



Nag News

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

September 2023 Issue #9



BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN MISSION STATEMENT

- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's backcountry and wilderness areas.
- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
- To assist the various government, state and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
- 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.
- To foster and encourage the formation of new back country horsemen's organizations.
- To cooperate with other BCHA organizations.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST 2023 MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

Corvallis Grange Hall, 130 Dutch Hill Road

Pot Luck Dinner: 6:30 pm

Meeting: 7:00 pm

The Corvallis Grange Hall is located on the north side of Dutch Hill Road, just west of the intersection of Hwy 93 and Woodside Cutoff. A potluck dinner will be served at 6:30 pm followed by our monthly meeting from 7:00-8:30 pm. Guests and new members always welcome.

This month we are pleased to welcome Tracy Hawkins! Tracy will be discussing Riding Basics: by being at one with your horse, on the trail or in the arena, every ride is an opportunity to improve skills and performance. Tracey raised her three daughters on a ranch in CA where they learned to ride together. She now competes in barrel racing and ranch rodeos. Tracey's philosophy is: every ride is a lesson. Tracey resides in Stevensville where she and her equine family offer riding lessons depending on availability.

For more information, please call Gene at 208-310-6326 or check out the website at: www.bchmt.org/bitterroot. Facebook: **Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH)**.

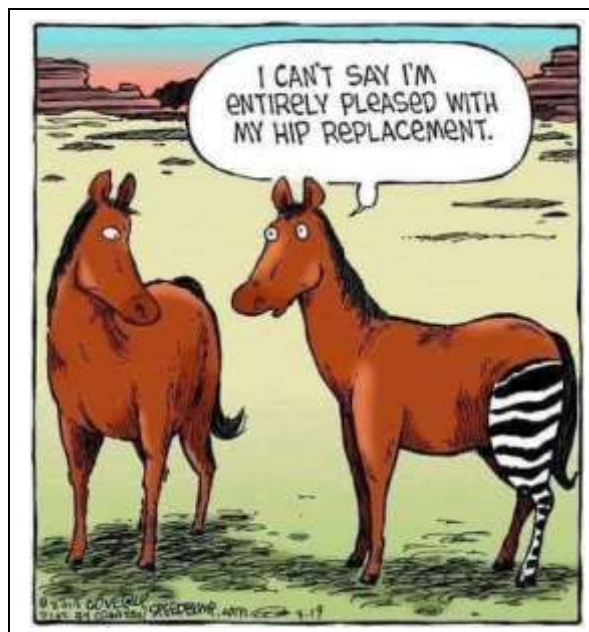
HIGHLIGHTS THIS ISSUE

- Editor's Note
- Horse Sense
- Back Country Kitchen
- August General Meeting Minutes (Draft)
- Sept Board Meeting Minutes (Canceled)
- Report, Horsemanship Conference

**DEADLINE FOR THE
OCTOBER 2023
NAG NEWS is
Thursday, October 12th**

**SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES
AND ADS TO:**

djmaiyo@gmail.com



Editor's note:

Due to the fact that Jan is riding the range in Mongolia, there is no Presidents message this month. However, a couple of noteworthy items are worth mentioning.

