



FEED BAG



MARCH 2005

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Vice-Pres., Rick Sherman	825-2247
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From the President's Pen . . .

I am excited about this year! We have lots of new and old ideas and some great help to pull them off with.

A good time was had by all at the Christmas party in Smoke and Thelma's barn. We all enjoyed the entertainment and good food. Some of the State representatives stayed for the potluck.

Our annual membership potluck dinner in January was a huge success. We added some new members as well as enjoying the great food and each other's company. Some of the new members remarked that they had never been to a potluck with so much good food.

We have lots of good ideas and new programs and events coming up this year. We are planning more organized rides with not only our club members but with other club's members and non-members alike. We will have back country trail projects to propose to the Forest Service. There will be a calendar of events in each *Feedbag* and also in the *Rocky Mountain Rider* and other local papers.

We plan to hold our annual steak ride at Boyd Mountain this year with a camp over the night before. There will be a ride in July at Clearwater Crossing with the Forest Service and some politicians. We will ride into the proposed wilderness area of the Great Burn to let them know the importance of making it a wilderness. We also have trail projects coming up, some of which are in the wilderness and some are not, but all projects will require help from our club members. 🐾

Gary Salisbury

For some of you, this will be your last issue unless you have paid your dues.....please check! A membership form is included in this issue. You can use it to correct changes in your address, e-mail address, chew out your editor, etc. A current membership list will be inserted in the Feedbag June Newsletter. Thanks! 🐾



Inside this Issue.....

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We are on the BCH Website. How do you get to Missoula Back Country Horsemen of Missoula? Type in bchmt.org to access the State website, then click on Missoula. This Missoula site has been getting 70 hits a day. We can put issues, Feedbag, pictures and any information that needs immediate dissemination on the web site. Some of the things we could put on the site are sale items and horses that are lost or stolen. Let Paul Evenson know what you want at: evenson@montana.com.

A special thank you to Sara and Paul Wilson for the picture of the Missoula Valley that is on the web site. 🐾

General Meeting
 7:30 p.m. 3rd Wednesday Each Month
 MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
 3201 Spurgin Rd.

Board Meeting
 Next Special Board Meeting
 March 9, 2005, 6:30 p.m.

Issues Meeting
 Scheduled As Needed
 Call Paul Evenson, 251-2163

“Spending that many hours in the saddle gave a man plenty of time to think. That’s why so many cowboys fancied themselves philosophers.”

.....C. M. Russell

COMING EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>WHERE/TIME</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
3/5/2005	Bitterroot Camp Out	Bass Creek-Camp up 10:00 a.m.	Paul Evenson, 251-2163
3/6/2005	Bitterroot Camp Out	Camp Down 12:00 p.m.	Chuck Miller, 961-5453
3/6/2005	Intro to BCH First Aid	FW & P, 1:00 p.m.	Keith Guschausky, 543-7957
4/1/2005	State Board Meeting	Heritage Inn, Great Falls, 1:00 p.m.	Barbara Parker, 544-9480
4/2-3/2005	BCH State Convention	Heritage Inn, Great Falls, 8:00 a.m.	
4/9/2005	Bob Marshall Complex	Seeley Lake, 9:00 a.m.	Smoke Elser, 549-2820
4/16/2005	Defensive Horsemanship	Paws Up Ranch, 9:00 a.m.	Smoke Elser, 549-2820
6/4/2005	National Trail Days	Blue Mountain	Barb Koepke, 626-4351
6/11/2005	Monture Trail Clearing	Monture Creek	Keith Guschausky, 543-7957
6/19/2005	BCH Steak Ride	Boyd Mountain	Gary Salisbury, 273-6967

Montana from Arizona by Dan Harper

Schedule of Programs

March 16 Pasture Management by Ed Brubaker, Cenex

April 20 Weed Control & Chemical Applications by Ed Brubaker, Cenex

Sept. 21 Horse Nutrition

What topics are you interested in? Give us some ideas.

There I was, in line to pay for the loot that I “won” at the Elk Foundation banquet, when my friend Ray pulled me out of line, shoved me into the hall and said, “Listen to this!” Next thing I know, I’m bidding on a mule-back mountain lion hunt in Arizona.

Well, Arizona in December isn’t too bad. The main ranch house was 35 miles from Young, a town with access only by graveled roads. The ranch had a one-lunger diesel engine to generate electricity and a cell phone that sometimes worked. The place was a working cattle ranch with a Forest Service grazing lease extending more than 40 miles north to south.

Early to bed, early to rise. The generator was shut down to battery power by 7:30 p.m. and everyone went to bed. By 4:00 a.m. the place was busy. The wood stove was hot, the cowboy coffee was smelling good and the horses, mules and hounds were being fed.

