

**BACKCOUNTRY
HORSEMEN
OF
AMERICA**

THE FIRST 25 YEARS

BY LLOYD FAGERLAND

To Jack & Sandy,
Thanks for the help,
Lloyd

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In 1993 I was asked by Chairman Mylon Filkins if I would accept the job of BCHA historian, a position we had not had prior to that time. My qualifications were that I had been a member since 1974, served in many offices in local, state and national BCH organizations, including terms as Chairman of both the original Back Country Horsemen of America and the present one. Each year since 1993 I have been re-appointed as historian. Apparently there is not a lot of competition for this job. My duties were never clearly defined and for several years I just drifted along. Two years ago I asked that anyone who had historical material about BCHA send it to me. Several people responded. Up until the time we hired an Executive Secretary, the Board Chairmen did most of the correspondence and kept the records. Each of them sent me the material they had saved. Also a few other people, such as former directors, had some things that they thought should be included in the history.

Last winter (1998-1999) I sorted through the material that I had and placed it in 59 separate files, discarding duplicate material and that which I thought was irrelevant. There may be some omissions in it, but when I was done I thought that it was well worth the effort. I also thought that few, if any people, would ever see it. So I decided to condense the material into a book, thinking that then it would be more readily accessible and that those that wanted more detailed information about a particular subject could check the files, which will be stored at the Executive Secretary's office soon after I am finished.

I had to decide how to proceed. I could pretend that I was an unbiased, neutral observer, watching it all unfold from some far off vantage point. But in most cases I was in the middle of the action, a player, not a spectator. I had strong feelings about many of the things that make up our history. So I will tell it the way that I saw it, which in some cases may be somewhat different from the way that others might tell it if they were writing this history.

Another big decision that I wrestled with throughout the compiling of this book was what to include and what to leave out. Making it too long might discourage some from reading it, too short and many things that should have been included would not be there. It was like sorting potatoes when I was a kid--decisions and more decisions. Early on, I decided not to include state activities unless BCHA became involved in some way. The same goes for volunteer projects. I thought that would be opening a can of worms to which there would have been no end. Everyone would think that their project should have been included rather than the ones that I picked.

And then there is the matter of bias. Everyone is biased to some degree except you and I, and I am not real sure about you. Seriously, everyone is biased and it may have surely been a factor in my decisions about what to include and what to leave out.

Contrary to what some may think, our first 25 years have not always gone smoothly. There have been many differences about how we should proceed. I compare it to a large group of riders, traveling through an unfamiliar forest with no map to guide them. At each fork in the trail, they would stop and have a long and sometimes noisy discussion about which trail was the right one and would take us to the destination we wanted to reach. Seldom was there a consensus but eventually there was some sort of an agreement reached and they went on to the next fork.

For the most part I think we have chosen the right way, but the ride is not over and there are a lot more forks in the trail ahead, but I am going to begin the story of our first twenty five years.

Right at the start, you may think that I have violated my rule about local chapter and state activities, but any history has to include those first few years, and the Flathead Chapter and the other Montana chapters was all there was at that time. They are our history.

Lloyd Fagerland

Back Country Horsemen of America

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LOGO

We have used the same logo since 1980, when the original Back Country Horsemen of America selected it from several that were submitted for consideration. It was drawn by Sandi Gipe, a well known Flathead Valley artist. The original drawing used a horseshoe script, which looked nice but was hard to read. It was thought that it was important that the name be more legible, so a more easily read script was substituted. When we made application to register our name with the federal authorities in 1996, they asked for written verification from Sandi that she released all rights to the logo, She had divorced, remarried and moved to Idaho, but we did finally manage to locate her and she willingly gave the permission that we needed.

IN THE BEGINNING
THE EARLY YEARS

It all began at Columbia Falls, Montana on January 17, 1973. At least that was when Back Country Horsemen was officially organized. Actually, the seed was planted a year or more previous to that when four friends began to talk about the need for an organization of horsemen that would specifically meet the needs and interests of back country stock users. There were lots of horse organizations, but none that they were aware of that showed any interest in back country horse use. Those four friends were Roland Cheek, Ken Ausk, Dennis Swift and Dulane Fulton.

A great deal of credit should be given to those four men and the others that joined them that first year in charting the course that this new organization would follow. They developed a program and philosophy that has withstood the test of time. Those included:

(1) Interest and involvement in public lands management, especially as it affected recreational stock users.

(2) participation in volunteer programs on public lands, with emphasis on those that improved riding opportunities.

(3) Education of both members and non-members about low impact methods of handling stock in the woods.

Those three items may sound familiar today because we still use them as the foundation upon which we built, but in 1973 they were all rather radical ideas. Previous that time, there had been no one who spoke for the wilderness or back country horse user. In 1974 the Forest Service began work on a new Bob Marshall Wilderness Management Plan. There was a lot of anti-stock sentiment shown in that first draft, including a permit system for stock users, but no one else. BCH raised ten objections to the plan and eventually all of those were resolved in a way that we approved. We can only speculate now on what might be the present day situation in the Bob Marshall Wilderness for stock users if BCH hadn't been ready and willing to meet that challenge in 1974.

There are all sorts of groups involved in the volunteer program today, but in 1973 that wasn't so. The whole concept was received with a great deal of skepticism and ridicule. The idea that people would spend their free time clearing trails or doing similar jobs for the government was thought to be crazy, out of touch with reality. As we added additional chapters here in Montana, some embraced the volunteer concept, but others did not. They said that if we did work for the Forest Service or Parks, that they would just do less and less, that appropriations for trail work would be cut, etc. But eventually they all came on board. Today I doubt if there is a local unit in BCHA that does not do some volunteer work.

It was recognized early on that most horsemen were doing a poor job of caring for the back country. The signs were left for all to see in dirty and abused campsites. Some of those horsemen were not going to change. That was the way they had always done it and they would continue to do so. But it was

thought that there were many that would change their methods if they were shown how important it was. An educational program began that first summer with the writing and printing of the first Guidebook. Our present Guidebook is patterned after that book and parts of it are included there. Later I will write in more detail a section on our educational efforts.

Five thousand books were printed and free distribution began. Sponsors contributed money to cover printing costs. Publication of a newsletter began that summer. It was not a mimeographed sheet that you might expect but was commercially printed. It was thought that a more easily read and attractive paper justified the extra cost.

It is easy now to look back and realize that some important decisions were made that first year. They set the tone for years to come, began to carve their special niche in the horse world. Decisions were made that took a lot of foresight and courage. If they had chosen the safe, business as usual approach I am sure that Back Country Horsemen would be long gone by now.

In the spring of 1974 Back Country Horsemen received their first publicity beyond the borders of Montana. Ken Ausk wrote to Chan Bergen, who was assistant editor of the Western Horsemen magazine and Ken told him about the new organization they had formed the previous year. Mr. Bergen replied, "As you may guess, we receive correspondence from a number of clubs, many of which function in the usual manner with the usual activities, but every once in a while we find one that has a different approach. It would seem that you have done that." Mr. Bergen went on to offer to publicize the Back Country Horsemen Guidebook in his column, which was done soon after that. Numerous out of state requests for the Guidebook were received and that little BCH club in Montana was beginning to be known far beyond Flathead County.

Ken Wilcox was director of the Trails and Pleasure Division of the Washington State Horsemen at that time. He stopped by Bergen's office. In a letter to Ken Ausk, Wilcox wrote, "The purpose of my visit was to try to persuade these people to devote a little more space to the problems that the back country horse users were facing in our Wilderness Areas and National Parks. Mr. Bergen listened for a few minutes and then went to his files and pulled out your letter and made a copy for me. It seems that you Montana Horsemen are having much the same problems that we in Washington are having.

In the 16 years I have been Trail Director of the WSH I have had many meetings with National Forest and National Park supervisors and have come to one big conclusion. That is, the problems that we are having are, for the most part, our own fault. The only voices that the Forests and Parks have been hearing have been that of the super preservationists like the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club and others. The horseman was home cleaning the barn and fixing fence when he should have been attending public meetings on land use planning. Now we have a real fight on our hands to regain some of the areas lost to us."

Ken Wilcox went on to say that they had begun to work on

volunteer trail projects. He wrote, "In just a year of getting involved with them and turning out at their meetings, we are being invited to sit down with them and help set the back country regulations."

Wilcox suggested that we be placed on each other's mailing list and keep in touch. This was the beginning of a long relationship that eventually evolved into the Back Country Horsemen of America. In the late 1970's the Trail and Pleasure Riders broke away from the Washington Horsemen and formed their own organization which they called the Back Country Horsemen of Washington.

Another contact was made through this series of letters that proved to be helpful to us. That was Sharon Saare, who at that time was Director of Distance Riding for the Appaloosa Horse Club and went on to become a very well known trail advocate throughout the western states. Ms. Saare came to the Bitterroot Valley and helped with the organization of the third Back Country Horsemen chapter there. Ms. Saare was also present at Libby, Montana when Back Country Horsemen of America was formed in 1985.

New BCH chapters were formed in Missoula, the Bitterroot Valley and Salmon, Idaho. In 1978 a club was formed in the Swan Valley and one on the East Slope, which was the first to be located on the Atlantic side of the Continental Divide. In his 1974 letter Ken Wilcox wrote "We both (he and Sharon Saare) both feel that the horsemen need to get organized nationally, which is the big reason I stopped in to visit the Western Horsemen editors." While a few other people shared those sentiments, not much was being done along those lines. During the late 1970's an organization called TRAIL was formed. I don't recall now what those letters stood for but I do remember that they were long on Chiefs but had no Indians. Ken Wilcox was on their board and there was also a lot of big name types--an army general, big shot business men etc. Their president was Ted Schlappfer, a retired Regional Forester from Oregon. Schlappfer came to a Flathead meeting in the fall of 1978 and asked if we would sponsor the TRAIL board meeting. As I recall, he wanted us to do all of the work, put up all of the money and take no part in the meeting. Needless to say, we declined that offer and TRAIL ceased to exist soon after that. It was a case of big ideas, with absolutely no grass roots support.

In 1978 a group began promoting the Pacific Northwest Trail, a long distance trail which would begin in Glacier Park and end at the Pacific Ocean. Ken Wilcox was on their Advisory Board. A public meeting was held in Kalispell and Ken came for that. He brought his camper and parked it in our yard, so we had the opportunity to become better acquainted. We took 'a position opposing the trail, thinking that it was an impractical idea. The Advisory Committee recommended that that the trail be abandoned and nothing more was heard of it. for some time. But in 1996, while camping in the North Fork, we ran into a man who was scouting for a possible route for the Pacific Northwest Trail. Evidently, there was still a core of supporters who were promoting that trail.

THE FIRST BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF AMERICA

During the early years the practice of having joint board meetings began. These were useful for discussion opportunities and get acquainted sessions, but they lacked authority to make any binding decisions. It became apparent that some sort of formal structure was needed. A constitution was drafted and ratified. The first convention was held in Kalispell March 17 and 18, 1979. There was a significant amount of opposition to all of this. The opponents felt that in some way, the new organization would restrict the freedom of the individual clubs. John Owsley, from the Bitterroot was elected as the first board chairman and we were on our way.

A name was needed. One could have been selected that accurately portrayed the fact that we were only six local clubs, all clustered in a fairly small geographical area. But people were thinking bigger than that and Back Country Horsemen of America was chosen. This has caused some confusion, because there were two separate and distinct BCHA organizations. The first was in existence from 1979 to 1985 when our present organization became Back Country Horsemen of America.

In February, 1980 I wrote to Ken Wilcox and asked him, among other things, "If there was any interest within your group in an affiliation between the Washington BCH and our organization?" Representatives from Washington began to attend our annual meetings and Lloyd Fagerland and Val Johnson (and perhaps others) went to the annual meetings of the Washington BCH.

Both the Back Country Horsemen of America and the Washington BCH continued to grow. During this time, the Washington BCH, which had been primarily an at large group began to convert to a local chapter system, more like the one used by BCHA.

In 1981, the High Sierra Stock Users Association, a group with similar goals and philosophy to BCHA was organized in the Visalia, California area. Ken Wilcox told me about them and on April I wrote a long letter, explaining what we were doing here in Montana and also asking if they were interested in any sort of affiliation between the two groups. There was some more correspondence during the summer, which resulted in my being asked to speak at their fall meeting in November. I made the trip, spoke and showed a slide program at their dinner meeting and met with a lot of horsemen who were enthusiastic about the possibilities of the High Sierra Stock Users. They paid for my plane ticket and I joke that they are the only people who ever spent money to hear what I had to say.

In 1980 John Owsley was appointed to an Advisory Board for the Continental Divide Trail. Although three public meetings were held in Montana to drum up support for the Trail, only thirty people attended them. BCHA opposed the trail, saying that they thought that there were better uses for scarce trail money and that the additional traffic through fragile, high altitude terrain would be hard on the country and detrimental to the grizzly bear habitat.

In 1979 Consolidated Gerox Geophysics applied for a permit

to do seismic testing for oil exploration in the Bob Marshall, Great Bear and Scapegoat Wilderness. They proposed to use explosive charges along 207 miles of line and place them with a helicopter.

Back Country Horsemen of America, along with a lot of other people, thought that this violated the provisions of the Wilderness Act but it had the blessing of Interior Secretary James Watt.

In April, 1980 we joined with some other Montana groups to form the Bob Marshall Alliance, whose purpose was to coordinate opposition to exploration and development in the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat and Great Bear Wilderness. The Wilderness Association sort of took over the whole operation and very little was being accomplished. Important decisions were being made and money spent with little or no input from the other members of the Alliance. The last straw was a meeting in Missoula which only six people attended. The meeting location was changed and our representatives were not notified and couldn't find the meeting. A lawyer (Jim Goetz) was hired and a lobbyist sent to an Interior Committee meeting in Washington D.C. A temporary Chairman was elected. In spite of this, there were no minutes kept and no information sent to us or any of the other members. It seemed obvious that there had to be some changes. On June 14, 1981 an Alliance meeting was held at Ovando. BCHA was represented by eight members. Reports were made that lawsuits had been filed by the Mountain States Legal Foundation and one other oil industry association that challenged the Interior Committees action withdrawing the wilderness areas from any oil or mineral leasing until 1984. Some bills were introduced in Congress that would make it much easier to explore or drill for oil in Wilderness areas.

A nominating committee was selected and another meeting set for two weeks later on June 28. At that time a full slate of new officers were elected, including Jim Bragger, a BCHA member as president and things went better after that. The battle went on for two or three years, but eventually the idea was dropped. We worked hard on this for some time. We were somewhat pessimistic because we thought that the political deck was stacked against us and that oil companies would overwhelm us, but eventually we won. I like to think that it was because of the work and effort of a lot of people and organizations who worked together to defeat this monster, but maybe it was because it was really a crackpot idea and reason finally prevailed. Probably it was a combination of the two.

In 1980 BCHA dues were raised to \$2 per member. Expenses for the year were \$914, which included the publication of three issues of the newsletter.

The first BCHA newsletter was printed in November, 1979. Ken Ausk and Lloyd Fagerland were asked to serve as interim editors. They felt that it was not their responsibility to - select a name and the board didn't seem inclined to do so either. So the first two issues were called the No Name News. The inspiration for that was an east side creek called No Name Gulch. But no one seemed particularly fond of this name and the board

changed it to the Back Country Horsemen of America News. In November, 1980 Bitterroot member Geri Hart became the new editor and served in that capacity for two years.

In March, 1980, elections were held and Lloyd Fagerland was chosen as Chairman, Jim Brogger, vice-chairman, Loy Robinson, Secretary and Mike Chandler, Treasurer. Kootenai Valley and Mission Valley were added as new clubs.

In April 1981 the University of Nevada at Reno sponsored a conference with the very long title of The National Conference on Allocation of Public Lands Between the Outfitted and Non-Outfitted Public. It sounded like something we should take an interest in and it was decided that I should attend. I booked a seat on an early morning flight to save my time and BCHA money. It would have worked, except the plane was several hours late and I would have missed my Spokane connection. I never made it to Reno, but as it turned out, it didn't really make much difference. We filed a number of statements, some of which appeared in the official record, but it was difficult to see any positive results of the conference. I make note of it here in our history because it was our first attempt to become involved in a National Conference of any kind.

In March, 1982 Ken Ausk was elected as Board Chairman and Linda McFarland became editor of the newsletter.

The fight continued to head off oil exploration in the Wilderness and we were participating regularly in Bob Marshall Alliance meetings. Deep Creek, a non-wilderness area adjacent to the east side of the Bob Marshall became of immediate concern because of attempts to do drill in that area. Both houses of Congress passed bills which prohibited any seismic work or oil leasing in the wilderness areas until 1984. The Alliance turned its attention to promoting additions to the Bob Marshall and in trying to define recommended boundaries.

By 1983 new clubs had been formed at Helena (Last Chance), and Libby (Cabinet). The annual convention was held in Salmon, Idaho March 19-20, 1983. Jim Brogger was elected as Chairman. Ken Wilcox and others, from the Washington BCH were present. A discussion was held about possible affiliation of the two groups. BCHA appointed a committee to draft a proposal and submit it for further consideration. Dues were raised to \$3 per person.

One of the agenda items at our annual meeting was the proposed sale of Forest Service and other public land. BCHA strongly opposed that. As was often the case, additions to Montana wilderness areas had been proposed and these were discussed.

We received an interesting letter from Pierre Lefebvre of Montreal in which he said that he represented a non-profit association whose purpose was to promote trail riding in Quebec. He wrote, "One of our objectives has been to open up provincial parks where horses have been prohibited. Government officials, backed by some biologists brought up a whole range of objections, one of them being the introduction of noxious weeds." I include this here because it was so familiar, something we were often hearing, especially from parks and it showed that it was not

just a local or even western problem.

