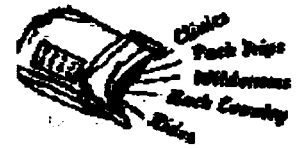




# FEED BAG



Editor: Myra Mumma

December 2005

## 2005 OFFICERS

Pres., Gary Salisbury	273-6967
Vice-Pres., Paul Evenson	251-2163
Sec., Michael Moore	273-2310
Treas., Becky Rohwer	721-8796

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Don Barth (1 year)	728-2526
John Kaiser (1 year)	543-6006
Lola Mae LaProwse (1 yr.)	251-5729
Connie Long (2 years)	626-5539
Rick Sherman (2 years)	825-2247
Kirk Sybrandt (2 years)	273-0277
Judy Ward (1 year)	273-0781

## STATE DIRECTORS

Barb Parker (1 year)	544-9480
Mike Chandler (2 years)	549-7639
Smoke Elser (alternate)	549-2820

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Education, Dan Harper	258-6467
Feedbag, Myra Mumma	542-7443
Horseman's Council, Mike Hartkorn	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, Lola Mae LeProwse	251-5729

## *From the President's Pen.....*

The end of 2005 is quickly approaching. We had a beautiful summer, a long fall and many trail rides. We have many good memories stored up for winter and some dirty, muddy tack that needs cleaning!

It was a privilege to serve as your President this past year. I am so thankful for all of you who worked so hard for MBCH. The officers: Vice-President Rick Sherman, Secretary Mike Moore and Treasurer, Becky Rohwer were truly dedicated to their offices. The committees so vital to this organization were chaired by folks who worked tirelessly for MBCH. Our Board of Directors is to be commended for their leadership. (Remember that any member is welcome at the Board Meetings.) Please support all the officers, Board of Directors, State Directors and Committee Chairmen who represent MBCH.

I'm honored that you voted me in as your President for next year. We have some challenges coming up in 2006, such as getting MBCH members more involved in the club. I know we're up to the task.

The Christmas Potluck will be held on December 10, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in Smoke and Thelma Elser's barn. There will be musical entertainment and an auction. (See last page for more information.) The Back Country Horsemen of Montana will meet at Smoke & Thelma's on the same day, December 10, at 10:00 a.m. Any BCH member is invited to attend the meeting and some of the State members will be at the potluck as well, so be sure to meet them and make them feel welcome.

Before you know it, it will be time for the January Potluck & Membership Drive on January 27th at 6:30 p.m. This potluck will also be held in Smoke & Thelma's barn. Some of the issues that we will discuss are involvement of membership, increasing membership, and the Gates Park Bridge (see pages 2 and 3 of BCH of MT October 2005 newsletter). We will also talk about BCH license plates and State-wide insurance.

So, we hope you will plan to attend both the December and January potlucks, bring a friend or two and renew your membership. We need your involvement and your ideas. Happy Holidays!

*Gary Salisbury*

## THANKS!!

Thank you, Smoke & Thelma Elser, for hosting the December Christmas Party and the January Potluck Dinner!

*"Ride a wild horse against the sky  
Hold tight to his wings before you die  
Whatever else you leave undone  
Once, ride a wild horse into the sun."  
....Hamah Kahn*

All the MBCH vests that were ordered are now in. If you didn't receive a call, contact Caroline, 273-6967. There are a few extras for sale.

**ELECTION NEWS**

Gary Salisbury was elected to the Presidency of MBCH for the second year. Paul Evenson is our new Vice-President. Michael Moore and Becky Rohwer remain in their offices of Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the year 2006.

Retiring from the Board of Directors are: Smoke Elser, Paul Evenson, John Farvo, Ron Hoff and Nancy Stoverud. Remaining on the Board are: Lola Mae LeProwse, Don Barth, John Kaiser and Rick Sherman. Newly elected Directors are: Connie Long, Kirk Sybrandt and Judy Ward. Connie Long, Rick Sherman and Kirk Sybrandt will be two-year members. Lola Mae LeProwse, Don Barth, John Kaiser and Judy Ward will be one-year members.

