

# Beartooth Back Country Horsemen Trail Tales

## *President's Pen*

Happy New Year!

It looks like winter has finally arrived. As the snow falls all around us our board is hard at work. They are working hard already planning for many fun activities and projects for this spring and summer.

Don't forget to register for the State Convention in Helena on March 14 to 16. We have raffle tickets available for some really nice prizes; 8 man tipi with stove, aluminum bear box set, and a \$250 gift card. The Convention is always a fun weekend.

I am looking forward to another amazing year with everyone as we spend time out in this beautiful country we are blessed with.

Let's make 2025 another great year!

Randy Thomsen



### **BBCH DIRECTORS**

Randy Thomsen President  
Sean Chepulis, Vice President  
Sarah Lewis, Secretary  
John Shamel, Treasurer  
Clark Linn, Board Member  
Scott Fluor, Board Member  
Bill Yager, Board Member

### **STATE DIRECTORS**

John Jenkins, Sr. Director  
406-855-0238  
Randy Thomsen, Jr. Director  
406-425-0204

### **NATIONAL DIRECTOR**

John Chepulis  
406-322-4823

## NEXT MEETING:



**January 20, 2025**  
**Potluck at 6:30 ♦ Meeting at 7:00!**

**Palladium Draughthaus**  
702 E Pike Ave, Columbus

**Education:**  
Hurricane Relief with Jeff & Rosi Guckenbug & Dave Heinle

### ***2024 Membership dues:***

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

**Please pay your 2025 dues! You can deliver them to Jon S. at our next meeting or mail them to PO Box 614, Absarokee, MT 59001.**

**We are not raising our dues as we want to encourage new and existing members to stay active.**

Not a member yet? Application available for download [here](#).

## SAVE THE DATE & RSVP!

**Event: Indoor Riding/ Obstacle Practice**

**Date: Saturday, January 18th, 2025**

**Time: 10am-3pm**

Come join us for some indoor arena riding in snowy January. This will be a member only event. If you would like to pay your dues at the event, we will happily take them there. There will also be some small obstacles to work on if you choose. There is also some outside pasture riding we can do depending on the weather and footing.

Dan and Emily have graciously let us use their arena and land to ride on. We do have a couple rules we need to follow to show our respect and thanks.

#1 NO DOGS ALLOWED ON PROPERTY! NOT EVEN IN YOUR VEHICLE!!!

#2 Please clean up after yourself and your stock. Garbage cans will be provided and there will be a scoop and wheelbarrow if you do not have one.

#3 Be respectful of the property and the animals that live there.

We will have a coffee pot brewing to keep us toasty. If you would like, pack a lunch or grab something in nearby Absarokee. You are also welcome to come visit with your fellow backcountry horsemen.

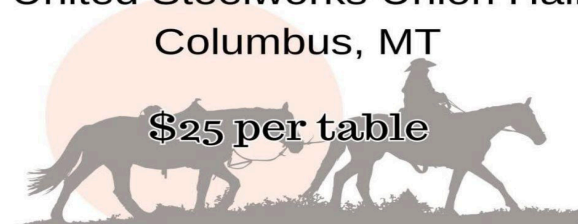
Contact: Sarah Lewis - Call or Text: 406-780-9500 or email: slewis\_35@yahoo.com

Address: Dan and Emily Aadland's Indoor Arena ~ 2 Magnus Johnson Ln, Absarokee, MT 59001

Directions: Here is the map [link](#). Take a left coming from Absarokee into the driveway then arena will be on your right side.

## Tack Sale

Feb 8th - 10 am to 4 pm  
United Steelworks Union Hall  
Columbus, MT

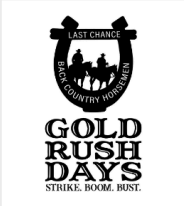


**[CLAIM YOUR SPOT HERE](#)**

# 2025 STATE CONVENTION

## BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MT

2025 STATE CONVENTION



**Strike! Boom! Bust!** Welcome to the 2025 Back Country Horsemen of Montana Annual State Convention, sponsored by the Last Chance Back Country Horsemen chapter of Helena, MT. In acknowledging the "rich" mining history of our city, this year's theme is "Gold Rush Days."

**DATES**  
**MARCH 14-16, 2025**  
SOCIALIZING, SPEAKERS, &  
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**LOCATION**  
**HELENA CIVIC CENTER**  
340 NEILL AVENUE  
HELENA, MT 59601

FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT THE CONVENTION WEBSITE OR EMAIL US AT  
LASTCHANCEBCH@GMAIL.COM

[REGISTER HERE](#)

# 2027 CONVENTION

## WE ARE HOSTING CONVENTION IN 2027!

If you'd like to join the committee, which will be subdivided into smaller committees after our initial meeting, please reach out to Melissa C. via email [codner.melissa@gmail.com](mailto:codner.melissa@gmail.com) or text 308-390-0465.



**FOR SALE**

16" Sulphur River Saddlery MULE saddle. Mule tree. Like New. I have less than 10 rides in it.

