



The Feedbag

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA

December 2011

Welcome New Members:

Jason Hanlon

Ted, Lynne &
Tom Murphy

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President’s Message.....



This is my last President's message for *The Feedbag*. There is an old Chinese saying, "The journey is the reward." This is so true of my last 3 years as Chapter President of the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula. I've made new friends, stayed involved with old friends and watched an amazing group of folks come together to volunteer their time and money for projects. The projects are very worthwhile and are a great undertaking for the Chapter....be proud. I can't say the job wasn't a lot of work for me but you all made it so much easier. Thank you each and every one. The journey truly has been my reward.

Congratulations to Ken Brown for being elected President for 2012. Also, congratulations to John Favro, 2012 Vice President, Diana Adkins, Secretary, and Dan Harper, Treasurer. These jobs are important and I know the newly elected officers will do an excellent job. During the November elections, Jane Kelly, Richard Tamcke and Barbara Koepke were elected to the Missoula Club's Board of Directors. In addition I look forward to serving on the Board as Past President. Mike Chandler, Gary Salisbury and Mack Long will be on the State Board of Directors starting March 2012. Look for updated bios in the March 2012 issue of this newsletter to get to know your officers and BOD's better.

Thank you to all of the committee chairs for all your hard work and dedication. You have made my job so much easier. Kudos to outgoing officers Ken Brown, Barbara Koepke and Jane Kelly. Job well done.

Don't forget our Club's 2011 Christmas Party on December 8th at Jokers Wild on Reserve. See page 3 for details.

We have the best Chapter in the State of Montana and I am proud to be part of it and so should you as you are the ones that made it the best. Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision and teamwork is the ability to direct individual accomplishment toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.

.....*Paul Evenson, President*

Mission Statement

- Perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
- Work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreation and stock use.
- Assist the various agencies responsible for maintenance and management of public lands.
- Educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise and sustained use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec. 7 BCH of Missoula Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, ORI Meeting Room
 Dec. 10 Montana BCH Board Meeting, Ruby's Inn, 10:00 AM
 Dec. 10 Club Christmas Party, Jokers Wild, 6:00 PM

2012

Jan. 4 BCH of Missoula Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, ORI
 Jan. 18 BCH of Missoula General Meeting, 7:00 PM, ORI
 Jan. 28 CPR/1st Aid, Tentatively FW&P, 9:00 to 4:00 PM
 Feb. 1 BCH of Missoula Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, ORI
 Feb. 25 Annual Club Membership Roundup, 6:00 PM, Lolo Community Center
 Mar. 7 BCH of Missoula Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, ORI
 Mar. 10 Saw Training Classroom Course, Tentatively FW&P, 9:00 to 4:00 PM
 Mar. 21 BCH of Missoula Membership Meeting, 7:00 PM, ORI
 Mar. 30 Montana State Convention, Billings Hotel, Billings, 1:00 PM
 Mar. 31 Blackfoot Highway Cleanup
 Apr. 21 Defensive Horse Safety, Harper Arena, 10:00 to 4:00 PM
 May 19 Annual Packing and Equestrian Skills Expo
 June 17 Father's Day Steak Ride
 Oct. 6 Blackfoot Clearwater Game Range Wire Roll-up
 Oct. 20 Blackfoot Highway Cleanup

2011 Annual Christmas Party
 December 10th, 6:00 PM
 Jokers Wild
 Homemade Prizes Made by Mem-
 bers, Potluck Dinner,
 Great Company

2012 Annual Membership Roundup
 February 25th, 6:00 PM
 Lolo Community Center

Always a good time, lots of laughter,
 pictures to share and of course,
 great food.

CLUB BOARD MEETS THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH; GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS ARE THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH.

Volunteer Requirements for 2012 Club Projects

Some courses/refresher courses are scheduled for volunteers who plan to volunteer on projects in 2012.

The first such class is **CPR/1st Aid**, January 28th, 9:00 until about 4:00, tentatively at Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FW&P) on Spurgeon. The instructor is Mark Wright. The cost is \$10/per student which covers the bare minimum of costs. Each student will receive an American Heart Association card to certify attendance, which is good for two years. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is a life saving technique that is used in many emergencies when someone's breathing or heartbeat has stopped. This technique, if applied by someone who is well trained and confident in his/her ability, can keep oxygen in the blood as it flows to the brain and other vitals until trained professionals can take over. The American Heart Association estimates that CPR can double or triple recovery of the patient. First Aid training is offered with CPR. Topics include, head, neck, spinal injuries, heat-related emergencies, hypothermia, allergies, burns, bone and joint injuries, wounds and wound infection.

