



# Nag News

Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen

January 2026 Issue #1



## 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, JANUARY 15th, 2026 MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING**

**DALY- LEACH COMMUNITY ROOM**

**1010 Main Street, Hamilton**

**Potluck Dinner** is served at 6:30 p.m. The general meeting starts at 7:00. Guest speaker is Q DeHart who will describe the BLM's Wild Horse & Burro adoption program. For more information contact: Diane Duffie 707-529-8284. Check out our website at: [www.bchmt.org/bitterroot](http://www.bchmt.org/bitterroot) or Facebook: **Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen.**

### ***THIS ISSUE***

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### **DEADLINE FOR NAG NEWS**

**Thursday, Feb 12th, 2026**

**SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLES & ADS**

**TO:**

[djmaiyo@gmail.com](mailto:djmaiyo@gmail.com)

## Happy New Year!



## A message from the President

Happy New Year and many blessings to all for 2026!

Thank you all, new and renewing members for being a part of the BRBCH. We are more than a great service organization because of the friendships we have all made in this group. I am honored to be your President in this year of our 50th anniversary and hoping that together we can make it a very special year.

This month, I will be putting together a committee to work on our 50 year Celebration and checking in with all the other committees to see how they are doing and what their goals are for the year. My primary goal is for all of us to have fun, while accomplishing our mission and to incorporate more riding and training opportunities into our projects, as well as more group riding just for fun. I am very aware that many of you joined to ride and have been asking for our regular group rides to return.

Special thank you's to all who take on extra responsibilities and give of your precious time to make us so successful. Here's to the New Year!

Warmly, Diane Duffie,

President, Bitterroot Back Country Horsemen

### Training - Bonnie Morgan contact.

**First Aid.** February 7 & February 28 are scheduled first aid classes, 18 people are currently certified. Time and location to be announced.

**Chainsaw/crosscut certification.** Chainsaw certs 10, training TBD, 2 crosscut certs with training days TBD.

**Defensive Horsemanship.** Two days are scheduled for defensive horsemanship demo (March 14) and obstacle course (April 4) at C-Max Stables.





## *The Spark of Christmas 2025 by: Joan Scheffer*

*There's been no snow here this Christmas!*

*.....but plenty of rain!*

*The horses are filthy*

*feeding is becoming a pain!*

*Had my muck-boots get sucked off!*

*Wet clay dry-lots are not fun.*

*My cat refuses to come in here ...*

*He waits by the gate til I'm done.*

*But my Father once told me*

*We can't control the weather!*

*Then he shared something special.*

*A secret we kept together.*

*Most things we can conquer*

*If we look for the SPARK...*

*Tune our mind round the right way-*

*Taking power from any dark!.*

*Look for any bold idea*

*that can make things become fun!*

*Keep an eye out for taking*

*A bright bit of the sun.*

*Well, I thought it a bit foolish-*

*But the twinkle in Dad's eye-*

*Was itself a great sparkle*

*Erasing any grey sky.*

*Just as I had grasped that*

*My heart filled with such joy.*

*The world became friendly.*

*What a great Christmas toy!*

*Now I want to share sparkles where ever I go.*

*And you should all look for sparks because sparks make us all GLOW!*



**BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN  
DRAFT GENERAL MEETING MINUTES,  
DECEMBER 18th, 2025 PROGRAM**

The December 2025 general meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH) was called to order by President Brad Pollman at 7:02 p.m. The meeting was held at the Daly-Leach Community Room. Approximately 29 members were present. There was a board quorum. All members led the Pledge to start the meeting. Guest: Troy Beaver.

**PROGRAM**

**Grace Gauthier, Certified Equine Massage Therapist:** Pam introduced Grace Gauthier, owner of Double G Equine Bodywork. She has varied equine experiences including English riding, jumping, liberty work and tricks training. She got her degree in Equine Science from MSU and her certification in Equine Bodywork, a three-year program. Horses have slow blood flow in winter, joints are stickier, antagonistic muscles contract more. All this causes movement problems. To combat this, bodywork helps. It can be done before or after warmups. She does massage, myofascial release, and she works trigger points. She charges \$75/hour and can arrange package rates. Bodywork benefits last about four weeks.

**Members Raffle:** Barb started us out with a draw for a \$100 bill from Tammany Veterinary, won by Cheyenne Raisor-Grinnell. Winners of the Scheels' \$250 gift card were Ross and Judy Posey.