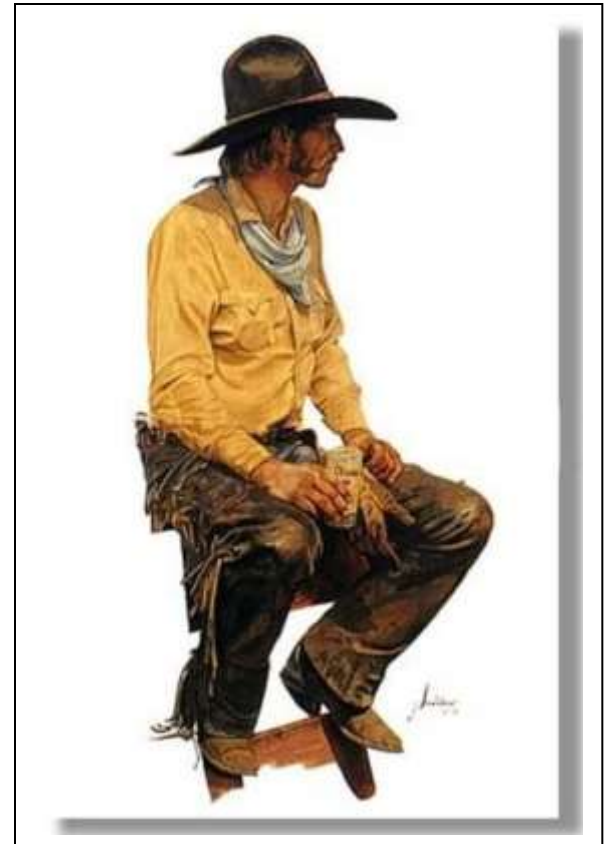
BRBCH volunteers maned the entrance gates and took and sold tickets during the Ravalli County Fair. Thursday and Saturday evenings Leslie and I were stationed at the always entertaining, never boring East Gate; where we greeted rodeo contestants, dignitaries, essential services, rodeo watchers, and lost or confused people. Thank you to all who participated and thank you to Ed Duggan for his help and advice when we had questions.

Due to a lack of a quorum, the September Board meeting was canceled. Meanwhile, in Vancouver BC, Dan Brandborg sent the following report to the board discussing two future backcountry trail projects:

First, Mill Lake to Fred Burr Lake including the switchbacks at the upper end of Burr. This may be a multiple year project with the switchbacks being the first priority. We have contacted a contract crew that would like to do this project and we are working on defining just what they will do and get a bid from them for this work. Thinking at this time is to do minimal pack support to the upper ends of the canyons here.

The second project is the upper end of Big Creek starting along the side of the lake up to Packbox pass, down Packbox trail in Idaho to the Garnet trail back up to Bear Creek pass. We are thinking this is the best project for the MCC crew. Again, minimal pack support for their two 9 day hitches. I (Dan) have been in contact with the Idaho trails person, Pete Bauer, who is all glad to see us doing work in there. The trails from Elk Summit into this country have not been cleared in years so access will be from the Bitterroot side. The Selway Frank Church foundation tried to make it around Big Creek lake to the pass but failed to get much above the lake. They are interested in coordinating with our group in some way.

As the summer now shifts into fall, on behalf of the BRBCH President, Chapter Officers, Board Members, Chair and Committee members, a giant thank you to all BRBCH members for helping to make 2023 a safe, fun and rewarding season!!



2023 Committees

Audit

Audio-Visual Equipment

Budget

Education

Election & Nominations

Equipment & Inventory

Fair

Fundraisers

RTP Grant

Historian

Issues

Memberships

Newsletter

Packing Clinic Scholarship

Parliamentarian

Programs

Projects

Social Marketing

Sunshine

Trail Rides

Training

Website Design

2023 Chairs & Members

Joe Kirkland, Shawn Kern, Judy Posey, Bonnie Morgan

Ed Bullock

Earl Philips/Gene Merrell

Ed Duggan/Christy Schram-Duggan
(Position Open)

Ed Duggan

Christy Schram-Duggan

Ed Bullock

Christy Schram-Duggan

Tim Meyer

Carol Johns

Leslie Conner-Maiyo

Dan Maiyo

Chuck Miller

Rebecca Jones

Monica Stanton

Dan Brandborg

Travise Grinnell

Cindy Beck

Jan Bullock

Bonnie Morgan

Nancy Pollman

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen 2023 Officers & Board**Chapter Officers**

Position	Name	Term	Contact
President	Jan Bullock	2023	(907) 242-9853
Vice President	Christy Schram-Duggan	2023	
Secretary	Kathy Stoppel-Holl	2023	
Treasurer	Barbara Walker	2023	

Board Members

Dan Brandborg	2022-23
Carol Johns	2022-23
Dan Maiyo	2022-23
Karen Philips	2022-23
Travise Grinnell	2023-24
Joe Kirkand	2023-24
Diane Duffie	2023-24
Dennis Hardman	2023-24
Brad Pollman	2023-24

State Director

Brad Pollman	2022-23
Chuck Miller	2023-24

Alt. State Director

Ed Duggan	2023
-----------	------

Past President

Gene Merrell

BCHMT State Chairman

Wade Murphy

BCHMT National Director

Brad Pollman 2023-24

Horse Sense - Sponsored by:



We carry all your equine vaccination and deworming needs, plus a large supply of animal health products.