On March 10th, Mark Wright and John Favro offer **Saw Safety**. This classroom session is free. It will tentatively be held at FW&P, 9:00 until about 4:00. Topics include saw safety, use, maintenance and technique. This class will not certify the volunteer for chain saw and crosscut saw, but is a prerequisite for the field proficiency classes to be held later. If the member wants to be certified for both chain saw and crosscut saw, two separate field sessions will be needed. Of course, a member does not have to be certified to help a sawyer, such as holding his horse or throwing logs and branches off the trail.

If there are questions or if you'd like to sign up for CPR/1st and Saw Safety, please call Mark Wright at 258-6795.

Defensive Horse Safety will be offered to members only on April 21, 10:00 until about 4:00, Harper Arena. The Forest Service's Northern Region requires employees and volunteers to take a defensive horse safety course. The Northern Region also requires that a refresher class be taken every 3 years. This course, which is definitely focused on horse and livestock safety, includes such topics as working around stock, tying stock, horse sense, horse characteristics and tendencies, saddling, cinching, mounting, and care of your horse. Other topics discussed are equipment and tack, knots, equine and human first aid. BYOL (Bring Your Own Lunch). Instructors vary but are all the best our Club has to offer. If you have questions or want to sign up for the course, you can contact Dr. Dan Harper by e-mail: dharp300@earthlink.net.

It is recommended that you carry your certification cards with you on the projects. Or, make a copy of each on a half sheet of paper to carry with you. Our genuine thanks to everyone who coordinates, teaches and hosts these courses. Your generous gifts of time, effort and knowledge are really appreciated.

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FOR SALE: St. Patrick Hospital Trauma Services offers Troxel equestrian helmets for sale. \$23.00. Contact Marianne Birenbaum, 214-7575 or e-mail her at eiranne@vzw.blackberry.net



FOR SALE: Ozark Leather 15" Western Saddle for \$270. Also, felt-lined cinch, back cinch, breast collar for \$25. Contact Barbara Koepke, 626-4351

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**BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA
 2011 CHRISTMAS PARTY & POTLUCK
 JOKERS WILD RESTAURANT, 4829 N RESERVE, 6:00 PM**

If you can help decorate, call Diane Tidwell, 273-0862.

2012 BCH of Missoula calendars will be on sale at the potluck. See Gary & Caroline Salisbury.

Get a jump on membership renewal. Barbara Koepke will have 2012 Membership Applications.

Don't forget to make and bring a homemade item to the potluck!

*Good Fellowship
 BCHM FAMOUS Potluck Dinner
 Door Prizes Made by Members*

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Sgt. Reckless of the Korean War

This article was submitted by BCH Members Richard Kingdon and Larissa Olson.

"Reckless" has her own website: www.sgtreckless.com which includes a video of her, the picture on the right and more details of the following story. This story first appeared in The Saturday Evening Post in 1954 and later in LIFE magazine in 1997.



Sgt. Reckless, a Mongolian mare in the Korean War

"Sgt. Reckless was a pack horse during the Korean war, and she carried recoilless rifles, ammunition and supplies to Marines. Nothing too unusual about that, lots of animals got pressed into doing pack chores in many wars. But this horse did something more....during the battle for a location called Outpost Vegas, this mare made 50 trips up and down the hill, on the way up she carried ammunition, and on the way down she carried wounded soldiers. What was so amazing? Well she made every one of those trips without anyone leading her.

I can imagine a horse carrying a wounded soldier, being smacked on the rump at the top of the hill, and heading back to the "safety" of the rear. But to imagine the same horse, loaded with ammunition, and trudging back to the battle where artillery is going off, without anyone leading her is unbelievable. To know that she would make 50 of those trips is unheard of. How many horses would even make it back to the barn once, let alone return to you in the field one single time.

She was retired at the Marine Corps Base in Camp Pendleton where a General issued the following order: she was never to carry any more weight on her back except her own blankets. She died in 1968 at the age of 20."

Sara Wilson put me onto an online book about "Sgt. Reckless: Pride of the Marines." The author is Andrew Geer. http://www.archive.org/stream/recklessprideoft011755mbp/recklessprideoft011755mbp_djvu.txt.

