



FEED BAG



Myra Mumma, Editor

March 2009



President's Message.....

Greetings to one and all. I hope you had great holidays with family and friends. Here's wishing you all the best for 2009!

I say thanks to all of you as I feel it is an honor and a privilege to be your president. The Officers and Board members are a very dedicated bunch and it will be my pleasure to work with them. We'll be able to build on what Connie Long started in order to make the club grow. It is apparent to many of us that this club has evolved into an energetic, forward-moving group.

One example is the number of members who stepped up during the 2009 nominations for officer and board member positions in November. It's heartening and it's catching—so it's pretty exciting to be your president!

Thank you once again, Smoke and Thelma, for having the 2008 Christmas Party at your barn. Even though the weather kept many folks at home, including the State Board members, the Elser barn was warm and it was a wonderful evening with friends, great food and entertainment. Klaus & Beate's Christmas cookies mailed from New York were a hit too. Your Christmas Party Committee worked hard to make the evening special. The Committee was: Ginger Hamilton, Connie Long, Sandi Treadaway, Barbara Koepke, Mark & Jenna Wright, Gary Salisbury & Caroline Bauer, Mike & Michele Hutchins, John Favro, Diane Tidwell and Anna Tucker. A big thank you to all of you!

***Live each day with courage.
Take pride in your work.
Always finish what you start.
Do what has to be done.
Be tough, but fair.
When you make a promise, keep it.
Ride for the brand.
Talk less and say more.
Remember that some things aren't for sale.
Know where to draw the line.***

I asked Myra to reprint this "Cowboy Creed" because I think it's a good code to live by.

The Forest Service has asked us if we want to do some more work projects. I hope more of you will be able to join us on these projects. You will quickly assimilate and soon appreciate what is known as "living on back country time." If you want to look at the past, your heritage, and learn what it was like 100 years ago, step off the hamster wheel at work and throw the watch in the corner, come ride with us!

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 the 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.

2009 Equestrian Skills Expo May 16, Missoula Equestrian Park

When the Heydon horse abuse case in the Bitterroot first came to light, MBCH responded three-fold. The club voted to: make a donation to the Bitter Root Humane Society where the Heydon horses were being kept, follow Montana legislation that has stiffer penalties for animal abuse and put on an Equestrian Skills Expo. This event is co-sponsored with the Missoula Equestrian Center. The focus of the Expo will be on education and safety following the guidelines of our MBCH Mission. There will be demos on Horse Handling Safety, Packing, Trail Manners & Safety, just to name a few. The Missoula Equestrian Park will demonstrate dressage, cross-country and stadium jumping and more. A Parade of Breeds will kick off the event.

If ever you wished that you could do something about this abuse case and others, now's your chance. Please support your club and the MEP by attending and participating in this Expo.



Left to Right: Smoke Elser, Alan Meyers, Randy Kappes, Dan Harper.



Left to Right: Jan Rach, Dennis Rach, Gary Salisbury, Santa Mark Colyer.

2008 Christmas Party

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Alan has some spring auctions coming up—an estate sale in Hamilton and two farm sales in the Polson area. If you need some extra tack or farm equipment, check with him on the dates!

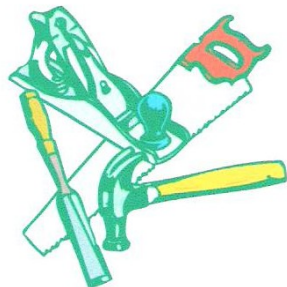
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Mike and Julie Beckel are having a spring saddle sale. And don't forget that they do repairs! Visit their website: www.oldtimertack.com

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SALEZONAS & TRAZA TONAZON

Answers to Trivia on page 9: 1) Gibson Reservoir is named for Paris Gibson, founder of Great Falls. 2) Hahn Peak is named after Tom Hahn who trapped in the area in 1908. 3) Danaher Creek, Mountain, River & Meadows all named for Tomas Danaher, early Ranger who homesteaded in what is now the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area in 1898. 4) Monture Creek is named for George Monture, a half-breed who was killed by Indians near the mouth of the North Fork of the Blackfoot River. 5) Shale Lake was named by a trail and fire crew that camped at the head of Red Creek while working a fire on Moonlight Peak in the '20's. They went to the lake to "mop up" the fire and found socks hanging in the tree—thus the name Sock Lake.



Don't miss this evening.
We're going to have a good
old-fashioned time!