The tack was good quality but poorly maintained, and it was kept in an open barn. A horse or mule was roped from the remuda and led to the barn where it would stand to be tacked up. No halters were used and all the stock stood quietly waiting for a nose bad with ground corn. The mules all had britchings on their saddles as did most of the horses. All had good, big hooves and were kept well shod by the Mexican ranch hands.

We rode out at dawn in a big arc following the hounds. Going cross-country through mesquite and pallo verde soon convinced me that my Montana chinks were a bit short. We would just put our heads down and go through thick brush 10-15 feet high and by the end of the first day my jeans were torn and shins bruised. The next day I wore bat wing chaps—much better.

If the hounds seemed interested we would hop off the mounts to look for tracks. We had to make sure that the dogs were on a lion and going the right direction. The reins were dropped on the ground and horses and mules seldom moved even a foot. They were never tied, not that there was anything to tie onto anyway.

All the stock was rock solid. A hound between the legs or a shrub stuck under the rear chinch never caused problems. The mules and horses were truly interchangeable. The mules were used to work cattle right along with the horses. Mules were often in the lead and were used to herd

the remuda as needed.

There was a good assortment of bits and bridles used from snaffles and grazing bits to bosals. There were no tie-downs or other restraints used. Everyone wore good spurs and a mount's hesitation in front of a steep rock would result in a spurred reminder.

The terrain was tough—steep and rocky with narrow draws that were dense with brush. The stock worked around the cactus pretty much ignoring it except for the wickedly sticky cholla cactus (jumping cactus) which they carefully avoided. When my mule turned between two saguaro cactus I again learned the value of bat wing chaps.

For seven days we rode following the dogs past old homesteads, past an old Spanish fort and past Anasazi ruins, stopping at an occasional grave site. Unfortunately, the country had been cooked with the drought of the last few years and the prey base for the lions just wasn't there. We never saw a lion. We did round up some stray cattle and I was surprised to find myself spurring my mule to a full gallop through the brush after a cow.

The early morning ride in the winter sun on the trail-less land going back to a way of life 60 years past was the reward for the trip. Of course, I did not want to return home empty handed so I bought a reining mule. I had to; his name was Montana and besides, my five month-old grandson needed a good riding mule! 🐾

Many people have sighed for the "good old days" and regretted the "passing of the horse," but today, when only those who like horses own them, it is a far better time for horses. ~C.W. Anderson 🐾

MBCH Officer Profile Gary Salisbury, President

Hobbies: I train about 15 horses per year, riding high mountain trails, fishing and working with people who have a problem with a horse.

Favorite Horse: I have been fortunate to have known lots of good horses but there are two that I remember most. Red came to me as a broke horse that had foundered. Since I am a farrier I took on the job of trying to save him. I owned him for 20 plus years during which he was mostly my number one horse in the string. I bought Rio from Ed Lambert of Stevensville. I broke him and used him on a feedlot that I owned. I used him for team roping, pulling a pack string and I packed elk on him. For 23 years he was a very good friend.

Favorite Trail: I have seen lots of trails and have been fortunate to have packed and cowboied in Canada, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Oregon. The one that sticks out in my mind is the trail into Cedar Log Lake that parallels the Kelly Creek Trail. On this trail a person can stop and look anywhere and just get lost in time.

Hero and Why: (All my heroes have been cowboys!) My heros are self-made individuals who wait on no one to get a job done.

Quote to Live By: Treat everyone with respect and always use correct manners.

Makes Me Smile: Making good horses, miles of trails, high mountain lakes that are good fishing, a good meal and a warm and dry bed.

Makes Me Sad: Rude and disrespectful people.

Wildest Dream: To own a cattle and horse ranch.

Comfort Food: Anything Caroline cooks.

Favorite Book: Books on horse physiology and Louie Lamoure books.

Famous Last Words: "Take a deep seat, long rein, and faraway look in your eye!" 🐾

MBCH Member Profile

Rick Sherman, Vice President

Hobbies: I have managed to make a living at what I like to do for entertainment. I have worked with horses and do that for fun and psychological grounding now. I'm also an artist. I am an amateur painter and the art director at The Shirt Shop.

Favorite Horse: Cobalt is my first horse. We bought him during the winter of '96 from a down-on-his luck outfitter near Seeley Lake. We test rode him on a strip of plowed road. He hadn't been ridden in months yet he responded to every cue perfectly. It was his easy smooth stop from a fast lope that convinced Feather and I both. He led the trail rides for years and is our dominant horse in our current little herd. He is 20 and still going strong.

Favorite Trail: The Clearwater Game Range is more than a trail. It's our favorite place to ride. The area offers an amazing variety of landscape to explore. It runs from high mountain ridges to open rolling prairie. It offers old growth stands, hidden marshes, and the Clearwater River. And OH, the views.

