



# FEED BAG



Editor: Myra Mumma

December 2006

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

The end of the year is fast approaching. Where did it go?! We're grateful for many trail riding memories this year, made especially memorable with the gorgeous fall weather.

I am privileged to have served as your president this past year. The job couldn't have been done without your support and hard work. I also want to thank all the officers: Vice-President Paul Evenson, Secretary Michael Moore and Treasurer Becky Rohwer, who are truly dedicated to their jobs. The many committees that keep this organization going are to be commended for their leadership. The Board Directors have been involved and supportive. Please thank all of these people when you see them for the time and effort they've willingly given to our organization.



Gary's Photo by Michele Hutchins

The Christmas Pot Luck will be at Smoke and Thelma Elser's barn on December 9, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. There will be music and an auction. Please help with items for the auction and, if you can, help set up and clean up. (See Insert) The Back Country Horsemen of Montana will meet at Elser's on the same day. Any member is invited to the meeting. Some of the State members will be at the pot luck, so be sure to meet them. Prospective members are most welcome at this pot luck!

Before you know, it will be time for the January Pot Luck and Membership Drive on January 17. We will notify members where the pot luck will be held, since we've outgrown the Elser's barn for this event. Please invite your neighbors, friends and prospective members to this membership pot luck.

I urge you all to attend your monthly meetings. It's a great way to see some familiar faces over coffee and dessert. We have really had some great programs at the meetings. For example, in October, Mark Wright gave a very interesting power point program on smokejumping. He even brought in his gear and he shared many of his stories. Also, Jon Cusker gave us a power point program and some information on the Open Space issue we would be voting on this month. Please come to the monthly meetings!

Happy Holidays!

.....Gary Salisbury

## Christmas Gift Ideas

This year give a gift of a compliment, of a smile or a kind word—be it a family member, a friend or a stranger (or your favorite horse!) Give the gift of respect or forgive someone. Make a person laugh or take a moment to listen. Give a gift of prayer for someone in need. And keep giving all year round!

## 2006 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

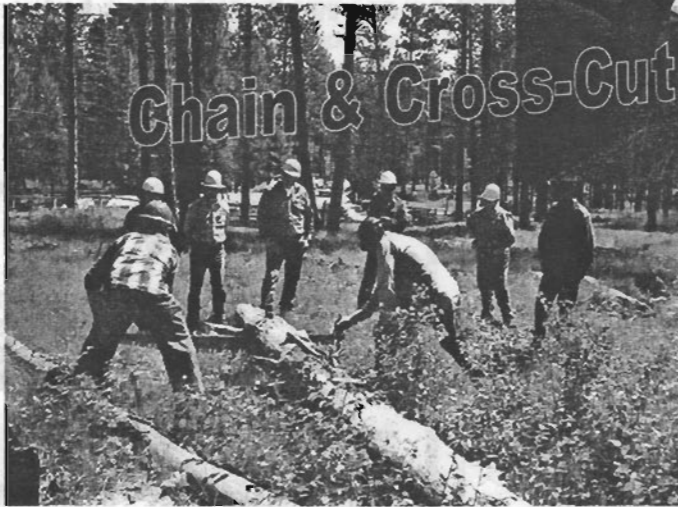
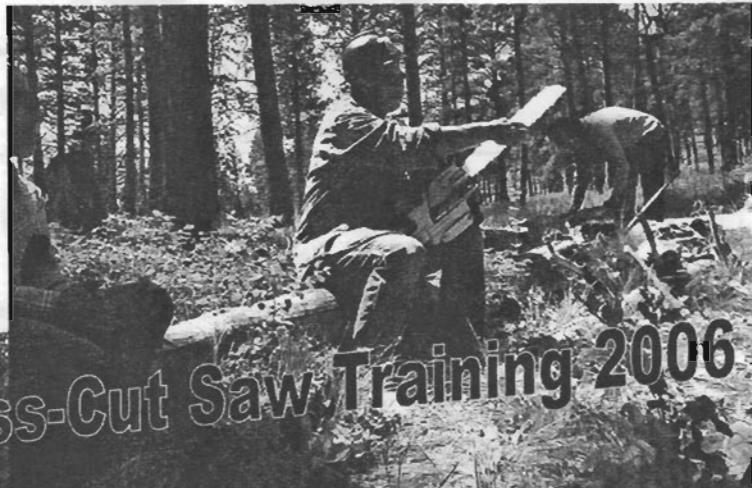
Don Barth (1 year)	728-2526
John Kaiser (1 year)	543-6006
Lola Mae LaProwse (1 yr.)	251-5729
Connie Long (2 years)	626-5539
Rick Sherman (2 years)	825-2247
Kirk Sybrandt (2 years)	273-0277
Judy Ward (1 year)	273-0781

## 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, Connie Gordon	626-2456
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



This Spring, Missoula Smokejumpers Mark Wright, Boyd Birch and Eric Rajala provided Chain Saw and Cross-Cut Saw Training to certify operators, including BCH of Missoula members. The three-year certification applies to chain saw and cross-cut saw use on Forest Service, BLM, National Parks and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks lands. The course mainly emphasizes safety and covers chain saw use and maintenance, personal protective equipment, bucking, felling, etc. BCH of Missoula members who participated are Bob Wiesner, Mack Long, Paul Evenson, Dan Harper—to name a few. Don Dodge, who provided these photos, was also in attendance.