**Christmas Poem by Joan Scheffer:** The Spark of Christmas for 2025 (see attached)

**BUSINESS**

**Minutes:** The November minutes were printed in the Nag News. There were no corrections. **Helen Engle motioned and Travise Grinnell seconded to accept the November general meeting minutes as printed. Motion carried.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Elaine presented the December treasurer's report. There were no questions. **Kathy Stoppel-Holl motioned and Julie Schram seconded to accept the December treasurer's report. Motion carried.**

**CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Request for Letter of Support for Grant Submission:** Brad reported on trail work proposed for Fred's Secret Trail System (Lick Creek area) by the Bitterroot Backcountry Cyclists. The FS has approved the proposed trails and the bicycle group asked for a letter of support from our chapter for their grant application. **Earl Philips motioned and Cherie Barton seconded that we approve a letter of support to Bitterroot Backcountry Cyclists for their grant proposal, with a request for "Share the Trail", "No E-bikes" and "No Riding After Rain" signage. Motion carried.**

**Coffee/Hot Water Signup Sheet:** Kathy passed around the 2026 signup sheet for coffee/hot water at general meetings.

**PO Box Key:** With the 2026 secretary Cheyenne's OK, Kathy passed the secretary's chapter PO box key to Barb, the membership chair as well as 2026 VP.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**State Directors:** Brad and Julie attended the state meeting on Dec. 10. Discussion at the meeting centered on public lands issues and rules changes. They are requesting that local input with Matt Anderson and the new director of FS offices be scheduled. We received state convention information, including raffle items: a rifle, a quarter of beef, and a Rocky Mountain Hat Company custom hat. Elaine will have raffle tickets for members to sell. Mark Wright presented information on the rendezvous at Monture Guard Station and he got a good response.

**Training:** Bonnie will bring a list of members who need first aid and other training to the January 15 meeting. Brad has asked for reimbursement of \$800 from the Cost Share Agreement for our first aid costs from last year.

**Membership:** There are currently 72 memberships and 112 members.

**Outreach:** Karen thanked Jenna Wright for her efforts in getting our Christmas food box event covered in a front-page article in the Nov. 26 issue of the Bitterroot Star.

**Fair:** Brad met with the fair's maintenance manager; his crew will redo the fair gates using their own materials and following our chapter's recommendations. The software we used for ticket sales is being updated. We may get an increased payment for our fair work.

**Projects:** Helen Engle mentioned trail work on Willow Creek and a needed trail head in the Rye Creek/Skalkaho area as possible 2026 projects.

**Program:** Pam said the January program is Q Dehart speaking on the BLM's mustang and burro program.

**Public Lands:** Brad got a news release from Julie Schram on the latest schedule for Sheep Creek Mine developments, and he encouraged members to submit individual comments. The Bitterroot Water Partnership is a source of information on the proposed mine.

**Sunshine:** If a member needs a get well, congratulations, or condolence card, let Jenna Wright know.

**2026 Board of Director Position Appointment:** Brad announced that we have a one-year director position open due to Barb Walker's move from director to vice-president, and the board selected Travise Grinnell to fill it.

**Sign Up for New Committee:** Brad spoke about the need for a Long-Range Planning Committee for equine use in the Bitterroot. He circulated a signup sheet for the committee. Our FS supervisor has asked us for feedback and input on equine use on the Bitterroot National Forest. Brad wants us to be proactive and to host a meeting of all equine groups in the valley to get their ideas. As an example, one idea is for a Larry Creek trail (on the recently added 120 acres) that could be located higher up; that trail location could help minimize crowding.

**Continued next page**



**(Draft General Meeting Minutes continued)**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Computer for Secretary's Position:** Costco's computer is \$550, and there are refurbished computers from Amazon, Best Buy and Newegg. **Mark Wright motioned and Joan Scheffer seconded that we spend up to \$500 for a laptop computer and software for the secretary position. Motion carried.** Travise will make sure that what we purchase has the needed components.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Next Meeting:** January 15, at the Daly-Leach Community Room, potluck at 6:30, meeting at 7:00 pm.