The first "Starter Packet" was put together. This was intended to be an aid in organizing new BCH clubs. It has been revised a number of times and is now called the "Organizational Handbook", but is still in use.

The 1984 annual convention was held at Polson with the Mission Valley Club as hosts. Clubs from Sanders County and Idaho's Panhandle were welcomed into membership.

Jim Murphy and Ken Wilcox were present and said that Washington had endorsed the concept of affiliation between BCHA, the Washington BCH and the High Sierra Stock Users, but it was voted down by the Montana-Idaho delegates. However, the board was instructed to invite Washington and California to send two delegates to a meeting with BCHA representatives for the purpose of examining the BCHA constitution and propose necessary amendments which would provide for their inclusion in BCHA. There will be more details in the next chapter.

Another Montana Wilderness proposal had been made and BCHA endorsed it. Also, a proposal was made for user fees to hunt on federal land. BCHA opposed it and it soon died for lack of support.

Val Johnson, from Salmon, was elected as chairman. Bill Maloit from the Last Chance club, agreed to serve as newsletter editor.

ORGANIZING THE PRESENT BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF AMERICA

The organization of the present Back Country Horsemen of America did not go quickly or smoothly. During the years that the original BCH of A was in existence there was occasionally talk about it developing into a truly national organization, or at least one that included all of the western states. How this was to be accomplished was a very fuzzy concept. It was assumed that they would in some way continue to add local units around their perimeter, which at that time was western Montana and northern Idaho.

In 1981 we had our first contact with the High Sierra Stock Users. Max Cochran wrote;

Dear Lloyd,

The very informative letter and materials that you sent recently are very much appreciated and are most helpful. I should also say encouraging. Your Guidebook, outstanding newsletters, etc. are just excellent.

We didn't know that the Back Country Horsemen of Montana and Washington were in existence. Our group saw a pressing need for a stock association and only began meeting in January. We held small group planning meetings and our first organizational meeting will be held May 16, 1981.

Our goals, proposed by-laws, first newsletter and brochures have some familiarity with yours, but yours are more professional.

Our group will encompass Fresno, Kern, Tulare and Kings counties, bordering the High Sierra back country.

We have 102 members at this date. This has been by word of mouth, as we are not officially organized until May 16.

You people have done a great job of leadership. Your Guidebook is an excellent publication. Would it be possible to have one for our 19 officers and directors. Anything else that you might do to help us get started will be appreciated.

Sincerely

Max Cochran, Interim Secretary

The first attempt at formulating any specific policies was made in the spring of 1981. A committee consisting of Loy Robinson-Chairman, Ray Stofel and Ed Nixon was formed and their purpose was to present an affiliation proposal to the membership. They put together two separate proposals. The first allowed any group to join BCH of A "which subscribed to the basic precepts of BCH of A as stated in the constitution." Each affiliating member would be allowed eight votes, which meant that Washington with 800 members at that time would have the same voting privileges as the smallest of the existing units.

The second proposal was very close to what was finally approved four years later. It provided that:

State groups would be organized with constitutions based on the same basic precepts as the BCH of A.

Provision would be made for local clubs in a state without an organization to affiliate with the state organization nearest to them.

A National BCH shall be formed to provide for a federation of state groups with provisions for a National Board of Directors, National Officers and a National Convention.

Activities of the National Organization shall be financed by a dues structure levied on state organizations on a per member basis.

A constitution for the National Organization shall be written to reflect the above proposals and also to insure that the basic precepts of BCH shall remain unchanged. Nothing shall be done by the National Organization which hinders action of the State or Local clubs, as long as those organization adhere to their constitutions.

No action was taken by the board on either of those proposals. I was chairman of the board at the time and put it back on the agenda for the September meeting. I had been invited to California to take part in the fall meeting of the High Sierra Stock Users and was hoping to be able to take some sort of proposal to them. But that was not to be as the board again refused to take any action on the committee report.

As my term as Board Chairman wound down in March, 1982, I wrote a final Chairman's Corner article for the newsletter. Among a great many things, I included a paragraph about the future of BCHA. I wrote:

"We call ourselves Back Country Horsemen of America. If we really believe that day will ever come when this will be a reality, we need to take some positive steps to see that it happens. Personally, I doubt if it will ever happen unless we organize state associations who join together to form a national. I hope that we continue to look for ways that this can be done and still protect the integrity and purpose of BCH."

The reaction to that was just another big yawn. The convention came and went that month without anything being done.

The March 20, 1983 BCH of A board meeting minutes say: The National Chairman shall appoint a committee to study an affiliation with the Washington BCH which would be mutually beneficial to both organizations The study will be presented to the board and sent to the Washington BCH for their consideration. The committee consisted of Lloyd Fagerland, Chairman, Loy Robinson, Val Johnson, Maryetta Bauer and Pinkie Bourne.

The committee commenced their work, and eventually, after consultation with Washington and California, produced a draft copy which I will include here. Loy Robinson was the member who put it together in written form.

Name:

Western Backcountry Stock Users Association.

Purpose:

To unite various western stock user clubs which are involved in the protection and promotion of stock use on public lands.

To provide a vehicle for inter-organizational communication.
 To provide a means for cooperative efforts on the issues of mutual concern.
 To provide an opportunity for improved understanding of each organization's goals and objectives

Program:

The promotion of common sense use and management of western wilderness and backcountry areas.
 The promotion of educational programs for backcountry stock users in horse handling and camping techniques which insure minimum impact on the resources.
 The promotion of membership involvement with public land managers in solving and eliminating problems associated with stock use and in development and maintenance of facilities that benefit stock users and the general public.
 The opposition of unjustified restrictions on, and closures to, recreational stock use.

Membership:

Membership is open to any statewide or regional stock users organization whose purpose and objectives are substantially the same as the WBSUA.

Board of Directors:

Each associated organization shall elect two directors, plus one additional director for each 500 members or fraction thereof.

Qualifications, term of office, expenses for travel, and method of election, for its board members will be determined by each member organization.

Officers

WBSUA Board of Directors shall elect from its membership a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer. Officers shall serve for a two year term. No officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

Dues

The dues structure and amount of dues shall be determined by the board of directors.

Meetings

Meetings of the board of directors shall be held annually, on a rotating basis, in conjunction with the annual meeting of associated clubs.

Special meetings may held as necessary and emergency meetings may be conducted by mail or telephone.

All official business of the WBSUA shall be conducted by its Board of Directors.

Non-Interference

The role of WBSUA shall be to advise and assist member clubs. No action of the WBSUA shall be construed as a dictation of policy to member clubs. Each member

organization shall retain its constitution and by-laws.

If any articles of this affiliation agreement, or any action of the board of WBSUA appears to contradict violate, or alter a constitution or set of by-laws, then that constitution or by-laws shall have precedence.

There are a few more provisions, which I have not included because I did not feel they were important to us now.

The above proposal was presented to BCH of A at their convention March 17, 1984 at Polson. Washington and California had indicated that they would approve it, but the BCHA voted to not accept it. This was a great disappointment to me. I had expected some opposition, but was surprised at the intensity of it. Some of it could be attributed to the usual fear of change, but the thing that killed it was the strong opposition of the old guard. The committee had purposely left many of the details to be worked out later, thinking that all that was needed at the time was a broad framework. No one knew exactly how this was going to play out and the detractors came up with worst case scenarios of all of the horrible things that might happen. Many of the people who had been officers and leaders up until that time were apparently fearful that their baby, which they had carefully nurtured along to this point, was, in some way, threatened by the affiliation.

The proposal was defeated by the delegates, but they then decided to leave the door open a crack. It was decided to "appoint a committee to continue to explore the possibilities of affiliation with Washington and California. Also directors were instructed to return to their respective clubs, report on the board actions and discussions and survey their clubs for their feelings on forming a state organization, to facilitate the affiliation with Washington and California."

The following are excerpts from the Washington BCH Trailhead News, about the affiliation effort.
March 1983

"The Back Country Horsemen of America 1983 Annual Convention is being held in Salmon, Idaho on March 19th and 20th. Fred Ryan, Jim Murphy and I plan to attend.

The organizers of BCHA hope to make this a national organization. We have been invited to affiliate with them and will be discussing this at the Convention in Salmon. Their organization and ours are very similar as far as working with the National Forest Service and Park Service goes but judging from what I read in their newsletters, they have no involvement at the state or local level, in promoting trails and trail riding." Ken Wilcox

May 1983

Fred Ryan. Jim Murphy and Ken Wilcox did go to Salmon, Idaho to attend the 5th Annual Convention of the original BCHA.

"After the Sunday meeting, we met with their board and discussed some sort of affiliation between our clubs, something

short of actually joining them. Our by-laws are different and although problems on federal lands are similar for both organizations, due to numbers of users in our state, we have to adopt different methods of solving them. Their Board will be suggesting some sort of guidelines for affiliation, hopefully by our Winter Meeting, for our approval." Ken Wilcox.

December 1983

Washington Winter Board Meeting

"Our first order of business was affiliation with Back Country Horsemen of America and the High Sierra Stock Users Association. After considerable discussion, a loose affiliation with no dues and any formal organization to be brought before the membership for approval, and recommended the name Back Country Stock Users Association.

I doubt very much that this is what the BCH of A had hoped for, although I believe that the High Sierra Stock Users will accept this. The BCH of A would like other states to join them using their name and by-laws. Personally, I think that with our broader program, we couldn't function as they would like. We will be pursuing this and will report in future issues on progress.

The membership voted to buy gas for one vehicle and pay registration fees for up to three officers to attend the BCH of A convention in March, 1994." Ken Wilcox

April 1984

"Ken and Carol Wilcox, myself and my wife Carol drove to Polson, MT to attend the BCH of A convention.

The main purpose of our attendance at the convention was to attempt an affiliation with BCH of A. This was the direction passed at our last annual convention. Correspondence on this subject has been progressing throughout the year since the 1983 BCH of A convention. Proposed articles of affiliation have been worked out which were acceptable to us and to the Montana representatives with whom we had been corresponding.

Upon our arrival at Polson, the proposed articles of affiliation proved to be a controversial issue. The subject was discussed at the Friday evening board meeting and again during Sunday's General Session.

The opposition to the affiliation was mostly against setting up an additional organization for affiliation and not using the BCH of A as the affiliating organization. BCH of Washington is opposed to joining BCH of A because it would only allow us a one club status and not that of a statewide organization. There is a great deal of discussion on the affiliation which I cannot include in this report for the sake of brevity. During discussions on affiliation, it appeared that BCH of A may be willing to modify their by-laws to include state organizations. Therefore, we recommend that unless serious discussions could proceed on changes to the BCH of A to allow statewide organizations, we would recommend voting down the proposed affiliation. The proposed affiliation was defeated during the General Session." Jim Murphy

In that same issue of the Trailhead News Ken Wilcox wrote; "About the affiliation, there are a lot of the members of the BCH of A (Montana-Idaho) that don't see any great need for this affiliation. They have a national organization, why create another one? The Back Country Horsemen of America isn't really growing like a prairie fire. In six years they have added two clubs outside of Montana, in Idaho. Their constitution permits them to come into any state and set up a local club. As Jim mentioned, under their present constitution, we would have to join them as a local club, with eight delegates to the National Convention, but paying \$2 for each of our 800 plus members.

They have a great organization, but it isn't a national one, no matter what they call it. It is a good Montana organization, with two Idaho clubs. A few of their leaders admit this. I hope that at the May BCH of A board meeting, a decision is made to recommend that the BCH of A constitution be changed to read Back Country Horsemen of Montana. The Idaho clubs could remain in that group or form the Back Country Horsemen of Idaho.

If they do this, Back Country Horsemen of America could be an organization of affiliated state organizations like Back Country Horsemen of Washington. High Sierra Stock Users Association, BCH of Montana and BCH of Idaho. The five High Sierra Stock User clubs are working on incorporating the HSSUA of California. These people see the need for a real national organization, not just a name."

After the negative vote in March, 1989 it was back to square one for the affiliation proposal, time to start over. Fortunately, Val Johnson, who had been elected board chairman at the March meeting, picked up the ball and carried it. We can only speculate about where we would be today if he had not done that.

In his first Chairman's Report in the May newsletter Val wrote, "It was the dream of those who first created the BCH of A, that the organization would unite all the stock users of our vast backcountry wherever they were. Perhaps we were somewhat naive in believing that stock users elsewhere in America's backcountry wouldn't have the same desires and interests that we had and that they would wait for the word to spread from Montana and Idaho.

This past convention pointed out that there were people outside the Montana-Idaho area that in fact, did have similar ideas and goals, but did have somewhat different organizational structure. Can we allow these differences to let us abandon our dream of the BCH of A. I think that the goals and ambitions of BCH of A are too important to allow organizational differences to stand in the way. Growth doesn't come without change. I think most of us realize this, but I also think that we sometimes resist change because it makes things different than we are used to. Since we are going to be looking at some changes, • I would hope that we will focus our attention on the goals and ambitions of BCH of A and be positive in our approach. Keep in mind that change is no less difficult for the people in Washington and California than it is for us.

The board went back to work, trying to draft a proposal that would satisfy the critics and still do the job that needed to be done. Many of the opponents felt that we should retain the BCHA constitution, which did allow Washington and California units to join, providing that they received the approval of the BCHA board. But they didn't seem to realize that it was unlikely that the Washington BCH and the High Sierra Stock Users were apt to come on board as anything less than full and equal partners, which seemed reasonable to me.

The BCH of A constitution provided for a governing body of eight delegates from each local unit, with a board of directors of two from each unit. It soon became apparent to the board that this would not work. If we assumed that we were going to continue to grow, the numbers would become unmanageable. In addition to that, the cost of transportation of large numbers of people to out of state meetings would be prohibitive. They decided to recommend that we form an association of state BCH organizations, which was exactly what had been proposed at the 1984 meeting. They did decide to eliminate the provision for additional directors from larger memberships. The fear expressed at that time was that the larger West Coast states would dominate the organization. Occasionally the concept of number of directors based on membership has been floated again, but up until this time, no serious effort has been made to change it.

They then proceeded to write a constitution and a set of by-laws, which hadn't been done in the original proposal. They also decided that the most appropriate name was Back Country Horsemen of America and proposed that state organizations be formed. At this time it was assumed that Idaho, because of its small membership, would remain with Montana until such a time as they added some additional clubs.

The final result was very similar to what had been proposed in 1984, except for the name change and a set of by-laws which laid out in detail exactly how the new organization would be governed. But the basic concept of an association of member states with a board of directors who would be selected by those states, remained intact. Copies of the proposal were distributed to Washington and California and to the local units in Montana and Idaho and plans made to present it to the BCH of A membership at the 1985 annual meeting in Libby.

The Montana newsletter reported that "After considerable discussion, debate and oratory, a vote was taken on the question of affiliation and passed with 72 yes votes and 3 against. It was assumed up until this time that Idaho would remain with Montana until there were more local clubs, but they decided to start their own state organization with only two local units. Dave Couch was elected as board chairman. Val Johnson and Jerry Underwood were chosen as BCHA directors. Montana also formed their state organization with Loy Robinson as board chairman Jim Brogger and Lloyd Fagerland were chosen as BCHA Director.

WHOA, HORSEMEN!

Do you want to keep the back trails open for horse and rider use in years to come?

It's Up to YOU!

Organizational Meeting of the

Back Country Horsemen

This organization is dedicated to perpetuation of backcountry horse use, assisting and guiding government agencies in managing wilderness for horse use, and education of the public in stock management.

**COME,
HELP ORGANIZE**

Date: _____

Time' _____

Place• _____

**THIS IS A NATIONAL MOVEMENT
SEEKING MEN, WOMEN AND
CHILDREN AS MEMBERS**



These signs, which were twice this size, were used in the 1980's and early 90's as an aid in forming new BCH chapters. They were produced by BCHA and sent to anyone who had use for them. The idea originated with one of the Montana chapters, but I can't recall which one.

BCHA-1985 & 1986

So, Back Country Horsemen began its journey, but nothing very spectacular happened that first year. It was mostly a matter of taking care of the organizational details, laying the foundation for the future.

The first order of business was to ratify the new constitution and by-laws and this was done by the four charter members, the last of them in May. On April 4, 1985 David Couch wrote to Loy Robinson and suggested that Idaho and Montana hold their first board meetings May 4 at the same location in Lake County. They met separately and also jointly to discuss items of mutual interest. One of those was how to divide the old BCH of A treasury, which was done on a per member basis. There were a number of decisions that needed to be made, but we seemed to be drifting, at least partly because we had no officers. We had never addressed exactly how those first ones were to be selected. I was concerned about it, thinking that it was important that this not continue for very long. I talked to Jim Brogger, my fellow Montana director, shared my concerns with him and offered to serve as the first chairman. Jim contacted the other directors and the result of that was that I was selected as chairman in a mail vote. There were no other candidates. It was felt that the only other really essential officer that was needed at that time was a treasurer and Val Johnson was contacted and agreed to do that job. Technically, it was not correctly done. We should have met as a board and elected officers, but no one was anxious to spend time and money doing that, so Val and I served as interim officers until the first directors meeting in March, 1986.

We had no money and no immediate way of getting any. Our constitution provided that any dues levied had to be approved by three fourths of the state organizations. Each state organization donated \$100 to provide the money needed for phone, postage, and other incidental expenses.

By separating from Montana, the two Idaho clubs had put themselves in a sink or swim situation, but they began to swim. A letter from Val Johnson, dated May 23, told of a meeting in Grangeville, attended by 40 people who were interested in forming a club there and it was expected that that would soon be done. Another meeting was scheduled for June 28 in McCall with a group there. New clubs were formed in Bonners Ferry and Priest River.

Val wrote, "I think that we will be holding off during the summer and fall in the development of any other new areas. We are somewhat concerned about our growth exceeding our ability to handle it."