**We're Proud!**

Paul Evenson was recently elected as Education Chairman of the Back Country Horsemen of Montana. In case you didn't know, Smoke Elser holds two chairman jobs—Horse Safety Training and Public Organization. Mike Chandler is the State Forest Travel Plan Chairman.

.....

- A horse is the projection of peoples' dreams about themselves - strong, powerful, beautiful - and it has the capability of giving us escape from our mundane existence.
- ~Pam Brown

.....



**Trail Projects 2006**

Upper Right: Mike Chandler (kneeling), Mack Long and Kirk Sybrandt (behind post) are rebuilding corrals at the Monture Creek.

Left: Rick Sherman on Young's Pass.

Upper Right: Rick Sherman on trail maintenance.

.....all photos provided by Don Dodge

**Dates to Remember**

- Nov. 15      Monthly BCH of Missoula Meeting 7:30 FW&P (Election of Officers)
- Dec. 9        BCHM State Board Directors Mtg. at Smoke & Thelma Elser's Barn, 10:00 P.M.
- Dec. 9        BCH of Missoula Christmas Pot Luck at Elser's Barn, 6:30 P.M.
- Jan. 17      BCH of Missoula Annual Membership Pot Luck, Place TBA
- Feb. 21      BCH of Missoula Monthly Meeting 7:30 FW&P
- Mar. 21      BCH of Missoula Monthly Meeting 7:30 FW&P
- Apr. ?        BCH of Missoula West Nile/Brand Inspection Clinic
- July 14, '07    Upper Clark Fork BCH Annual Ride at Gold Creek



*Runch branding.*  
 Upper Right: John Forsythe in 1929  
 Right: John Harschuck in 2004.

### Trail Maintenance Project

by Don Courtney

Retired Smokejumper, Class of 1956

We've been doing the National Smokejumper Association (NSA) Trail Maintenance Project (TMP) for several years, and we have learned (and are learning) a great deal about how it ought to run. (Even white mice can learn.) The program is growing and evolving, and it is about time that we report to anyone interested on where we stand, what we do and how we do it, and particularly to old smokejumpers who might like to volunteer. The Forest Service has also been learning from our past performances but it would be immodest of us to give you the impression that the Forest Service is beating down our door to offer us nifty projects. However, the Forest Service *is* beating down our door to offer us nifty projects.

There is one Eternal Truth/Giant Principle that governs the conduct of TMP: If you want people to work free, YOU HAVE TO TREAT THEM GOOD. You smile at them; you thank them for their efforts; you feed them the best you know how (at no cost to the volunteers); and you try very hard not to jerk them around. There remain Forest Service rules that may not be broken. But some of our cooks may decide to provide from their own pockets the proper grape juice to accompany a meal; some good elves may accidentally leave canned barley extract near a camp site; volunteers are free to see to their own spiritual and spirituous needs without fear of rebuke. During most of the day, the bad news is that we are not 18 year-olds earning next year's tuition. At cocktail time, the good news is that we are not 18 year-olds earning next year's tuition.

It is a scientific fact that the trails are steeper and the mountains are higher than they ever were before. It is also a scientific fact that most of us are in similar states of age and decrepitude, so the crews move on and get it done at their own pace. Hiking distances vary, but usually are around six to eight miles. A USFS packer or volunteer backcountry horseman will pack in the tools and gear to backcountry camps. Each backcountry volunteer

brings a fanny pack or small backpack to carry his own water and lunch. In addition to the pack, each backcountry volunteer should bring a sleeping bag, small one or two-man tent, work clothes, rain gear, gloves, sun glasses, bear spray, sun hat, and personal items. And, now that we think of it, so should each non-backcountry volunteer.

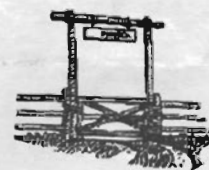
The program has now grown to the point where a volunteer can elect not to walk in but to be driven to a guard station, and work out of there instead of a backcountry camp. There are various reasons for wanting to work out of a guard station: the turning of too many calendar pages, too many hard landings, a preference for carpentry over trail maintenance, and many others (some of them nobody's business but yours). Whatever the reason, don't stay home because you have no business climbing the hills or no wish to. We've got a place for you.