Barbara Parker will continue as State Director for one year, Mike Chandler for two years, and Smoke Elser will be the alternate.

Please support these new officers and directors by taking an active part in the club activities. ➔

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**One Mean Mule**

This may be a first... A couple from Montana were out riding on the range, he with his rifle and she (fortunately) with her camera. Their dogs always followed them, but on this occasion a mountain lion decided that he wanted to stalk the dogs (you'll see the dogs in the background watching). Very, very bad decision...

The hunter got off the mule with his rifle and decided to shoot in the air to scare away the lion, but before he could get off a shot the lion charged in and decided he wanted a piece of those dogs. With that, the mule took off and decided he wanted a piece of that lion. That's when all heck broke loose... for the lion.

As the lion approached the dogs, the mule snatched him up by the tail and started whirling him around, banging its head on the ground on every pass. Then he dropped it, stomped on it and held it to the ground by the throat. The mule then got down on his knees and bit the thing all over a couple of dozen times to make sure it was dead, then whipped it into the air again, walked back over to the couple (that were stunned in silence) and stood there ready to continue his ride... as if nothing had just happened.

Fortunately even though the hunter didn't get off a shot, his wife got off these four...shots! ➔

Source: Unknown. This article is on several websites with no reference to the author.



← The mountain lion is still alive and fighting back.

Mule stomped the cat, pinned it to the ground and bit its neck several times. ➔



← The big cat is pretty well dead but the mule picked it up, whipped it in the air, and stomped on it.



An audience of dogs that the mule is protecting in the background. ➔



## Who is this Back Country Horseman?

by Paul Evenson

If you can answer the following questions, give Paul Evenson a call at 251-2163 or email at [evenson@montana.com](mailto:evenson@montana.com) for a cup of coffee (or beverage of your choice) with pie and ice cream:

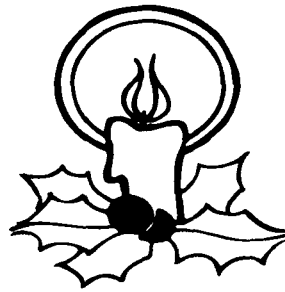
1. Who is this Backcountry Horseman?
2. Where was the picture taken?
3. What breed of horse is he riding?
4. What is the horse's name?

Keep smiling and don't forget to check your cinch.



## Christmas Party

We hope to see a lot of folks we haven't seen for awhile at the Annual BCH Christmas party, which will be held at Smoke & Thelma's barn. This is a great time to invite friends who might be prospective members. The date is December 10,



6:30 p.m. It will be a potluck dinner with each family or couple bringing a main dish and either an appetizer, salad or dessert. Coffee and punch will be supplied. Please bring a serving spoon for your dish.

Be sure to mark your dishes in case they get left behind. As in the past, the Montana State Board Meeting will be held in Missoula at Smoke's the same day (starting at 10:00 a.m.) We have always enjoyed having many of these BCH members join us in our festivities. Please keep your eye out for these folks and welcome them. We will have entertainment and an auction. **Please bring auction items. See you there!**

Must see and ride to appreciate: Striking 6-year black/white Tobiano mare, 14-2, sound/healthy, very smooth and comfortable to ride, fearless on trail, goes out alone. Advanced beginner or better. Good mother, also--had a very nice-looking tri-colored pinto filly this spring. Too many horses, not enough time, but this time, this horse is one of my favorites!!! \$1500 firm. 406-864-2175 (Alberton)



## Timely Tips for Cleaning Wool Blankets

by Paul Evenson

Beat and brush the blanket. Every few days simply slap the blanket against a door, tree, fence, etc. Then use a horse brush (not a metal curry comb) and brush the hairs and dander from the blanket. This won't take more than five minutes.

