the trail as Snowy Range has about a mile and a half of creek frontage.

My wife joined me at the trailhead for the weekend as I was staying over until the pack out on Monday. After a rather long ride (for us), 16 1/2 miles, on Saturday we were invited on the private ranch for a beverage and conversation. It's quite a sight. The buildings are built of rough-hewn reclaimed timbers with large Montana style windows. The caretakers do their share of volunteer work too, including plowing the E Fork Road in the winter and working for Search and Rescue.

But don't think the trip was all peaches and ice cream. Late Sunday afternoon I tacked up my 3 pack animals, saddled my riding horse, and headed up the trail to the crew's camp. Not one mile in I met Ben, the ABW project leader. He was hiking out a day early due to frigid temperatures, and maybe a risk of hypothermia to some crew members. Ahhh, Montana in the summer! Louise and I had ridden up to the camp Saturday and informed the crew weather reports were that there might be snow down to 7000 feet by Monday. So, this turn of events was not wholly unexpected. The ABW camp was just over 7000 ft. No big deal I thought as I was prepared. At 3:30 in the afternoon I was in shirt sleeves and the sun was out. Ben was beginning to regret pulling out the weather was so nice.

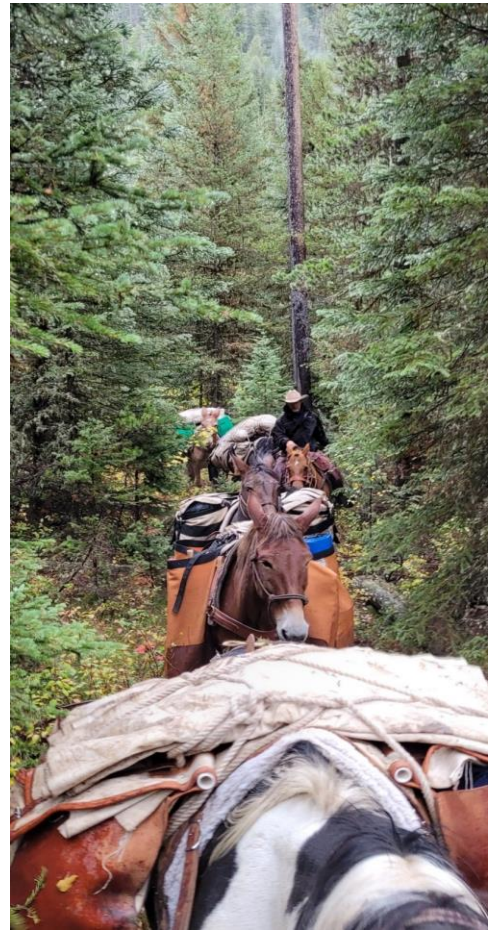
Well, an hour later I was pulled over at a nice meadow letting my equines graze for half an hour. It got cold fast. I dug into a pannier and pulled out my heavy jacket. I made it to their camp about 5:30 PM with a couple of hours of daylight left. About that time, it clouded up and began to snow and even sleet. I unsaddled the horses and mules as fast as I could. I threw everything under a mantee. Set up my summer tent – basically a net with a rain fly, threw my gear in it, and I hobbled the mules and horses to graze. Once those basic camp chores were done, I paused, looked around and noticed the weather looked even more ominous than I expected. What had I gotten myself in to I wondered? Not looking good. No big deal I thought. I've been in much worse than this. Who couldn't walk out 6 miles in a blizzard if his horses and mules froze to death?

The crew had left a tarp up with all their gear under it. Ready to be packed and loaded early the next morning. And dry firewood under the tarp too. Fortunately, the fire ban had recently been rescinded in that county. Wow, what a blessing to have a tarp and dry firewood. I had a roaring fire in no time – the first one I had all summer with restrictions we've had. Couldn't have been at a more needful time. I never did get really dried out though. It ended raining steady until the morning, but not enough you couldn't warm yourself by the fire. And there was also left-over food in the bear boxes. Their leftover spicy jerky warmed me up a bit too. After all, they pulled out a day early and didn't the remaining grub.

In a short time, there was about a quarter inch of sleet/hail/snow on my tent's rain fly. Still two days before the first day of Autumn. I was beginning to have visions of an April Montana newspaper headline like "Frozen Packer Found in Absarokas", subtitled "Spicy Jerky Not Quite Hot Enough". Then the precipitation turned to rain, it warmed a little and there was no more sleet. It was getting late, raining steady and I was all alone in the mountains in bad weather.