The original BCH of A had been incorporated as a non-profit in Montana. It was decided that the new BCHA would continue under that non-profit incorporation status and that Montana would file a new application as the Back Country Horsemen of Montana.

As the year went by, we began to make plans for our first annual meeting. It was decided to hold it in Helena, MT at

the same time as the Montana convention. Idaho also had their first annual meeting with Montana and BCHA. BCHA met on the same date and place as the host state organization for five years. While that had some advantages it also had some serious disadvantages, mostly a shortage of time and too much going on. Host state directors were usually heavily involved in their state meeting and it was difficult for them to participate in both meetings.

We had a fairly full agenda for the 1986 meeting. It included the following items:

1. Election of officers.
2. Setting of dues.
3. Establish a budget and a list of priorities.
4. Expansion policy.
5. Geographic limits.
6. Associate members.
7. Presidents Commission on the American Outdoors.
8. A general policy on Wilderness Additions.

Lloyd Fagerland and Val Johnson were re-elected as Chairman and Treasurer. Jim Murphy was elected Vice-Chairman and Les Linendoll was elected Secretary.

One of the more important decisions we were faced with was the amount of dues that we would ask for. Should we try for a fairly substantial amount that would allow us to participate in hearings, symposiums and meetings and publish a newsletter or should we be more cautious and conservative? Washington had voted to limit their contribution to \$500, Idaho was struggling along with a very small membership and Montana had already gained a well deserved reputation as someone who was very careful with their money. So, cautious and conservative won out and we settled on 50cr a year per adult member. That had to be ratified by the state organizations which was done soon after the annual meeting ended. We had about 3,000 members at that time.

Charlie Morgan thought that we should begin to publish a newsletter, saying that it was essential if we were going to grow and expand. It would have required more money than we had and the board decided to stay with the 50(0 dues rather than risk asking for more and having it turned down. Another thing that had not been addressed very well in the by-laws was the question of who had the authority to form new BCH groups. That finally evolved into the situation we have today. Where there was a state organization, they had that authority within their state. Acceptance or refusal of all others was the responsibility of the BCHA board. Out of state chapters would be accepted as non-voting members until such a time as they formed a state organization. A minimum fee of \$25 should accompany each application.

While everyone assumed that we would continue to expand, the details about exactly how that was to be done were pretty fuzzy. We were forced into some decisions by receiving an application for membership from the Valley Wranglers of Saratoga,

WY. The application was accepted and they became the first Wyoming BCH unit, as well as the first beyond the four charter states. Unfortunately, they survived for less than one year.

President Reagan appointed a Commission on the American Outdoors, whose mission was to hold public hearings throughout the country and make some recommendations about recreation on public lands. The Commission consisted of about a dozen people, big name types, primarily politicians and business leaders. Of that group, there was only one horseman, Frank Bogert, mayor of Palm Springs, CA. His interest and experience with horses was a lot different than ours, which is what you would expect of the mayor of Palm Springs. Ken Wilcox had met him at a meeting somewhere and we zeroed in on him as our most sympathetic commission member. Ken wrote an article about the PCAO which appeared in the Western Horsemen. We received a lot of mail because of this article and so did Bogert, as Ken mentioned him in the article.

Ken Wilcox expressed the thoughts of the majority when he wrote, "We need to be represented at these meetings. Whether this will do any good is hard to say. Certainly, not getting involved is not going to get us anywhere." So we allocated some of our very limited funds for that purpose, correctly assuming that horsemen were going to be a scarce item at the meetings. Someone from California attended the meeting at Reno, Ken Wilcox, Jim Murphy and others attended the one at Seattle and I went to Denver.

We concentrated our testimony on the need for adequate trail maintenance and construction and access to public lands by horsemen. We were limited to a four minute presentation, which at first I thought was too short, but by the time I had sat through several hours of those, I had changed my mind and thought it was plenty of time.

This was our first venture into nationwide policies. It was hard to tell if we had made any ripples or not. It was a high visibility, lots of publicity sort of thing, with high expectations. When it was all over, my perception was that not much was accomplished. It did give us some good experience.

It was easy to see the importance of money. The outfits with lots of it were well represented and the poor ones were not. I did make contact with the few horsemen from Colorado that attended the Denver meeting, thinking that it might gain us a toehold in that state, but nothing came of it.

Attending that first BCHA board meeting were Jim Murphy, Ken Wilcox and Gene Wheeler from Washington, Max Cochran and Charles Morgan from California, Val Johnson, Joe Swendig and David Heishman from Idaho and Jim Brogger, Les Linendoll and Lloyd Fagerland from Montana. States which provided a Chairman were entitled to three board members.

Three of those first board members are now dead. Each of them made a huge contribution to Back Country Horsemen of America and I would like to briefly make note of that here.

Max Cochran was a bundle of energy when I first met him in 1981. We traveled around Tulare County, talking to numerous people about Back Country Horsemen. Max had recently retired

as County Superintendent of Schools, and it seemed that he knew almost everyone in the county. He was one of the handful of people who had organized the High Sierra Stock Users Association. He served as it's secretary for a number of years and was dedicated to the concept that back country stock users needed a strong organization to protect their right to use public lands. Max and his wife Irene edited their newsletter during those early years.

Ken Wilcox was a carpenter who fell from a roof, badly injuring his feet and ankles. He could no longer work as a carpenter, but he devoted the rest of his life to the cause of back country horsemen. For sixteen years he was Trails Director of the Washington Horsemen's Association. Then he and a few of his fellow trail riders withdrew from the WHA and formed their own association. This group soon became known as the Back Country Horsemen of Washington, which in 1985 became a part of Back Country Horsemen of America. During most of this time Ken served as Executive Director of the Washington BCH. Basically, it was his full time job. He attended countless meetings, served on many boards, wrote letters by the ream and edited their newsletter.

Charley Morgan was another workhorse. If there was something going on within the California BCH, Charley was usually involved in it and quite often was in charge. He was in the High Sierra Stock Users early on, served as Executive Director of the California BCH for a number of years, was advertising coordinator for the Back Country Horsemen of America News from 1990 through 1995.

These three men were different individuals, but they shared some common traits. First, they all enjoyed riding their horses on mountain trails. They saw that this was threatened from a number of directions and were willing to spend a substantial part of their lives working to preserve their right and that of the people who came after them to continue to use their horses on public lands. They were all hard workers and were not afraid to stand up and be counted when they thought that it was necessary. We owe them and all of the other people who have shared their vision and have done their part to preserve that heritage. Let us not forget it.

In January, 1987 Ken Wilcox wrote in the Trailhead News, his perceptions about the first year of operation of the newly formed Back Country Horsemen of America.

"We now have an operating BCHA. We have got some growing to do and some attitudes to change before we will reach the point where we can be anywhere near an effective organization. Discussions on the Presidents Commission for Americans Outdoors made this pretty obvious.

Each state organization's dues to BCHA are 50¢ for each of its adult members. Fifty cents, the price of a cup of coffee, isn't going to get us much representation at national hearings, etc. The agenda of the Presidents Commission on the American Outdoors in Denver, May 14 and 15, is recreation on federal lands. It is nearly imperative that we be represented at this. Sending a rep will use all the travel funds in our \$1500 budget.

Charlie Morgan wants to try and put out a newsletter, the National Chairman and the Expansion Committee have some expenses, so presto, we will be broke."

Our constitution provided that all new groups that wished to join Back Country Horsemen of America would be required to include Back Country Horsemen in their name. Out of deference to the High Sierra Stock Users, this requirement was waived for them. However, in January 1986 they began talking of changing the name of their state organization to the BCH of California. This was officially done later that year.

In June Idaho began publication of their first newsletter with Sara Johnson as editor.

In July Dick Cochran reported that the California BCH, after several years of effort, felt that they had beat back efforts to further restrict stock use in the Sequoia-Kings National Park.

We continued to receive a steady flow of inquires about forming local BCH chapters. Some of these eventually resulted in new chapters and others ended as dead ends that never went anywhere. We had a few contacts with people in the Lander-Riverton, WY area but it was several years before those that bore any fruit. Another promising prospect was Dee Godesiabois, who had homes in both Arizona and Colorado. We had high hopes for this/but they never materialized. We also had some inquiries from the Reno area, but it was several more years before anything came of that. The same was true of LaGrande, Oregon. Since spring, I had carried on a correspondence with Becky Howells of Talihina, Oklahoma. Most of you may be surprised to know that there is a National Forest near there. In August she wrote saying that she had organized a BCH chapter. That sort of took us by surprise, but the board did approve the application in March, 1987. Shirley Burleson, from Oklahoma, attended our board meeting at Lynwood Washington. Their chapter seemed to be fairly active for a year or so and then just withered away. Perhaps they were too far removed from other BCH units. In addition to that, we were in no position to give them much help.

Some printed materials were developed to assist with expansion. At that time the Flathead Guidebook was being distributed by BCHA. They began to talk about developing their own book. An application form was developed for the use of all units. A committee was appointed to make revisions in the old BCHA "Beginning Packet" that would bring it up to date and make it suitable for use at that time.

A motion was passed that, "The Chairman express to the Superintendents our concerns with the horse use restrictions in our National Parks and request a copy of such management plans dealing with horse use in Grand Teton, Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks."

The Park Service established a Stock Use Review Committee and the California BCH were able to get two members appointed to this committee. We began gathering material from parks for the use of the committee.

A petition was presented by the California delegation, revised and adopted by Back Country Horsemen of America.

NATIONAL PETITION
ASSURING RECREATIONAL STOCK USERS ACCESS TO
NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS

- WHEREAS 1. Man and horses and mules have been partners in work, war and play since biblical days,
and
- WHEREAS 2. Horses and mules have played an important historic role in the exploration and development of the public lands of the United States,
and
- WHEREAS 3. The trail system that exists on national public lands was developed by and for pack and saddle animals,
and
- WHEREAS 4. The environmentally concerned horsemen's organizations, such as Back Country Horsemen of America, have proven that the judicious use of pack and saddle equines is not harmful to the eco-systems of the fragile back country,
and
- WHEREAS 5. The existence of pack and saddle stock on national public lands contributes to the historical scene and fosters, for public view, a way of life and travel that should not be forgotten,
and
- WHEREAS 6. The use of horses and mules helps to disperse recreational use away from congested road heads which is a problem in most of our parks and forests,
and
- WHEREAS 7. Horses and mules provide the means of transportation for people that are unable to endure the rigors of hiking and back packing,

THEREFORE

Congress is petitioned to enact legislation that charges the administrators of national public lands to responsibly manage their trusts in a manner that shall NOT exclude recreational horses and mules where such use has a historic basis.

BCHA - -1987

Something happened in my personal life that affected BCHA somewhat. In August I had a heart attack. At first we thought that it didn't amount to much, but between then and Christmas, I was in and out of the hospitals eight times. All of this provided one commodity that I had been short of previous to that--time to take care of my BCHA correspondence and other duties. In January I wrote to Vice-President Jim Murphy suggesting that perhaps I should resign. He said that he thought that wasn't necessary, saying that if I couldn't make it to the annual meeting in March, that he would chair the meeting.

A few things happened in the months prior to the annual meeting that are noteworthy. One of those was that there was an attempt to close the Rattlesnake Wilderness, near Missoula, MT to stock use. The Missoula BCH began a long and hard fight to keep that from happening and were eventually successful. Rattlesnake Creek, which had its headwaters in the Wilderness, was a water supply for the town of Missoula. There had been a few cases of giardia, which had been attributed to the city water. The Montana Water Quality Bureau suggested that a ban on horses, dogs and beaver in the wilderness might solve the problem. The water company jumped on that solution as the other alternative was a filtration plant, which they would have had to pay for. It was never specified exactly how they were going to ban the beaver. Presumably, they were all to be killed. One would have thought that wilderness advocates from all over the country would have come forth to do battle for the cause of wilderness purity. Eliminating a species of native wildlife from a wilderness for the financial benefit of a neighboring town was certainly gutting one of the principal concepts of the Wilderness Act. But not one peep was heard from them. Apparently they were willing to sacrifice one of the key provisions of the Wilderness Act in order to get rid of the horses.

The Missoula BCH requested help from Back Country Horsemen of America and, as Chairman, I wrote a letter to some key Forest Service officials and received a reply from Dale Robertson, who was then Chief of the Forest Service. He said that no decision had been made, that the pressure was coming from the Montana Water Quality Bureau, and that we should try to influence them to change their recommendation

A few years later we were faced with a very similar situation in California. Anti-horse groups were seeking to ban horses from municipal watersheds on the basis that they were carriers of cryptosporidium, another similar parasite which uses mammals as a host. Research at the School of Veterinary Medicine of the University of California at Davis indicated that horses were seldom, if ever, carriers of either parasite.

While BCHA played a minor role, most of the credit for the successful outcome of the attempted Rattlesnake Wilderness horse ban, goes to the Missoula BCH which showed a great deal of tenacity and perseverance and were finally rewarded. It is also a classic example of the benefits that can come from a good network of local chapters spread throughout the country.

I wrote to Jim Murphy and said, "I think that the March annual meeting is a very critical one. We have coasted along, maintained the status-quo, but really haven't made any significant advances this past year. I doubt if we can continue to do that. It seems to me that we have to somehow develop more of an activist program.. It is surely not going to be easy to do and I don't really have any clear cut ideas on just how we should go about it. A little more money would help some, but we have also got to hammer out some concrete goals about just what we are trying to accomplish."

We began to talk about raising our dues to \$1 per member. Correspondence from directors indicated that they agreed that we should ask for a dues increase. Our 1986 expenditures were \$1166 and we finished the year with a \$216 balance. But we felt that we were avoiding things that should be done because of a shortage of funds. It was sort of a Catch4²² situation. We needed to prove to some skeptical members that we were doing our job defending horsemen's rights wherever they were threatened, but we needed to do it without spending much money.

On January 22 I wrote to the state organizations informing them that I thought that the directors would recommend a dues increase at the March meeting. I also asked if they would place it on the agendas and if they would try to make it effective on January 1, 1987, rather than waiting until the following year.

An article about the extreme damage that recreational stock use was causing in wilderness areas, especially the Bob Marshall Complex was published in the *BackPacker Magazine*. The author was a seasonal USE'S employee, apparently a college boy with a summertime job. The publishers seemed to think that a few months spent in the wilderness made him an authority of some sort. He made a lot of ridiculous claims. I wrote to the editors in New York City, rebutting point by point many of the more preposterous ones. As you might guess, none of it was ever printed nor was any reply received from them. One positive thing did come from it. We distributed it around the BCH world and it certainly did rile up the troops. I will quote a short section of my letter to the *Backpacker Magazine*. "The whole premise of your article that horses are responsible for all trail damage and should be banned from wilderness areas, is ridiculous. Contrary to what your article implies, horses have not destroyed the trail system. It is still there, much of it in the same location it was built years ago. With some care and maintenance, it will continue to serve both hikers and horsemen for many more years.

Your readers also might be surprised to know that the Bob Marshall Wilderness is still there too. While there are some signs of use along the heavily traveled access corridors practically everything else would certainly be considered pristine by anyone's standards. A person seeking solitude can certainly find it, merely by leaving the main corridor trails.

I would like to strongly reiterate my feelings that the article gives a completely false picture of the trail situation here in Montana. The author offers no proof, statistics or corroborating evidence to support his theories. The whole thing

is irresponsible to an extreme degree."

The annual meeting was held in Lynwood, WA on March 7 and I was able to attend. All states were represented.

A lengthy discussion was held about what was generally perceived to be the anti-horse sentiments of most national parks and what we could do to change that. A motion was passed that "The BCHA will become active in trying to revise the anti-horse use policies of the National Park Service in the Parks of the West."

Expansion efforts were not progressing as well as had been expected, with the exception of Oklahoma. Other leads in Arizona, New Mexico and Oregon had failed to develop and nothing had been heard from the Saratoga BCH for some time and they didn't respond to letters sent to them.

The production of promotional materials was discussed and it was agreed that BCHA should develop and print materials that would be available to any state or chapter that had need of them.

Charley Morgan again proposed that a BCHA newsletter be printed, but no action was taken. A motion was passed that "The Chairman shall send a quarterly summary of BCHA activities to the State President/Chairman/Editor for inclusion in state BCH publications."

Jim Murphy reported that he was making some progress on the BCHA Guidebook.

Elections were held and Jim Murphy was elected as Board Chairman, Val Johnson, Vice-Chairman and Les Linendoll, Secretary-Treasurer. Next year's meeting was to be held in California.

Communication, or rather the lack of it, continued to be a problem. On September 27 Secretary Les Linendoll wrote to Chairman Jim Murphy: "My main concern is the lack of communication from the state organizations to the national board and from the national board down. We have no idea who is doing what and where.

It was my belief that the state chairman/board was to send information to the national chairman, he was to compile it from all the state organizations, and this summary would be sent back to the states for publication in their state papers. I have written and talked to our state chairman about that subject/but I'll bet that he hasn't contacted you.

Our expansion effort seems to have died. Has it? I have not heard of any efforts to promote and expand our organization. I don't have any solutions but we need to seriously consider some sort of effort. Since we now have \$3,154 and should expect about \$3,000 of income next year, we should have money to start something."

Everyone seemed to agree that this was a major problem. But it seemed to be one not easily corrected. In going through the files, it is apparent that less than half of the directors ever wrote a letter. They seemed to think of their position as more of an honorary one, rather than a working one. State Chairman and Boards were even worse. There is practically nothing from them.

In October Jim Murphy distributed a report. He wrote that the states had ratified the dues increase and the constitutional changes and had all paid their 1987 dues. He reported on a local Forest rule change that would have restricted horse use on that Forest. Washington BCH was able to reach a compromise position with them where the changes were somewhat less restrictive.

The Presidents Commission on the American Outdoors report was published, all 426 pages of it. Jim offered to loan his copy to anyone who wanted to read it.