Every 60 to 90 days wash the blanket in a tub of cold water. For best results, put the blanket in a tub of water and let it soak for at least an hour. Then, as best you can, "wring" the blanket in the water, then wring it out of the water. Hang the blanket over a rail. With a horse brush, lightly brush the blanket on both sides. Let the blanket air dry completely, then slap it against a door or tree until it feels as soft as a brand new one. It is best not to use soap when washing the wool blanket as the blanket will retain much of the soap (even soaps made specifically for wool). When the blanket becomes wet with sweat, the residual soap may seep throughout the very porous wool, and irritate a horse's back. A pressure washer or car wash can also be used, but again use no soap. After a few washings, the color will begin to fade. This has no bearing on the usefulness of the blanket in serving its true purpose. An older, faded, soft blanket next to your horse's back may be preferable. After all, the concept is to protect the horse's back and keep them comfortable. December is a good time to get this done as it is after the summer trail and hunting season. Be sure to look equipment over for cleaning or repair. The first on the list should be wool blankets and pack pads.

Until next time – ride with a smile and make people wonder why you are so happy!

## A Cowboy's Christmas Prayer

....by S. Omar Barker



I ain't much good at prayin, and You may not know me, Lord--  
I ain't much seen in churches where they preach Thy Holy Word,  
But You may have observed me out here on

the lonely plains,  
A-lookin' after cattle, feelin' thankful when it rains,  
Admirin' Thy handiwork, the miracle of grass,  
Aware of Thy kind spirit in the way it comes to pass  
That hired men on horseback and the livestock that we tend  
Can look up at the stars at night and know we've got a Friend.

So here's ol' Christmas comin' on, remindin' us again  
Of Him whose coming brought good will into the hearts of men.  
A cowboy ain't no preacher, Lord, but if You'll hear my prayer,  
I'll ask as good as we have got for all men everywhere.  
Don't let no hearts be bitter, Lord. Don't let no child be cold.  
Make easy beds for them that's sick and them that's weak and old.  
Let kindness bless the trail we ride, no matter what we're after,  
And sorter keep us on Your side, in tears as well as laughter.  
I've seen ol' cows a-starvin', and it ain't no happy sight:  
Please don't leave no one hungry, Lord, on Thy good Christmas night--  
No man, no child, no woman, and no critter on four feet  
I'll do my doggone best to help you find 'em chuck to eat.

I'm just a sinful cowpoke, Lord--ain't got no business prayin'--  
But still I hope you'll ketch a word or two of what I'm sayin:  
We speak of Merry Christmas, Lord--I reckon You'll agree  
There ain't no Merry Christmas for nobody that ain't free!  
So one thing more I'll ask You, Lord: just help us what You can  
To save some seeds of freedom for the future sons of man! 🐾

### COMING EVENTS

- December 10th**, 10:00 A.M. State Board Meeting  
Smoke & Thelma Elser's Barn
- December 10th** 6:30 P.M. Annual Christmas Potluck & Auction  
Smoke & Thelma Elser's Barn  
3800 Rattlesnake Drive
- December 11th** 6:30 P.M. MBCH Board of Directors Meeting at FW&P
- January 27th** 6:30 P.M. Potluck & Membership Drive  
Smoke & Thelma's Barn
- February 15th** 7:30 P.M. MBCH Meeting at FW&P
- March 15th** 7:30 P.M. MBCH Meeting at FW&P

## In memory of.....

On November 1, 2005, MBCH lost one of its members. Janet (Babe) Vetaly "passed away following a courageous battle with kidney cancer." Courageous, yes....and much more. Babe clung to life. Her passion for life, like her passion for her horses were such an inspiration to those around her.



Babe's family raised and trained horses. With the skills she learned from those early years, she raised her own horses. She trained a weanling black and white paint named Sundance. When he was ready, they did competitive trail riding, which earned the pair many ribbons.