Lightning Ridge

.....by Rick Sherman

A light frost clung to the grass and the brush. The early morning sun cast long fingers through the trees, warming the ledge I sat on. It was just outside the lodge and I liked to sit there in the morning, eat my hot oatmeal and daydream about the cutthroat in the deep hole fifty feet below me in the Spotted Bear River. I had a few morning chores and then the rest of the morning was mine to fish.

My dad called out the door of the lodge to let the horses out. I finished up my oatmeal and headed for the corrals. The morning sun was cutting through the trees in shafts of light through the early mists. Birds were singing and it was warming up nicely. I walked to the back of the corrals and opened the gate that led into the woods and out into open land.

I watched as all but the wrangle horse headed out the gate and bolted for temporary freedom and a belly full of grass. My father's angry voice cut through my morning reverie, "Rick, you didn't bell them!" I snapped out of my daydream too late to stop the last of the horses as they ran out the gate. "God dammit Rick, you know how hard they are to find out there without bells. What the hell were you thinking? Go get them before they get too far."

I quickly bridled Pete, an old stout pinto left in the corral as this week's wrangle horse, jumped on bareback and headed out in pursuit. I tried to kick Pete into a lope to catch up, but couldn't get more than a brutally choppy trot out of him. I had a skinny butt and he had a spine like a 2x6. In less than half a mile I couldn't take the pounding anymore,

.....continued on page 6

2009 Officer Profiles

Paul Evenson, President:

Hobbies—Leatherwork, reading, horseback riding.

Favorite Horse—The one I am riding at the time.

Favorite Trail—Headquarters Trail, Headquarters Pass

Quote to Live By—Let's Get It Done!

Makes Me Smile—Our poodle.

Makes Me Sad—People that hurt animals.

Wildest Dream—Ride the "Bob" from North to South and then East to West.

Comfort Food—mashed potatoes, baked potatoes, boiled potatoes.

Favorite Book—Books by Pete Fromm. "Indian Creek Chronicles" is a great one!

Famous Last Words—Keep smiling but don't forget to check your cinch.

Mark Wright, Vice-President:

Hobbies—Hunting, fishing, camping, skydiving, skiing and horseback riding.

Favorite Horse—An old sorrel ranch horse named Pretty Boy (not named by Mark).

Favorite Trail—Bob Marshall Owl Creek Trailhead at Holland Lake.

Quote to Live By—There's no place I'd rather be.

Makes Me Smile—Cold beer, peanuts, my wife sitting next to me, an elk in the back of my truck.

Makes Me Sad—People who hurt other people.

Wildest Dream—My wife and I in the back country with our horses for a long time!

Comfort Food—Cold beer and peanuts. Of course Jenna's oatmeal raisin cookies

Favorite Book—Wilbur Smith novels

Famous Last Words—Shoot low, Sheriff, they're riding Shetlands.

Jenna Wright, Secretary:

Hobbies—Running, yoga, horseback riding, cooking and baking, reading, and anything that involves being outdoors.

Favorite Horse—I can't choose! I've owned five different ones and they have all had their own special personalities.

Favorite Trail—Any trail. Just as long as I'm in the saddle, I'm happy.

Quote to Live By—Live each day to the fullest. You might not have another.

Makes Me Smile—My husband.

Makes Me Sad—Mean people.

Wildest Dream—Not having to work and instead just doing the horse thing every day.

Comfort Food—All the foods I can't eat.

Favorite Book—Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom

Famous Last Words—You can pick your friends but you can't pick your family.

Alan Meyers, Board Member

Hobbies—Horses and everything to do with them.

Favorite Horse—Mick, AQHA bay gelding.

Favorite Trail—Dutchman Basin Trail. There are always elk or their tracks.

Quote to Live By—If you can say something nice, don't say anything at all.

Makes Me Smile—My wife and kids, my new daughter-in-law.

Makes Me Sad—The horse and real estate markets.

Wildest Dream—I can't say it in this family newsletter!

Comfort Food—Ice cream and jerky.

Favorite Book—I have quite a few but I really like.....

Famous Last Words—Happy Trails!