Also an online short story written about Sgt. Reckless: Combat Veteran. It's written by Nancy Lee White Hoffman and was originally published in November 1992. <http://www.mca-marines.org/leatherneck/sgt-reckless-combat-veteran> Here's an excerpt: "Latham taught Reckless how to take cover while on the front lines. When tapped on the front leg, she would know to hit the deck or get down. The training proved invaluable on many occasions. Latham also trained Reckless to head toward a bunker when incoming rounds hit behind the lines. "We'd get incoming there too, and they'd [the enemy] lay it on you. If Reckless was back in the back, she'd go to a bunker. All I had to do was yell, "Incoming, incoming!" and she'd go.""

The online video, the short story and the archived book are all very worthwhile reading. Until I read the archived book I couldn't imagine one of my horses making the sacrifices that Sgt. Reckless did. But those marines turned a horse into one of their own—a buddy. I'm not sure Sgt. Reckless knew she was a horse.....

The Editor

Seeing Yellowstone on a Horse

by Cherie Russell

Early last spring fellow BCH member Sheila Getty and I put our heads together to organize a trip to northern Yellowstone National Park with our horses. Several months later, on a beautiful September day, six of us started an incredible adventure. My husband, Tom, was the only male in the group; "...to provide the muscle", he mused. Others in the group consisted of Nancy Stoverud, Barb Jennings and Jan Sousa.

Campgrounds at Yellowstone, unless in the backcountry, prohibit stock; thus, we had to stay outside the Park. We opted for Timber Camp in the Gallatin National Forest, seven miles from Gardiner. The ranger said "...it was our best bet", as there were corrals, water, plenty of grazing and "lots of room for trailers." I was assured that the dirt road, even though it turned into one lane past the teeny hamlet of Jardine, would accommodate long trailers. "People do it all the time", she added. A couple of hours into the drive, a flat tire on Sheila's trailer along I-90 delayed our ETA at Timber Camp; however, it allowed Tom "to provide his muscle."

Night had fallen when we finally pulled into Gardiner and headed for Timber Camp. Finding a strange campground at night has always topped my list of "Things to Avoid." On the other side of Jardine was a ninety degree turn onto a very narrow and old wooden bridge with very little wiggle room for maneuvering the trailers. We provided entertainment for a few Jardine residents who could be seen peering out their windows through parted curtains.

After everyone safely maneuvered their vehicles over the bridge, we thought it would be just a few minutes to Timber Camp. We were all eagerly anticipating Barb's Jambalaya and a glass or two of wine. The full moon did little to assist driving the narrow, curvy and tree shrouded road along the side of a mountain. It was a painstakingly slow drive but we finally located the turnoff; a recently carved "road" out of the forest. At the end was a beautiful clearing, brightly lit by the full moon; the gurgling and bubbling sounds of running water pinpointed the near-by stream and the sev-

eral corrals were there waiting for our horses. Our poor horses – they had been in the trailers for twelve hours.

We planned to ride into the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness during the first two days and these trailheads were near-by. After a leisurely breakfast, we saddled up and headed to Knox Lake (aka Castle Lake). The trail was steep and rocky but Knox Lake is located in the middle of a very large mountain meadow hemmed in by mountains jutting up to meet the azure sky. There were fresh grizzly bear and wolf tracks along the shore.

On the return trip, Roy, Sheila's horse, stumbled and almost went down. There was a 2" nail embedded in his right front hoof; it took Barb's Leatherman and many tries before it was extracted. There was no blood and a horse medical kit provided the means to immediately treat it.

We decided to change our campsite for our Yellowstone rides. The president of the Gardiner Rodeo Association allowed us to use the rodeo grounds north of town to set up camp. There was no charge, but we gave a generous donation. There were plenty of corrals and hoses for water, plus a large parking lot.

We selected two trails to ride – the Lamar River Trail and the Specimen Ridge Trail. A park ranger told us that we could park in most pull-offs for the day. There were also certain trailheads that provided overnight parking for outfitters packing into the interior of Yellowstone; in northern Yellowstone there were two of these – Soda Butte and Slough Creek.

It was drizzling at 7:00 the next morning when we headed out to Soda Butte. Nancy and Barb's certified weed-free hay, which was on top of the trailer, had to be bagged before they would be granted permission to enter the Park. The Park Service supplied the plastic bags; Tom supplied the muscle. We were asked if we had a recent (within a year) Coggins Test certificate and Brand Inspection. At Soda Butte, the parking lot was filled with wolf watchers, some illegally parked in "Stock Trailers Only" spots. A ranger soon arrived and reme-

died that. A pack of wolves was feeding on a bison carcass not far from the trail. By the time we tacked up, the wolves were finished and had moved on. The clouds had also given way to bright sunshine.



Lamar River Trail terrain makes it easy to bushwack.