The Idaho Outfitters and Guides had filed a lawsuit, hoping to overturn Forest Service regulation pertaining to them in the Frank Church River of no Return Wilderness. It was thought that if they received a favorable ruling, that it would affect wilderness regulations throughout the country. Jim thought that we should make a decision about whether we wanted to get involved in this issue or not. He also said that his employer was sending him to Washington, D.C. for a few days and that he would try to find time to visit with Forest Service officials about this suit.

Jim also proposed that we purchase advertising in the Western Horsemen magazine, promoting Back Country Horsemen of America at a cost of \$330.

BCHA - -1988

In October, 1987, Chairman Jim Murphy wrote to the board members, asking whether or not they thought BCHA should become involved in the Idaho Outfitters--Forest Service controversy regarding wilderness rules and regulations for outfitters. By January he had received replies and they unanimously agreed that we should support the Forest Service, saying that the proposed rules were reasonable and should be implemented. In early January, Jim made his trip to Washington D.C. and met with Larry Henson, USFS Associate Deputy Chief and John Buttrille, Director of Recreation Management. In his report to the board, Jim said that they discussed the Idaho Outfitters suit. Henson and Buttrille said that they felt that they had a strong case, but noted that the suit was being handled by the U.S. Attorney's office in Boise, ID. They also said that an offer had been made to appoint a task-force to study the whole issue if the outfitters would drop their lawsuit, an offer which the outfitters had declined.

But by late January they changed their mind and did withdraw their suit. What may have influenced them was that the McClure-Andrus Idaho Wilderness bill had been introduced. In addition to some additional wilderness, that bill included Section 308, which grand fathered in past practices of the outfitters and guides.

Jim thought that the battle had shifted from the courtroom to the political arena and that we needed to concentrate our efforts there. He wrote to Senator McClure, Governor Andrus and the other Idaho Senator and Representatives, saying: "Back Country Horsemen of America supports the addition of new wilderness area. However, we are opposed to the clauses which the McClure-Andrus bill contains grand fathering the past practices of the Idaho Outfitters and Guides. There appears to be no valid reason for the overriding language to be in the bill other than to appease the outfitters. This is giving in to a special interest group and is not in the public's interest. Unrestricted practices such as these are not allowed in other Wilderness and should not be allowed in the Frank Church River of No Return.

The present practices of the commercial outfitter in this wilderness are not in conformance with the accepted wilderness practices defined by the 1964 Wilderness Act, which has been accepted and used by commercial outfitters in other Wilderness areas. We urge you to remove the language in Section 308 of your bill."

On March 5, the Idaho BCH passed a resolution which said, "We oppose any attempt to allow the outfitters in Idaho's Wilderness areas to use permanent structures or facilities, to tie up additional campsites for their exclusive use, to maintain permanent caches, to box in and pipe spring water, to erect permanent corrals, or to use artificial salt licks to bait big game animals."

Montana BCH passed a similar resolution at their convention. While the lawsuit had been withdrawn, the battle was far from

over. One new factor was that Dale Robertson was now Chief of the Forest Service. He seemed much more sympathetic to the outfitter position than was his predecessor, Max Peterson.

I have jumped ahead a couple of months, but will now go back to early January when Jim made his trip to Washington D.C. Jim also discussed with Mr. Henson and Mr. Buttrille topics of a more general nature--funding, trails, Forest Plans, Congressional role, volunteer program, etc.

That day he also met with Larry Belli, Resource Management Coordinator for the National Park Service. Jim told Mr. Belli that, while most national parks typically allowed stock use, many of the rules and regulations effectively stopped that use. Many of those rules appear to be arbitrary, vary from Park to Park, and are not proven to be necessary.

He also touched on the issues of recreational stock use grazing in parks and the lack of enough permitted horse camps. He reminded Mr. Belli that stock use in most parks was a traditional use and should be maintained.

Jim was breaking new ground for Back Country Horsemen of America. It was our first face to face contact with upper level US Forest Service and National Park Service officials. In his report to the Directors, Jim asks, "What good did the meetings in Washington, D.C. do? I don't know how to tell, but I do know that a face to face meeting is more effective and remembered longer than a letter or phone call. At least they know we are out here, what our concerns and opinions are and that we are folks just like them."

The annual meeting was set for April 15, at Visalia, CA just prior to the first California state convention. Up until this time all California BCH business was conducted by their board of directors. They had been informed by the state that all non-profit corporations were required to hold at least one general meeting a year.

The BCHA advertisement in the Western Horseman magazine was in the February issue. This resulted in inquiries from all over the United States. The newly developed informational letter was used to reply to those.

The Board did meet in Visalia as planned. All four states were represented by the allotted two directors, except there was no one from Oklahoma. In addition to that, Jim had made several unsuccessful attempts to reach them by telephone and letter. Jim Brogger suggested that perhaps distance was a factor in their demise and that it should be considered when new chapters applied for membership. He thought that we should accept only those that were contiguous to an existing BCH state, but no action was taken on his suggestion.

State reports were made. Don McPherson said that several new chapters had been added in Idaho and that they had good prospects for more. He also said that he had a tentative date set to meet with some Reno horsemen. Ken Wilcox said that horse use in 17 Washington Wilderness areas was threatened by some horsemen ignoring all rules and common sense.

The need for a national newsletter was again discussed, but no action was taken.

The board decided to submit a constitutional change to the states for ratification that would limit terms of BCHA directors to three consecutive two year terms. Val Johnson proposed that the past chairman become an ex-officio board member, but this failed. Added cost was a factor in that decision.

A discussion was held on the possibility of hiring a part time BCHA Executive Secretary, but no action was taken.

The Guidebook revisions were almost completed, but it was decided to postpone printing until it appeared that there was adequate funding.

Montana had developed Mountain Manners, a book of cartoons and advice, which emphasized proper back country stock handling techniques. Montana asked if BCHA wanted to participate in the printing of this book, but they declined. It was thought that all available money should be used for Guidebook printing.

A budget of \$4,900 was adopted, which included \$2,500 for Guidebook printing.

Considerable time was spent discussing National Parks. They were in the process of preparing the first draft of a National Parks Management Plan. The deadline for comments was close. There seemed to be very little information available. BCHA and others asked for an extension which was granted.

William Penn Mott was the Director of the National Parks at that time. He was a California native and several BCH members were acquainted with him. It was decided to request a meeting. That took place at Walnut Grove, CA when Mott came home for the Christmas holiday. Stan Albright, Director of the Western Region, NPS was also present. Chairman Jim Murphy flew down from Seattle for that meeting. Also present were California BCHA directors Jim Wells and Jack Rogers and Heritage Trails Fund officers George Cardinet, Nancy Dupont, and Dale Brooks.

Jim made a presentation, explaining our history and some of our concerns regarding National Parks. One item discussed was the formation of a national Stock Use Advisory Committee. Albright told them that advisory boards or committees had to be approved by the Secretary of Interior and that approval was very difficult to obtain. He suggested that it would be more effective to pursue advisory committees at the local level with each park superintendent.

Mr. Mott took notes, asked for copies of our brochures and at the conclusion stated he should be able to do some things to solve our concerns and improve horse use opportunities.

Jim Murphy said, "I thought that the meeting was worthwhile. We must now prepare to work with park superintendents at a local level. We must be prepared with good workable solutions that still protect the parks."

By December funding for the Guidebook was in place. Region 1, USFS at Missoula contributed \$3,000, Region 4 at Salt Lake City, \$2,000 and Region 6 at Portland, \$1,000. Back Country Horsemen of America had budgeted \$2,500 and the state BCH organizations had pledged \$2,000. This allowed enough books to be printed to bring the cost to less than 40¢ a copy.

We participated in our first National Trails Symposium.

We shared costs with the Heritage Trails Fund and George Cardinet was our representative.

Don McPherson had met with a group of horsemen at Reno in June/who said they wanted to form a BCH chapter. In December they reported that they were meeting regularly with about 25 members.

The Big Horn Basin BCH had formed in the Powell-Cody area of Wyoming. They were quite small with only about 12 members, but had done some volunteer projects during the summer.

The Wilderness Cache Task Force made their report. It recommended that all caches be removed from the River of No Return Wilderness

After the California Board meeting, Ken Wilcox wrote in the Washington newsletter: "On that 20 hour drive home, I did quite a bit of pondering about what BCHA should be doing to make itself the powerhouse organization that it has to be to be effective. It does have a long way to go before it reaches that point. BCHA was formed to preserve our rights to use horse for recreation on public lands. We can circulate petitions and write letters and complain about being discriminated against till we're plum worn out without gaining a trail, until we change the anti-horse attitudes of many land managers and users. Education of horsemen was never mentioned at any of the sessions that I attended in California, except that I did bring it up in a panel that I was a part of. Until BCHA builds its program around educating the horsemen and the results of that program starts showing up in the back country, we are not gaining a bit. BCHW is working on a good educational program that we can share, which might make a difference. "

BCHA - -1989

The feasibility and need for a newsletter had been discussed every year since BCHA was formed in 1985, but no serious attempts to print one had ever been made, except for the "Highline", which was put together by BCHA Secretary Loy Robinson in 1988 or 89. Loy's paper was quite small, both in size and circulation, limited to a fairly small percentage of our membership. Loy printed one or two issues on his computer. Unfortunately, we don't have a copy of those.

But in 1989 the board actually got serious about publishing a paper. Charley Morgan had advocated a newsletter since day one, but a number of other leaders had now joined him in thinking that it was important that we do so without procrastinating any longer.

As usual, money was one of the stumbling blocks. While we had accumulated a small reserve, it would not finance a newsletter for long. It was suggested that perhaps the states would be willing to pool the money they were now using to publish their own newsletters and that the BCHA paper could replace them. Jim Murphy said that Washington printed on a monthly basis and that he doubted if anything less than that would be acceptable to them. He also pointed out what would surely be a big problem--that of the state editors or contributors getting their material submitted in a timely manner.

At one time Montana had suggested that we print a glossy, slick paper magazine similar to the "Bugle", the Elk Foundations magazine which was sold by subscription and on newsstands. Some estimated costs were developed and they were quite high. Charley Morgan thought that the most practical route was to print a tabloid size, newspaper type of publication. He thought that this would be very suitable and within our financial abilities.

The annual meeting that year was held in Lewiston, ID on March 17, the day prior to the Idaho convention. One of the first actions of the board was to propose that dues be raised from \$1 to \$2 and that the additional money be used to fund a newsletter. This was unanimously passed and sent to the states for ratification.

An application was received from the High Desert Trail Riders of Klamath Falls OR for membership as associates. They were accepted by a vote of 6 to 2. The dissenters felt that we had never made provisions in our constitution for associate memberships and that it was time that we did so. It was a very vague area and continued to be that way for some time.

Val Johnson suggested that it was important that an attempt be made to preserve the BCHA records such as correspondence, minutes, resolutions, list of officers, etc. No action was taken, but we did find several years later, that most officers had kept fairly complete records.

Elections were held and Val Johnson from Idaho was chosen as Board Chairman, Jim Wells of California as Vice-Chairman and Loy Robinson of Montana as Secretary-Treasurer.

Ken Wilcox, Jim Murphy and Don McPherson announced that they planned to attend a Wilderness Skills Workshop in May, which was sponsored by the Sheriff's Posse at Klamath Falls. It was said that people attended from a wide area and it was thought that some contacts might be made which would be useful in our expansion efforts in Oregon.

Jim Murphy made a report on the Guidebook. A total of 28,000 copies were printed. The four Western Regions of the U.S. Forest Service contributed \$7,000 and were sent 17,000 books. About 6,000 were kept by BCHA for distribution by them and the rest sent to the BCH state organizations that had contributed money. While a number of people helped with the revisions and additions to the Guidebook, the bulk of the work was done by Jim Murphy. He kept the project moving, raised the necessary funds and supervised the printing and distribution. It was a big job that was well done.

The Montana BCH complained that they felt that the National Chairman and Board had not sufficiently supported the Montana Wilderness Bill. Chairman Murphy had written several letters and the Montana officers were not very specific about exactly what more they thought that he could have done to influence the outcome. This led to a general discussion about how involved BCHA should be in state issues. How were decisions to be made to get involved with only one meeting a year? Only a few directors would ever respond to requests for opinions or information. Practically never was there correspondence from state chairman or other officers. If there was any of that, it never made it into the files we now have.

The Chairman was instructed to appoint a committee whose duties would be to produce a pilot copy of a newsletter. This was to be done no later than February, 1990 so that the board could decide the future of the newsletter at their annual meeting. This committee was appointed at a later date by Chairman Johnson and consisted of Charles Morgan, Jim Murphy and Lloyd Fagerland, all strong advocates of a newsletter.

It was announced that U.S. Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson had ignored the recommendations of his own Task Force and refused to order the removal of caches from the River of No Return Wilderness.

BCHA 1990

The newsletter committee had been directed to publish their first issue by February, prior to the annual meeting in March. A decision was then to be made regarding the future of the paper. The committee divided up the responsibilities. Jim Murphy compiled a mailing list and prepared the labels, Charley Morgan prepared the advertising for printing and Lloyd Fagerland edited the paper.

The big controversy at that time was the continuing battle between the Forest Service and the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association over management rules in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. There were a number of articles in the newsletter about this very newsworthy situation. Some members thought that there were too many.

Very shortly after publication, Doug Timms, Executive Director of the Idaho Outfitters called Val Johnson, complaining that there was inaccurate information in the paper. Val wrote to me on March 4. "Congratulations on the newsletter. I thought that you did a splendid job. It looks very professional and contains timely, interesting and educational information.

I received a call from Doug Timms. I told him that I thought he was being very presumptuous in asking for a preview of material going into our newsletter prior to publication. He indicated that there were numerous inaccuracies in the newsletter. I told him that I was not aware of any and that he should identify any false statements and provide me with that information before the board meeting."

Mr. Timms did not provide us with any specific examples of inaccurate statements. The wilderness management issues continued to be in the news and we continued to print the details in our newsletter.

The 1990 annual board meeting was held in Missoula on March 16, the day before the Montana convention. We passed a resolution favoring the Forest Supervisors recommendations concerning outfitter reserved camps, the removal of all caches and all permanent structures, including boxed in springs and water systems, by the end of 1990.

By this time USFS Chief Robertson was in the outfitter camp, in direct opposition to the recommendations of the Forest Supervisors who administered the Frank Church Wilderness and a USFS Task Force that had been appointed by Robertson to study the issue and make recommendations

The board decided to continue the newsletter, printing four issues a year. Murphy, Morgan and Fagerland were asked to continue as the newsletter committee and they all agreed to do so. It was thought that the \$1 from each members dues would be sufficient to fund the paper, providing that we could sell a sufficient amount of advertising.

Advertising revenue had started off well, with \$950 received that first issue. But it went downhill rapidly with \$475 the second issue and \$250 for the third. It did rise back to \$625 for the fourth issue. The states ratified the dues increase and we continued to publish. We were mailing 3400

copies and printing 4400 at this times. The extra copies were used for promotional purposes.

It was thought that the state organizations would support the newsletter by appointing someone to provide news of their activities and issues and someone that would sell advertising. Unfortunately, that never happened. We had good support from a relatively small number of people and that is what kept us going.

Advertising rates were very low. Many of the advertisers were people who were willing to financially support BCHA, who may have thought of the money as a donation rather than purchasing advertising. For this reason, we were hesitant to raise the rates. We had thought that large, horse related businesses would purchase ads, but were unable to interest any of them in this. We looked into the possibility of hiring a commercial ad salesman, but found that our rates and circulation were so low that no one was interested in doing this. So we struggled along for a number of years, primarily supported by small businesses.

The status of Associate member chapters in states without a state organization was again discussed. Several constitutional changes that would clarify some of the requirements and procedures were proposed and these were sent to the state organizations for ratification. A constitutional change was proposed by Ken Ausk that would have limited directors to three consecutive two year terms, but this was defeated. The feeling was that this should be a state decision.

Val Johnson, Chairman, Jim Wells, Vice Chairman and Loy Robinson, Secretary-Treasurer were all re-elected. However, this was a day before Montana held there elections and Loy was not chosen as a Montana director. Later, Ken Ausk, who was the new Montana director, was appointed to fill the office of Secretary Treasurer.

We continued to receive a substantial amount of correspondence. Some were merely requests for Guidebooks. Others wanted information about Back Country Horsemen. One letter was rather unusual. It was from Carlos Stephen Emmin, who lived in West Africa. Carlos was interested in fire prevention. I assumed that he may have had a job working for the state in a capacity somewhat similar to our Forest Service employees. The letter was addressed to the Forest Service and to us, but was sent to our Post Office Box at Columbia Falls. The most interesting part of the story, which we do not know, would be how he got our address.

Carlos asked for Smokey Bear and Woodsey Owl things, plus a long list of items that could be used to promote fire prevention, such as rings, books, calendars, pens, balloons

pencils, badges, posters, key holders hats, caps and Smokey storybooks.

Carlos thought that "Heavy fines should be imposed on anyone found setting fire to his newly weeded farm, since that can encroach on the nearby bushes and cause disaster for a vast area of land. After cooking, also our women should be advised to extinguish fire totally as embers can regenerate flames, which can in turn destroy life and property."

He ended his letter by saying, "Sir, my friends and brothers said that we are very interested in your company, so kindly send me beautiful things."

I turned his letter over to the local Forest Service office and I don't know whether they sent him any beautiful things or not. Of course, all of the above is not really important to our history but I have included it because I thought that it was interesting and it showed that we were gradually becoming more well known. I can recall letters from England, France, Australia and Quebec, plus almost every state in the union.

Some members began to talk about the need for an Executive Secretary, but we did not make that move until 1995.

The Wind River BCH in the Lander-Riverton area of Wyoming held their organizational meeting. Also, the group in Nevada reported that they were meeting regularly with about twenty members attending. The Klamath Falls, OR group applied for membership and paid dues for 35 members.