Then I saw a small light down the trail headed toward me. And I heard whistling, Ichabod Crane, or the headless horseman, perhaps? A few moments later into camp rode our other packer, David Heinle. It was after 9 PM. I don't think he could have left the trailhead until after dark. We didn't ask each other about the mud on one side of our saddles or saddle horses. I had been wondering if help would materialize, but he's one packer you can count on. At least I could freeze to death in the Montana summer with company. David can usually be relied upon to pack in needed soul-warming libations as well. That never hurts on a cold summer night.

I've been around a lot of campfires – but not this summer. I think some of the best ones are with friends in remote mountain locations in inclement weather. And this was no exception. We packed up early, rode out and hit the trailhead a little before noon. Some of the trail crew met us, and the ranch caretakers brought us pizza. I was just about dried out by the time I hit Park City. Another memorable trip. If you didn't make one our trips this year, come join us next year!





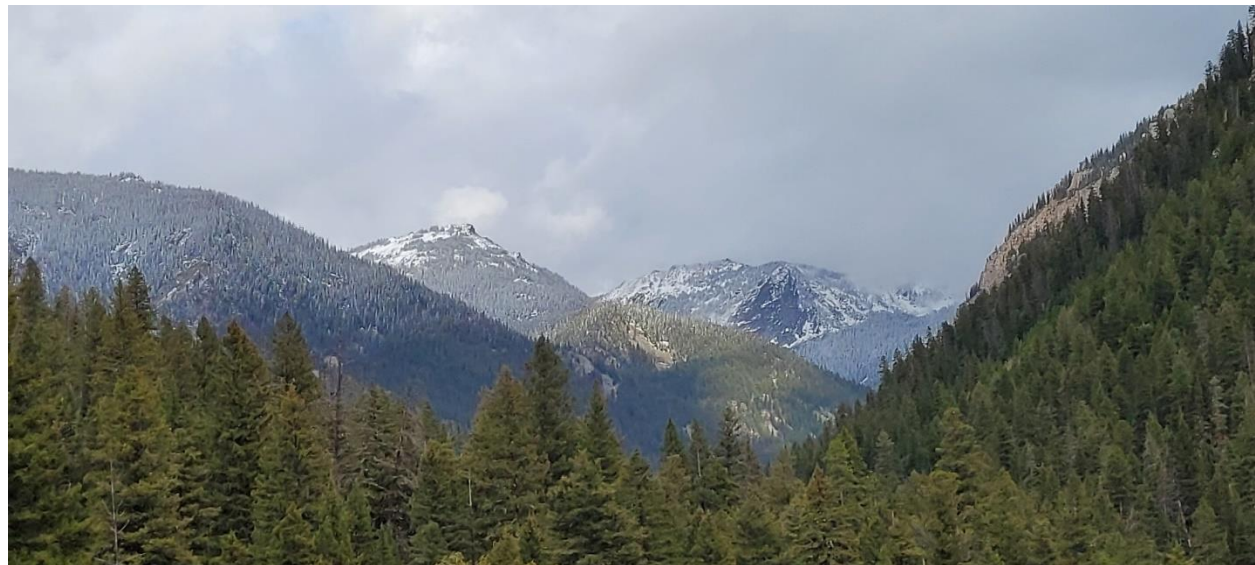


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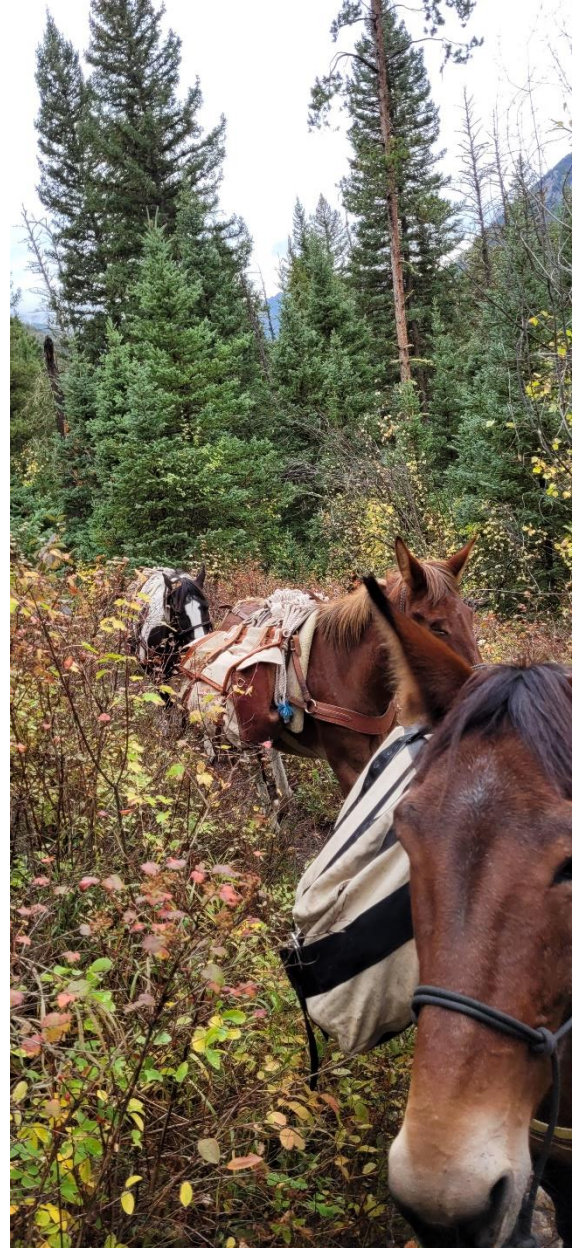


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DUTCH OVEN COOKING WITH MARILYN SIMMONS

You can cook anything in a Dutch Oven. The whole secret is the placement of the coals. For a 12-inch oven you use 15 for the top ($12 + 3 = 15$) and 9 for the bottom ($12 - 3 = 9$).

This $\frac{2}{3}$'s of the size of the oven goes on the bottom and $1 \frac{1}{3}$ goes on the top this will heat your oven to 350 degrees. Many people use too many coals to cook their food.

Dutch Potatoes

- 12 slices cooked Bacon cut into pieces
- 10 – 15 potatoes, sliced
- 4 onions sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
- Salt and Pepper

Add a little oil to bottom of oven, add one layer of onions, one layer of potatoes, sprinkle bacon and dot each layer with butter, salt & pepper.

Repeat each layer until oven is full. Place lid on oven and cook for about 30 minutes, using the $\frac{2}{3}$ coals method.



