



Nag News

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

In Partnership With



Volume 47

July 2020

Issue 07

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BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN MISSION STATEMENT

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's backcountry and wilderness areas.
2. To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
3. To assist the various government, state and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
4. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new back country horsemen's organizations.
6. To cooperate with other B.C.H.A. organizations.



**DEADLINE FOR THE
Aug 2020 NAG NEWS is
5 p.m. Aug 11, 2020**

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A Message from Our President

Greetings Members:

I hope you had an enjoyable and safe July 4th holiday weekend. The weather is changing to our normal summer expectations. It is a good time to get out and experience our outdoors.

Brad and Nancy Pollman have graciously offered to host the July Bitter Root Back

Country Horsemen General Membership meeting. They have also suggested that you could come at 6:30 pm and bring your personal picnic, in place of the shared potluck. The meeting would begin at 7:00 pm as usual. Remember to bring your own drinks and chairs.

Given the Covid-19 situation in our area, I encourage those attending to follow the current guidelines. Those that can and are willing should wear a face covering. All should ensure proper social distancing.

Gene Merrell, president

COMMITTEE	CHAIRS AND MEMBERS	CONTACT
Audit	Nancy Pollman	406-546-6492
Budget	Candace Erickson	
Audio-Visual Equipment	Ed Bullock	907-575-7878
Election & Nominations	Katie Williams	531-0688
Equipment & Inventory	Chris Grove	381-7600
Fair	Bill Black/Mark DeGrazier	363-6834/777-1234
Fundraisers	Ed Bullock	907-575-7878
RTP Grant Committee	Lionel Lavallee	640-1242
Historian	Laura McManus	642-3018
Issues	Lionel Lavallee	406-640-1242
Memberships	Kathy Stroppel-Holl	961-0096
Newsletter	Lionel Lavallee	640-1242
Packing Clinic Scholarship	Chuck Miller	961-5453
Parliamentarian	Rebecca Jones	415-264-5457
Programs	Philip & Pam Torgerson	360-4933/360-3201
Projects	Dan Brandborg/Lionel Lavallee	381-5643/640-1242
Social Marketing	Susan Slempe	821-2017/381-5910
Sunshine	Cindy Beck	360-1165
Trail Rides	Jan Bullock	907-242-9853
Training	Bonnie Morgan	381-9021
Education Committee	Ed Duggan & Christy Schram-Duggan	369-3140/360-5947
Website Design	Nancy Pollman	406-546-6492

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen 2020 Officers & Board

President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
Gene Merrell 208-310-6326	Dan Brandborg 381-5643	Christy Schram-Duggan 360-5947	Sandra O'Brien 907-529-1315

Directors:

Ed Bullock (2020-21) 907-575-7878	Lionel Lavallee (2019-20) 640-1242
Jan Bullock (2019-20) 907-242-9853	Mike Costanzo (2020-21) 375-1340
Ed Duggan (2019-20) 406-369-3140	Julie Schram (2020-21) 961-2457
Joe Kirkland (2020) 802-2286	Dan Maiyo (2020-21) 208-940-2887
Tim Meyer (2019-20) 907-440-0841	

Past President: Karen Philips 406-961-0101 **State Chairman:** Rich Carl 406-899-5248

State Directors: Chuck Miller (2018-20) 961-5453
Lionel Lavallee (2020-21) 640-1242

Alt State Director: Taylor Orr (2020) 930-5838

2020 Project Details

Please contact project leads listed below to volunteer.

Calf Creek – The Calf Creek project date is Saturday, June 27. Jan Bullock is the project leader (907-242-9853) and will hold the project briefing at 9:00 am. Please note that the port-a-potty that we, with others, have sponsored in the past is not there because of Health Department requirements. Please plan accordingly.

Larry Creek – The Larry Creek project date is Sunday, June 28. Joe Kirkland is the project leader (406-802-2286) and will hold the project briefing at 9:00 am.

East Fork Main Trail – CANCELLED

Boulder Creek – The Boulder Creek project is scheduled for July 10 – 12. Project leaders are Ed and Christy Duggan (Ed: 406-369-3140, Christy: 406-360-5947). One weekend, 2 day trips from the trailhead, trail clearing with chain saw to wilderness boundary. Crosscut from boundary to falls and possibly beyond. Overnight at the horse camp.