The Region 1 USFS Centennial Pack String had been put together in 1989. They performed at a great many shows and parades, plus they were sometimes used for special packing jobs on various USFS Districts. A minimum impact camp display was also a part of their show.

They paraded through downtown Missoula during the 1990 BCH meeting and also appeared at the Washington BCH Rendezvous at Roy. They had a busy year and finished it by going to Pasadena, CA to take part in the Rose Bowl Parade. A few years later it appeared that the pack string might be a casualty of budget cuts, but BCHA and others rallied to their support and they are still alive and well.

Washington BCH filed an appeal of a USFS decision, one of the few times we have done that. They appealed a Management Plan for four Cascade Forests, which included 17 Wilderness Areas. Among other things, the plans would have restricted trail clearing to a three foot width on 75% of the trails. The Washington BCH felt that, in that wet, fast growing environment, the trails would be clogged with brush and be impassable to horse use.

In October, Kurt Dyer represented Back Country Horsemen of America at the National Recreation Strategy Conference in Washington, D.C. Kurt went a day early and contacted Jerry Reese, who had worked on the Lewis and Clark Forest in Montana, but who was now working at the Washington D.C. office. Jerry arranged for a 45 minute meeting that day with USFS Chief Dale Robertson. They discussed a number of items of interest to BCHA. In his report Kurt said, "Mr. Robertson was not aware of our organization, but seemed genuinely pleased that we exist."

I am convinced that my visit with Mr. Robertson was worth the cost of the trip. I had the opportunity to visit further with the Chief throughout the conference, at which he was present most of the time."

Kurt had a busy day and was also able to spend some time with Montana Senators Baucus and Burns.

At the two day conference, much of the time was spent in small workshop type groups, which dealt with a wide range of recreational subjects.

Previously, BCHA had not been involved in much activity of this sort, but Kurt thought that it was worth attending for several reasons. "First, we received much needed recognition on a national level. Second, several contacts were made that may result in the formation of BCH groups in areas where there are none now, and third, the USFS seems excited about an organized group representing the private stock user sector.

Idaho's Senator Symms introduced legislation that would authorize a Recreational Trails Fund. This Act provided that a small percentage of the gas tax revenue would be transferred from the Highway Trust Fund into a new trails account. This money would be available for trail related work through grants administered through the various states. BCHA endorsed this bill and it eventually passed in spite of strong opposition from some of the "environmental" groups. It was not funded until a year after passage, and then only for a fraction of the 50 or 60 million dollars that had been anticipated.

Something new had been added to the trail scene. Pedal powered trail bikes were becoming more and more common. Some accidents and confrontations were reported in the news. At Montana's Gibson Reservoir there was a confrontation between horsemen (not BCH members) and some bike riders that resulted in criminal charges being filed. In Oregon a bike rider competing in a race crashed into a horse and the horse rider ended up with some broken bones and was hospitalized.

1991

Back Country Horsemen of America continued to struggle with organizational problems in 1991. While some directors communicated regularly with each other, there were many who never did. There is nothing in the files to show that about half of them ever did anything other than attend the annual meeting. Another area of concern for some of us was the time wasted at our annual meeting on trivial things, and our inability to focus on more serious and complicated matters. It was felt that this once a year meeting time was very valuable to us and that better use of it could be made if some planning and information exchange was done prior to the meeting.

Near the end of his term as Board Chairman, Val Johnson wrote to the directors. He said, "As I look back over the past two years that I have been chairman, and the years that we have been a national organization, I don't think our hopes and aspirations have been as successfully attained as they could have been if we had focused our efforts on specific goals. Sure, we have had some successes, but I think that we could have done better if we planned ahead."

"In thinking about what the National Board of Directors goals should be, perhaps we should concentrate on expansion and increasing our profile on a national level. Increasing our profile would entail becoming more involved in getting our message of improved trails and retention of stock use expressed at these national and regional forums such as the one that Kurt went to in Washington, D.C."

I first became aware of Peter Browning, a well known California writer and founder of the High Sierra Hikers Assn. when Charley Morgan responded to an appeal that he had made to hikers to voice opposition to the use of pack and saddle stock in National Parks. Charley wrote a point by point rebuttal and concluded it by saying, "The perpetuation of the myth that pack and saddle stock are the spoilers of the wilderness is unjustly furthered by your arguments. The real problem that all of us face as users of the wilderness is that there are just too many bodies. You yourself state that 95 percent of the use is by the back packer segment of users and thus they should share a proportionate amount of blame for degrading the "wilderness experience."

Pack and saddle stock in the High Sierra had been used for over a hundred years prior to the first report of the existence of Giardia. This is directly attributable to improper disposal of human feces. Who is the best equipped to manage the feces problem, the five riders, all of whom carry shovels or the 95 hikers, most of whom don't even carry a small trowel?

Our record of conservation speaks for itself. We resent the implication that it is otherwise."

The 1991 annual meeting was held March 8 in Olympia, Washington as a part of the Washington convention. All four of the charter states were fully represented, but expected representatives from Wyoming and Nevada did not show

up.

The application for membership from the Wind River, WY chapter was accepted, but things were not going well with our efforts in Oregon. The High Desert Trail Riders of Klamath Falls had applied for membership and paid dues the previous year, but they sent a letter saying that they felt that they were not getting their money's worth from BCHA and that they would not pay the \$2 a member dues for that year. They were later dropped from membership. Don McPherson announced that he and Steve Didier planned to attend a meeting in LaGrande, OR on March 23. This meeting was held as scheduled and resulted in the formation of the Blue Mountain BCH Chapter.

A Task Force was appointed whose function was to review, rewrite, update and circulate all expansion materials of BCHA and to establish the position of Expansion Coordinator, whose duties would be to supervise and coordinate all expansion efforts. Val Johnson was later appointed to this new position.

We had sold \$800 worth of advertising for the last newsletter, of which 5000 copies were printed. Someone from the Capitol Riders of Washington, was present and said that he had some contacts with national advertisers. He was authorized to contact these people, but no advertising was sold to them.

In Montana another Wilderness Bill had been introduced in Congress and Montana directors asked BCHA to support passage of that, which was done. Numerous attempts to pass a statewide bill had all failed. This latest bill took a different approach. It proposed wilderness designation for areas in only two national forests but that also followed the path of all the others and went down to defeat. Later that year, Sen. Baucus introduced another Montana Wilderness bill, the 11th, and it went like all the others. The pro wilderness groups attacked it from one direction and the anti-wilderness types from the other.

Jim McCrae, from British Columbia, was present and said that they had formed a BCH chapter there. After considerable discussion, it was decided that full affiliation was not in the best interest of either group. Instead, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed that allowed Canada to use the Back Country Horsemen name. It also provided that:

1. They will establish lines of communication with each other to further the purposes and objectives of the organizations.
2. They will cooperate with each other in matters of mutual interest.
3. They will share information about matters of mutual interest.
4. They will be entitled to send observers to the meetings and events of the other organization.

It was decided to hold the next annual meeting separate from any state meeting. This was first presented as a constitutional change and failed. It was pointed out that the constitution allowed the board to meet when and where they decided. The meeting was set for Reno, NV April 25 and 26.

By a vote of 5 to 3, a motion passed to establish the position of Executive Secretary. A committee of the three past

chairmen were appointed to define the position and make recommendations to the board at the 1992 meeting.

Officers elected were Mylon Filkins, Chairman, Kurt Dyer, Vice-Chairman and Ken Ausk, Secretary-Treasurer.

When Les Linendoll was Secretary, he pointed out how difficult it was to keep good minutes and also adequately represent your state as a director. We then began the practice of appointing a recording secretary to take meeting minutes. One of those at the 1991 meeting was Peg Rickabaugh, who has since that time changed her name and we now know her as Peg Greiwe, BCHA Executive Secretary.

A proposal had been made for a user fee program in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. This was to be a five year pilot program and would include fees for all use, including floaters and aircraft landings at Wilderness airfields. No vote was taken at the board meeting, but the sentiment was strongly against user fees. It required Congressional approval, which was never given, so that was the end of that.

In April we became aware that the Forest Service-Outfitter controversy in the Frank Church had spread into Wyoming. Outfitters there were asking for similar favorable treatment that they thought was being given to the Idaho outfitters.

On April 22-23 Lloyd Fagerland represented BCHA at a Region 1 Wilderness Workshop at Missoula, MT. This meeting was attended by over 100 people who were involved in Wilderness management. They were mostly USFS, but some were from the Park Service, Montana Fish & Game, BLM and Tribal officers. Fagerland was one of a four person panel that presented the program after their dinner one evening.

Nancy Dupont, president of the Heritage Trails Fund, represented BCHA at the National Trails Coalition at Washington D.C. BCHA contributed \$150 toward her expenses and she distributed information and told the Trails Coalition about BCHA activities. She also wrote a report of the meeting for the newsletter.

Advertising rates were raised to \$7.50 a column inch. The Pecos BCH was organized in New Mexico and applied for associate membership. Many of the charter members had been part of an all women's packing group. In spite of the fact that women have always been a large and important part of our membership, we are known as the Back Country Horsemen. There have been times when we discussed changing the name, but somehow, horsepersons or some other neutral gender title just didn't seem to have the right ring to it. Most BCH logos show a horse and rider, who always appeared to be male. The New Mexico logo also had the horse and rider, but it was definitely female.

The Organizational Handbook was revised, updated and distributed. Members primarily responsible for that were Dick Cochran, Mylon Filkins and Fred Chamberlain.

Ads promoting BCHA were purchased in the American Mule newsletter and the Western Horseman magazine. Also, with our permission, the Horse and Horseman magazine began printing pages from the Mountain Manners BCH booklet, one each month and at no cost to us.

Senator Symms addressed the Idaho BCH annual convention. He gave an in depth review of his bill that would establish a Recreation Trails Trust Fund, with the money coming from a portion of gas taxes. This was discussed at the BCHA annual meeting and no action was taken as it seemed that we had significant numbers of both proponents and opponents to this bill. The opponents felt that it would contribute to more ORV trails and use.

At the end of 1991, we received a report from the Forest Service on clean up efforts in the Frank Church. The reports painted a mixed picture. Some outfitters were complying/but some had made little or no effort to do so. They noted that an early, heavy snow at the end of the hunting season had made it difficult to make inspections or move camps from the woods.

Chairman Filkins attended the National Park Symposium, Challenges and Strategies for the 21st Century at Vail, Colorado on October 7-10.

BCHA 1992

The Symms Recreational Trails Fund Act passed in early 1992. Due to varying opinions on the board, BCHA had never taken a position for or against the bill. The Washington BCH nominated Jim Murphy for the lone equestrian position on a national advisory board that was being formed. It was given to an American Horse Council member from a New England state.

The Guidebook was reprinted, 33,000 copies, costs shared by BCHA, various state and local BCH groups and the USFS. Jim Murphy again was responsible for the reprinting.

Washington was the largest BCH state at the beginning of 1992 with 2300 members. California was second, reporting 1600 members. Idaho had also grown to almost 1000. Alone amongst the charter state, Montana had failed to show any growth. There were also four associate member chapters in four different states, for a total membership of over 6,000.

The annual meeting was held in Reno, April 25-26, with the local chapter as the host. The charter states were fully represented, with two representative each from Wyoming and Nevada.

We received our first request to purchase the mailing list. Policy was established to not sell it.

The board wrestled again with the problem of defining exactly what a state BCH organization was. It was decided that two local chapters, with more than 15 members each could form a state organization and apply for full BCHA membership. Single chapters in a state where there was no state unit could apply for associate membership and be entitled to one voting member at the annual meeting.

A committee had been established the previous year to explore the possibility of hiring an executive secretary. The committee thought, and the board agreed, that we did not need a full time employee. Also, it was thought that the pressing need was for someone to take care of clerical work, phone calls and that sort of thing, rather than someone who set policy and made major decisions. At that time, almost all clerical work and correspondence was done by the chairman, and it was thought that it was essential that we lessen that time consuming load, if we were going to continue to be able to attract good chairmen. The idea again foundered, apparently because we could not fund it on a continuing basis without some additional income. Ann Lange was appointed as a one person committee to investigate various funding alternatives and report back at the 1993 meeting.

Grizzly bears, wolves and buffalo were often in the news throughout Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. There was serious talk of reintroducing wolves in the Yellowstone area. Already there were various food storage regulations there regarding bears and talk of extending those to the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. Montana was allowing hunters to harvest surplus - bison and elk that wandered out of Yellowstone Park. Many back country users feared increasing regulation that would limit their recreational use opportunities.

Montana introduced and BCHA passed a resolution that read:

"The BCHA oppose unjustified regulations or restrictions on backcountry recreational use due to wolf reintroduction or bear management policies developed by the resource management agencies."

Also, in a somewhat related action, the Montana BCH began to deal with proposed "bear sanitation" rules for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. They passed a resolution that said, "While we agree with the stated purpose, we do not feel that a host of new rules and regulations are needed to achieve that purpose. If and when it is determined that new rules are needed, they should be implemented only as a direct response to a specific, ongoing, well documented problem and not because of occasional, isolated incidents. Specifically, we do not feel that there is a need for rules such as are now in effect on USFS land around Yellowstone Park, which include permanent metal bear resistant food caches, meat poles and prohibition against game carcasses in camp."

BCHA joined the American Horse Council, also the Trails Coalition, a newly formed group whose only stated purpose was to work for funding of the Trails Fund Act, which had been approved, but no funding appropriated. There was no funding provided that year.

All officers were re-elected The 1993 meeting was set for Lander, WY.

Unhappy with the speed and effectiveness of outfitter clean up efforts in the Frank Church Wilderness, Wilderness Watch, Bill Worf and Howard Spaletta filed a lawsuit, asking that the USFS be compelled to take steps that would eliminate caches, permanent structures and piped water systems from the wilderness. They also asked for changes in the reserved camp system. .

Much to almost everyone's surprise, Senators Baucus and Burns joined forces and introduced another Montana Wilderness bill. That sailed through the Senate, but ran into a dead end in the House, where Representative Williams, encouraged by the environmental groups, managed to kill it with some legislative maneuvering.

Charley Morgan asked to be relieved of his duties as advertising coordinator, but no one was found that would do that job, so he continued. It had been decided at the annual meeting to pay the editor a stipend of \$350 per issue and the advertising coordinator \$150.

The Rocky Mountain BCH was formed in the Canon City, Colorado area and made application for membership. Also a second chapter in Wyoming was formed at Buffalo.

Ann Lange submitted testimony to Rep. Bruce Vento's Oversight Hearings on Recreational Trails. Things haven't changed much since then. Ann wrote, "We are spending millions of dollars to generate volumes of lofty verbiage that is often worth very little once completed. Special interest groups then play the game well, wasting more millions by bogging down implementation in lengthy appeals and judicial maneuvering."

Gary Larabee, representing BCH of Washington, became a semi-finalist in the Take Pride In America Program. Their reward was a certificate signed by Manuel Lujan, Secretary of the

Interior and an invitation to an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

In April Ben York, the California state BCH president and a 67 year old retired veterinarian began his Mexico to Canada horseback trip along the Pacific Crest Trail. His wife, Adeline was to accompany him, but soon after starting, she got into trouble in a snowfield, got bucked off and ended up with a broken arm. Ben continued with the trip, averaged 20 miles a day and in August was in mid Oregon. He reached the Canadian border in October.

BCHA was represented at the American Trails Council Symposium in Missoula September 20-22 by Mylon Filkins and Lloyd Fagerland. Idaho BCH members Don and Lorraine McPherson were also present, representing the Idaho Trails Council, as was Les Linendoll, from nearby Corvallis and a few other local members. There were 344 people from 44 states registered. Mylon, Don and Lloyd were participants in three of the twenty five workshops that were on the program.

As usual, horsemen were a small minority, but a lady lawyer from New York state gathered us together for a couple of meetings. I recall women from Illinois and Indiana, both of which had statewide trail organizations. We also met Mead Hargis and Barbara Walker, which later that year resulted in our first BCH chapter in Utah.

In my newsletter report of the meeting I wrote, "I thought that the Symposium was well worth the time and money that we expended to attend. Hopefully, we will retain some of the things that we learned and put them to use. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect was the public exposure and the contacts that we made. Back Country Horsemen is still not exactly a well known name, but we did make a few more people from all over the country aware of the fact that there is a BCH organization and that we will fight to preserve our right to use trails on our public lands. The contacts that we made will prove valuable somewhere down the road."

Les Linendoll was appointed as the new Expansion Coordinator.

In its closing days, Congress appropriated 7.5 million for the Trails Fund for 1993.

The Wildland Training Center, west of Missoula, MT began to teach wildland management, horsemanship and primitive skills to Forest Service and other land management agency employees.

1993

Utah formed a state organization in January, 1993. They followed a different route than all others in that they formed their state organizations and then began to add local chapters. They sponsored a workshop in April and Chairman Mylon Filkins was a guest and speaker.

The Flathead Chapter hosted a 20th birthday party for Back Country Horsemen. One hundred and thirty one people gathered in Columbia Falls, only a mile or so from the site of the organizational meeting held 20 years previous to that. Representatives from most of the Montana chapters joined in the celebration, as did former BCHA Chairman Val Johnson and his wife Sara. There was a large group from the BCH chapter at Cranbrook B.C. The Flathead Forest Supervisor and Spotted Bear District Ranger attended. The guests of honor were Beaverhead Forest Supervisor Ron Prichard and his wife Ardis. In 1973 Ron was the Glacier View District Ranger. Both he and his wife were charter members and Ardis was the first treasurer. In preparation for the party a 20 year BCH history was written and published in the BCHA newsletter.

BCHA applied for Internal Revenue C-4 non-profit status. This allowed them to avoid paying income taxes on any revenue but did not make dues and donations to the organization a deductible item for the donors.