Babe's determination to live and her enthusiasm for working with horses will never die. Her family suggests donations to the Guardian Angel Fund in her honor. 🐾

## Backcountry Horsemen Work Together.....by Paul Evenson

On August 10, 2005, the East Slope and Missoula Chapters packed in horse and mule feed for the Spotted Bear Ranger District. They packed in 26 bags of hay cubes and two bags of pellets. Four Backcountry Horsemen and 18 head of stock accomplished the mission. The supplies were packed from Benchmark to Basin Creek on the South Fork of the Flathead River. This 17-mile ride went up and over Stadler Pass to the Basin Creek cabin. They spent the night at the Forest Service cabin and returned to Benchmark on August 11.

On August 13, the Backcountry Horsemen resupplied Patrol Mountain Lookout using nine head of stock. They packed up a replacement lookout for the two that were up there. Earlier in the day there had been 3 to 4 inches of snow at the lookout. 🐾

## The Christmas Horse

The young couple had made their usual hurried, pre-Christmas visit to the little farm where dwelt their elderly parents with their small herd of horses. The farm had been named Lone Pine Farm because of the huge pine which topped the hill behind the farm, and through the years had become a talisman to the old man and his wife, and a landmark in the countryside.

The old folks no longer showed their horses, for the years had taken their toll, but they sold a few foals each year, and the horses were their reason for joy in the morning and contentment at day's end. Crossly, as they prepared to leave, the young couple confronted the old folks. "Why do you not at least dispose of "The Old One". She is no longer of use to you. It's been years since you've had foals from her. You should cut corners and save where you can. Why do you keep her anyway?" The old man looked down at his worn boot, scuffed at the barn floor, and his arm stole defensively about the Old One's neck as he drew her to him and rubbed her gently behind the ears. He replied softly, "We keep her because of love. Only because of love."

Baffled and irritated, the young folks wished the old man and his wife a Merry Christmas and headed back toward the city as darkness stole through the valley. So it was, that because of the leave-taking, no one noticed the insulation smoldering on the frayed wires in the old barn. None saw the first spark fall. None but the "Old One". In a matter of minutes, the whole barn was ablaze and the hungry flames were licking at the loft full of hay. With a cry of horror and despair, the old man shouted to his wife to call for help as he raced to the barn to save their beloved horses. But the flames were roaring now, and the blazing heat drove him back. He sank sobbing to the ground helpless before the fire's fury. By the time the fire department arrived, only smoking, glowing ruins were left, and the old man and his wife. They thanked those who had come to their aid, and the old man turned to his wife, resting her white head upon his shoulders as he clumsily dried her tears with a frayed red bandana. Brokenly he whispered, "We have lost much, but God has spared our home on this eve of Christmas. Let's climb the hill to the old pine where we have sought comfort in times of despair. We will look down upon our home and give thanks to God that it has been spared."

And so, he took her by the hand and helped her up the snowy hill as he brushed aside his own tears with the back of his hand. As they stepped over the little knoll at the crest

of the hill, they looked up and gasped in amazement at the incredible beauty before them. Seemingly, every glorious, brilliant star in the heavens was caught up in the glittering, snow-frosted branches of their beloved pine, and it was aglow with heavenly candles. And poised on its top most bough, a crystal crescent moon glistened like spun glass. Never had a mere mortal created a Christmas tree such as this. Suddenly, the old man gave a cry of wonder and incredible joy as he pulled his wife forward. There, beneath the tree, was their Christmas gift. Bedded down about the "Old One" close to the trunk of the tree, was the entire herd, safe. At the first hint of smoke, she had pushed the door ajar with her muzzle and had led the horses through it. Slowly and with great dignity, never looking back, she had led them up the hill, stepping daintily through the snow. The foals were frightened and dashed about. The skittish yearlings looked back at the crackling, hungry flames, and tucked their tails under them as they licked their lips and hopped like rabbits. The mares pressed uneasily against the "Old One" as she moved calmly up the hill and to safety beneath the pine. And now, she lay among them and gazed at the faces of those she loved. Her body was brittle with years, but the golden eyes were filled with devotion as she offered her gift. Because of love. Only Because of love. ♡

Source: [www.hintsandthings.com](http://www.hintsandthings.com)



### Welcome Creek Rides

by Rick Sherman

I live near Clinton just past Schwartz Creek road. There are a few local rides we do within easy reach of home. Welcome Creek Wilderness is just a few miles from our back door if horses could fly. We have a trailer though. I like to go up to Eight Mile saddle to access the top of the wilderness.