Blodgett Creek – The Blodgett Creek project is scheduled for July 24 – 26. Dan Brandborg is the project leader (406-381-5643). Trail cleared by FS to Bridge and above High Lake Trail Junction. Trail clearing from Bridge to trail junction, two night(s) at 7-mile meadow. Pack stock will be used to transport gear and equipment.

Twogood Cabin – The Twogood Cabin project is scheduled for August 7 – 9. Project leaders are Ed Duggan and Julie Schram (406-369-3140). Trailhead, horse camp maintenance. Trail clearing to cabin and surrounding trails. Overnight at Twogood cabin. Pack stock will be used to transport gear and equipment.

Other Topics of Note

Fun Rides – Jan Bullock is planning to lead monthly Fun Rides in July, August, Sept, and possibly October. Stay tuned for details.

East Fork Fun Ride and Campout Weekend – **CANCELLED** – This event was scheduled for July 3 – 5. However, with the current Covid considerations, we would not be able to have the meals, trainings, and comradery that were being planned. We are working with the Forest Service to reschedule this for next year.



Northern Lights and NeoWise Comet from Fire Watch Tower in Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness

JULY BRBCH MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

July meeting will be held in Brad and Nancy Pullman's Pasture
3777 Eastside Hwy, Stevensville, MT

There will NOT be a potluck dinner, but feel free to bring picnic @ 6:30. Meeting at 7:00 pm. The meeting will be outside, so remember to bring your chair. If the weather is rainy, we will set up the large club tent.

We suggest bringing an umbrella in case we cannot all fit under the tent. Bathroom facilities are very limited, so please plan ahead.

Program Speaker: Jan Bullock will present "Veterinary Logistics at the Iditarod"



Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and social distancing rules, there will not be a printed, mailed version of the March issue of Nag News. If you are aware of a fellow member who doesn't have Internet access, please print up the web version for their benefit.

Thanks, from your editorial staff.

TRAINING UPDATE APRIL 2020

The Covid-19 virus outbreak affected many changes to our training schedule this spring. Here is a summary of the changes so far:

Saw Trainings: The Forest Service has asked that no saw trainings take place before the end of May. The class previously scheduled for April 25 is cancelled until we get the ok to resume classes. All certifications due to expire in 2020 have been extended until 2021, if First Aid/CPR is up to date.

First Aid/CPR: The American Heart Association has extended the date of expiration of cards due to expire in 2020 for 120 days. No classes will be taught until given the ok to resume teaching. If you have signed up for a class, you will be the first on the list to be contacted.

Defensive Horsemanship: At this point no extension for cards expiring in 2020 have been made by the Forest Service, since no projects will be done until the CDC gives the ok to resume. All trainings for this spring have been cancelled (Demonstration 4/4, Obstacles 4/25 and 5/2). The BCHMT site has a power point with training videos to watch for the classroom/demonstration portion of the Defensive Horsemanship training. When we can resume trainings, I can schedule a session on one of our trails to complete the training for a new card or renewal. Please send me a note telling me what you learned from the presentation if you would like to get your DH card.

While you are waiting to get back out on the trails, watch training videos while it snows and get out to do ground work with your horse/mule/donkey when it warms up again. We are lucky to be able to get in meaningful exercise and training during this time of self-quarantine. Be safe out there!



THE RAM'S HORN MEDICINE TREE

Excerpted from *Ravalli Republic*
and W. M. Whitfield Ravalli
County Museum, July 5, 2020

Since time immemorial the Bitterroot Valley has been the traditional homeland of the Salish people, and many tribal members still visit the valley annually to dig bitterroots and place sacred

offerings at a highly revered local shrine. The Rams Horn Medicine Tree is situated on the East Fork of the Bitterroot River, and was once a popular roadside attraction, complete with a Montana State Highway interpretive sign and a commemorative plaque. The jagged 15-foot-tall stump now stands seemingly forgotten after a windstorm in 2001 took its deadly toll on the historic landmark. Local residents had noticed in the early '70s that the treetop was beginning to turn brown, and a Forest Service study in 1999 confirmed the fact that the tree was ending its natural life cycle. Today no signage remains to connect the fading icon to our fast-paced modern world, but a few old-timers still continue to use the site as their own personal global-positioner, and the Salish Indians continue to adorn it with their symbolic offerings.