Washington was still the largest BCH state, but California was growing fast with eleven chapters and three more in the planning stages. Idaho reported 15 chapters, an increase of six in the past year.

The annual directors meeting was held May 1-2 in Lander Wyoming. The charter states were fully represented, plus delegates from Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico and Colorado.

Kurt Dyer was elected as Chairman, Randy Darling as Vice-Chairman and Ann Lange as Treasurer.

Expansion Coordinator Les Linendoll reported that since October he had answered inquiries from 131 people in 29 states and three Canadian provinces.

Applications from state organizations in Wyoming and Utah were approved as was an associate status for the Northwestern Chapter in New Mexico.

A total of 7,500 newsletters were printed, of which 550 were complimentary copies sent without charge, mostly to government agencies. Jim Murphy had compiled the new list, which included every USFS district in the ten western states and others, such as the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Advertising revenue had fallen. In an effort to encourage sales, it was decided to offer a 25% commission for all sales, but that never met with much success. Rates were increased to \$10 a column inch.

The newly formed Rocky Mountain Chapter reported that they manned an information booth at the Denver Sportsmen Show.

It was pointed out that volunteer report forms varied widely, making it difficult to compile accurate statistics for all of BCHA, and also that there were many different hourly

rates used to calculate the value of work performed. While everyone seemed to agree that a standardized form would be desirable, that has proven to be a difficult goal to reach.

Ann Lange made her report on possible revenue sources to fund the Executive Secretary position. She suggested forming three new membership categories, such as California had done. Those were (1) Sustaining at \$100, (2) Benefactor-\$250 and (3) Patron-\$500. This was adopted. Ann also suggested that there be an increase in dues paid to BCHA by the state organizations. Later in the meeting the directors voted to ask the states to approve a \$1 increase in dues for 1994, bringing the total to \$3.

Again, there was no action taken to fill the authorized position of Executive Secretary. The increasing work load for the Chairman was discussed and some new appointed positions were established to help with that. A Corresponding Secretary position with an annual salary of \$1,000 was established. It was thought that this person would take care of most of the correspondence and clerical work, which may have worked but no one was ever found that would take the job. The position of Liaison Chairman was set up and Mylon Filkins agreed to do that. His areas of responsibility were legislation, contacts with various public agencies and other groups, etc. Another new position was that of Historian. Lloyd Fagerland accepted that job. Apparently the competition for those two jobs is not too great as both are still held by the same people. Les Linendoll was reappointed as Expansion Coordinator and Jim Murphy, Charles Morgan and Lloyd Fagerland were also reappointed to the newsletter staff.

The immediate past chairman was made an ex-officio member of the board, with his expenses to be borne by the BCHA treasury.

Ann Lange attended a five day Limits of Acceptable Change Conference in Missoula, MT. The LAC concept was relatively new. Previously, some wilderness areas had attempted to set numerical limits, which hadn't worked too well and it was thought that a new approach was needed. The LAC concept was that instead of trying to count bodies, or horses, or whatever, they would attempt to measure change. It was thought that the numbers weren't too important, but that the amount of impact was. Standards were set to try to do this, with only limited success. A system of monitoring was established as a way of measuring change, but has proven to be difficult, time consuming and expensive.

The first use of the LAC concept was for the Bob Marshall Wilderness and a number of Montana BCH members were a part of the planning from 1982 to 1987. Since then it has been used in a lot of locations throughout the country. Jerry Stokes, who at that time was Recreation Officer for the Flathead Forest, was the lead man in this and I assume that he knew where we were headed, but for my part, I thought that we were just sort of muddling along and I had no idea of what it would look like when we finished.

The second wilderness to attempt LAC planning process was the Selway-Bitterroot. Idaho BCH members participated in that

and reported that they felt that, if they had not done so, about half of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness would have been closed to stock use. Later, this LAC Task Force was suddenly disbanded, the casualty of a threatened lawsuit that maintained that such advisory committees were illegal unless specifically authorized by Congress or the Executive Branch of the government.

The Montana Mountain Manners booklet was being reprinted and the BCHA Board decided to contribute \$500 towards its cost, in return for the number of books that would pay for.

Income for the year was \$17,500, outgo was \$24,500. The deficit was caused by the \$11,600 cost of printing the Guidebook.

The Endangered Species Act began to have more of an effect on dispersed recreation and BCH members began to show more interest in it. The original Act, passed in 1973, was supposed to be re-authorized in 1993. Numerous bills were introduced in Congress that would have done this. They ranged from those that would have made only minor changes to those that would have drastically altered it and all points in between those two extremes. This went on for several years, but no re-authorization bill was ever passed. What the legal ramifications of that are, I do not know, but Congress apparently decided that it was politically expedient to ignore it. Secretary of Interior Babbitt did make some administrative changes, which corrected some of the more flagrant abuses. Some environmental groups threatened to sue to force the changes to be reinstated, but I don't believe that they ever did.

The Idaho BCH developed a four page position statement which asked for a rewrite of the entire Act. They felt that it was unscientific, that there was an estimated 100 million species on earth and that few have had base line studies as to their habitats and life procedures. They asked that various species considered vermin be eliminated from any consideration and the re-authorization be written in clear, concise language./ One of the major criticisms of the 1973 Act was that it was so vague and imprecise that it had allowed, even encouraged, lawsuits and interpretations by the courts.

Charley Morgan suggested that we begin to promote "Gentle Use" as a substitute for such terms as Minimum Impact, Tread Lightly, Leave No Trace and other similar phrases. He thought that it would create a more positive image. To some extent, that has now happened.

Wilderness Watch, Bill Worf and Howard Spaletta received a favorable judgment in their lawsuit against the Forest Service. It ordered the parties to submit a joint remedial plan, which had to be in full compliance with the Wilderness Act.

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Oregon Trail, a group of Wind River BCH members and those of the New Pioneer Wagon Train retraced a portion of that route. Their trip was four days instead of the six or more months that it took most of the original travelers.

A number of people wrote articles for the newsletter in 1993, justifying the need for an Executive Secretary and promoting the \$1 dues increase that had been proposed by the Board. Amongst those was Kurt Dyer, BCHA Chairman. Kurt wrote: "If we are going to grow as an organization, continue our educational programs and operate as an effective group on a national scale, our budget will have to grow with us. I feel that a \$1 increase in our national dues is a conservative measure to keep our budget at a realistic level. So, for the price of a cup of coffee, let's support the organization."

Ann Lange represented BCHA at a Central and Southern Sierra Wilderness Conference. She was part of a panel, consisting of a backpacker, a Sierra Club member with a USFS moderator. Her subject was "Wilderness Users--How do they view Wilderness Management Action?"

1994

The annual Back Country Horsemen of America board meeting was held at Park City, Utah on April 30-May 1. The state organizations of California, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming were all represented. In addition, associate chapters in New Mexico and Nevada also had delegates present.

An application from Arizona for associate membership was approved. Also, applications from Tiller Creek, Oregon and the High Desert Trail Riders of Klamath Falls, Oregon were accepted. There was an application from Homer, Alaska, which was tentatively approved, pending receipt of a suitable constitution and other documents.

Expansion Coordinator Les Linendoll reported that he and Jerry Kempf had participated in a Horse Packing and Wilderness Skills Clinic sponsored by the USFS Eagle Ranger District at Eagle, Colorado. Copies of the BCHA Guidebook, Newsletter, Mountain Manners and various F.S. publications were distributed to the 70 or 80 people present. Lynn Munson and Sandy Fuller, of the Rocky Mt. BCH came over, assisted with the program and talked to numerous individuals afterwards. In spite of high hopes that this would result in the second Colorado unit, it did not turn out that way. Les also reported that since the last annual meeting he had responded to inquiries from 41 states.

Don McPherson reported that the Idaho BCH Low Impact Horse Use video was completed and would be available in May. This video ran for 75 minutes and was for sale for \$29.95. The Washington BCH presented Idaho with a \$2500 check to help with expenses. BCHA had previously donated \$1,000.

The \$1 dues increase had been ratified by the states, to go into effect January 1, 1995.

All officers were re-elected and there were also no changes in appointed officers.

The paid membership in 1993 was 6,840. Washington was still the largest, with 2510, California next with 1929, Montana had 1071, Idaho 878, Utah 168, Nevada 146, Wyoming 68, New Mexico 53, Colorado 50 and Oregon 23.

Some discussion took place regarding registering the Back Country Horsemen name. Dick Cochran estimated that it might cost as much as \$2,000 and no action was taken.

The Executive Secretary position was again discussed and it was decided to not fill the position in 1994.

Re-authorization of the Endangered Species Act was in the news for the entire year. Each issue of our newsletter had long articles about it. We were sure that 1994 was the year. There were several bills introduced in Congress. Lots of talk, but no action. The directors adopted a position which said: "BCHA supports new legislation and other government actions that will bring greater consideration for people into the Endangered Species Act, especially consideration of economic well-being and recreation opportunities."

In Washington, some environmental groups were pushing for the establishment of the North Cascades National Park. This

would establish a national park on what was primarily Forest Service land. The Washington BCH felt that they were heavy users of that land and that park designation might bring restrictions. They asked BCHA to support their position and they adopted the following resolution:.

"Back Country Horsemen of America opposes the proposed establishment of an "International Peace Park" in the North Cascades of Washington because the proposal has an undefined potential for restricting human use. Any such proposals must clearly define the impacts on recreation and the effects on local economies. Any proposal must assign decision making roles to specific people representing user groups, including recreational horse use and local economics."

It was decided to investigate the possibilities of forming a foundation with Internal Revenue C-3 status to enable tax free donations to be given to it for the purpose of funding special projects.

The 12th National Trails Symposium was held in Anchorage, Alaska the last week of September. Jim Murphy represented BCHA and participated in one of the 35 workshops that were available. His topic was: Design Conflict--Back Country Trail Design and Management.

Canyonlands National Park in eastern Utah issued a draft for a new management plan. The Utah BCH responded to this draft and said that they hoped to be able to head off this unnecessary and unjustified recreational stock closure in another national park.

In commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Wilderness Act Ann Lange prepared a wilderness history and presented it at the California Rendezvous.

That year a lot of publicity was given to the highly touted plan to "Reinvent the Forest Service", proposed as a part of President Clinton's plan to Reinvent Government. It seemed to be all talk and no action. It was hard to see any noticeable improvements and before long, nothing more was heard of it.

That year I violated one of the accepted rules of newsletter editing, which is, "Never pick a fight with someone who has more ink than you do." I took on no less a person than Pat Close, editor of the Western Horseman magazine. It all began when she wrote an article entitled, It's Time to Circle the Wagons. It was prompted by Senate Bill 208, which Ms. Close thought was a serious threat to recreational horse use in National Parks. As nearly as I could determine S. 208 was a bill dealing with no one other than park concessionaires. It would have raised their fees and subjected them to more competitive bidding. It passed both houses of Congress with overwhelming approval. The only stock use that it affected were the horse ride concessionaires which are a tiny part of the business. I thought that she had been conned into jumping into the concessionaires battle by the American Horse Association, which in turn had been enlisted by the National Park Hospitality Association, which is a lobbying group for park concessionaires. It is big business and I didn't think they needed any help from us or the Western Horsemen. But the

article by Ms. Close struck a responsive chord amongst many of our members. It was reprinted in several BCH newsletters and I received three suggestions that I do the same in the BCHA newsletter.

I decided to compile our own article about stock use in the national parks, thinking that we had as much expertise available as anyone. I wrote for information from ten knowledgeable members and they enlisted six more people. I collected a stack of material three inches high and wrote a two page article for the newsletter. It is difficult to summarize that in a sentence or two, but what we found was that the Park's weren't real friendly to stock users, but that the situation hadn't changed much in recent years and my correspondents didn't anticipate that it would in the foreseeable future.

Members wrote to say that they thought that I was crazy to aggravate Ms. Close. The Western Horseman had, in the past, given us some favorable publicity. Soon after that I did receive a letter from Ms. Close, saying that she was a regular reader of our newsletter. That was the beginning of the exchange of a number of letters over the next year or so--cordial and friendly letters so the skeptics were wrong. In that year Ms. Close commissioned me to write two articles and even paid me for doing so. They were a first for me, but I cashed the checks rather than hanging them on the wall. One was about the Endangered Species Act and how it was affecting horse use here in Montana and, ironically, the other was about a proposed management plan for Glacier Park and how it would affect horsemen.

1995

The annual board meeting was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico April 28, 29 and 30, with 15 voting delegates from nine states attending, plus a few guests.

State reports were given. Chairman Dyer asked for input as to the value of those reports. Consensus was that they had some value, but that the oral section of them should be brief (4 minutes).

Getting the states to report their volunteer work on a standardized report form continued to be a problem. Randy Darling and Shari Marihugh gave an illustrated report on volunteer activity documentation.

New Mexico had formed a state association and applied for state membership, which was approved. The Oregon Coast Horse Association applied for associate status. This was tabled, pending the arrival of more information, but was later approved. The second Colorado chapter, Four Corners of Durango, applied for associate membership, which was granted. Also, there was an application from the BCH of the Ozarks, from Harrison, Arkansas which was approved.

The registration of the Back Country Horsemen of America name and logo was discussed. Jim Bridegum said that he had some experience in that field and that he thought that a trademark registration would be sufficient and could be done for \$500 or less. He was asked to explore that further.

Ann Lange compiled a collection of board policies. Copies will be duplicated and distributed.

Kurt Dyer had made a trip to Lethbridge and Pincher Creek, Alberta, visiting with individuals who were interested in BCHA and some government officials. After some discussion, the board indicated a desire to support the Canadian clubs education and service while maintaining a separate but formal relationship to encourage the exchanging and sharing of information.

Kurt also went to the Denver Stock Show, where the Rocky Mountain BCH members were manning an information booth. He was able to meet and talk with a number of Colorado horsemen and thought that the trip did much to promote the expansion and awareness of BCH in Colorado.

The Executive Secretary position was again discussed but this time L.D. Bennett had developed a detailed presentation of guidelines. His report suggested that a selection committee be established and that they have the authority to negotiate a monthly salary between \$800 and \$1200, depending on experience and time involved. They would also have the authority to decide what office equipment was needed. A motion was made to change the title from Executive Secretary to Executive Director. Proponents thought that title sounded more authoritative and I guess the opponents agreed. The motion failed. The job was described as clerical in nature, an office manager rather than a decision maker.

The decision to fill the position was not unanimous. A number of motions were made to implement the decision.

All passed by a vote of either 11 to 4 or 10 to 5.

L.D. Bennet and Nylon Filkins were appointed as members of a selection committee, chaired by the new BCHA chairman, which was later determined to be Randy Darling.

Re-authorization of the Endangered Species Act had still not happened. In fact, it never did. California, Washington, Idaho and Montana BCH all had adopted position papers on it. The general content of those was that they favored giving the states and individual property owners more control of what happens within the ESA. Delisting species that have reached target numbers such as the grizzly bear in the Bob Marshall Ecosystem should be done to show that the Act is working. An example of how the Endangered Species Act affects BCHA members was shown by the placement of new bear sanitation regulations in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. These regulations, imposed on all people traveling or camping in grizzly bear country, required that they store their food in bear resistant boxes or in a bear resistant manner as well as taking other precautions to minimize human-bear conflicts.

A proposal had been made by the Forest Service to establish a separate wilderness district in the Frank Church. The Idaho BCH were strongly opposed to this idea and asked BCHA to support them, which they did. Opposition was primarily because it was thought that it would make wilderness managers more inaccessible and result in another layer of bureaucracy. Not all members agreed with that. I received two letters from people who thought that it was a good idea and would result in better wilderness management.

Randy Darling was elected Chairman, Don Nuxol Vice-Chairman and Linda Serduik Secretary Treasurer. Montana was selected as the next meeting site.

One hundred and twenty copies of a two page questionnaire was prepared and distributed to all local units and others by Mylon Filkins, of which 59 were returned. The questionnaire attempted to determine what members expected of BCHA, what they liked and what they disliked and asked for suggestions for new programs, etc.

In May, long time Executive Director of the Washington BCH, Ken Wilcox died. Ken was on the first BCHA board of directors, took an active part in the formation of BCHA and for years was one of the most active and influential of our members.

In the closing days of the 1994 Congress they passed the California Desert Protection Act. This Act was the largest, and probably the most controversial wilderness addition in the lower 48 states since the enactment of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

Our membership rose to 8,100 members.

The Executive Secretary search committee began their work. An ad was placed in the newsletter and several applications were received. In September, from those applicants, Peg Greiwe was selected. She established an office in her home and began her work. As a part of the get acquainted process she made a trip to Montana and met with Lloyd Fagerland, newsletter editor, Linda Serduik, Secretary-Treasurer, Ken Ausk, Montana

Director, Les Linendoll, Expansion Coordinator and Brent Morris, Advertising Coordinator. Peg said, "It was most informative and enjoyable time. Quite a bit of information flew back and forth at the table I learned a lot about BCHA."

Brent Morris had been hired to sell advertising on a commission basis. He had experience doing that and there were high expectations that we would come close to financing the newsletter through advertising revenue. Unfortunately, it didn't turn out that way as Morris sold very little advertising. After a time, he was relieved of his responsibilities and Peg Greiwe began to handle advertising accounts

The Recreational Trails Fund Act was passed in 1991. but no money was appropriated until 1993 when 71 million dollars were allocated. Then came two more dry years without any funding, but in 1996 and 1997 15 million dollars were appropriated. Since that time funding has taken place each year in gradually increasing amounts.

Two BCH chapters were formed in North Carolina and paid dues for 183 members.

