



FEED BAG



DECEMBER 2004

Editor: Thelma Elser (549-2820)

2004 OFFICERS

	273-6727
Pres., Gary Salisbury	273-6967
Sec., Michael Moore	273-2310
Treas., Becky Rohwer	721-8798

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Don Barth (1 year)	728-2526
Smoke Elser (1 year)	549-2820
Paul Evenson (2 years)	251-2163
John Farvo (2 years)	726-6338
Ron Hoff (1 year)	273-8556
John Kaiser (1 year)	543-6006
Rick Sherman (2 years)	825-2247

STATE DIRECTORS

Smoke Elser (2 years)	549-2820
Barb Parker (1 year)	273-6416
Mike Chandler (alternate)	549-7659

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Education, Dan Harper	258-8467
Feedbag, Thelma Elser	549-2820
Horseman's Council Mike Hartkom	549-0527
Issues, Paul Evenson	251-2163
Membership, Becky Rohwer	721-8796
Phone, Judy Ward	273-0781
Projects, Keith Guschausky	543-7957
Publicity, Barbara Parker	273-6416
Social, Caroline Bauer	273-6967
Sponsorship Lolo Mae LeProwse	251-5729

items discussed were oil drilling on the East Front which has since been tabled by the BLM, at least for the present time, trail maintenance and reclassification and the Right to Ride Bill. The Right to Ride legislation has passed the House (H.R. 2966). This bill is a recognition of the unique place that horses and saddle stock have on our heritage and in recreation on public lands. It should help to guarantee horsemen the right to ride on all public lands. It is not too late to write to Senator Baccus and Senator Burns and urge their support of this bill when it hits the floor in the Senate.

On November 9th and 10th we put up our club display at the USDA Centennial Forum here in Missoula at the Holiday Inn. At this Forum, our National BCH received an award for our partnership with the Forest Service in providing many hours of volunteer labor nationwide. Also, our own Smoke Elser received a similar award for his partnership with them in training and leadership in "leave no trace" stock use.

You will note that our constitution is printed in this Feed Bag - there are several changes that we need to vote on at our next general meeting. This printing of the constitution here meets our requirement to notify the membership 30 days prior to voting on any changes in the constitution.

We have two large events coming up. On December 11th, the State Board of Directors will meet at 10 A.M. in Smoke's barn. Lunch will be supplied for a fee of \$5.00. All members are welcome to attend and learn what goes on at the state level of our organization.

Also on December 11th at 6:30 we kick off our annual Christmas Party and Pot Luck. This event also takes place in Smoke and Thelma's barn. We will be having our annual auction of your white elephant items, craft or art items, baked goods etc. This is always fun. We will enjoy live music provided by a three-piece blue grass band called "Country Folk & Cousin Ray". Many of our state board members and wives stay for this evening so come, bring a guest and help make the evening a success!

On January 21st our annual pot luck and membership drive will take place. You will be hearing more about this at a little later date.

We hope we'll see you at our Christmas Pot Luck and that you will bring a friend and prospective member.

Gary Salisbury

Did you know our club performed well over 100 man hours of volunteer work this year?

From the Acting President's Pen...

Due to Bob Doty's illness, I am still acting President. You will be happy to know, however, that Bob is doing well, and is back at work. Hopefully, we'll soon see him back at our meetings!

We've been busy the past two or three months. We had a good turnout for our November issues committee meeting. Among the

GENERAL MEETING

7:30 P.M. 3rd Wednesday of each month

No general meeting in January

Mt. Fish, Wildlife & Parks Headquarters

3201 Spurgin Road

BOARD MEETING

6:30 P.M.

Prior to general meeting

Special Board Meetings scheduled
every three months - 1st one**6:30 P.M. January 18th, 2004**

Mt. Fish, Wildlife & Parks Headquarters

ISSUES MEETING

Call Bob Evenson 251-2163

Scheduled as needed



For the next twelve months the following slate of officers will be running our organization. Please give them your support and volunteer to help the club on one of the numerous standing committees.

President, Gary Salisbury. Rick Sherman gives up his second year on the board to become the Vice President. Becky Rowner and Mike Moore both retain their positions as treasurer and secretary.

Your board will be composed of Bob Doty (as past president), Paul Evenson and John Favro both with 1 year remaining on their terms, newly elected to the board are John Kaiser, Don Barth, Lola Mae LeProwse, all for two years and Nancy Stoverud for 1 year. Smoke Elser has 1 year remaining of his

term on the state board. Barb Parker was elected to fill a two year spot on the state board and Mike Chandler was elected as the alternate. As delegates on the state board, Smoke and Mike have a vote on our board.