From I-90 take the Clinton exit. Go right to E. Mullan Road. Turn left and go about two miles to Schwartz Creek Road. Turn right cross the bridge and rattle up the road. Take the left when the road forks and rattle some more. Another four or five miles take another left at the Eight Mile Saddle sign. From there the road gets steep narrow and windy. Then it gets worse. Finally as you crawl along the side of a vertical clearcut the road forks again to the right. It's marked with

a little sign that says Eight Mile Saddle. Another two miles and you reach the top of the saddle. It's been fifteen miles and an hour plus since the turn off of E. Mullan. But, hey, it's close to home.

Feather and I went up for a sunset/full moon ride last July. We got all the way to the top, where we found the road blocked by logging equipment. It was getting dark and I had to back a four-horse trailer down a one-track road for two miles. The horses thought I was nuts. I'm sure Feather agreed.

The trailhead is a four way intersection that has been clearcut and burned in the Cooney Ridge Fire of 2003. Follow the ridge to the left. The trail is faint but visible. There is even a sign on a burnt tree showing the trail.

The trail follows the ridge for a mile or two through the burn and patches of green. At one point it forks. This is the beginning of the Sapphire Ridge Trail. It shows on the maps as going all the way to the Big Hole and into Idaho. If you go that way you can pick up the Three Mile Trailhead into the head of Welcome Creek. I haven't been down that one. Take the left trail and follow the ridge into Welcome Creek Wilderness. This area has burned in mosaic patterns in 1988 and 2003 so the trail is a little sketchy at times. You can't get lost though; it is vertical on both sides of the ridge. The climb is easy and gradual for about four or five miles. The top of Welcome peak is open with a spectacular view. From the top you have a view of the velvet green drainage of Welcome Creek. I think you can see nearly all of this little wilderness from there. You are looking down into Rock Creek and have a clear panoramic view of the Bitterroots, the Pintlers, the Swans, the Missions, and the Rattlesnake.

The ridge takes a downhill arc down into Rock Creek. It eventually comes out near the Spring Creek Trailhead on the Rock Creek Road. I haven't been all the way down that trail yet. I would like to put a trailer at either end and give it a try. It would be a day ride of about fifteen miles. I don't think the trails are maintained much so one would have to be prepared to cut the way down. Like I said, it's our back yard and nobody goes there, so we do it a couple of times a year. I think the Eight Mile Road off East Side Highway on the Florence end would be easier to trailer. ♡

## The Great Burn Ride

by Rick Sherman

Last summer, I went on the Foresters Ride as an observer and a participant. I brought my horses along so Feather and I could explore the Great Burn Proposed Wilderness.

After the last of the other BCH participants and Forest Service and government dignitaries pulled out Friday morning, I packed up my one pack horse, we climbed on our saddle horses and headed up the North Fork Trail for Goose Lake.

The trail follows the creek for seven or eight miles before getting into the serious climb for the State Line Ridge Trail. About six miles in, we came to a couple of old partially preserved cabins known as Greenwood Cabins. We got a brief history of the site from Bob Holverson, the packer out of Nine Mile, during the group ride the day before. It was an old mining site, hunting camp, and among other things, a bootleggers' camp. Only two of the cabins remain from the original camp after great effort to clean up a century of accumulated ruins.

After a few miles of dense forest, we came into a stand of huge, ancient cedars with twelve foot plus diameters. These trees show the burn scars of the 1910 fire that gives the Great Burn its name. There is a camp here in these great trees just before the climb. It has the feel of a cathedral with large open spaces of brush surrounded by giant columns. The canopy is dense and lets little light through which helps keep the area cool. Giant ferns grow along the creek giving the place a "Lord of the Rings" feel.