I am going to use my editorial privileges to preserve an idea that I thought and still think was a good one. I proposed it in 1993 and again in 1995 without any visible signs of support either time. In spite of the rebuff, I still think that the idea has some merit. No one was impolite enough to say so but they seemed to feel that I was a traitor to the cause for even suggesting it, the fellow in the black hat standing in the way of growth and progress. But I saw myself as the fellow in the white hat that was trying to avert a train wreck, which I was sure was bound to happen somewhere down the track.

Basically, the idea was to set an eastern boundary, beyond which we would not accept Back Country Horsemen chapters. The boundary was never specifically defined, but was assumed to be the western states where we now have BCH units, a line from the eastern Montana border running in a southerly direction.

For people who showed interest east of that line, we would offer to help and encourage them to establish their own state and regional groups. Ideally, there would be four or five nationwide, with BCHA representing the western part of the country. There are already many statewide trail riding organizations, which should make that job easier.

I think that there are numerous advantages and practically no disadvantages to this approach. The smaller geographical area would allow them to focus on their own problems and devise their own solutions. It would also allow for more participation on a grass roots level. The distances that we deal with now are already a problem. Spreading further would do nothing but make a bad situation worse.

As I envision it, once the regional organizations are in place, a loose coalition would be formed which would maintain good communication between the groups and cooperate on items of mutual concern. The officers could meet occasionally and possibly form a truly national trail riding organization which would have enough members and clout to actually influence government decisions on a national level.

The present policy is one adopted by the board of directors at the 1995 annual meeting which said: "That they would: propose, encourage and support the expansion of BCH clubs into as many states as are desirous of membership, are in need of our support, direction and encouragement, who meet the requirements of BCHA and support the purposes.

Only time will tell whether isolated units like those in Arkansas and North Carolina can survive over the long pull. It seems to me that the deck is stacked against them. To this point, they haven't made much difference, one way or the other, but that surely would change if there were thousands of members in that part of the country.

I surely believe that there is a great danger in getting too spread out. We could become so diverse and fragmented that no one will know what we stand for, including our own members. Trying to assimilate thousands of members from a very different geographical situation without losing our identity would certainly be a tricky maneuver.

We tend to think of our enemies as those rabid, anti-horse types who are continuously trying to force us from public lands. While these people can be a nuisance and an aggravation, they can't really hurt us. The people who can mortally wound us are good people, horsemen, BCH members who loose site of our purpose. They become so wrapped up in the social aspects of BCH that they forget that it has a more serious purpose. I certainly don't mean to imply that easterners are more inclined that way than westerners. But I do think that, for the most part, that their problems are different than our problems, and that a group of people who were focused on those and on solutions to them would be better than a one size fits all approach. Forming those regional associations would be a lot of work. It wouldn't be quick and it wouldn't be easy, but the end result would be a lot more effective than becoming a Back Country Horsemen of America chapter.

So there you have it. Maybe someday after I am long gone, someone will read this, think that it is a good idea and go to work to make it happen.

In January, Colorado BCH members assisted the USFS in a Leave No Trace presentation at the Denver Stock Show, the largest event of its kind in the United States. They helped man the information booth and provided some printed BCH material for distribution. The Region 2 pack string, which had been put together the year before, performed in front of the grandstand crowd each day.

Over 500,000 people watched the pack string do its thing. In 1995 the string of nine matched molly mules participated in eight packing demonstrations, seven parades, three county fairs and two other events. In addition to that, they were a working string, packing over eight tons of miscellaneous cargo and forty tons of gravel.

Over 15,000 people stopped at the simulated stock camp on the grounds and participated in workshops where the Leave No Trace message was taught.

Faith Duncan was the Forest Service educational specialist who played a major role in the show and information booth. Later, Faith was also a key player in the formation of the Front Range BCH Chapter, located in the Denver vicinity.

Mylon Filkins and Ann Lange represented BCHA and the California BCH at the 13th National Trails Symposium in March at Washington, D.C. Mylon gave a presentation at two workshops and Ann at another. The Washington BCH had put together a Tread Lightly educational display box, which was displayed at the Symposium.

A bill was introduced in Congress that would have transferred Bureau Of Land Management Lands to state ownership, provided that the states wished to take title to them. Most BCH members thought that it was not a very good idea. While the BLM hadn't been noted for putting a lot of emphasis on recreation, there were signs that this was beginning to change. Most states did even less in trail maintenance and construction. The idea soon faded away.

Eldon Bowman, of the newly formed Arizona BCH, made his first attempt to get the Grand Canyon National Park to improve their facilities for, and treatment of private horsemen. Although, horses were allowed on some Park trails, no information about stock use was available at the entrance gates. Eldon continued his battle, with only an occasional success story.

The 1996 annual Board meeting was held near Columbia Falls, MT on April 26-28. This was the ten year anniversary of the first meeting in Helena.

Nevada and North Carolina applied for state membership status, which was granted. The Front Range Chapter, of Colorado, applied for Associate Membership, which was approved. Soon after they were organized, North Carolina was hit with a hurricane, which did a tremendous amount of damage to the trails.

in the Great Smoky National Park. The members pitched in and spent many volunteer hours clearing trails. Their weather has been making the national news again this past winter, first with a hurricane, heavy rains and floods and more recently with a snow and an ice storm.

Bill Maloit was appointed as chairman of the newly formed education committee and Al Brenner as head of the publications liaison committee.

Lloyd Fagerland resigned as newsletter editor, effective when a replacement was found. An editor search committee was formed consisting of Dave Howells, Peg Greiwe, Randy Darling, Al Brenner and Lloyd Fagerland.

Jim Bridegum reported that an application had been submitted at a cost of \$245 to register the name and the logo, but that it did not apply to all uses of those two items.

Dues were paid for 8,345 members in 1995.

Brent Morris, who had been retained to sell advertising on a commission basis, spoke to the board. He said that advertisers preferred an every other month publication, rather than one that was only published every three months and that if we would publish six times a year, that he could sell enough additional advertising to cover the extra costs (\$6,000). The board voted to go to six editions a year, contingent on Morris being able to sell the ads. But he didn't sell the ads and we didn't publish the extra issues.

The board renewed Executive Secretary Peg Greiwe's contract for \$1,000 a month, plus office expenses.

In Idaho's Sawtooth Wilderness a proposal was made to close an eleven mile section of trail, which in turn, blocked access to some other trails. The only reason given was that it was a heavily used hiker trail, close to a popular tourist area and that they didn't like to share their trail. This was opposed by the Idaho BCH and BCHA and was eventually dropped.

Not knowing who the new editor would be or what their experience or knowledge of BCH purpose and values might be, it was decided to form a publication committee. They will have final review of all material in the newsletter until the new editor is familiar with BCHA matters. In addition, the committee had various other duties. Al Brenner was the chairman. Deadline for job applications was set for June 30.

California introduced a resolution favoring use of hand held mechanized equipment (chain saws) in wilderness. The resolution passed, but later Montana directors vigorously objected to it, saying that not enough consideration and time had been given to a controversial subject.

A membership in the Blue Ribbon Coalition, purchased by the Executive Secretary, apparently at the urging of some Washington members, was rescinded. It was felt that it should have been a board decision as their values and purpose are much different than ours. It was noted that great diplomacy should be used in the resignation letter.

Herb Janzen and Warren Smith, representing the Kootenay BCH at Cranbrook, B.C. were visitors and gave a brief report. Chairman Randy Darling, Vice-Chairman Don Nuxoll, and

Secretary-Treasurer, Linda Serdiuk were all re-elected.

When Treasurer Linda Serdiuk made her financial report and proposed budget, it seemed rather obvious that the existing funding wasn't going to stretch to cover the proposed expenditures. After considerable discussion, it was moved and passed to propose raising the dues \$2 a membership, making them \$5 for a single and \$8 for a family. It was agreed that it would take some promotion and sales effort to get the state organizations to approve the increase, and directors were requested to go home and explain to members why it was needed.

Linda wrote an article for the next newsletter titled, "The Case for a Dues Increase", in which she stated the financial realities, as she saw them. As a part of that article she listed items owned by her family and expenses incurred because of horse ownership. As you can imagine, the amount was impressive and included things like a pickup and horse trailer, several horse and all the tack necessary for them, camping equipment, vehicle expenses, veterinarians and farriers. BCHA dues were such a small part of that total amount, that they could hardly be measured.

Harold Edwards also wrote a newsletter article he called, "With More Growth Comes More Responsibility". There was only one letter in the 1996 files on the subject, and that was from Ken Ausk, who had opposed hiring the Executive Secretary and thought we should balance our budget by cutting expenses.

In October, Treasurer Linda wrote to the directors, enclosing a financial report to that date. Linda wrote: "Enclosed is an update on our financial situation. As you look at the income which we anticipated, you will notice that we have not met our expectations in two categories--advertising and guide book sales.

Also, I think that an examination of the finances points out the necessity of the dues increase. Without it, we will have to start dipping into the unrestricted balance on hand, which is our financial security cushion. In a year, we could easily wipe out that reserve, and the thought of that gives this treasurer worse hot flashes than she already has. The point of this message is not to alarm, but I do think that we need to be realistic. We have \$12,000 in a special account, reserved for Guidebook printing."

A meeting was held in Hood River, OR, on May 5 to discuss forming a state organization. Three of the four Oregon Chapters were represented and the first steps for completing the formation were taken. A group of interested people from the Hood River vicinity attended the meeting and expressed interest in forming a chapter. Subsequently, meetings were held on May 23 and June 19 and the Oregon state BCH became a reality.

Ms. Cole, from Oregon, Bonnie Davis, from California and Madelyn Kempf, also from California applied for the position of newsletter editor. Madelyn Kempf was chosen by the search committee the first part of September. Since a newsletter was planned for that month, it didn't seem fair to ask Madelyn to produce one on such short notice, so I put together one more

issue.

Madelyn had a long background in BCH, joining the Flathead chapter in 1978. Later she and her husband Jerry, moved to the Bitterroot Valley in western Montana, following their Forest Service careers, and also, for the same reason, they moved to California. While in the Bitterroot, Madelyn edited the Montana BCH newsletter.

1997

New Mexico BCH requested that a central meeting place be chosen for the annual board meeting. They said that they had not been able to send a delegate to Montana the previous year and would not attend the meeting in Washington in 1997 because of the cost of air fare

Another 33,000 copies of the Guidebook were printed, for a total of almost 100,000 for BCHA, plus 24,000 that had been printed and distributed by the Flathead BCH.

The editor of the Trail Rider magazine offered to feature a BCH volunteer project in each issue (bi-monthly). This was done for a year or so.

Mylon Filkins and Alan Hill went to Washington, D.C. to attend Great Outdoor Week.

Kim Markus was appointed as newsletter advertising coordinator, working for a commission of 15%.

Ann Lange was appointed Education Chair. She began to gather and index educational material that was already available, either from BCHA or the state and local units. She asked that they send her anything of that nature that they had.

A bill (HR 2107) was introduced in Congress that would establish a three year demonstration fee program for recreation use on public lands.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Back Country Horsemen of America and the U.S. Forest Service. Late that year a similar document was signed with the National Park Service.

It was a detailed agreement, too long to duplicate here, but in part, it said, "This Memorandum of Understanding will serve as a service wide MOU to provide the general framework of cooperation upon which mutually beneficial educational programs, service projects, training seminars and other activities may be planned and accomplished."

Among other things, BCHA agreed to "Assist the NPS (USFS) in the maintenance of back country wilderness resources, to educate and encourage active participation in the appropriate use of NPS (USFS) backcountry resources by horsemen and the general public."

One of the many things that the NPS agreed to was, "Encourage park superintendents and their staff to work with BCHA members at the local level to identify potential opportunities and locations for BCHA activities that are compatible and appropriate to the NPS site, and to utilize BCHA resources."

The annual board meeting was held near Leavenworth, Washington on April 24-27.

Applications were approved for state memberships from Oregon and Colorado.

Volunteer service hours for 1996 totaled 72,950 for all units reporting, with an estimated value of \$1,454,950.

The Washington BCH announced that they had completed the formation of a foundation and had received Internal Revenue 501 (C) (3) status. This allowed them to accept grants and

donations from individuals, foundations and corporations, who then would qualify for a tax deduction. BCHA voted to explore the possibility of setting up a similar foundation.

BCHA membership was approaching the 10,000 mark and 9,000 copies of the newsletter were being printed.

The states ratified the dues increase, but no money from that would be received by BCHA until January 1, 1999.

The Board opposed the Demonstration Fee Program by a vote of eight to two, with five abstaining.

Board officers elected for the coming year were Dave Howells, Chairman, Ann Lange, Vice-Chairman and Al Sammons, Secretary-Treasurer.

A letter was read to the board by Edd Blackler, Montana director, from the Montana BCH board. They said that a policy had been set in previous years that meals were not a reimbursable expense and that appointed officers Les Linendoll, Kurt Dyer, and Mylon Filkins had submitted claims for registration at the previous annual meeting, which were, in fact, nothing more than meal charges. Also they said that Mylon had submitted a claim for a substantial registration fee at a Trails Symposium meeting he had attended and Les had submitted bill for meals for a trip to Oregon on Expansion Committee business.

They certainly got a reaction from the national board, although it may have not been what they wanted. Immediate Past Chairman Randy Darling wrote, " The Board was appalled that you would chastise those who have given so freely untold hours and many of their own unreimbursed dollars to further the goals and objectives of BCHA."

Ann Lange, Vice Chairman and a former Treasurer wrote, "I am dismayed and disappointed that you evidently did a very poor job of checking your facts. This personal character assassination was uncalled for and completely out of line. Mylon has dedicated himself to BCHA, his integrity is beyond question and that most of his expenses as Public Lands Chairman come out of his own pocket."

Linda Serdiuk wrote, "A great deal of disgust, anger and disbelief registered on the faces and in the voices of BCHA representatives upon the reading of your letter. As immediate past treasurer, let me assure you that all officer, chairpersons and volunteers operate under a strict and limited budget approved by the National Board. All expenditures are properly accounted for. These volunteers and chairpersons have under spent their budget. They also travel many miles and place numerous phone calls at their own expense, and expend countless hours on behalf of BCHA."

Alan Hill, a director from California wrote, "I do need to state in defense of Mylon's extraordinary efforts that he has spent days of his own time and contributed literally thousands of dollars in expenses and contribution to benefit the state and national organizations over a period of many years. At no time has he submitted bills or invoices for anything but a fraction of the actual cost of his office or travel expenses spent on BCHA activities.

Each letter ended with a demand that an apology be made

by the Montana board to the National Board and to the individuals involved. John Rolater, Montana Board Chairman wrote to Dave Howells, the newly elected BCHA Chairman. He wrote, "I sincerely regret the fact that anyone took personal offense to the letter, and apologize to any who were so offended. There was never any intent to question the character or level of commitment of any individual."

As far as I know, no apology was made directly to the individuals involved. I debated about whether to include all of this in the history. Maybe it isn't important, but it was certainly a memorable part of the 1997 board meeting. Those that were there probably recall it well.

If there is anything positive to come from printing this, it would be the lesson that we should learn from it. In the final analysis it caused lots of hard feelings with nothing gained from it.

And so, on this rather sour note, I am going to bring to a close this section of our history, the first 25 years. Perhaps I should have rearranged the material so that I ended with a more upbeat subject.

Editors Note:

I will record here a short history of the Back Country Horsemen formation efforts in each of the states where we have established chapters. For the most part, it will be confined to the very early history. While a more complete account would be a desirable thing to have, I have neither the needed information nor the inclination to do that. If and when that is done, it should be the responsibility of the individual states. I have included here membership numbers for each state. These are a combination of single member and family memberships, so the exact number of members is unknown.

ALASKA

In 1993, near Homer, Alaska, a BCH club was formed by a former California member. In March, 1994 they were formally accepted into Back Country Horsemen of America as the BCH of Kachemak. Unfortunately, they did not grow or survive, never becoming an active part of BCHA. They struggled along for a couple of years, but were then dropped from membership.

ARKANSAS

Our first contact with Arkansas came in the late 1980's. Bob Madden, who was working in southeastern Montana, joined the Flathead BCH. Later, he moved to Arkansas. In July, 1992, we received a letter from him, saying that he was no longer receiving the newsletters. After checking, it was found that he had moved and we had no current address. From this contact the BCH of the Ozarks was formed and accepted for membership in 1995. Most of our correspondence was with Gordon and Becky Keogh, who were the president and secretary of the new chapter. In 1998 another chapter was formed in the same general area near the Buffalo River National Park and was called the Buffalo River Back Country Horsemen. What at first was thought of as an encouraging and positive development didn't turn out that way as these two chapters began to have serious differences of opinion, which apparently developed into a full blown feud. At the 1999 annual meeting the BCH of the Ozarks applied for state membership. The board postponed action on this application, feeling that both chapters should be a part of the Arkansas BCH.

In January, 2000, Chairman Alan Hill wrote to Rob Davidson in Arkansas. He reminded him that our constitution only allowed one BCH state organization in each state. He also said that, "the BCHA Board cannot assume a position of judge and jury in this matter" and urged "consolidation and cooperation of interests to allow the application to proceed".

We soon heard from both groups. Neither was interested in "consolidation or cooperation". They both said that they wished to withdraw from BCHA membership. Unless something unexpected happens between now and the annual 2000 meeting in April, it appears that the Arkansas BCH will be history.

ARIZONA

Our first contact with anyone in Arizona was with Dee Godesiabojs of Camp Verde, who also had a home in Colorado. At that time there was no BCH organization in either of those states. Our correspondence began in 1985 and continued for a couple of years. Ms. Godesiabojs seemed sincere in trying to establish a BCH group in either Arizona or Colorado, but in spite of that, was not successful in doing so. In 1987, we also heard from Jean Clark, who was a friend and neighbor of Ms. Godesiabojs and also was the secretary of a local riding club. Also in 1987 we heard from Ben Benton from Flagstaff, who was a former mule guide and packer in the Grand Canyon Park. He thought that the Flagstaff-Grand Canyon area was a logical place to organize a BCH unit, but he wasn't successful in doing that. During this time, Montana members Loy and Margie Robinson and Les and Maxine Linendoll, vacationing in Arizona, stopped to visit with Ms. Godesiabojs. Everett Decora and his wife from Idaho also called on her.