Hero and Why: My father who was a fighter pilot. He shaped my self-view and my passion for wilderness and the land in general. His strength of character and sensitive honesty are things I have tried to bring into my own life and relationships. I'm fortunate to have had his example.

Quote To Live By: "Git 'Er Done."

Makes Me Smile: Most any ride.

Makes Me Sad: Being too damn busy to ride.

Wildest Dream: I'm currently in a creative visualization fantasy about doing two to three months exploring the Bob. Feather and I are both artists. We want to do a long trip where we can take the time to paint our way through the wilderness. It was also my father's dream to ride from one end to the other of the Bob. He never fulfilled that dream. I want to do a memorial ride for him.

Comfort Food: Beer

Favorite Book: *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Star Hawk and *Black Elk Speaks* by John Neihardt

Famous Last Words: "Oh, Shit!" 🐾

MBCH Member Profile

Michael Moore, Secretary

Hobbies: Archery, Golf, Hunting with my Son, Horseback Riding, Camping, Rodeoing and Woodworking.

Favorite Horse: My horse, Sunny, because he is mine and Dice, my son's horse, because he is so trustworthy.

Favorite Trail: Bass Creek because of the scenery and earthy smells going up the creek bottom. Also McClain Creek.

Hero and Why: My dad, for the values he instilled in me and my family and for his dedication to the people and community of East Helena where he was on the city council and major for 20 years. I admire him for being so active until his recent death.

Makes Me Smile: Watching my kids strive for success.

Makes Me Sad: Death. Also, my wife says household chores make me sad!

Wildest Dream: Bagging a seven-point bull during archery season with my son along.

Comfort Food: Pizza

Famous Last Words: "You'll never know if you don't try." 🐾

MBCH Member Profile

Becky Rohwer, Treasurer

Hobbies: Endurance Riding, Snorkeling, Needlework, Griz Games and Adventures!

Favorite Horse: How can I choose a favorite! I have three and love each of them when they are being good or threaten to sell them when they are bad.

Favorite Trail: Whichever one is sunny and warm in the winter or cool with a gentle breeze in the hot summer.

Hero and Why: All my endurance riding buddies who put up with all my quirks but still let me hang around. They teach me so many

lessons—things that are good to do and not to do.

Quote To Live By: To finish is to WIN!

Makes Me Smile: My dog, Tilly, when she jumps high to catch her tennis ball in mid-air.

Makes Me Sad: Having to put my gelding to rest.....

Favorite Book: What else, *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier

Famous Last Words: "After all, tomorrow is another day." Good Ol' Scarlet O'Hara. 🐾

This story of a cowboy wedding seems appropriate since Valentine's Day was just a couple of weeks ago.

The Wedding



by Rick Sherman

We were on my motorcycle blasting around Salmon Lake. We were leaning into a corner at about 80 mph when Feather proposed to me. I about laid it down but managed to wobble to a stop beside the road. We had been dating a couple of months at this point and I had to admit the thought had crossed my mind. We both had been married before and had several long-term relationships as well. We had both been hurt and the prospect of diving in head first without knowing what was under the water was an issue.

I stared out at the lake for a few minutes. Finally I came up with a plan. She would have to move up to Seeley with her two kids to live with me and my kid in a two-bedroom trailer through the winter. If we survived that and she still wanted to get married I would do it in the Spring.

Feather agreed to the conditions and we moved her family in with my daughter and me. To my surprise Jack Rich, my boss, at the Double Arrow was willing to hire her on as assistant wrangler. We had a great summer working together on the trail ride operation. The summer consisted of working with horses and swimming in the lakes with the kids.

Winters in Seeley are another matter. They are good old-fashioned Montana winters. Lots of snow, lots of cold and gray, and long. We had to build an insulated box of a room out on the porch for Angel and Feather and I slept in the living room. It was crowded and cramped but for the most part we all got along pretty well. I'll admit that I did take a long walk to town at ten below for a couple of beers one night. I found myself sharing a bit vocally my frustration with the kids' arguing. I try not to yell at the kids so the long walk was warranted.

Spring came, the trail rides were about to get started again and Feather called me on my promise. We decided, that since we had both been through this marriage ceremony thing before, we wouldn't take it too seriously. In fact, we decided to do it as performance art.

Since our lifestyle and living revolved around the old Double Arrow barn and horses, we would do a cowboy wedding. The old barn was built back in the early '30's of larch logs felled on site, skidded and block and tackled into place with draft horses. It was a hand hewn log beauty. The barnyard and surrounding grounds in the spring are lush and green.

Trail Creek runs behind the barn and forms one boundary of the barnyard. The other boundary is a bluff that

forms a natural amphitheater. It was a joy to work out of this old place and seemed the perfect backdrop for a wedding.