E-Z Fruit Cobbler

Add fruit to bottom of Dutch Over (pie filling or canned fruit)

Sprinkle 1 box of white cake mix over the top of fruit

Pour 1 can of pop over cake mix.

Cover and bake 25 minutes.

Variations: Peach - white cake mix & 1 can of 7 up. Cherry pie filling – Chocolate cake & 1 can of coke.



Cowboy Pineapple Upside Down Cake

10" Dutch Oven

Place in the bottom of your oven

½ cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

Pineapple rings (20oz can) save the juice

Maraschino Cherries - one in each pineapple

Mix together:

- 1 Yellow cake mix
- 1 cup of pineapple juice
- ¼ cup bourbon
- 3 eggs

Pour over pineapple and bake 30 minutes or you can smell the cake. Use 7 coals on the bottom and 13 on top.



ring

until

Quick Cinnamon Pull Apart Rolls

One can of grands biscuits (cut into 4 pieces)

Roll pieces in cinnamon sugar

Place in oiled Dutch oven and pour ½ cup of butter over biscuits and bake until you can smell them.

About 30 minutes.

BBCH – BOARD MEETING 9/2/2021

Meeting called to order at 7:05pm at Chepulis home.

In Attendance: John Jenkins, Randy Thomsen, Nancy Thomsen, Melissa Codner, John Chepulis, John Simmons

Minutes- John Chepulis moved to approve August minutes as corrected. Melissa Codner second. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report in Minutes. Discussion on checks written for the month, donations, outstanding checks, budget, and membership. The club is at 39% of total received from license plate. Randy Thomsen moved to accept Treasurer's Report. John Chepulis second, John Simmons abstained. Motion passed.

Education- Ben Daly of ABWF would like to speak at a club meeting, maybe November. October Club meeting Greg Schatz will speak via zoom, a meeting place with faster Wi-Fi will need to be reserved. Randy Thomsen and Melissa Codner will chair September meeting, pizza will be ordered and a packing demonstration on how to tie an elk quarter will be discussed. December meeting will be Christmas party. John Jenkins will contact Connie Long to schedule CPR/First Aid classes for certifications.