In 1992 we heard from Marilyn Cordovano, also of Camp Verde. She was no more successful than the others had been in trying to organize a local unit in that area. In 1993 Eldon Bowman was finally successful in organizing a chapter in the Grand Canyon vicinity. Eldon had worked for a time in Montana's Glacier National Park and we had some mutual acquaintances. At the present time the chapter has only ten members, some single and some family. We have been unable to establish another chapter in Arizona. In spite of their small numbers, the chapter has taken an active part in land management issues in their area and has been involved in the volunteer program.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

During 1990, with the help and encouragement of Back Country Horsemen of America and the Washington BCH, chapters were formed in British Columbia at Kamloops, Cranbrook and an area east of Vancouver. A few Washington and Montana members participated in some of their activities.

On March 8, 1991, at the BCHA annual meeting at Olympia, WA, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Val Johnson for Back Country Horsemen of America and Jim McCrae for the Back Country Horsemen of British Columbia. This memorandum provided that:

1. They will establish lines of communication with each other to further the purposes and objectives of the organizations.
2. They will cooperate with each other in matters of mutual interest.
3. They will share information about matters of mutual interest.
4. They will be entitled to send observers to the meetings and events of the other organization.

In 1996, a BCH local unit was formed in southern Alberta, but it was disbanded in 1998.

COLORADO

As with almost every other state, a number of contacts were made in Colorado prior to the time that the first local unit was formed there. The first that I have a record of was Dennis DeVore at Greely in 1987. During the fall of 1986 the Presidents Commission on the American Outdoors held meetings at various locations throughout the country, including one at Denver. I attended that meeting and made contact with the only other horse focused organizations represented there, which were the Colorado Horse Council and a riding club from Boulder. None of those people had any interest in back country trail riding, so nothing came from those contacts. In 1989 Geri Rem of Canon City, CO requested information and literature about BCH. Nothing came of that either, but that is the area that we later formed the first local unit in Colorado. During 1990 Jim Baer of Tabernash showed a lot of interest but didn't follow through with any organizational efforts. In 1994 we were invited to present a Low Impact training session at the Eagle Ranger District, in the same general area as Tabernash. Les Linendoll presented the program there but that turned out to be another dead end.

But in 1992 things took a turn for the better. Lynn Munson and her husband, BCH members from Idaho, moved to Cotopaxi, CO. Lynn went to work and by April had organized Colorado's first BCH club. She was elected president. They got involved in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management volunteer trail projects. In January they set up a booth at the Denver SportsShow and distributed BCH material there.

At the BCHA annual meeting in April, 1993 the application for membership of the Rocky Mountain BCH was approved. Since that time several more local units have been added in Colorado and a state organization has been formed and accepted for membership.

They now have five chapters, with 310 members.

OKLAHOMA

Our first contact with Becky Howell of Talihina, OK was in February 1983. She wrote to the Flathead BCH, one of many requests for our Guidebook, which we were furnishing free of charge at that time. In April, 1985 we again heard from Mrs. Howell, who sent \$10 and was placed on the Flathead membership list. She asked for more guidebooks and for information about how to form a BCH club. This was just a few days after we had voted to form Back Country Horsemen of America and we were in a state of confusion. There were no officers and no one knew who was responsible for what. I answered her questions as well as I could.

In February, 1986 I received a letter from Mrs. Howell saying that they were "finally getting the Oklahoma Back Country Horsemen going". In May, 1986 we received a letter saying they had organized. They sent a copy of their constitution and asked for 100 more copies of the Flathead Guidebook. At that time this was the only printed material of that type that we had. Ms. Howell said that they had one of the last areas of public land, still open to horsemen in Oklahoma and that they were gradually being closed off.

In March, 1987, the BCHA Board met in Lynwood, WA. Shirley Burleson attended as the Oklahoma representative. Oklahoma BCH request for membership was granted. In November we received a letter from Buddy Wilmoth saying that he had been elected president.

In January, 1989 Jim Murphy wrote to the Oklahoma BCH, saying that he had not heard from them in some time and that we had not received any dues for 1988. He wrote that if we did not hear from them soon, that their BCHA membership would be canceled. There was no response and their membership was canceled at the annual meeting that spring.

Now, we again have an Oklahoma chapter, with 15 members.

OREGON

Oregon seemed to have a lot of potential as fertile ground for expansion. It had lots of horses, lots of people and lots of back country and public land. In addition, it was bordered on three sides by existing BCH states.

But it didn't come fast and it didn't come easy. Our first efforts there were in 1977 when Flathead members Roland Cheek and Jack Watts traveled to Enterprise, OR and talked to a group of people about forming a BCH club. They went at the invitation of Boyd Hill, a Forest Service District Resource Assistant and Loren Hughes, a conservation leader in that area. But after an encouraging meeting with a number of people, nothing happened until 1991 when Idaho's Don McPherson, following up on some new inquires, was successful in organizing a local unit at LaGrande, OR.

Prior to that, in 1989, Don McPherson, who was Expansion Coordinator for Idaho, went to Klamath Falls, OR, and talked to an existing trail riding club, the High Desert Trail Riders. In February, 1989, they applied for membership in BCHA which was granted at the BCHA board meeting at Lewiston, ID that March. In May, Jim Murphy, Ken Wilcox, and Don and Lorraine McPherson attended a packing clinic that the High Desert Trail Riders sponsored. They met with the club leaders and had a booth at the clinic at which they promoted BCH.

Chairman Val Johnson invited them to the annual board meeting in 1991, which was held that year at Olympia, WA but no one from Oregon attended. In fact, a few days prior to the meeting, Ken Wilcox and Val Johnson received a long letter from president, Dan Applebaker, saying that they would no longer continue their affiliation with BCHA. He said that the \$2 annual membership fee was a burden to them and that he objected to our back country and wilderness emphasis. He also felt that we would not be successful in Oregon unless we broadened our membership requirements to include any horse club that wished to join, regardless of whether or not their primary interest was back country trail riding. Of course, that was completely contrary to everything that we had done to that point and we wouldn't make those sort of changes in order to attract members, so the Klamath Falls group withdrew. Now they have changed their position and are again members of the BCHA and the Oregon BCH. For a time, this left the Blue Mountain BCH as our only group in Oregon. They continued doing some volunteer work and sponsored a Packing Clinic, although they didn't make any substantial growth. Their 1991 membership was 20 families.

In 1994 the Tiller BCH was formed. Victor Morejohn was elected president and all of my correspondence was with him. Their members lived along the Tiller Highway, a long, narrow corridor through the mountains. The distances involved and the small population made it difficult for them.

On May 5, 1996, a meeting was held at Hood River, OR, to discuss forming a state organization. Three of the four Oregon chapters were represented and the first steps were taken to

complete the formation. Other meetings were held on May 23 and June 19 and the Oregon BCH became a reality.

They presently have ten local chapters, with 246 members (single and family).

UTAH

The first record that I have of any interest in a BCH unit in Utah was a letter from Don Anderson of Salt Lake City dated July 23, 1984. Anderson requested information and later became a member of the Flathead BCH and he continued to pay his dues for a number of years. Whether or not he ever became a member of the Utah BCH, I do not know.

There were a few other contacts with Utah horsemen during the next few years, including Ronald Tressler and Gregory Wolfley. In July, 1991, Cherie Shanteau wrote to us saying that she was especially interested in our Low Impact educational efforts and thought that "Utah needed a BCH club." Val Johnson, BCHA Expansion Coordinator continued to correspond occasionally with Ms. Shanteau.

In early September, 1992, Mylon Filkins, Don McPherson, Les Linendoll and I took part in a National Trails Symposium, held at Missoula, MT. There we met Mead Hargis and Barbara Walker, both of whom were employed by the Kamas Ranger District in Utah. They visited at length with the four BCH members who attended the Symposium and were especially interested in our Light on the Land educational programs for horsemen. As a result of these contacts I was invited to participate in a "Stock User Education Meeting" scheduled for December 5, 1992 in Salt Lake City. The Wasatch Cache Forest paid for my plane ticket and other expenses. Les Linendoll had recently been appointed as BCHA Expansion Coordinator, and he scheduled a vacation trip so that he and his wife were in Salt Lake City that weekend.

Two groups of people were in attendance. One was recreational stock users and the other was Boy Scout leaders and officials who were having a regional conference that day. We spoke to both groups and the Light on the Land message seemed to receive a good reception. Later in the afternoon we met again with the horsemen in attendance, told them about BCHA and answered questions that they had.

As a result, the group decided to call an organizational meeting January 9, 1993 at Clearfield. Their efforts were successful and the foundation was laid that day for the formation of the Utah BCH. They followed a different route than all of the BCH chapters that had preceded them. Formerly, local units were organized first and a state organization formed after there were two or more local units. In Utah, the state organization was formed and local chapters came later. Apparently, either approach will work as there are now a number of local chapters in Utah.

Mike Schlosser was elected as the first president. Pat Coryell was the first secretary. Pat also published a newsletter and did a tremendous amount of work those first two critical years. From my far off vantage point, it seemed that she was the spark plug that kept it running. Harold Edwards also played an important part in the formation of the Utah BCH and I am sure that there were others that I am not aware of who also carried their share of the load.

One aspect of the formation of the Utah BCH that is unique, never having happened before or since, is the role that the USFS played, especially Mead Hargis. He provided the momentum to get the ball rolling. Of course, others kept it moving but Mead deserves a great deal of credit. The Forest Supervisor at that time, Susan Giannetino supported him in his efforts.

BCHA Board Chairman, Mylon Filkins, was able to visit the Utah BCH that first year and spoke at one of their meetings.

In February, 1994, Utah BCH became involved in their first big public lands issue. President Mike Schlosser wrote to the Canyonland National Park Superintendent, expressing a fear that their new Management Plan was going to severely restrict continued stock use in the Park. In July, Roald Peterson visited with the Superintendent and furnished some material for the BCHA newsletter.

Utah BCH continued to grow and now has eight chapters, with 360 members (single and family).

WASHINGTON

The Washington BCH had its origins in the Trails and Pleasure Division of the Washington State Horsemen. Ken Wilcox was the director of the Trails and Pleasure Division of the Washington State Horsemen for 16 years. In the late 70's, it became apparent to Ken and a few others, that the Washington State Horsemen weren't really interested in back country horse use. They decided to form their own organization whose focus and primary purpose was to protect the interests of the horsemen who were riding on Forest Service trails and other back country locations. Shortly before that, Ken had become aware that there was an organization in Montana with similar interests and who were called Back Country Horsemen. He thought that the name aptly described their new group and asked permission to use it, which was granted.

Thus began a few years of correspondence and cooperation, but there was no formal structure of any kind. Ken Wilcox, Fred Ryan and Jim Murphy, often accompanied by other Washington members, attended the original BCHA annual meetings in 1981, 83 & 84. I went out to the coast and participated in one of their meetings and Val Johnson did the same.

This culminated in 1984 in an unsuccessful attempt to join the groups, including the High Sierra Stock Users of California. Washington and California approved it, but the original BCH of A turned it down.

Jim Murphy wrote about the 1984 meeting at Polson, MT.

"The main purpose of our attendance at the conventions has been to attempt an affiliation with BCH of A. This was the direction passed at our last annual convention. Correspondence on this subject has been progressing throughout the year. Proposed articles of affiliation had been worked out which were acceptable to us and the Montana representative with whom we have been corresponding."

But they were back again the next year, working with those of us who shared the dream of establishing a Back Country Horsemen organization that would be large enough and influential enough to be able to speak for and protect the interests of back country horsemen from a large geographical area. That year, (1985), a very similar proposal to the one rejected the previous year was accepted by all three organizations with very little opposition.

Washington became a charter member of the new Back Country Horsemen of America and we were on our way. At that time Washington had primarily an at large membership, located west of the Cascades. That has now changed, with 29 local chapters scattered throughout the state, for a total membership of 1750 members (single and family).

WYOMING

A history provided by the Wind River BCH club says that "the idea of forming a BCH chapter in Wyoming originated in early 1990 at a meeting of the Long Ears Mule Club." Actually, it originated several years before that and two clubs had been formed prior to that, although both turned out to be short lived.

I will try to detail what I know about those early efforts. The first contact in the Lander area was with Judy Mystol, who was connected to a existing horse club of some sort in Lander. We had corresponded and, coming back from a winter vacation, my wife and I spent the night in Lander in March, 1983. Mrs. Mystol and her daughter came to our motel room and visited with us about BCH. We later sent her a box of Guidebooks, which she distributed around the community. We had also stopped at a Ranger District Office west of Lander and talked to someone there named Skip ?. Nothing came from either of these contacts.

In June, 1983, we first heard from Doug Hunter at Saratoga. We corresponded back and forth and during the early part of 1986 a club was formed there. My wife and I, again returning from a winter vacation, stopped and spent the night as the guest of the Hunters. The chapter and the community were small. Doug and some other members of the chapter worked at a coal mine some distance north of there. That mine suddenly closed and the Hunter's moved to Cody and the chapter did not survive long after that.

During this same time period, I began corresponding with Ron Bisceglia, a horse trainer from Riverton. At this time Jan Swanson, a former member from the East Slope Montana chapter, was working in the oil fields near there. I met with Bisceglia and about five other men at Riverton during the winter of 1986. I don't have a record of their names. During 1987 we began to compile a list of people who expressed an interest in forming a BCH club in the Lander-Riverton area. The first of these was Richard Inberg, followed by Monte Best, followed by Frank Meridith. Later Tom Lindsey and Gary McQuinn were added to the list. In spite of what seemed to be a lot of sincere interest, no progress was made towards our goal of starting a BCH club in that area. Jim Murphy, the newly elected BCHA Board Chairman, wrote letters to them and Val Johnson newly appointed Expansion Coordinator, made a trip to Wyoming and talked to Frank Meridith and Doug Hunter in Cody.

Doug was working in the Cody area, trying to organize a local unit there. In early June, 1988, I met with a small group of people at the Cody Fairgrounds. They seemed optimistic in spite of the small turnout.

In March, 1988 I received a letter from Frank Meridith. He said that he had been trying to get something going, but wasn't getting much cooperation and was getting discouraged. Ron Bisceglia wrote that he had some serious health problems, was selling his business and moving to Oregon.

But Doug Hunter was having a little better luck. By including the nearby town of Powell, he had been able to form a local unit. On June 3, 1989 the Big Horn Basin BCH applied

for membership into BCHA.

In January, 1990, we received a letter from Don Dunham, a former California member who had moved to Lander. He was sent an organizational packet. In March, a steering committee was selected with interim officers and about ten members of the Long Ears Club and fifty others forming the new BCH chapter. By June, 1990, they had drafted their constitution and made application to join BCHA. That was not formally accepted until the BCHA Board meeting the following March. Forty people attended the July meeting. Bill Crump was elected as the first president. Bill met with the Brazeltons, from the Big Horn Basin Club and they made plans for a joint activity.

In the spring of 1991, we received an inquiry from Farrell Hill, who owned a Ford dealership at Jackson, WY. I stopped to see him when we were in Jackson. He seemed to be a very busy man, perhaps too busy to spend the time to organize a new BCH club. At that time, nothing came from that contact, although there is now a local unit in that vicinity.

Also in March, 1991, Al Sammons and Bill Crump attended the Montana BCH annual meeting. In April, 1992, Linda Serdiuk and Charlotte Salum represented Wyoming at the BCHA annual meeting at Reno. Also in 1992, the Little Powder River BCH applied for membership. Since that time a number of other clubs and a state organization have been formed.

At the present time they have six local chapters with a membership of 355 (single and family).

INDEX TO FILES

It is our intention to permanently store the records of the Back Country Horsemen of America at the office of the Executive Secretary. The material has been sorted and placed in the following files. If someone wishes further information on a specific subject, perhaps the Executive Secretary will be able to retrieve it for you from the files.

1. BCHA Organization--1983 through 1986
2. Early History--1973 through 1978
3. Original BCHA---1979 through1980
4. Original BCHA--1981
5. Original BCHA-1982
6. Original BCHA--1983
7. Original BCHA--1984
8. BCHA -- 1985
9. BCHA -- 1986
10. BCHA -- 1987
11. BCHA -- 1988
12. BCHA -- 1989
13. BCHA -- 1990
14. BCHA -- 1991
15. BCHA -- 1992
16. BCHA -- 1993
17. BCHA -- 1994
18. BCHA -- 1995
19. BCHA -- 1996
20. BCE-JA--1997
21. BCHA Annual Meeting Minutes and Treasurers Reports
22. Incorporation--Non-Profit--Logo Registration
23. Executive Secretary
24. Brief Histories, early BCH, Ken Ausk & Lloyd Fagerland
25. Volunteer Programs
26. BCHA Directories--Addresses
27. Guidebooks
28. Mountain Manners

29. Newsletter Correspondence, etc.
30. Publicity--Clippings
31. Recreational Trails Fund--Symms Act
32. National Parks
33. River of No Return Controversy--Bridger-Teton
34. Organizational Handbook
35. Frank Church Single District Management Unit
36. Annual Newsletter Reports
37. Nine Mile Pack String
38. 1992 Trails Symposium--Missoula
39. Education
40. Presidents Commission on the American Outdoors
41. Trails Symposium--Tucson
42. Alaska
43. Arkansas
44. Arizona
45. British Columbia
46. Colorado
47. California
48. Idaho
49. Montana
50. North Carolina
51. New Mexico
52. Nevada
53. Oklahoma
54. Oregon
55. Washington
56. Utah
57. Wyoming
58. Expansion
59. BCHA Constitution