

In Partnership With



Nag News

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

December 2020

Issue #12

Inside

Important

Member Info

Horse Sense

Back Country Kitchen

General/Board Mtg. Minutes

Ads & Services

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.

A Message from our President

Thanks to all that voted in our 2020 elections last month. 40% of our membership participated, which is an outstanding show of interest. We welcome Barbara Walker as our incoming Treasurer and Katie Williams as a 2021 - 2022 board member. I thank Tim Meyer for his service as he leaves the board. Tim is exploring other opportunities to serve the chapter.

Pam Ristad won our participation raffle during the November general membership meeting: a \$20 gift certificate to Cow Poke Ranch Supply, one of our faithful sponsors. We will have a monthly raffle over the next few meetings to encourage your attendance at the Zoom membership meetings. Please join us and do not forget to renew your membership.

We know that many of you like the opportunity to visit with other members during our meetings. That was easy with the potluck and in person meetings. However, in the current environment it is more difficult. To enhance that aspect of our meetings, we will open the Zoom "window" 15 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to start. Please join at 6:45 to visit with other members.

The Trail and Education committees will be meeting with the Forest Service in January to begin planning our 2021 trail season and required trainings. They welcome your input on trails you would like considered for clearing and maintenance, as well as additional educational topics and opportunities. Please drop them a note or give them a call.

I wish each of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year!

Gene Merrill, President

DEADLINE FOR THE Dec 2020 NAG NEWS

is
5 p.m. Dec 9, 2020

SUBMIT YOUR
ARTICLES AND ADS TO:
lionel.lavallee47@gmail.com

To improve accuracy please
confirm all ads by deadline
date.

Committee	Chairs & Members	Contact
Audit	Nancy Pollman	546-6492
Budget	Candace Erickson	
Audio-Visual Equipment	Ed Bullock	907-575-7878
Election & Nominations	Sandra O'Brien	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	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 Slemp	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	546-6492

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen 2020 Officers & Board

Chapter Officers

Position	Name	Term	Contact
President	Gene Merrill	2020-22	208-310-6326
Vice President	Dan Brandborg	2020-22	381-5643
Secretary	Christy Schram-Duggan	2020-22	360-5947
Treasurer	Sandra O'Brien	2020-22	907-529-1315

Board Members

	Term	Contact
Ed Bullock	2020-21	208-310-6326
Jan Bullock	2019-20	907-242-9853
Ed Duggan	2019-20	369-3140
Joe Kirkland	2019-20	802-2286
Tim Meyer	2019-20	907-440-0841
Lionel Lavallee	2019-20	640-1242
Mike Costanzo	2020-21	375-1340
Julie Schram	2020-21	961-2457
Dan Mayo	2020-21	208-940-2887

Past President: Karen Philips 406-961-0101 **State Chairman:** Sherri Lionberger 208-691-6218

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

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

December 17th BRBCH Monthly meeting to be on Zoom @ 7pm
Program Speaker: none

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ATTEND AND BE A WINNER!

As an incentive for members to attend the Bitter Root BCH Zoom meetings, each month a random drawing will award one attendee a \$20 gift. For the December meeting, the winner will receive a \$20 gift certificate. **November** winner was Pam Ristad.

2021 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Membership applications for new and renewed members are now being accepted for 2021. Memberships run from January 1-December 31. Forms can be downloaded from the BRBCH website (<https://bchmt.org/wp/bitterroot/forms-andpublications/forms/>) or contact Kathy to have one sent to you by regular mail. Please completely fill out the application form - it satisfies our insurance coverage. Renewals need to update phone number, email, and address as needed. Cost for an individual is \$30, families are \$40, and secondary memberships are \$10 (individual or family if your primary membership is with another chapter). Mail the form with your check to BRBCH, PO Box 1083, Hamilton, MT 59840. You can also contact Kathy to arrange to meet if you want to pay cash.

Thanks!
Kathy Stroppel-Holl
kshmes@outlook.com
406-961-0096



Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and social distancing rules, there will not be a printed, mailed version of the December 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.

Also, this month we've changed the look and feel of the newsletter to be cleaner and (in our humble opinion) a bit more modern. Hope you like it!

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Saddle Sore Spots

from thehorse.com

Edited for length

A sore starts as inflammation of the skin, and you should be able to feel it before you can actually see it. If you run your hand over the horse's back, you might find a raised, hot, or swollen area. If you continue to use the

horse, this lump is subjected to more rubbing (since it protrudes upward), making the condition worse.

Causes

The tack we use on our horses often causes saddle and girth sores. If a cinch or saddle pad is dirty or has a rough spot, or a saddle doesn't fit right, the end result is usually a sore on the horse. Some sores are caused by the way we ride. A rider out of balance with his horse can create as many problems as an unbalanced pair of saddle bags; the uneven weight distribution puts more pressure on one side of the saddle than the other.