How Work Projects "Work"

...by the Editor with contributions by several MBCH members

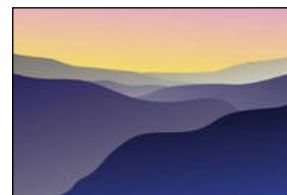
Winter is the time for planning and your Project Leaders, Michael Moore and Dan Tuxbury, are busy planning projects for the 2009 season. Projects come from the Ranger Districts on an as-needed basis. Michael and Dan can't really plan the dates until snow has melted from the trails and high water subsided, but that's usually toward the end of June. After the project is named, they decide on a route, whether it's a loop or in and back out on the same trail. Then what to pack and how many animals will be needed. If there isn't hay at the cabin, then hay needs to be packed in for the animals. Food is determined by number of people times number of days. The crew's food can

usually be packed on one animal. Paul and some other members developed a food shopping list with the Rocky Mountain Ranger District that works well. Meals are usually under \$4.00 per meal per person. Materials for the work have to be packed in, such as lumber, hardware, hand tools and saws.

The day of departure comes. It's slow sorting out items for the packs, manning up the loads and filling bear resistant panniers. Do you know what "manny means? "Basket" in French. Know what manny means? "Cover" in Spanish. Before heading down the trail, a safety meeting is held. Order of horses and mules depends on issues of the animals. Generally, horses that won't stand quietly while tied, kickers, green horses should be trained at home before going on a pack trip. Lead the problem horse. Slow down on bad spots in the trail until everyone is past. The packers try to think ahead of issues that could arise in order to divert problems. Other safety rules are to stick together. If one has a problem or if packs need adjusting, yell out to the leader. At water crossings one rides across and turns to face the others while they drink. Don't tie to dead trees that can break. Tie eye high—the horses's eye.

It's hard work making trails safe for travel. The crew clears trails of blowdowns, makes water bars, kicks baseball-sized rocks that are dangerous out of the trails and water crossings, retreads trails. The crew clears enough to make a canopy, which is limbing up to 10 feet and 4 from the edge of the trail. And the weather isn't always nice. There are snow squalls and rain showers, wind, lightning—all the same day!

Clearly a great deal of satisfaction comes from the work, but there's more to it than that. There's the camaraderie of accomplishing work together as a team. But it's different for different people. Smoke says he loves to "see what's around the bend in the trail." Alan's motivation is "to see new country, the magic of Wilderness." Paul goes "to enjoy our back country heritage and to step back in time." Why do you go to the back country?



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| Issues, Paul Evenson | 251-2163 |
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| Recreation Rides, Richard Tamcke & Sandi Treadaway | 258-6621 728-3459 |
| Social, Lana Hamilton, Nancy Stoverud, Diane Tidwell | 251-3456, 542-0085 & 273-0781 |
| Sponsorship, Anna Tucker | 273-3779 |

DATES TO REMEMBER

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Feb. 28 | Annual Membership Potluck, 6:00, Lolo Community Center |
| Mar. 4 | MBCH Board Meeting, 6:30, FW&P |
| Mar. 18 | MBCH General Meeting, 7:00, FW&P |
| Mar. 27-29 | State BCH Convention, Red Lion Colonial Inn, Helena |
| Apr. 1 | MBCH Board Meeting, 6:30, FW&P |
| Apr. 4 | Spring Tune Up Clinic by Gary Salisbury, 10-4:00, Potluck |
| Apr. 11 | First Aid & CPR Training, FW&P, Call Mark at 258-6795 |
| Apr. 15 | MBCH General Meeting, 7:00, FW&P |
| Apr. 18 | Defensive Horsemanship, Harper Arena, 9:00 |
| Apr. 25 | Log & Water Crossing, Erskine Fishing Access west of F'town, bring a lunch. Richard at 258-6621 |
| TBA | Certification for Cross Cut and Chain Saw Training |
| May 16 | MBCH & Missoula Equestrian Park 2009 Equestrian Skills Expo, Missoula Equestrian Park, 10:00, see p. 1 |
| May 6 | MBCH Board Meeting, 6:30, FW&P |
| May 21 | MBCH General Meeting, 7:00, FW&P |
| May 31 | Marshall Canyon Wildflower Ride, Dan & Marjorie Harper, 10:00 a.m., Bring your lunch. |
| June 6 | National Trails Day, Blue Mtn. Trailhead, Barb at 626-4351 |
| June 21 | Father's Day Steak Ride, Blackfoot-Clearwater Game Range, Leaves Boyd Ranch at 11:00 |
| July-October | Club Recreation Day Rides, Leaders Needed, Call Richard at 258-6621 |
| August 21 | Annual Summer Potluck |
| WTSM* | Burnt Cabin Hay Shelter Work Project Monture Creek Trail Project Welcome Creek Cabin Work Project |

* When the Snow Melts!