Through the years there have been various stories of how the actual Medicine Tree was cut down by early loggers or has somehow been misidentified by historians. However, a close inspection of old trapper and trader era journals, combined with the oral histories of Salish Indians and early white settlers, there can be no doubt of the tree's authenticity. In his "Early Recollections," East Fork pioneer Bertie Lord states that the actual horn was cut off of the tree in 1892 by "some vandal of a white man," but for nine or 10 years prior to that, he had often stopped to study the horn as he made his way up and down the East Fork. The 300-year-old tree was first fully documented by Alexander Ross in 1824 as his large band of Hudson's Bay trappers worked their way up the Bitterroot Valley on an expedition to the Snake River country.

Ross goes on to say that all Indians revered the celebrated tree, and that hunters in passing often sacrificed something as a tribute to the ram's head. One of his Iroquois trappers, so as not to incur the displeasure of the god of hunters, hung a bit of tobacco to the horn, to insure that his hunting was even more propitious. Nine years later another trapping expedition entered the valley, led by Warren Angus Ferris. Ferris joined the American Fur Company at age 19 and kept a detailed journal from 1830-1835, later published as "Life in the Rocky Mountains." His account varies little from that of Ross, though he does give a more detailed description of the actual location of the tree itself. "On the eastside of the Bitter Root River there is a singular curiosity that I had not before observed,

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because it is situated under some rocky bluffs, almost impassable to horsemen; the proper road being on the west side of the river." This is perhaps a clue as to why the famous landmark went completely unnoticed by Lewis and Clark, who passed through in 1805.

Ferris continues with his description, "The tree is unusually large and flourishing, and the horn in it some seven feet above the ground. It appears to be very ancient, and is gradually decomposing on the outside, which has assumed a reddish cast. The date of its existence has been lost in the lapse of ages, and even tradition is silent as to the origin of its remarkable situation. The oldest of Indians can give no other account of it, than that it was

there precisely as at present, before their father's great grandfathers were born. They seldom pass it without leaving some trifling offering, as beads, shells, or other ornaments." One interesting variation in the Ferris account is that he fails to mention the entire ram's skull, and speaks only of the horn itself. I'm not sure exactly how to explain the discrepancies in the two differing reports, though some investigators believe they are speaking of two separate locations entirely.

Apparently medicine trees were fairly common in western Montana, and several other sites have been documented in Flathead County and Deer Lodge County, as well. However, not all medicine trees display a ram's horn buried in the trunk, and many were merely adorned with painted figures and an assortment of offerings. On Sept. 11, 1805, Sgt. John Ordway of the Lewis and Clark Expedition mentioned a medicine tree that would seem to fall into this category. As the Corps began their trek up Lolo Creek, Ordway noted that the Corps "passed a large tree on which the natives had a number of images drawn on it with paint. A part of a white bear skin hung on said tree. We suppose this to be a place of worship among them." A similar report of this sacred medicine tree was recorded by Corps member Joseph Whitehouse, proving that both men were astute observers, who managed to leave us a unique perspective of early Native customs in western Montana.

In his book "Pioneering in Montana," Granville Stuart gives another account of a large pine tree that was located on top of a hill near the Clark Fork River, east of Missoula. Stuart mentions that the Indigenous people "hung small articles of beadwork, bear claws, strips of red cloth, queer-shaped stones, bunches of white sage, pieces of buffalo scalp, small pieces of bone, etc." on the tree. He adds that the offerings were made "as the Indians passed on their way out to the hunting grounds, and were placed there to invoke the Great Spirit to make game plentiful and to make them successful in their

enterprises."

Here in the Bitterroot Valley the Ram's Horn Medicine Tree plays an important role in the Salish creation story. In this story Coyote, who possesses great medicine, travels the land slaying monsters in preparation for the coming of man. Coyote learns of a giant wicked sheep in the Bitterroot Valley who kills all who try to pass through his domain. Coyote goes to the place by the river and asks the ram to demonstrate his power. Pointing to a small tree he asks the sheep to knock it over, and of course the horrible, boastful creature could not resist the chance to demonstrate his awesome strength. He lowered his head and charged the tree, smashing it with his huge horns. The ram struck the tree with such force that one of his horns went all the way through the tree, making it impossible for him to escape. With three swift strokes of his flint knife, Coyote cut off the body from the head and threw it against the rocks, saying, "In the generations of human beings to come, there will be no such wicked creatures. This tree will be a place for human beings to leave offerings of their prized possessions, and to give thanks, and to pray for their well-being, for good fortune and good health."