My mother had a cottage industry in Seeley catering weddings so she naturally took this one on. She had a traditional ceremony and reception in mind so she was a bit at odds with some of our plans. We didn't have a lot of money to invest in this affair so we kept it simple. Feather's wedding dress was something she bought at a garage sale for fifty cents that was intended for dress up for the girls. Under it she wore an antique slip, hand-made by her grandmother. Nobody saw it but she sure was proud of it. For myself I bought a new pair of black wranglers, a new cowboy hat and called it good.

The preacher was Pastor Jack from Lincoln. He is a way cool guy who has tattoos solid from head to foot. The pews of the church were hay bales set up outside the barn by the hitch rails. For the reception we had a local country band play outside the cookhouse. We had two horses saddled and ready to go in the barn.

The day of the ceremony was one of those late May days where every kind of weather happens within a few minutes of each other. We had people from all over the country, Baltimore, Tucson, Seattle, L.A. and all over Montana. The crowd was an eclectic mix of cowboys, bikers, hippies, loggers, doctors, lawyers and everybody in between. At the appointed time the crowd gathered at the hay bales. We got Pastor Jack up the narrow ladder into the hay loft.

Elk antlers formed the alter. All the kids were next to us and the weather joined in as well. It blew and rained and hailed, spit a little snow then the sun came out. The crowd came back out of the barn and we had great and mercifully brief ceremony. Feather even sang a love ballad to me. She forgot the words at first but recovered gracefully and carried on.

After the ceremony we climbed down the ladder into the lower part of the barn, slipped into the tack room where Feather removed the antique slip and pulled on my chaps under her wedding dress. We mounted our horses and rode out into the crowd. Our friends gathered around us and sang a round of *Happy Trails*. We then turned our horse to the open pasture and the hills and galloped off. We had planned to do an easy lope across the meadow but it turned into a race. Damned if Feather's little Morgan didn't beat me to the other side. From there we rode up onto old Baldy, a bald hill that over looks the Double Arrow and did another ceremony, this time with a pipe I had carved for this moment.

When we rode back to the reception we stopped on top of the bluff and surveyed the crowd below. From below we were silhouetted against the now sunny sky. I told you it was performance art. This was the part where I got into trouble with my Mother. In a traditional wedding the bride and groom do not take off for 45 minutes, making the crowd wait for the feast. Mom would not let any one eat because the tradition says the bride and groom get first pickings.

From here it was feasting and dancing in the meadow until well after dark. Finally Feather and I found ourselves sitting around the fire alone with the last couple of beers. We were happy, satisfied and married. 🐾

Submitted by Paul Evenson.....

Want to resupply lookouts and get a view from the mountain? The Rocky Mountain Ranger District on the Lewis and Clark National Forest have again agreed to let a member of the Back Country Horsemen accompany me when I resupply the lookouts. Once I get a schedule, I will put it on the website. You can call Paul Evenson at 251-2163 or e-mail at evenson@montana.com. The 2004 fire season was slow, but the lookouts still had to be resupplied. I had personnel from the District fire crew, or fire use crew, from the Supervisor's

Office accompany me. I made a few calls to some members but most were not able to make the trip. Dan Tuxbury was the only club member to accompany me. Dan is a great trail companion and I am looking forward to our next trip. Below is a picture of Patrol Lookout and my dog, Riikka. 🐾



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Barb Parker (1 Yr.), 273-6416
Mike Chandler (Alt.), 549-7659

Club Board of Directors

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For Sale: Older
model custom-built
Cherokee 2-horse
trailer. Good
condition, steel-belted tires, \$2200.
542-7443



PACKING TRIVIA

Question: Do you tie your pack horse lead ropes fast to the horse ahead of him, or do you use piggin strings? What do you use for piggin string and where do you attach it?

Answer: A piggin string is run from the cinch rings on both sides with a loop in the center of the horse's back to which a breakline is attached and in turn the breakline is attached to the lead rope of the next pack horse's back. Three eights (3/8) inches of rope for piggins strings, doubled bale twine for breaklines. The purpose of a piggin string is to put any back strain (such as a horse pulling back) on the breast collar rather than pulling down on the saddle. The object of the breakline is for safety. If a horse goes over the bank, he won't pull the horse in front with him.

Tip: When leading pack horses, never tie fast to your horn. A couple dallys around the horn with the end held in your free hand or placed under your leg on a cold day works well. Be alert when crossing bad spots and have light contact with your saddle horse's mouth. Negotiating a place like a gully will cause horses to go down slowly and up quickly. You may have to check your saddle horse and give your pack horse more rope or the back rope can be pulled from your hand. Needless to say, this is a bad spot to lose your rope. You should also watch your pack string in bad spots in case a horse needs more time. Watch for the domino effect.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!