Visit us in Corvallis or Deer Lodge,
on Facebook, or

www.cowpokeranchsupply.com

406-961-4917

Monday – Friday 8 – 5:30

Saturday – 9 – 4

Why Do We Change Bits? By Martin Black *Eclectic Horseman Magazine*

Why do we change from one bit to another on our horses? This can tell us something about our horsemanship and ourselves. Sounds like one of those dreaded self-evaluations? — “It’s not me, it’s them!”

If you want to improve your horsemanship, look at what you are doing, let your horse evaluate you. He has nothing to prove, and he doesn’t have an ego.

If we have a problem and we are changing bits to fix a problem, did you consider how to prevent from making the same mistake next time? Or is it something you accept as “just something some horses do?” A horse does not just get heavy in the face or fight the bit because he wants to go against pressure and get into trouble. He can’t make sense of what we are doing so he becomes heavy and tolerant of the pressure or he becomes confused and frustrated. Then he learns to avoid the pressure from the bit by flipping his head or trying to pull the reins out of our hands to try and get some relief from the constant pressure of someone holding onto them. When this is the case, changing to a new bit might help for a day or two, but if you do not change your presentation with your hands, you will end up right back in the same place.

On the other hand, things can be going along reasonably well and we can change bits to give him a more refined signal where he can feel more and our hands can do less. This is received completely different. The horse accepts and responds positively. The other way the horse may respond intimidated.

Some bits are designed to offer more feel and some are designed to inflict more pain but the acceptance isn’t there, or he may be

. The reason being, the tongue of the horse has plenty of feel but yet is much more tolerant to

pressures than the bars of the horse’s mouth. The tongue itself is a muscle and the tissue that the tongue is made up of is tougher than the sensitive bar tissue. When the tongue is soft it has some give to it, so if he accepts the pressure of the bit, the tongue and the poll stay soft and he gives or responds to the bit. If he doesn’t respond softly, the tongue muscle flexes along with the poll and he braces against the bit and is able to protect the more sensitive areas of his mouth.

Bits that don’t operate on the tongue and put pressure on the bars of the horse’s mouth, such as “tongue relief” bits, are designed to inflict pain. The bars are very sensitive; they don’t have any give like the lip or tongue; therefore, it doesn’t take very much pressure from these bits to cause damage such as bruising, swelling, or tearing the tissue. The obvious signs of this are when the horse’s head elevates and/or the nose goes out. If we are using devices to control the horse’s head position, we have already bypassed the feel stage and are operating off of pressure by using more leverage, more pain, or we have his head tied down to inhibit the horse’s negative responses. We are addressing the symptoms and not the problem. The problem is we are too aggressive, too quick or too strong with our hands, and the horse doesn’t understand or doesn’t have time to respond. The symptoms of this are for him to fight or go against pressure. If the horse can’t get away from pressure, he will go against it.

The pallet is also softer tissue with little give, is very sensitive and can contribute a lot of feel and response to a bit. But, if there is so much pressure that we go beyond his feeling it and it becomes painful, he will open his mouth to get away from the pain. Here again there are devices to treat the symptom of this scenario and prevent his mouth from opening and the problem goes on unaddressed. The bits don’t generally cause the problems we see with head

position or mouth opening; it's the pressure we put on the reins that is the problem. We need to address our timing and the amount of pressure we apply with our hands.

The unfortunate thing is so many bits designed today are to inflict pain and intimidate the horse to respond. Bit makers are looking for a "new and improved" model to market and are willing to compensate a "Professional Horseman" to endorse it. Most of the time it is a "Professional Competitor" that is endorsing the new invention and you don't see all the horses that don't survive their program. Only the successful ones are acknowledged, so the new bit must work.