*Some of you might know Don Courtney, author of this article. He wrote the article to recruit retired smokejumpers for trail maintenance in the back country. I hope you enjoy Don's humor.....Editor*

### From Charlie Russell's 1914 Christmas Card:

Best wishes for your Christmas  
Is all you get from me,  
'Cause I ain't no Santa Claus  
Don't own no Christmas tree.

But if wishes was health and money,  
I'd fill your buckskin poke,  
Your doctor would go hungry  
An' you never would be broke.



### Little Bits

Twenty-seven horses died at a breeding and boarding facility in Texas after the owner treated a grain silo with a metallic phosphide tablet for rodent control. Phosphide is toxic to humans, horses and pets. Many landowners put out a zinc-phosphide product purchased at their local hardware store to kill ground squirrels and gophers, not realizing that it can be toxic to horses and pets. The toxin causes heart, gastro-intestinal tract, liver and pulmonary failure, resulting in extreme pain and death.

A recent study of trailer accidents was documented by Roadside Assistance Plan, U. S. Rider, which found a large number of accidents were caused by gooseneck trailers getting stuck on railroad tracks. The problem is that the tracks at most crossings are higher than the road, so the truck tires can be on the road and the rear tires can be on the other side of the tracks, causing the front of the gooseneck trailer to bottom out on the tracks. Exercise caution when crossing railroad tracks. If this should happen to you or someone you know, call 911. Unload all humans and animals from the truck and trailer, which will get them to safety and also take the weight off the trailer tires.

Source: *Perfect Horse*, October 2006

## John Forsythe Memoirs

John Forsythe was born in Dillon, Montana in 1927. He was raised in the Centennial Valley, which is 23 miles east of Monida. His father, Andy, was foreman of the 7L Ranch, also known as the Roe Ranch Co., for over 40 years. Actually, the Roe Ranch Company consisted of three ranches—the Centennial Valley Ranch, Upper Red Rock and Lower Red Rock Ranches. John's family lived at the Centennial Ranch. He attended a country school and the school teacher boarded at the Forsythe home.

Because the stock couldn't all winter at the Centennial Ranch, the 7L cowboys made five trips between Centennial Valley and Red Rock ranches, a total of 65 miles. Then in the summertime they'd take the saddle and work horses back to the Centennial Ranch.

*"I was never a kid. I was too busy workin'."*

The cowboys would return to Red Rock and take the dry cows into the nearby mountains. Then they trailed the cows and calves. About 300 horses, including mares and colts, stallions, work horses and saddle horses summered at the Centennial ranch along with 400 head of cows.

All the haying was done with work horses. They ran eight mowers and changed their teams at noon. About 1,300 tons of native hay was put up for winter use. John says, "I was never a kid. I was too busy workin'. I broke eighteen head of five-year old horses when I was 15 years old. We never broke anything that wasn't five years old. We had too many miles to cover so we didn't mess with them when they were three. And they were losing teeth when they were four."

It wasn't long before John realized if he could break rank ranch horses, he could ride a bronc in the rodeo arena. So he

entered a rodeo in Dillon and his rodeo career went from there. In Livingston, he took first place in bronc riding in 1949. He had purchased a pair of spurs called "Paddy Ryan bronc spurs" that raked a lot of miles on those bucking horses. Later John competed in more rodeo events, like bareback bulls and broncs. In 1951, John was thrown from a horse and suffered a broken neck. He was in a cast for six weeks so he returned to the 7L Ranch to run the buck rake during haying season. When they removed the cast it was full of foxtail!

John was drafted into the military. He jokes, "I still have splinters under my fingernails from when they drug me off the porch." John followed the rodeo circuit until 1955 when he found a sweetheart and married her. They would in time have five children. In 1990 the Red Rock ranches sold to Ted Turner, who donated the old 7L ranch house to the college in Dillon. After that sale, John and his wife were able to purchase a small ranch in the Red Rock area. In retirement, John enjoys riding his mare and remembering earlier days....and what memories they are!

*Thanks to Randy Kappes who gave me this "AGRINews" article dated 3/24/06. Randy told me to call Anna Tucker for more information. Anna steered me in the right direction and told me she sold a mare to John sometime ago. The mare's name is Bijian ("meaning small in Arabic, small like a mustard seed"). Anna said John and Bijian looked so good together that people would ask John to pose for pictures. Tami Jo Blake at AGRINews allowed me to use the information from the article.....Editor*



*Upper Picture: Young John dragging calves at a Centennial Ranch branding.*

*Upper Right: John Forsythe in 1949.*

*Right: John horseback in 2004.*