Traditionally the Ram's Horn Medicine Tree has served just that purpose. It has been said that the tree offered a neutral zone, where sworn enemies could come together peacefully and openly discuss their grievances. Men would congregate at this solemn site and work through their differences and perhaps they might even come away with a better understanding of cultures different from their own. Their mutual well-being, good fortune and good health depended on it. In this respect, it seems Coyote was true to his word.

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Mexican Beef & Rice

Definitely a camping meal that can be made in a single cast iron skillet or Dutch Oven

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion chopped
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 red pepper diced
- 1 yellow pepper diced
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon taco seasoning (a mix of chili powder and cumin to taste)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 cup rice
- 1 ½ cups broth or more if it seems dry
- 1 jar (16-oz) chunky salsa
- 1 can (15-oz) black beans
- 1 cup sweet corn canned OR frozen
- Shredded cheese, lime wedges, sour cream, chopped tomatoes, cilantro, avocado, tortilla chips

Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook for 2 minutes. Add the garlic and beef and cook until browned. Stir in the diced peppers and cook for 1 more minute.
2. Stir in the tomato paste, taco seasoning, salt and pepper. Cook for 1 minute. Add the rice, broth, salsa, black beans and corn and stir well.
3. Bring to a simmer, cover the skillet with a lid, reduce the heat and gently cook for around 15 minutes, or until cooked through. Add more broth if necessary.
4. Top with shredded cheese and cover for another 2 minutes, if you like. Serve with your favorite toppings.



Minutes of Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen General Meeting June 18, 2020

The general meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen was called to order by Secretary Christy Schram-Duggan at 7pm at the home of Brad & Nancy Pollman. Absent were officers President Gene Merrill, Vice President Dan Brandborg, and Treasurer Sandra O'Brien.

There was not a quorum this evening. There were 22 members present.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes. The minutes from the May meeting were discussed, but not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

Treasurer's Report. Current financials were provided and discussed. Again, there was no motion to approve due to the lack of a quorum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For lost and found items (mostly silverware) left at previous meetings, please see Kathy Stoppel-Holl. They'll be there until she gets tired of bringing them to meetings!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Issues. There was nothing to present.

Projects. Presented by Christy Schram-Duggan. There are sign-up forms available tonight, or call the project leader to sign up. Information is available on the website. Karen asked that photos be taken at work projects and sent to her for use in the articles.

June 27. Calf Creek. Jan Bullock is the project leader. There are positions for both riders and hikers.

June 28. Larry Creek. Joe Kirkland is the project leader. There are positions for both riders and hikers.

July 12. Boulder. This was to be a camp, but with the coronavirus restrictions, Christy and Ed Duggan will need to re-visit this.

July 24-26. Blodgett. Dan Brandborg is the project leader. Dan spoke with Mark Smith; others have cleared up 4 miles already. There is a large tree to come down. Right now they're looking to stay two nights at 7-Mile Meadow.

August 7-9. Twogood cabin. Christy and Ed Duggan are project leaders; Julie Schram will also be helping at camp. They'll be re-visiting this to determine if they can move forward as planned with restrictions in place at that time.

Inventory. Dan and Lionel did inventory in the shed. PLEASE fill out the sign-out form when taking and

returning tools. The Forest Service has our forest service radio. The SPOT device is in the shed. Nancy Pollman will pick it up, re-charge it, and update the firmware so it's ready for the Larry Creek project.

RTP Forms. There are new forms available. Christy is willing to help for those who are not comfortable using the online form. For those who are unfamiliar with RTP, Brad explained what it is and how it works,

Volunteer Agreements. Please sign a form if you have not done so this year or last. Last year's forms are good through this work season.

State Directors. Presented by Christy Schram-Duggan. Brad noted the next State meeting is in September. A lot of the chapters are out working on trail projects already.

Firearms Policy. There were some glitches with the firearms policy, but all seems to be back on track now. There needs to be a background check by the USFS in order to carry a firearm on a work project. This is needed for Workers' Comp coverage. Please note that the USFS policy has always been no carrying of firearms. It's come to the attention of the USFS that their employees, and others, were carrying, so they've come up with a plan to make it work for their employees and a much more simplified plan for volunteers. These approvals are good for three years. Bonnie Morgan will collect a list of those who want to carry; this list will go to Mark Smith to start the process.

Membership. Presented by Kathy Stoppel-Holl. There are 82 memberships, 137 members. Kathy has membership cards with her if you need one. They are good for various discounts at local stores.