Get involved, volunteer for a committee (We are going to need a new editor for this newsletter) - along with other committee chairs.

THE END OF AN OUTFIT

by
Rick Sherman

I need to preface this story with the fact that it's filtered through the eyes and memory of a then twelve-year-old boy. I didn't know what was going on between my father and his partner in the outfit, but it became pretty clear after that last trip.

The two families had been struggling to keep the outfit afloat for several years when my father finally booked the trip that would take us out of the hole and up to the next level of success.

A local insurance branch office in Great Falls was inviting the main office big wigs from Chicago out for a trip into the Bob for a week of fishing and floating. They hired the Diamond R to show them a good time. It was time to demonstrate what we could do and generate some big city clientele.

It took several trips in to set up and stock the camp at Black Bear. At that time, the trail started at the Spotted Bear Ranger Station, so it was a twenty-mile ride in. There were plans to set up for quite a party, so two of the packhorses carried nothing but booze. My father and

Gil felt it necessary to sample a bit of the load on the way in. It was getting dark with a ways to go when Gil started falling off his horse. Dad would help him back on and hand him his pack string lead and continue on until he fell off again. This went on until well after dark. Finally, frustrated and angry, my dad threatened to leave him in the trail. He kept his word. He drug Gil off the trail, tied Gil's string onto the back of his and headed on into camp.

Around daylight Gil staggered into camp soaking wet from crossing the South Fork on foot. He grabbed an ax and went to wake up my dad. Fortunately he heard him coming, but the fight put a dark cloud over the partnership. That evening Ole, the cook, sampled the load a bit heavily himself and fell down the bank to the river, knocking out his front teeth. They rode out the next day to take Ole into the doctor and to get the guests.

We had to lease some packhorses to cover the size of this trip. One horse in particular was not a good fit. We called him the Roan. About halfway in, he chose to blow near the front of a long line. I watched from some distance back as one horse after another blew in a chain reaction that traveled back toward me. I decided to bail and threw a leg over as my horse blew. I remember the cinch, the seat, the cinch, and the seat until my boot came off and I went sailing down the steep side hill. I no sooner quit rolling than my dad was there, scooping me up and checking for injuries. I never have figured out how he got there so fast since he was in the lead.

I didn't get hurt too bad and we continued on once all the loads

were back on. I don't know what the guests were doing during all that, but it must have been a hell of a show.

The rest of the trip in and the first couple of days went fairly smoothly. I was oblivious to the bad blood between Gil and my dad, but I could feel the tension without understanding what was happening.

The next disaster was the Big Salmon Lake drop float. The plan was to ride up with the boats packed and stay the night at the lake. The next day they would float back to the camp. Going up was fine. Upon arriving we found that Gil had forgotten to pack both the dinner meal for crew and guests and the feed for the horses in a dry camp. The next day both the guests and the horses were a bit grumpy. We set the guys off down the river, packed up the horses and headed back down the trail toward camp. There was a wrangler with a string of empty packhorses ahead of me. I had the empty saddle horses and my dad was behind me with another string of packhorses. We were stretched out and out of sight of each other when my dad had to stop and deal with the Roan who had managed to tangle himself up. As dad was dealing with him, the horse danced into a ground hornet's nest. They swarmed his string, which blew and stampeded down the trail. Dad was knocked over the side of a ravine. By the time he climbed out, they were out of sight.

I was just crossing a small bridge with my string when I heard them coming over the hill behind me. I looked back and saw this wild-eyed tangled mass of panicking horses blasting down the hill toward me. I threw my lead away pulled my horse over and off the bridge into the marsh just as they hit the back of my string. I just let

them go. I wanted to go back for my dad, but I was in a fight with my horse because he wanted to join the stampede. Just then Dad came loping over the hill. Lord what a relief for both of us.

The story for Carl, the wrangler ahead of us, was the same as for me. We got back to camp to a corral full of bruised, bloody horses and eight miles of broken pack equipment behind us. Carl went back up to pick up the pieces as my dad and I patched up horses and equipment. On top of it all, the insurance guys floated in to camp in the middle of all this.

The crowning glory of this story was the last day. The guests were to float out to just before the South Fork Gorge. I was to be their guide. I was a kid who had never been down this river before. My dad told me to watch for the third major creek after Black Bear Creek. Gil would be waiting there with the horses.