The next two to three miles are a steep climb up into and along the side of a big cirque. The trail is narrow and poorly maintained through here. The brush, Ceonthis, I think, is dense and grows in tight on the trail. In places I couldn't see Feather's horse in front of me. She had a weird floating appearance as she rode through the brush. The trees are behind us and the view opens up into a vertical landscape of brush, cliffs, and ribbons of cascading water.

Near the top there was a stretch of the trail that had partially filled in from the soil above eroding down onto the trail. The trail was only eight inches or so wide in this 200-yard long stretch. I could look straight down through the brush and see daylight. I was watching the trail break away under the horse's feet ahead of me and feeling the same under my horse. Feather called back and informed me that she felt she was doing reasonably well with her fear of heights but was very definitely challenged. I don't have an unreasonable fear of heights, but I was sweating this stretch out. If a horse went down into that brush, it would have stopped him from taking the long tumble but I don't know how a person would get him back out. We got through it and made the ridge a few minutes later with great relief. Goose Lake is in a small bowl just over the ridge on the Idaho side of the State Line Trail. It is partially surrounded by meadows offering good feed for the horses and good campsites in the big spruces that protect the north side of the lake. We were ready to find a place to call it a day when we saw a cow and calf moose in the lake.

Our daughter Ashlea recently had a very close call with an angry momma moose. The story was still fresh in Feather's mind so we opted to not disturb Momma Moose and her baby, but continue down the Goose Creek drainage in search of a campsite. About another mile down the creek we came across a beautiful meadow under an impressive cliff. The grass was knee deep, the water was good and it felt like a sheltered cove. It was at this site that my Arab mare manifested severe symptoms of a heart problem. Five times she went down in a heap. I slapped her with the lead rope to pump enough adrenalin to get her heart going and get her back on her feet. I walked her for a few minutes then her eyes would roll up and down she would go. She finally stabilized and was okay for the rest of the trip.

The next morning we packed it up and headed up to Goose Lake again. When we got there we ran into another group of horse packers from Kooskia, Idaho. There were three generations of one family in the group. The packer was the Forest Service packer out of Kooskia. He was with his father, a forty-year retired veteran of outfitting, his nine-year-old son, and a couple of buddies. It was about noon and as we walked up to say hello they handed us a bottle

of Black Velvet. We took a couple of hits on the bottle to be polite and sat and visited for a while. Anyone who has that much backcountry experience has stories to tell. We sat for quite awhile and listened to the old outfitter spin his yarns.

No moose were at the lake that day so we decided to set camp up at the far end of the lake near the creek that fed it. Our neighbors killed their fifth and decided to kill gophers all afternoon. The continuous gunfire was sure to drive anything that could move on its own far away. We felt safe from those "killer moose".

Late afternoon we rode up onto the State Line Trail to watch the sunset. We rode up to a saddle between two high open points and tied the horses and walked the rest of the way. I reached the top before Feather and was checking out the trail. I could see it winding along the ridge into the distance. This area was burned hard during the 1910 fire and the trees are still trying to make their way up from the valleys. It is mostly open and grassy with spectacular views in all directions. I turned to see if Feather was catching up and realized that seven mountain goats had popped over a little rocky ridge. Feather was slowly walking through them. They didn't seem at all concerned about our presence. One of the adults curiously approached to within a few feet of Feather. We sat on the ridge and watched the sunset with the goats.

On the way back down, I could see something black near our camp from way up on the ridge. I thought bear, but we had our camp in order so I wasn't too worried. As we rode into the meadow we saw our packer friends had set up camp above the lake on the edge of the meadow. As we rode up to their camp, they were all looking out at the lake. Five moose were now in the lake or on the little peninsula where our camp was. The cow and calf were back with a bull and two other cows. The old boy announced that this country doesn't have anything more dangerous than a moose, especially a moose with a calf. This wasn't helping with Feather's concern.

We had to go back down to our camp and our camp was down where the moose were. It was getting dark and I

didn't want to deal with bunch of moose in the dark. Feather refused to go. I finally took the horses down, got them taken care of and on the high line. I built a nice cheery fire and finally convinced her to come down to camp. I figured the moose were out in the lake. We were back in the trees away with a fire and as long as we didn't somehow get between them we would be ok.