**Coffee/Hot Water:** Judy Posey has coffee and Cheyenne Raisor-Grinnell has hot water for January.

**Gene Merrell motion and Cherie Barton seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.** The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Karen Philips, Co-Secretary BRBCH

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**BITTER ROOT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN**

***DRAFT* BOARD MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 2nd, 2026**

The January 2026 Board meeting of the Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen (BRBCH) was called to order by Diane Duffie at 7:00 pm at the Daly-Leach Community Room. Present were President Diane Duffie, Vice-President Barb Walker, Treasurer Elaine Driskoll, and Secretary Cheyenne Raisor-Grinnell; Directors Chris Carrera, Dennis Hardman, Mary Odell, Pam Ristad, Joan Scheffer, Julie Schram, and past-president Brad Pollman. Absent were directors Travise Grinnell, Ed Duggan, and Christy Schram-Duggan. There was a Board quorum. Committee chairs/members present: Bonnie Morgan, Dan Maiyo, and Earl Philips All led the Pledge.

**Welcome to New Officers and Directors:** Diane explained the importance of the officer and director positions and thanked the new 2026 board for giving of their time and energy.

**BUSINESS**

**Minutes:** The December 2025 minutes were published in the Nag News. There were no updates. **Dennis Hardman moved and Joan Scheffer seconded to accept the December minutes. Motion carried.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Elaine provided account balances. There were no updates. **Brad Pollman moved and Julie Schram seconded to accept the January treasurer's reports. Motion carried.**

**CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PO Box Keys:** Diane, Barb, and Elaine have the chapter's PO box keys for 2026.

**Daly-Leach Keys:** Diane has the only key, and she has the backup key for the fair shed.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership:** New and renewal memberships were presented by Barb. We did a paper ballot vote. After approval, there are 75 memberships and 118 members for 2026. The list of approved members will be attached to the printed copy of the minutes.

**State Directors:** Brad and Julie discussed the BCHMT convention to be held March 27-29 in Bozeman. Convention packet items were distributed. Diane asked who could handle convention needs: Diane will ask Tim Meyer if he will help Christy with the chapter convention display, photo contest details to be put together by Julie Schram, and there are no current memorials. Elaine will handle raffle ticket distribution and money collection, and she will submit the delegate reservations.

**Training:** Bonnie scheduled Feb 7 & Feb 28 first aid classes, 18 people are currently certified: Chainsaw certs 10, training TBD, 2 crosscut certs with training days TBD. Two days are scheduled for defensive horsemanship demo (Mar 14) and obstacle course (Apr 4) at C-Max. A third training day at Rock Creek Horse Camp with a project was proposed for May 9th or 16th. A "No Drama Llama" day is possible this summer.

**Projects:** Committee meets later this month. Diane will communicate with all current committee leaders.

**Public Lands:** Brad will meet w/Matt Anderson re: changes in the FS. Travel Management Rules and the Roadless Rule have historically included huge public input; now the rules are ordered to be rescinded. Nothing has happened yet, but that could change this month or February.

**Budget:** Earl provided a summary of the budget philosophy that is used to build the 2026 budget. He made suggestions regarding the CDs and arrangement of funds for ease of use and better understanding. The draft budget will be presented at the February board meeting. Earl suggested a temporary financial committee be formed, and it will include him, Elaine and one more member.

**Audit:** Barb, Elaine, and Nancy are on the committee and will meet at the end of the month.

**Constitution:** Dan said the committee met Dec 14th and continues to refine verbiage in the existing constitution to streamline it and fill in gaps. Next meeting is Jan 18th at the Stevensville Fire Hall. **(Continued next page)**

## Board Minutes Continued

**Long Range Planning Committee for Equine Use in the Bitterroot:** Brad will conduct a meeting with the committee at the end of the month.

**50th Anniversary Celebration Planning:** Diane is pulling pieces together for a meeting with Julie, Christy, Helen, Barb, Pam, and Joan. Julie and Helen found photos. The barn on Pine Hollow in Stevi was suggested as a venue; they offer a 15% discount for non-profits. Diane has looked into the Eagles Lodge as well. Catering was discussed. Potential caterers mentioned are the UM and Trapper Creek Job Corps culinary programs.

**Program:** Q Dehart (Sharmaine) will describe the BLM's wild mustang/burro program.

**Grants:** Julie reported on an FWP grant due in January, and Brad emphasized we need to plan a year ahead to apply for this and other grants.

## OLD BUSINESS

**Secretary's Computer:** Diane bought the computer; it cost \$399 with Word software.

**Phone Numbers in Newsletter:** Brad suggested we keep the numbers in the newsletter because scammers can get information in multitude places.