Saddle and girth sores are common in horses which are ridden hard, or ridden with poorly fitting tack, or ridden with tack that moves

around too much or puts pressure on certain areas. Barney Fleming, DVM, past president of the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC), and ride veterinarian has seen a lot of horses which have gone a lot of miles.

"The cause of a sore is fairly obvious—uneven pressure or localized pressure," he said. "It doesn't take very far down a trail, or very long during a competition, to create skin damage that eventually becomes a sore. A piece of latigo or a saddle string under the saddle can within minutes create an area that will make an actual sore if that pressure continues."

Most sores are caused by pressure or chafing.

"Pressure damages the skin and the body's reaction to that is swelling," he adds. "This compounds the problem if you don't take care of it. Common things that cause pressure sores are fanny packs, saddle bags, attachments to the saddle, etc., that create uneven pressure or are rubbing back and forth. Another common cause is a wrinkle in a pad or dirt under the pad."

Treating a Sore

"A common mistake in treating a saddle sore or trying to prevent or control one is to add padding," says Fleming. "If a horse starts to get a sore, many people put on two pads. You need to do exactly the opposite. You want to cut away wherever the problem is and get rid of that pressure."

"Whatever is causing that pressure can only be eliminated if you put some space between the sore spot and what's been rubbing the horse. When I find a sore on an endurance horse, I send the rider off to find a sharp knife to cut a hole in that pad! The rider may be a little upset, cutting up a \$60 pad, but it helps the horse."

"Medication-wise, just about anything can be used on a saddle or girth sore," he says. "I'm a big believer in putting something on a girth sore that's soothing and lubricating. You want to keep it soft, and it doesn't matter what you use; even petroleum jelly works well. It doesn't have to be medicated if it's not an open wound. Neosporin or some other kind of antibiotic ointment can be used if the skin is broken. Bacteria can be opportunistic and make it worse. Petroleum jelly can be used, even on an open sore; I'd rather see a rider use that than nothing."

Once a sore starts, it can be hard to heal unless you quit riding the horse (to give the raw area a chance to keep from being irritated) and unless you can adjust the tack so it doesn't rub. If a sore is repeatedly rubbed or constantly re-injured by the same ill-fitting saddle, it might develop thick scar tissue. If you must keep riding the horse, change saddles or cinches, or adjust it so it doesn't rub. If you can't change saddles, try a pad that distributes pressure better, or cut a hole in the pad (larger than the sore) to take the pressure off that area.

Regarding swelling, he says it's best to let that take care of itself, especially if you don't use the horse again until it goes down. "Sometimes swelling will move, and people will wonder why. It's just gravity; the body has produced some fluid to protect the area, and it just gravitates to a lower spot. This is part of the process of the swelling going away."

Old-time horsemen often used ice on a really bad gall, especially over the backbone. "Ice won't hurt it, but I'm not sure that it will really change anything," says Fleming.

Whether or not you can continue using the horse will depend on how bad the sore is, and whether you can eliminate what's rubbing or pressing on that area. "If you can move the girth or change it, you may be able to keep riding," he says. "If you discover you have a buckle that is poking the horse, and can move it, you can probably keep riding."

Prevention

"One thing most horse people do already, which is just common sense, is to thoroughly groom the horse prior to tacking up," says Fleming. "A tiny amount of dirt that you can't even see with the naked eye may change the contour of the horse's back. If you put pressure on that, it can make a sore."

It's like the princess and the pea; no matter how much padding you put over that tiny lump, the horse will still feel it—and the extra pressure can accentuate its effect.

After getting the horse's back (and girth area) as clean as possible, take care in the way you tack up the horse. Put the pad and saddle on ahead of normal position and slide them back into place, going with the lay of the hair. Never pull a pad or saddle forward; this ruffles the hair. If it's cinched up tight and ridden in this position, it might create irritation that could lead to a sore. When readjusting your saddle out on the trail, lift it up and put it more forward of its normal position, sliding it back into place—to avoid rubbing the hair (and sweaty dirt, if there is any on the horse's back from his exertions) the wrong way.

Regarding girth sores, there are many good girth materials today that we didn't have in earlier years, such as neoprene. "We got by with rope/string girths for a long time, just because they have some give and conform to the horse, but some of the newer materials are better. Obviously, an old leather strap pulled up tight will put some unusual pressures on the girth area, particularly at the elbow. The elbow hits the girth or cinch at every stride."

For proper girth fit, make sure that the girth is long enough so the buckle doesn't come into contact with the elbow.

The elbow doesn't touch the girth when the horse is standing, so you don't always think about it, but when the forearm moves back and forth, the elbow comes in contact with the cinch.