Communications- Board would like to see more photos on Facebook page.

BCHMT- A new program to replace "Leave no trace" is being set up. September 25 is the next State meeting, John Jenkins, Louise Jenkins, and John Chepulis will attend.

Activities- Review of Myers Creek campout, calling tree and results of packing race. Defensive Horsemanship certifications are due in spring. Discussion on Spring pack clinic. Chain saw certifications need to be renewed. John Chepulis will start getting names together and notification in the Newsletter.

Issues- Lodge Pole Road, at Myers Creek, closure has become a concern. Randy Thomsen will pen a letter of concern to all the agencies involved. John Simmons will get contact information for letters. John Chepulis will check on getting BBCH signs at trail heads and check on replacement of old signage.

Randy Thomsen and Melissa Codner will ask membership about interest on t-shirts or hoodies for the club at September meeting.

John Jenkins would like to send a member to a packing camp, which has been done in the past. Inquires will be made to see if that is possible.

Donations-

John Chepulis moved to donate \$500 to PLWA. Melissa Codner second. Motion passed.

John Chepulis moved to donate \$500 to Absarokee Food Bank. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed.

The canned food collected at the Myers Creek Campout was also donated to Absarokee Food Bank.

John Chepulis moved to donate \$500 to ABWF or Red Lodge Foundation whichever is to the advantage of the ABWF. Randy Thomsen second. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 9:09pm

LAUGHINGSTOCK

The cowboy lay sprawled across three entire seats in the posh Amarillo theatre.

When the usher came by and noticed this he whispered to the cowboy, "Sorry, sir, but you're only allowed one seat." The cowboy groaned but didn't budge.

The usher became more impatient.

"Sir, if you don't get up from there, I'm going to have to call the manager.

The cowboy just groaned.

The usher marched briskly back up the aisle.

In a moment he returned with the manager.

Together the two of them tried repeatedly to move the cowboy, but with no success.

Finally, they summoned the police.

The cop surveyed the situation briefly then asked, "All right buddy, what's your name?" "Sam," the cowboy moaned.

"Where ya from, Sam?" With pain in his voice Sam replied....

"The balcony."

Weblinks to Public Lands

Have you been wanting to explore and ride new trails...but are unsure where to look? On the following links you can enter horse riding or horse camping in each site's search engine.

Public Lands are your lands – get to enjoying them!

National Parks: www.nps.gov **National Forest:** www.fs.usda.gov **National Wilderness:** www.fs.usda.gov

National Refuge: www.fws.gov **National Conservation Areas:** www.blm.gov



October 5th, 2021 – Trail to Blue Lake, Crazy Mountains

The plan: I would head in alone and ride to Upper Twin Lake and fish, then head back and meet Wendy at Blue Lake, later in the day. I completed the first part of my plan – making it to Upper Twin Lake and catching a nice Rainbow Trout for Dinner. Part two – meet Wendy at Blue Lake. As I headed off the main trail towards the Lake, there was an ominous sign. “This trail is not maintained for livestock or pack animals.” Hmm. I soon realized the sign was correct. The trail was narrow – in most places. A solid rock in others. The downfall that would stop most equine adventurers. Thank goodness Beau is good at bushwhacking and jumping logs. After climbing up, over, and around, over beds of sharp rocks, that Beau carefully navigated despite his 000 shoes – candidate for lodging between those sharp rocks, we came to a place I needed to dismount, for good. I had already dismounted to get him past several obstacles, but closer to the Lake, the trail forms a narrow channel with solid, jagged rocks on both sides. His stirrups were scraping as we trudged along. I could hear him sliding on the slick sheets of granite but just focused on the footing in front of me. I figured this was Wendy’s master plan to finally get me to dismount and lead Beau. It was working. As I neared the Lake, her horse, Champ, called out to Beau. I spotted Wendy fishing, and joined her for a


hug and a “what the heck is with this trail?” She then told me she had never ridden it before. No wonder. We had a good laugh and basked in the beauty of this gorgeous lake. Well worth the effort, but many may prefer to “hike” it.

Please send any submissions for the Newsletter to Robin Morris, junkerette@msn.com, by the 5th of each month. Thanks!

Thank you to these local businesses for their continued support!



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