## NEW BUSINESS

**2026 State Convention Delegates:** BRBCH sends 8 delegates plus one alternate. Three are taken by our state directors: Ed, Brad, and Julie. Additional delegates are Diane, Barb, Pam, Dennis, Cheyenne and alternate Christy Schram-Duggan: Registration fees are \$150/person, and early registration due date is March 1. The chapter will cover lodging for one night and mileage. Room sharing is encouraged. Saturday lunch/dinner and Sunday breakfast are covered.

**2026 State Convention Auction Item:** The live auction items raise money for BCHMT. The item should be worth \$100 and is contributed by every chapter. Our item was discussed: a laser engraved saw or fabricated fire ring were suggested. This request will be brought to the general membership for ideas. Brad explained how the raffle system works to help the host chapter make money by all chapters selling raffle tickets. Prizes: Rifle, ¼ beef, custom hat. The theme this year is Historic Trails and Campfire tales.

**Pins for Past Officers/Directors:** The pins have been produced and will be presented to our outgoing officers and directors at the Jan. 15 mtg. We have a pin for Joe Kirkland for his service as director in 2024. Thank you to Nancy for ordering the pins.

## OTHER BUSINESS

**2026 Board Photo:** A photo of the new board will be taken at the Jan 15th meeting.

**Mary O'Dell moved and Julie Schram seconded to adjourn. Motion carried.** The meeting ended at 8:38 pm.

Cheyenne Raisor-Grinnell, Secretary BRBCH





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## Understanding and Treating Scratches in Horses.

Feel like you are living in Olympia Wa.? All this rain may put your horse at risk.

Scratches in horse heels refers to a condition known as pastern dermatitis.

It can affect the heel, the back of the pastern, the fetlock, and occasionally the cannon bone. It is also known as "mud fever", "dew poisoning", "greasy heel" or "cracked heels".

The bacteria and fungi find their way into breaks in the horse's skin. The conditions for its development are excessively moist or dirty environment and repeated wetting and drying of the skin (damp, muddy pastures or wet stalls).

**Which horses are at risk?** Scratches isn't a fussy disease, as any horse can get it; but the condition is widely prevalent in draft horses with feathers or long fetlock hair that retain moisture. Horses with white legs are also at risk because un-pigmented skin is more susceptible to sun damage, chaffing and abrasions making it more at risk for infection.

**How are scratches treated?** A rule of thumb is: "Don't scratch scratches". Carefully clip the hair away from the infected area, taking care not to scrape or break the skin. Once the area is clipped, gently wash the affected areas with an antibacterial shampoo (such as chlorhexidine, betadine, or benzoyl peroxide) or an antifungal shampoo (1-2% miconazole) and let it sit for about 10 minutes before gently rinsing. Rough scrubbing and harsh chemicals should be avoided. Scabs can be massaged off carefully, but don't pull or pick them. Using a clean towel, carefully pat the area dry and apply a topical treatment as directed by your veterinarian. Limit washing sessions to only once a day for 7-10 days. Then cut back the frequency to 2-3 times per week until resolved.

Ointments that your veterinarian will recommend for scratches include antibiotics, antifungals, steroids and other medications. In more serious cases, systemic antibiotics may be needed.

The primary defense to allow healing is a dry, clean environment. This means you may need to find an alternative living situation for your horse if he/she is fighting a case of scratches. Horses should be kept off wet pastures and housed in a clean, dry stall. Shavings should be of the large, fluffy variety. Milled shavings should be avoided as they

contain more moisture. Applying a layer of zinc-oxide based cream (ie. Desitin®) to DRY affected areas may also help soften scabs and provide a moisture barrier to allow healing to occur.

If you've been treating scratches unsuccessfully, you should call your veterinarian out to have a look. A severe lameness and/or deep wounds with swelling, excessive heat or white/yellow discharge also warrants a call to your veterinarian.

## Prevention.

- Keep the footing dry inside the stall and turnout area; use dry bedding and fill in muddy areas around gates
- Dry your horse's legs before putting him up in a stall.
- Avoid early morning turnout when there is heavy dew or frost on the ground.
- Do not use wraps or boots that will retain moisture around the infected areas. Do not share boots between horses.
- Horses with long leg hair or feathers may benefit from hair removal/clipping so that moisture and contaminants are not trapped against the skin.
- Early detection is the best medicine - check your horse's legs frequently for early signs of infection and routinely groom your horse to prevent mud build-up on legs.