Rough out leather, 3/4 rigging. About 27 lbs. \$2,000. [jessi.sparkman@gmail.com](mailto:jessi.sparkman@gmail.com)



If you have a saddle or piece of packing equipment, please feel free to email the information to Rochelle at [ebenezerquine@gmail.com](mailto:ebenezerquine@gmail.com). The listing will be removed after 3 months unless you request otherwise.

## WARM UP TO WINTER RIDING

January 6, 2025

Debbie Moors

**It's not always the easiest time to ride, but you can beat the cold-weather blahs with some of these tips and strategies for winter riding.**



*Ride through winter in comfort with a few simple tips for staying warm.*

**If you live in a cold-weather climate, you know how challenging riding through winter can be.**

**Here are a few tips for taking the chill off barn and riding time.**

### **1. Wear layers.**

Before you head out to the barn, know whether you're just going out to feed and check on the horses, or if you'll be riding. If you're not doing strenuous barn chores or schooling your horse, wear heavier clothes. And, if you are going to be getting your heart rate up and working hard, dress in layers.

Wear a lightweight base layer that'll wick sweat away from your skin (polypropylene or silk are two options) then follow that with a middle layer of wool, or a synthetic that insulates without adding a lot of bulk. A jacket system that has a zip-in vest or jacket offers even more options.

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## 2. Pack smart.

If you'll be trail riding, pack a small waterproof container or ziplock bag that has matches, an extra layer of warmth, and a "space blanket." Boating supply companies offer small kits that are waterproof and crushproof, and can usually be slipped into a saddlebag or fanny pack.



Dana/adobe.stock.com

## 3. Grooming time.

A good grooming session before you ride will warm you up and will help warm your horse's muscles, too. During your grooming routine, check your horse's hooves for snow or ice if he's been outdoors. Pick out his feet, then spritz with cooking spray or coat with Vaseline to keep snow and ice from packing into his feet. While you groom your horse, wear your horse's bridle under your jacket to help warm the bit, or wrap it in gel hand warmers. Or, check out The Bitten Store's bit warmer, which'll double as a body warmer or can slip into your pocket as a hand warmer.

**6. Cool off.**

Plan extra time to cool your horse down after a ride. If your horse is clipped, consider using a quarter sheet—it'll drape over his hindquarters and keep him a little warmer during cold-day rides.

**7. Dress for the ride.**

If you wear insulated boots, make sure you're able to move them easily in the stirrups. Consider ordering oversized stirrups for use during the winter months. Try gel-pack foot warmers to protect against popsicle toes. Take time to stretch and warm your muscles before climbing into the saddle. And give your horse plenty of time to warm up before you start a strenuous schooling session.

**9. Hydrate.**

If you're going on a long ride, wear a Camelbak (drink delivery system that you wear like a backpack) or a similar product to carry water. It's easy to get dehydrated in the winter, and dehydration makes you more susceptible to hypothermia and frostbite. Water is a concern for your horse, too. Studies show that when they're offered warm water, horses will drink more in the winter than if their water is ice cold. Keep an eye on water tanks and buckets (make sure they're clean and ice-free). Decreased water intake can increase the risk for colic.

**11. Take a break.**

On really cold days, take a riding break. Check-in on your horse, then grab your tack and head to a warm tack room, or your house, and do a little cold-day cleaning. Wash bits (Listerine makes a great bit cleaner and disinfectant), clean headstalls and saddles, and check for any worn leather or broken buckles.

**12. Safety first.**

Do a safety check. Walk through the barn and pasture, checking for ice and hazards. Mix sawdust and de-icer to both melt ice and absorb moisture, and double-check water lines when frigid temps are predicted.



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**13. Visualize summer.**

Sometimes, staying motivated requires goal setting. Think about goals for yourself and your horse, plan to attend some winter clinics and horse expos, and make a month-by-month list of what you'll do to make your goals come true.

**14. Enjoy your horse.**

Even if you only have time for a deep whiff of eau d'équine or you just sit and listen to barn noises for a while, it can help recharge your batteries for that next sparkling winter day, when winter riding is at its best.

All content, including images credited to:

<https://horseandrider.com/how-to/warm-up-to-winter-riding-13010/>

## DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

December 5, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Laura O'Connor – Secretary

**Attendance:**

Jon Shamel, Melissa Codner, Sarah Lewis, Bob Knutson, Laura O'Connor, John Jenkins, Bill Yeager, Scott Fleur, Randy Thomsen, Clark Linn

Called to order 6:32pm

**President's report:**

- Discussion on improving Meyers Creek horse camp
  - Need to schedule conversation with USFS – Allie in Red Lodge and office in Bozeman
    - Projects committee/2 members can do this

**VP report:** Discussion on encouraging members to attend pack clinics

**Secretary report:** November Minutes reviewed. Motion to approve minutes made by J Shamel, 2nd by J Jenkins. Motion passed.