There was still an obstacle to overcome; a herd of bison was sprawled across the trail. Bison are unpredictable, especially the bulls during rutting season. Slowly and cautiously, we made a wide berth of the herd, while both humans and horses kept watchful eyes on the noisy herd.

Lamar River Trail starts out open, wide, and covered with sage and grass. Much of this area was burned to varying degrees in the fires of 1988. After fording Soda Butte Creek, the trail crosses high meadows with copses of trees and climbs up and over several side hills. From these hilltops, there are scenic vistas of the Lamar River. Cache Creek is the next ford, and while doable in September, earlier in the summer it may be too deep and swift to cross safely, even on horses. Very close to the ford on this creek, there is a stock campground. Much to our dismay there were several llamas tethered in camp about 100 yards away, staring at us with their unblinking and piercing eyes, while standing as motionless as boulders along the trail.

The next day we again left at the crack of dawn to ride the Specimen Ridge Trail from west to east. The day before, we had scouted a small parking area, located about a mile from Tower Junction, and across the road from the trailhead. It was large enough to park a few horse trailers if there were no vehicles already randomly parked. We arrived early

enough to secure spots for our trailers.

The scenery from Specimen Ridge rivals anything in the Park – the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness to the north, Mt. Washburn to the south, and, at one place, an eagle view of Lamar Valley. The majority of us were not interested in scaling Amethyst Mountain at the far eastern end of the trail. NPS has marked the trail with posts, rock cairns and ugly orange markers, but bison and weather often flatten the posts and topple the cairns. In some cases, the game trails are more prominent and easily mistaken for the real trail.

The trail begins in sagebrush and grass meadows; then there is a steep ascent to the top of the ridge. Lone bull bison

were seen here and there as well as numerous small herds of antelope. Various bones (elk and bison) and elk antlers were scattered all along the trail.



Vista of Lamar Valley from the Specimen Ridge Trail

Bad luck is said to come in threes; unfortunately, for Sheila, these words rang

true. Somehow, her bear spray, located in a bottle holder attached to her horn saddlebag, went off. Roy was not affected, but Sheila got some on her hands and without thinking, touched her face. She underwent an agonizing 45 minutes; there is nothing one can do except to keep flushing the areas with cold water.

The next day it was back to Missoula with lots of good memories and lessons learned. Despite the challenges we had faced, there is nothing better than experiencing Yellowstone with good friends, while on the back of horses. My husband had to admit that a group of cowgirls are, indeed, lots of fun. *Photos courtesy Cherie Russell.*



Tom, Barb, Jan, Nancy and Sheila in Yellowstone National Park, Above Lamar Valley

“Three Miles An Hour”, a Montana PBS documentary, was shown at the November 16th BCH of Missoula general membership meeting. It was shown twice on the Montana PBS TV channel in November and will be shown one more time in November on the 29th at 7:45 PM. In December it will air on December 29th at 7:00 PM and December 31st at 4:30 PM.

The Lolo National Forest thinks “the kids should see it too” and are hosting the film at the Missoula Children’s Theatre on December 5 at 6:30 PM. The first 300 in attendance will get in free. *Photo courtesy BCH of Missoula Photo Library.*



**SMOKE
ELSER**

Richard's Fling on Blue Mountain

By Ken Brown

At the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula's (BCHM) October general meeting, Richard Tamcke announced that he was going to do a trail clearing project that Saturday on Blue Mountain if anyone wanted to join him. The week had been wet and rainy so I waited until Friday night to call him to tell him I was coming. He told me to meet him at 10:00 a.m. on the big curve part way up the mountain.

I arrived a few minutes before 10:00 a.m. to find Richard's horse trailer, Nancy Stoverud and Sheila Getty. I shortly discovered that Richard and Jess Maynard had already left.

We saddled up and headed out on the trail to find Richard and Jess. We figured they could not be too far and that we would be able to find them from the sound of their chain saw. We were not hearing a chain saw. However, we were seeing fresh saw dust and cut logs. After riding up some switchbacks we found them standing by their horses with a screw driver on the chain-saw. The handle had come loose. We gave them a bad time about leaving without us and then joined in the ride up the next section of the mountain. When we found a downed tree, Richard would get off, get the chainsaw off his pack horse, and cut the log out. Jess would throw it off the trail.

At one point when Richard was cutting a downed tree, his horses and Jess disappeared. Richard had been letting the horses loose while he cut and they decided to leave without him. Jess had gathered them further up the trail. At some point Richard and I were riding together in the back of the group. I did not observe it but Richard said that while he was on the ground one of his mares had swung around on the trail, knocking him off the trail. He landed on his feet, stepped back on the trail and off he went again.