Later, after it got dark, I walked out with my headlamp to check on the moose. As I shined it out on the lake I could count the glowing eyes. Two pair of glowing eyes started coming right at me. "Feather get up a tree," I yelled. I ran back to camp and as Feather scrambled up a gnarly spruce tree, I looked for a tree for myself when the moose trotted past camp. It turns out that we were camped on their access route to the lake.

In the morning we awoke to the sound of thundering hooves. We looked up to see several moose trotting back toward the lake just a few yards away from where we slept. By this time the fear factor with the moose had subsided to fascination. We spent the rest of the morning sitting and watching them. I have little experience with moose so this was an excellent learning experience.

That afternoon when we headed back down that trail, I stopped at the top and double-checked the packs. I didn't want anything to go wrong on that bad stretch. As we danced down that questionable 200 yards my heart was in my throat and I don't remember breathing. I kept hoping that my horse didn't pass out in the middle of that. We got through okay and the rest of the ride out was nothing but relief.



This was my first experience with the Great Burn and it left a lasting

impression. It's close to Missoula, as remote as you could ask for, dramatically beautiful and full of wildlife. Not many people know about it and it's a big area. I personally want to involve myself with working to protect this incredible area. As Back Country Horsemen, I would like to see us be able to work on the trails and the clean up of old campsites, etc.

I would encourage people to go check this land out. You won't be disappointed. 🐾

## MBCH Support for Retired Smoke Jumpers

by Brendt Stoverud

In June, we received a request from the Bob Marshall Foundation to support a group of retired smoke jumpers for their annual trail building project. Keith requested my assistance in fulfilling the request.

I met with Jon McBride, coordinator for the teams, to determine what was required in the way of support. It appeared that we would be required to pack in ten ex-smoke jumpers, their personal gear, their tools, food, camp gear and water bars.

Sunday, July 24, I picked up a truckload of camp gear, two coolers and two bear-proof containers of food plus all the trail building tools from Jon McBride at their support headquarters, loaded up horses and mules and headed for Monture Ranger Station where I met up with Keith Guschausky and Kirk Sybrandt and his son Christian. That evening, we mantied and matched the loads to be ready for the next morning.

Five-thirty Monday morning we began the day with a good breakfast, loaded up the stock, and met the smoke jumpers. We arrived at the trailhead where we were given another heaping truckload of personal duffle, tents, a bear fence, a large camp stove and a large propane bottle. Fortunately, the Forest Service had decided that the team was to use local material for the water bars rather than to pack in water bars.

A little over an hour after arriving at the trailhead, we had twelve horses and mules saddled, the remaining gear mantied and were on the trail. The trail was a steady uphill climb about nine miles to the top of Shanley where the team was to work on reconnecting the trail to the Pyramid Pass Trail.

We were unloaded in about twenty minutes and were ready to head back down the trail as a weather front moved in. The ridge top trail was not a good place to be as the lightning began to strike around us. By 8:00 p.m. we had the stock loaded and headed for dinner at Trixie's. It had been a long time since breakfast at 5:30 a.m.

Early Sunday morning, the 31st, we were again on the trail back up Shanley to pick up the team. This trip, Kirk's wife, Liz, rode in with us. Once we hit the camp we immediately began putting loads into manties and loading the pack stock. We were on the trail back down as another front began to move in.

Another long day on the trail ended back at Monture where the stock was watered and loaded for a trip back to Missoula after a late dinner at Trixie's.

This was just one of the many support missions the BCH of Missoula has performed for the Forest Service this last year. 🐾

January 27th  
Annual Potluck & Membership Drive  
6:30 P.M. at the Elser's barn. Bring a  
friend or two!



BIG, HUGE thank-you's to the *Feedbag* contributors this month. Once again, MBCH members pitched in to make it happen. Deadline for the next issue is February 20.



**HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS!**