**Treasurer report:**

- Nov report emailed to BOD
  - November report reviewed. Motion made to approve by J Jenkins, 2 nd by R Thomsen. Motion passed.
  - \$1500 in November from State license plates
  - \$250 donation to RMEF in name of Simmons' family
  - Jeff & Rosi returned club donation from NC Flooding Trip
- Need to start up new accounting (QB) software
  - Need to go completely digital with this and general documents (Google Drive)
- Need to update membership list & addresses
- Discussion into donating \$500 to BCH-MT State (we do this annually)
  - Motion made to donate \$500 to BCH-MT State by J Jenkins, 2 nd by S Fleur. Motion passed.

**Committee's report:**

- 2027 BCH-MT State Convention
  - Discussion into looking at Red Lodge or Billings for location
  - Attendance will be ~200 people
  - Billings Convention Center is finishing up a renovation
  - Contact Red Lodge chamber of commerce
  - Further discussion in January with new committee
- Activities:
  - Scott Fleur has tried getting in touch with MDOT with no response
    - Going to draft letter to BLM and MDOT for Belfry area (6,500 acres)
      - Contact J Chepulis for BLM contact
  - Discussion for looking into riding/parking area projects in the Pryor's
- Education:
  - General Meetings
    - November cowboy poetry was a success
    - Dec: Hanna Hall, Christmas Party
      - Meat from caterer
      - White elephant gift exchange details sent out
- Youth Clinic / Summer Packing Clinic
  - Dates to be emailed out to members
- Fun Days at Dan Aadland's arena were discussed

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**New Business:**

- 2025 Elections
  - BOD, as voted in by board members
    - Treasurer: Jon Shamel
    - Secretary: Sarah Lewis
    - VP: Sean Chepulis
    - President: Randy Thomsen
- Signature card at bank will need to be updated. Randy Thompson, Jon Shamel (already signer), and Sarah Lewis (local in Columbus for convenience) will be added.
- Post Office keys will be turned over to Sarah Lewis at Christmas party.

Chairs for Committees discussed. Discussion to have board member as chair on committees as possible.

- Education Committee Chair: Sean Chepulis
- Activities Committee Chair: Sarah Lewis
- Projects Committee Chairs: Jon Shamel, Scott Fleur & John Jenkins
- State Convention Committee Chair: Melissa Codner
- Communications Committee Chairs: Rochelle Smith & Jessi Erickson.
  - Discussion to grant Rochelle Smith and Jessi Erickson complimentary BBCH memberships as thanks for their work on the newsletter and website. Motion made to approve the 2 complimentary memberships made by J Jenkins, 2nd by J Shamel. Motion passed.
- Audit Committee Chair: Clark Linn

Discussion of charitable donations that are usually made at the end of the year. Discussion included making sure we focus on supporting our mission statement with the use of club funds.

- Motion to donate to Hanna Hall in the amount of \$350.00 made by J Jenkins, 2 nd R Thomsen. Motion passed.

Discussion about renewing membership to the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. After discussion and evaluation of the different levels of membership available it was decided that the Meadowlark level would best fulfill the needs of the BBCH club.

- Motion to join chamber at Meadowlark level for the cost of \$150.00 made by J Jenkins, 2 nd by R Thomsen. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned: 9:11pm.

## RESOURCES

### *Life Flight Network*

Let's talk about the not so fun part of the backcountry. There are definite risks involved about being away from civilization and being self reliant if anything goes awry. If something bad happens and you are unable to exit on foot or horseback, the only option is via helicopter. It is incredibly expensive but there is some insurance for the just in case instance. Following is the link for informative purposes only.



PLEASE NOTE: This is NOT a sales pitch. This is a non-commissioned link.

<https://member.lifeflight.org/#lp-pom-block-370>

Membership is under \$100 and, according to the website, will cover the flight. There is also additional ground insurance.

### *Online Defensive Horsemen Information*

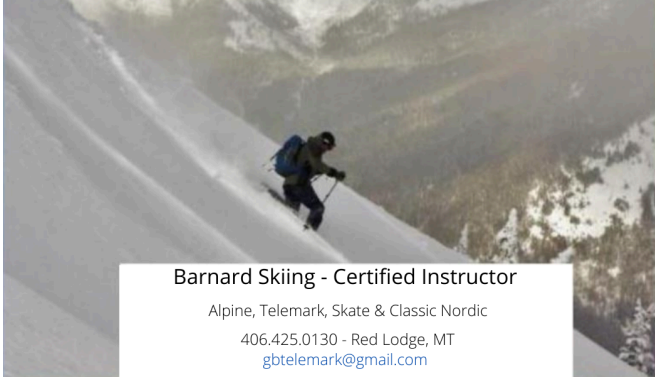
Website - <https://bchmt.org/wp/education/>

Scroll down towards the middle and you will see Horse Safety

This is good information and a great resource for new members that still need some defensive horsemen prior to doing any work activities this year.




**THANK YOU TO THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**



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**Stillwater Veterinary Clinic**

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 Absarokee, MT 59001  
 406-328-4159

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