Training. Presented by Bonnie Morgan.

First Aid/CPR. For those whose cards are expiring this year, the expiration date has been extended for one year.

Saw Certs. Certifications expiring this year have also been extended for one year.

Videos. There are some chapters putting training videos on their FaceBook. Bonnie likes this idea and asks for submissions from members. If you have a special skill or see a better way to do something, and want to do this, please keep your video to less than 3 minutes and send it to Bonnie.

Outreach & Program. Presented by Karen Philips. Not much with Outreach yet since we haven't been doing anything. Photos from future work projects can be sent to Karen and it will be uploaded to our

FaceBook page by Susan Slemp.

Jan Bullock has offered to do a program at our July meeting. The August meeting is usually where we do our fair presentation, but he'd also like to have Steve Brown, the new Stevensville Ranger, at that meeting.

Sunshine. A reminder that if you know of any member needing a sunshine card, please let Cindy Beck know.

Fun Ride. Presented by Christy Schram-Duggan. Jan Bullock is hoping to do a ride July 19, destination still unknown. If you're interested in riding, please contact Jan Bullock.

2021 Convention. Presented by Christy Schram-Duggan. You probably know, our chapter will be hosting the 2021 convention since the 2020 convention was cancelled. The convention cmte took a break and will begin meeting again in September.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Ravalli County Fair. Mark DeGrazier and Bill Black will be working with the fair again. At this moment the fair is on. The Fair Board and Commissioners will decide by mid-July if the Fair continues. After mid-July it would only be canceled by call of the State Governor. Members and friends of members are asked to volunteer to sell or take

Defensive Horsemanship. There has not been any word of extending these. If yours has/is running out, talk to Bonnie

tickets at the gates. Please contact Laura DeGrazier to sign

up. We will be working to get an interactive sign-up sheet on the website as soon as possible. This is our chapter's annual fundraiser.

The Fair will again be offering free lunch entry hours; this year it will be for three days. The Fair will man the ticket booth at the main gate through which this works.

Mill Creek trail is passable all the way to the lake. Ed Duggan has been working on clearing this (60+ trees before losing count.) You can cross the creek at the high water trail.

National BCHA News. Brad Pollman is the Alternate National Director for Montana. The new permanent address for BCHA has moved from Connecticut back to Columbia Falls, where it started. Mark Himmel (Charlie Russell chapter) is the BCHA Treasurer and will be moving up to Vice Chair next year. Brad is on the Executive Cmte. There have been issues with the managerial company that was hired several years ago. BCHA is letting that firm go and will work with several individuals and/or companies to split the work up to get it done better. There will be

changes with how our membership is tallied, which means for the better. Financially, BCHA is doing quite well. With this transition we'll be able to carry out BCHA business just on BCH dues collected; it has not been that way for a while. We have a good director handling fundraising and we're seeing things turn around.

eBike Status. Tahoe National Forest had opened up their trails to eBikes. BCHA worked with the wilderness groups to sue them; it was settled out of court. It only cost BCHA \$1000 to participate in this lawsuit, but this has already been useful with other locations where there are issues. BLM is our next biggest hurdle; they are doing a rule change. BCHA is staying diligent on this; the comment period has closed. Remember that individuals can write letters and/or submit comments, too.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 16, at 7:00 p.m. The Pollmans offered their field again. With a show of hands it was decided to do that. There will not be a potluck, but folks are welcome to come early and picnic.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Pollman

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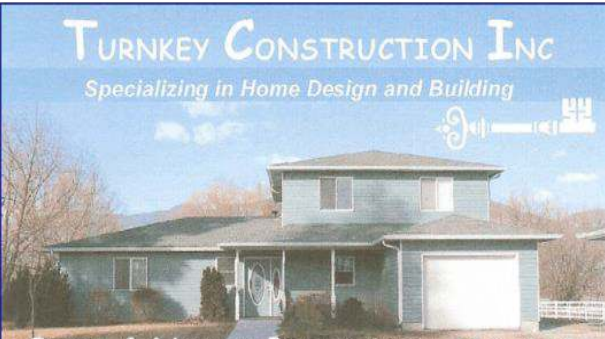
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Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen



NEXT BRBCH MEETING

Thursday, July 16th

**Location: Brad & Nancy Pollman's
Pasture**

Self Hosted Picnic @ 6:30

Meeting at 7:00

**Guests are welcome! Please don
Masks and Socially Distance**