The creeks all braided long before they actually flowed into the main river. There were little creeks all along the way and no way of telling which was a major creek. I counted on Gil to be there. He wasn't.

We came around that last bend before the river flows into the Gorge. The South Fork is a pretty big river by the time it gets to this end. It goes into the Gorge through a small crack in a sheer limestone wall. As it goes in, it forms a huge standing wave. We saw that wave and paddled like maniacs for the bank. All we did was get the boats sideways as we were sucked into the canyon. The wave threw the boats up into the air. I remember being airborne surrounded by beer cans, then I was in the bottom of the boat underneath four grown men and most of the beer cans.

It was beautiful inside the Gorge. The walls were sheer white and tall and the water was glass smooth and green black. It looked serene and calm and safe, like you would want to continue down its length just to see it all. At that time no one had ever survived a trip through the Gorge. We climbed the walls to get out.

As I have mentioned the "guests" were the same insurance people that held the liability insurance for our business. They cancelled us upon their arrival back in Great Falls.

I think that the whole outfitting business was over for my dad about the time he left Gil in the trail. Perhaps it was when they decided to sample that load.

I sat on the edge of a cliff near the Lodge and sobbed in grief when dad told me we were leaving for good. I have been back a few times to see the old place and share with my kids the place where the stories began. I know though, that those few years were the best of my life and had a great deal to do with who I am now.

COMING EVENTS

Dec. 11th 10 A.M.
State Board Meeting
Smoke's Barn

Dec. 14th: 6:30 P.M.
Christmas party & pot luck
Smoke's barn

Jan. 18th: 6:30 P.M.
Board of Director's Meeting
Dept. Fish, Wildlife
& Parks Headquarters

Jan. 21st: 6:30 P.M.
Annual Pot Luck &
Membership Drive
Place to be announced.

NOTE: There has been considerable question about the USFS Trail Classification and proposed Draft Stock trail standards. Below please see an explanation of these classes and the proposed design parameters as it affects pack and saddle animals. Tread width has been the object of considerable discussion and it should be noted that there is a range for tread width. It should be noted that the maximum would probably rarely be used and the minimum probably most often used. Also keep in mind that anytime a major change to trail width or allowed type of use is made some type of NEPA with public involvement would have to be done. - For further information talk to Keith Guschausky, Project Chairman, or Board member, John Favro who is the Trails Co-ordinator for the Northern Region USFS - - or see www.fs.fed.us/r3/measures/TR.htm.

Trail Class

The prescribed scale of trail development, representing the intended design and management standards of the trail.

- ◆ There is only one Trail Class identified per trail or trail segment.
- ◆ The National Trail Classes provide a chronological classification of trail development on a scale ranging from Trail Class 1 to Trail Class 5 (see Attachment A: Trail Class Matrix):
 - ◆ Trail Class 1: Minimal/Undeveloped Trail
 - ◆ Trail Class 2: Simple/Minor Development Trail
 - ◆ Trail Class 3: Developed/Improved Trail
 - ◆ Trail Class 4: Highly Developed Trail
 - ◆ Trail Class 5: Fully Developed Trail
- ◆ Each Trail Class is defined in terms of applicable Tread and Traffic Flow, Obstacles, Constructed Feature and Trail Elements, Signs, Typical Recreation Environment and Experience.
- ◆ Trail Class descriptions define "typical" scenarios or combined factors, and exceptions may occur for any factor. In applying Trail Classes, choose the one that most closely matches the managed objective of the trail.
- ◆ Trail prescriptions describe the desired management of each trail, based on Forest Plan direction. These prescriptions take into account actively managed trail uses, user preferences, setting, protection of sensitive resources, and other management activities. To meet prescription, each trail is assigned an appropriate Trail Class.
- ◆ There is a direct relationship between Trail Class and Managed Use and one cannot be determined without consideration of the other.
- ◆ These general categories are used to identify applicable Trail Design Parameters and to identify basic indicators used for determining the cost to meet national quality standards.
- ◆ Trail Classes represent a refinement and expansion of the previously used Forest Service Management Classes: Mainline/Primary, Secondary and Way Trails.

See the insert for Draft USFS Trail Design Parameters

Last minute Christmas gift!

How about a Back Country Horsemen of Missoula t-shirt?