There are plenty of old designs from Europe and the old Spanish Bits modified in old California that were used for hundreds of years by arguably some of the best horsemen the World has ever seen. Their horsemanship was studied for military purposes and for work. Their survival depended on their success with their horses. I believe there is plenty to learn by understanding the way to use some of the old designs and not turn to the quick fixes. We need to take more responsibility for why it is not working instead of grabbing a bigger hammer to fix it.

BACKCOUNTRY KITCHEN

SPONSORED BY:



The Shirt Spot

**1704 N 1st St Unit C
Hamilton MT 59840
406-389-4096**

The Shirt Spot is new to Montana since April 2023, but has over 20 years' experience in the industry! Services offered include printing, embroidery, sign banners, stickers and business cards. Quality clothing including tee's tank tops, and ladies crop tops are offered at a reasonable price. Also offered is a huge variety of headwear ready for embroidery!

COWBOY POTATOES

- 4 slices bacon
- 1 medium-sized onion
- 6 medium-sized potatoes
- ½ teaspoons or more of coarsely ground black pepper
- Salt to taste
- Add salt and pepper before the cooking is finished.
- More water may be required.
- Serves six average servings, or four Bitter Root Backcountry Horsemen.

Fry bacon until crisp. Remove bacon and slice the onion into the hot drippings. Fry until golden yellow. Remove onions and pour out bacon drippings, until only a tablespoon remains. Break bacon into bits and return it with the onions to the pan. Slice in the potatoes and immediately cover with water. Bring to a boiling point, then lower the fire and allow to simmer until the potatoes begin to cook to pieces and the liquid thickens.

BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN

(DRAFT) GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, AUGUST 17TH 2023

The August 2023 general meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH) was called to order by President Jan Bullock at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Rock Creek Horse Camp at Lake Como. Approximately 26 members were present, with a Board quorum. Ed Bullock led the Pledge of Allegiance to start the meeting.

Guests: Dustin and Kate Fletcher, with young son Beau

PROGRAM

Christy Schram-Duggan, County Fair: Fair will be Wed, Aug 30 thru Sat, Sep 2. The chapter has supported the Fair since 1978; it is our only fundraiser. Folks work the gates selling and taking tickets/stamping hands. Volunteers check in at the West gate. Shifts are 4-5 hours, and you get into the fair for free the day you work and another day. Shifts are usually 8-noon, noon-5, and 5-9pm. The fair committee will meet Aug 26-27 to do final work. Day/Evening managers will meet Aug 27 to get familiarized with the new gates and paperwork. A group of members spent many hours getting the booths updated to be more comfortable for volunteers. About 20 slots are left for folks to sign up.

BUSINESS

Minutes: The July minutes were printed in the August Nag News; there were no corrections. **Christy Schram-Duggan motioned and Julie Schram seconded to accept the July general meeting minutes. The motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report: Barb presented the August treasurer's report. **Karen Philips motioned and Travise Grinnell seconded to accept the August treasurer's report. The motion carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Safety Moment: Ground hornets are active! If you run into them, move on quickly and note the location for other trail users.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Grants: The committee of Dan Brandborg, Diane Duffie, and Barb Walker reported that their search found a lot of money out there for trail improvement projects. They chose two projects to pursue: 1) Clearing the trail from the Fred Burr reservoir to the top of the pass to Mill Creek, and 2) Completing a loop from Big Creek through Idaho and down Bear Creek. They have an MCC crew reserved and have consulted with a private contractor. The club's in-kind donation could be in the form of pack support and food before and after their trips. Applications open up in

November/December. One of our club goals next spring will be to clear the trails up to where the crews will be starting their work.

Issues: Carol Johns reported that the Draft for the Environmental Assessment for the Bitterroot Front project has been made available and comments will be accepted for 30 days. It is a 360-page document and the comment deadline is September 14. She also noted that there was a good article by Laura Lundquist in the Missoulian about the proposed mining operation for rare-earth minerals on their Sheep Creek claim, near the confluence of the West Fork of the Bitterroot River and Sheep Creek.

Projects: Dan Brandborg reported that we have finished 7 projects so far this year. The Bear Creek project was successful, cutting out over 60 trees to get to the top of the pass.