If a sore is caused by the cinch ring or buckle, adjust it to contact the horse in a different place, and pad it. If the sore is in the soft, movable tissue behind the elbow, use a softer material or a neoprene girth that creates less friction. The best way to avoid girth sores is to use a non-abrasive cinch that fits the horse, and toughen the girth skin gradually—with short, easy rides—after any extensive layoff. Sometimes a horse's conformation makes more problems in fitting a

girth or cinch because of the elbow's relationship to the girth area.

"This is one reason some people make saddles with center girths or a girth that's movable," says Fleming. That way the cinch can be moved away from the elbow on certain horses. Rigging that sits too far forward can rub the skin behind the elbows. "On an endurance ride when I see a problem developing, I may stop the rider and tell him or her to figure out a way to move that girth back two inches and eliminate the constant contact and rubbing."

However, if the horse's girth line (narrowest part of the chest) is close to the elbow, moving the girth back will not help as the girth will naturally slide forward into the narrowest spot.

If an old sore is thickened or contains scar tissue, care must be taken to avoid putting any extra pressure on it. If it's a girth sore, you can pad or move the girth so there's less abrasion on it.

"If it's a saddle sore, you take the pressure off it," says Fleming. "There will always be more pressure there because it's thicker now. I wouldn't stop using the horse just because he

has scars; the body has done a lot to protect itself. You just need to keep from adding pressure to the thick spot."

Tack Hygiene

Clean tack is always important—not only in preventing sores, but also in minimizing the risk of passing a fungus or some other contagious skin problem from one horse to another.

"Cleanliness is much less irritating than dirt. God made dirt, and dirt don't hurt, except when there's an open wound, to use the old saying," he says. "On any activity that has any length of duration, such as a trail ride or a long round of competition, inspection of tack is crucial. The good riders, the conscientious people that I see, spend as much time dealing with tack at a rest period as they do with food. They will pull off the tack, inspect it and the horse, look and feel and adjust."

Materials that can be wiped clean are best, rather than something you must wash and dry. Neoprene girths often work wonders for horses with tender skin; they produce less friction and rubbing, and can be rinsed off after (or even during) a ride and be wiped clean and dry immediately.

Donate to BRBCH just by shopping at Amazon Smile

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen has been issued a donation from the AmazonSmile Foundation. Once per year, the AmazonSmile Foundation issues donations to all registered organizations that have earned donations, even if the donation amount is below the \$5 minimum. We can increase donations for Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen by reminding you, our supporters to do your Amazon shopping at smile.amazon.com. If you're a first-time shopper to Smile, simply go to the link, sign in with your amazon password, and select "Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen" as your charity.

In the spirit of the Holidays, we'd like to share some seasonal photos from our members







BACKCOUNTRY KITCHEN



Whiskey Blackened Elk Roast

*provided by
Montana FWP*

This should

*also work with any prime cut of roast
beef.*

Ingredients

- 3–5 lb. elk roast
- 5 cloves garlic, peeled and cut into slivers
- 1 large yellow onion, cut lengthwise into slivers (optional)
- 1 c. vinegar (any type)
- 5 T. vegetable oil
- 2 c. strong brewed coffee
- 2 c. water
- ½ c. whiskey*
- Salt and pepper

**Don't worry about the alcohol. It evaporates, but the whiskey flavor continues to enhance the meat.*

Directions

1. With a knife, cut two dozen or so slits halfway into the meat. Insert slivers of garlic (and onion, if you like).
2. Put the roast in a glass or ceramic bowl. Pour vinegar over the top and into the slits, turning for full coverage. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.
3. The next day, discard the vinegar solution and pat the meat dry with paper towels. Over medium-high heat, heat the oil in a heavy roasting pan. Add the roast and brown until nearly burned on all sides.
4. Reduce heat and pour coffee over the roast, being careful of hot oil spatters. Add water and whiskey, cover, and simmer for about 6 hours atop the stove. (Alternatively, roast the meat, after browning and adding the liquids, in an oven preheated to 285 degrees.)
5. Twenty minutes before serving, season with salt and pepper.
6. Remove the roast and let it rest 10 minutes before carving and serving. Meanwhile, heat the pan until the remaining liquid begins to bubble. Use a wooden spoon to scrape up any brown bits. Serve this as a sauce atop the roast or over potatoes, or thicken it into a gravy with flour or cornstarch, whisking briskly to blend, then heat until bubbling.

**Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen
General Membership Meeting
November 19, 2020
&
Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen
Board of Directors Meeting
December 3, 2020**

Due to time constraints and new meeting format, minutes for the past General and Board Meetings will be included in the December Virtual Meeting for the General Membership

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Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen



NEXT BRBCH MEETING
Thursday, December 17th
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting
Meeting at 7:00