Long Sleeve \$15.00
 Short Sleeve \$12.00
 Sweat Shirt \$20.00
 Hooded Sweat Shirt \$ 28.00



Designed by Rick Sherman. Contact Rick at 406-825-2247

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

Section 1 - This constitution and by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting or special meeting of the organization by a majority vote. Notice of a proposed amendment or amendments shall be given to the organization at the preceding general meeting.

History of the constitution of the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula

The original constitution was adopted February 27, 1975

A major revision: March 17, 1999

A major revision: November 2004 (proposed)

THE RESURRECTION OF RUSTY

by
Thelma Elser

The phone rang about 9:45 one evening about a month ago. We had a horse down and the woman calling thought Smoke should come immediately. In her words, "You have a roan, stud horse who has gone crazy, he has gone thru the fence and is down, and just acting nuts". Well, Smoke was out the door in nothing flat, and by the time the phone rang a second time he had the horse trailer hooked up and was getting ready to pull out. "Don't come" the lady said, "I've got him up and in a neighbor's corral".

Well, fine, Smoke preferred waiting until daylight anyway when he could see what he was doing, so leaving the truck hooked up, he came back in the house and got ready for bed.

In the meantime, Smoke and I wasted considerable time trying to figure out what horse it could be. We have one roan -- but no studs -- and nothing that had shown any such behavior in nearly twenty years, all of our horses having reached the age where they are rather subdued!

Anyway, the phone rang at 6 A.M. the next morning. Again, it is the helpful neighbor who lives adjacent to our pasture. She tells us that Rusty is down again and he is dead and asks, if we want them to bury him out on the pasture. Smoke replies, "No, I'll come and load him into the trailer and bring him home to bury.

So, again Smoke heads out and this time makes it to the pasture. As he pulls up with the truck, he can see a horse laying still in the corral, so he pulls around and proceeds to get into a better position to try and load the horse, using a come-a-long.

After backing up to the corral gate, and walking around to the back of the trailer, you can imagine his surprise when he looks up and Rusty is standing there waiting for him to load him. Typical of our horses, he knew the sound of our truck, and was ready to head for the hills!

Apparently, our good samatarian had giving Rusty a hefty dose of Ace-Pro in order to calm him down the night before. This had slowed down his system enough so that he laid quietly for most of the night. She had been with him at midnight -- and he was still in the same spot the next morning when she looked in on him, but obviously not real close up.

Rusty had become attached to her two horses who had been sharing our pasture. When she pulled them out, he became excited and tried to follow them through the fence. But a stud? Rusy is a sorral, with a few flecks of white -- and is probably 26 years old and has been a babysitter for young children in our dude string for several years.

Anyway, other then a few wire cuts -- Rusy survived his near-death experience, and we are hoping to have him around for a year of two yet!

CHRISTMAS PARTY

We are hoping to see a lot of folks whom we have not seen for awhile at the Annual BCH Xmas Party, which again will be held at Smoke Elser's barn. This is a great time to invite friends who are prospective members. The date is December 11th and time is 6:30 pm. It will be a pot luck, with each family (or couple) attending bringing a main dish and either an appetizer, salad, or dessert. We will supply dishes and eating utensils, coffee, and some cold drink. If you would, please bring serving utensils. Be sure to mark your dishes etc. in case they get left behind.

The Montana State Board Meeting will be held in Missoula at Smoke's that same day. We have enjoyed having many of these BCH members join us in our festivities. Please keep your eye out for these folks and welcome them.

Entertainment will be provided by a Blue Grass group called "Country Folk & Cousin Ray". There will be a silent auction of donated gifts. Share your handcrafted items with others or bring a white elephant item that you no longer use. The proceeds will help defray the costs of the party.

Hope to see you there!

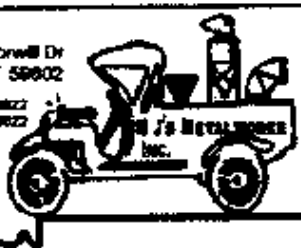


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BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA

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Music by a Blue Grass Band called
"County Folk & Cousin Ray"



*Happy
Holiday,
Partner!*

GOOD FELLOWSHIP

**DECEMBER 11th
POT LUCK DINNER 6:30 P.M.**

LIVE AUCTION 9 P.M.
Auction will be donated hand crafted
items, white elephant items, etc.

**PLACE: Smoke & Thelma Elser's Barn
3800 Rattlesnake Drive**

Turn on Rattlesnake Court

BYOB - coffee and punch provided. Please bring an appetizer, meat or hot dish
and salad or desert. Plates, cups & utensils will be provided.

Dress is casual and warm.

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