St Mary's Lookout Support – future runs are Aug 24 and Sep 7. Contact Ed D for more info. This effort supports the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation. Those trips are great public relations exposure. Ed D has started Mill Creek runs for the irrigation district, every 5 days; 20-mile roundtrip ride. He starts around 7:30am, back by 6:30pm. Fred Burr Upper Trail Project will be finalized soon.

Dan Brandborg reported that one of the RAC grant possibilities would be to create a kiosk at the Bear Creek trailhead with some sort of "tablet" for hikers and riders to record trail conditions, such as "ground hornets at mile 3!"

State Directors: No report.

Education & Training: Any new folks need to see Bonnie M to get training if they want to ride on a project.

Membership: Leslie reported there are currently 88 memberships and 139 members.

Outreach: Karen requests members to send her good photos of projects so she can have some printed up for thank you cards.

Program: Tracy Hawkins, a barrel racer will speak at the Sep meeting. Her topic is "Riding Basics from Trail to Arena."

Sunshine: If anyone knows of a member who needs a get well, congratulations, or condolence card, let Cindy Beck know.

OLD BUSINESS

Ed Duggan will be putting the tools for projects in the trailer that formerly carried the "Leave No Trace" equipment.

NEW BUSINESS

Ed Bullock reported that a new page sponsor for the Backcountry Kitchen recipes is "The Shirt Spot." He is new in Hamilton and does embroidery and silkscreen images on many items, from shirts to hats. He is located on Hwy 93 in the old Sears building. Several members have requested getting items with the BRBCH logo so the club is looking for someone to coordinate getting prices and taking orders from members.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting: September 21 at the Corvallis Grange, potluck at 6:30, meeting at 7:00 pm. Coffee: Karen Philips, hot water: Diane Duffie

Travise Grinnell motioned and Diane Duffie seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm

Bonnie Morgan (for Kathy Stroppel-Holl, Secretary BRBCH)

BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN BOARD MEETING AGENDA, SEPTEMBER 7TH 2023 (**CANCELED**)



Highway 93 RV Parts
1345 Hwy 93 North Suite #2
Victor, Montana 59875
Call or Text:
406-961-8688

RV Parts & Accessories
www.Highway93RV.com



**SWEETWATER
MERCANTILE**
BEADS and GIFTS

2130 N 1st St • Hwy 93
Hamilton, MT 59840 • 406-363-3215
sweetwatermercantile@gmail.com

Find us on
Facebook



Turnkey Construction Inc
Stevensville, Montana
25+ Years Experience



**RADIANT IN-FLOOR
HEAT SYSTEMS**

Brad Pollman 406-546-6492
TurnkeyConstructionInc.com

DARRELL REESE, WMS, AIF®
Founder, CEO, SAG
Financial Advisor, RIA'S



**SAGEMONT
INVESTMENT GROUP**

225 West Main Street, Suite B
P.O. Box 1887
Hamilton, MT 59840
darrell.reese@raymondjames.com
sagemontinvestmentgroup.com

RAYMOND JAMES

O 406.363.4293
C 713.851.1764
T 800.800.6766
F 406.363.4303



CTC
BOOT & SHOE
REPAIR

Carrie & Travis Van Dyke
406-381-4975

Used Boots
Gently Worn
Comfortably Priced

107 State Street • Hamilton, MT 59840



ONE MISSION
Farrier Service LLC

Myron Miller
Cell (406)-550-2148
Serving the Bitterroot Valley and beyond



**COW POKE
RANCH SUPPLY**

For All Your Farm & Ranch Needs!

1308 Eastside Hwy.
Corvallis, MT 59828
www.cowpokesupply.com

Ph: 406-961-4917
Fx: 406-961-4917
Email: cowpoke@montana.com



Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen



NEXT BRBCH MEETING

Thursday, September 21st 2023

Location:

Corvallis Grange Hall

Dinner at 6:30pm Meeting at 7:00pm

Visit our Website:

bchmt.org/bitterroot

***Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen
P.O. Box 1083
Hamilton, MT 59840***