## BACKCOUNTRY KITCHEN SPONSORED BY:



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## Chocolate Chip Cookies

*Yea, I know. Everybody knows how to make chocolate chip cookies. But here is the recipe anyhow just in case you need to be motivated to make some. Enjoy!*

I like to use Ghirardelli  
bittersweet chocolate chips.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Butter or margarine, softened
- 3/4 cup Sugar
- 3/4 cup Brown sugar, packed
- 2 Eggs, large
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla
- 2 1/4 cups Flour, unsifted
- 1 teaspoon Baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon Salt
- 1 cup Walnuts or pecans, chopped (optional)

#### DIRECTIONS:

- Heat oven to 375°F.
- Stir flour with baking soda and salt; set aside.
- In large mixing bowl, beat butter with sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy and lightened in color.
- Add eggs and vanilla, one at a time. Mix on low speed until incorporated.
- Gradually blend dry mixture into creamed mixture. Stir in nuts and chocolate chips.
- Drop by tablespoon onto ungreased cookie sheets.
- Bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until chocolate chip cookies are golden brown.

**Exclusively at the Shirt Spot!** Embroidered Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen logo on in-stock vests and jackets or a vest/jacket of your own choice. Personnel Wyoming Traders vest shown. Custom thread color available. Inquire for pricing. Caps offered in a variety of styles and colors! \$25/cap or \$20/each/10 caps. **Tell the Shirt Spot that you saw this notice in this newsletter! Show your support for our BCH Chapter!**





**2026 Committees**

Audit  
 Audio-Visual Equipment  
 Budget  
 Election & Nominations  
 Equipment & Inventory  
 Fair  
 Grants  
 Historian  
 Issues  
 Long-Term Planning  
 Membership  
 Advertising  
 Newsletter  
 Outreach  
 Parliamentarian  
 Pleasure Rides  
 Programs  
 Projects  
 Social  
 Sunshine  
 Training  
 Website

**2026 Chairs & Members**

(Changes Annually) 2025: Barb Walker, Joe Kirkland, Elaine Driskell  
 Dennis Hardman, Travise Grinnell  
 (Changes Annually) 2025: Gene Merrell, Earl Phillips  
 (Changes Annually)  
 Ed Duggan  
 Christy Schram-Duggan  
 Brandi Ashford  
 Tim Meyer  
 Carol Johns, Kathy Stroppel-Holl  
 (Volunteer Needed)  
 Barb Walker  
 Virginia DeLeo  
 Dan Maiyo  
 Travise Grinnell  
 Joan Scheffer  
 Pam Ristad, Candice Erickson  
 Pam Ristad  
 Ed Duggan  
 (Volunteer Needed)  
 Jenna Wright  
 Bonnie Morgan  
 Nancy Pollman

**Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen Officers and Board****Chapter officers**

Position	Name	Term	Contact
President	Diane Duffie	2026	707-529-8284
Vice President	Barb Walker	2026	928-606-0855
Secretary	Cheyenne Raisor-Grinnell	2026	406-214-1108
Treasurer	Elaine Driskell	2026	916-698-8544

**Board Members**

Board Members	Term
Dennis Hardman	2026-27
Joan Scheffer	2026-27
Pam Ristad	2026-27
Ed Duggan	2026-27
Chris Carrera	2025-26
Mary Odell	2025-26
Julie Schram	2025-26
Christy Schram –Duggan	2025-26
Travise Grinnell	2025-26

**State Directors**

State Directors	Term
Brad Pollman	2026-27

**Alt. State Director**

Julie Schram	2026
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**BCHMT National Directors**

Brad Pollman
Connie Long

**BRBCH Past President**

Brad Pollman
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**BCHMT State Chairman**

Mack Long
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**BCHMT Vice State Chairman**

Sandy Himmel
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**Alt. National Director**

John Chepulis
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**Thank You Judy and Ross Posey for adopting  
Chuck's sweet mare Izzy and Francis, the just as  
sweet mule! Enjoy these lovely animals!**





# Bitter Root Back Country Horsemen



## NEXT BRBCH MEETING

Thursday, January 15th, 2026

Daly-Leach Community Room

Dinner at 6:30pm    Meeting at 7:00pm

Visit our Website:

[bchmt.org/bitterroot](http://bchmt.org/bitterroot)

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