We hit the saddle and started toward O'Brien Creek on the next stretch of trail. It had started to rain by then. Nancy made the mistake by asking to go ahead since they were waiting on their horses while Richard and Jess cleared trail. They went on ahead only to be caught up with by us guys. Richard then gave Nancy his hand saw and put her to work on the 6 to 8 inch lodgepoles. Sheila and I were hand cutting downed trees when there was a ruckus. I was around the inside of a bend in the trail and looked over to see Richard, dressed in his orange hunting attire, bounding head-over-heel down the side of the mountain into thick downed timber at a good clip, like a big pumpkin. He did a double-gainer, a triple salchow and after he went 30 to 40 feet he came to a sudden stop into a half-nelson in the limbs of a knotty pine. (*salchow: a mid-air twirl*)

We then heard Nancy yelling for Sheila. It turns out that Sheila had been a Respiratory Therapist on Life Flight. As we were heading toward the rest of them I told Sheila if Richard needed CPR I was doing chest compressions and she was sucking lips. She told me she was very good at chest compressions.Wait a minute! She is a Respiratory Therapist, like as in breathing – giving breaths – resuscitation. But then again she said she was retired. I took measure of her. She was pretty agile at climbing on her big horse while the rest of us just kind of snaked up the best we could into position, mostly on the saddle. She was vicious in breaking tree limbs by hand. I figure my only advantage was I out weighed her. When we got closer I planned to hip-check her over the side. Then I would have a free shot at doing chest compressions for Richard. However, when we got to Richard he was up on the trail and on his horse. Off we went again. The trail leveled off a bit just before we would hit another road section so we stopped to eat. The wind was now howling and blowing fiercely. We tried to find some shelter from the wind to eat in. We were also concerned about more dead trees falling in the wind storm....on us.

Richard stated that his unplanned trip down the mountain was caused by his mares jockeying for position to either kick or get out of the way of being kicked. In the process, Richard was again pushed by the rear end of a horse over the side of the trail and down the mountainside. He was sporting a fresh bump with a newly exposed layer of virgin white skin showing over

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his right eye brow, a bump on the lower back of his head and a sore finger. He felt the sore finger must have been from him holding onto either the reins or a lead rope as he was being knocked out into space.

The wind was now joined by a driving rain. We decided that we had gone far enough and started back down the mountain. We soon hit the saddle area again and then went on a trail paralleling the road. Richard said there was a big tree across the trail but you could lead your horse under it. When we reached the big downed tree Richard surveyed it to see if we could safely cut it out. It took some doing and a few cut tree sections before we were able to get the horses through. In the process of chain saw cutting I used some martial arts kicks on the more stubborn cuts with my left boot. I have now discovered that when I walk on my left boot it makes a very loud clicker noise. My boots have a metal shaft running the length of the boots for support. Apparently I broke the one in my left boot. I am thinking of patenting the idea as a safety measure in bear country.

I later called Richard. I asked jokingly if Diane was going to let him come out and play with us any more. She seemed to think it was a humorous event and gave her blessings for him to go again, although he declined a ride the next day. As it turns out there was a yet a third time that he was knocked off the trail and Jess fell in a hole. And so it went.

There is a quote, by some unknown to me author, that is frequently used by Barb Koepke and was given to me by her daughter, Michele Hutchins, that says:

Life is not meant to be a journey to the grave
in a pretty and well preserved body,
but rather a skid in broadside, thoroughly used up,
totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming,
"Wow, What a Ride!"

Richard, our hats are off to you. You are a hell of a man!

Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area Wire Rollup October 8, 2012

By Alan Meyers, Chairman

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Volunteers from BCH of Missoula, students from the University of Montana and biologists with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FW&P), all in all 39 volunteers, met on October 8th to roll up and remove two and one-half miles of wire and wooden fencing and build 1,000 feet of split rail fencing at the new trailhead site. FW&P biologist Jay Kolbe organized the project. BCH of Missoula members included Herb Monk, Mike & Cherie Fisher, Klaus Von Stutterheim, Barb Koepke, Barb Parker, Diana Adkins, Lana & Earl Hamilton, Randy Velin, David Nikonow and Alan Meyers. Special thanks to Beate Von Stutterheim for the gourmet dinner served by candlelight at their home near the Game Range. It was awesome!



The first Saturday in October is being dedicated to this project. The setting is stunning! You come too! Photos provided by Alan Meyers.



*Back Country Horsemen of
Missoula*

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**Back Country Horsemen
of Missoula
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