MBCH Board Meetings: First Wednesday of each month, 6:30

MBCH General Meetings: Third Wednesday of each month, 7:00, Fish,
Wildlife & Parks Office on Spurgin Ave.*Cont'd from page 3.....*

so I hopped off and started walking back to get a saddle. My dad rolled up in his truck, saw me walking and assumed I had been dumped. When he found out that I had wimped out, his concern turned to anger and he tore into me again.

I was humiliated and ashamed that I had blown such a simple chore with the potential consequence of jeopardizing the whole business. My frustration with my own foolishness was almost as bad as my dad's verbal beating. I walked back, saddled up and rode out again. I was glad to be riding alone.

Fortunately, twenty horses are easy to track. I had hoped they would go a short distance and then eat. Unfortunately, they picked up on the fact that someone was coming after them and kept moving. They went about a mile up the Spotted Bear River and then turned up a draw toward Horse Ridge. I followed on Pete for hours tracking them up the mountain. I was in an area I had never been before and I had never done this on my own. It concerned me, little jabs of doubt gnawed at my gut, but I kept my eye on the trail, determined to correct my mistake.

It was a hell of a climb up through heavy old growth timber. We side-hilled it through the open parks when we could and picked our way around and through the out-crops of ancient red shale when we had to.

The sun was high when Pete and I broke out on Horse Ridge. I could see down on the Diamond R way below. I was high enough to see into the Bob Marshall and get a feel for how much landscape there was to hide in. The ridge was open with long, slick rock flats skewed at steep angles, terminating to short vertical cliffs below us. Pete chugged at a steady pace up the ridge.

We continued to climb even higher on the ridge when the usual afternoon thunderstorm moved in on us. The clouds boiled in around the ridge turning the sunny afternoon dark and cold. The wind picked up hard and visibility

.....Cont'd. on page 8

Editor's Notes

Recently, Paul Evenson told John and me about the full-sized mounted grizzly bear at the Lincoln Ranger District office. This magnificent bear was run over by a pickup truck in an accident near Lincoln. It was aged at 12 years old and weighed 830 pounds (the second largest bear recorded in Montana) and was over 8 feet tall. This bear was first captured on the east side of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area near Choteau where it got into trouble with food--grain to be specific. It traveled from there to Seeley Lake and then to Lincoln over a several-year period. And, in fact it was run over once before in 1996. The untimely death of this bear illustrates the problem once bears get a taste of human food. This one was photographed around Lincoln getting into garbage cans and visiting buildings looking for food just before it was killed. The old adage of "A fed bear--is-a-dead-bear" is a testament here.

If you are planning on riding into the "Bob," or one of the many wilderness/backcountry areas around here, think about this. What can you do to avoid or lessen an "encounter" with a grizzly bear? There are a number of excellent brochures describing proper precautions to take when riding/camping in grizzly bear country. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (www.IGBCOnline.org) composed of representatives of the Forest Service, State Game and Fish Agencies, National Park Service and Tribal Governments, has some excellent information. This information is available in a program called "BE BEAR AWARE." Many of the publications (we'll have some available at the February Membership Potluck) are available at the local offices of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, National Forest Ranger Districts, and National Parks. Most will advise you to take precautions with your horse feed as well as your own food stuffs. Grizzlies really like horse pellets and dog food as well as many other foods that are frequently taken on back country trips--not to mention those juicy steaks and fresh caught fish! Back Country Horsemen of Missoula library has a small book for checkout called "Bear Aware: The Quick Reference Bear Country Survival Guide" by Bill Schneider. Call me if you'd like to check it out and I'll get the book to you.



Feedbag Editor and the big Grizzly in the Lincoln Ranger District office.

Here are some dates around the area that you might be interested in. I didn't list all the websites for details here but you can find them by Googling the subject or give me a call at 542-7443 or e-mail at jmmumma@montana.com.

| | |
|---------------|---|
| April 2-5 | MSU Spring Rodeo |
| Apr. 18-19 | Brandon Carpenter Clinic at Dunrovin Ranch, Lolo |
| Mar. 21 | Barnyard Bunch Annual 4-H Tack Swap, Corvallis |
| May 1-2 | MT Wilderness Annual Meeting, Missoula |
| May 9 | Annual Spring Catalog Horse Sale by Missoula Livestock Auction. Catalog deadline is April 3rd. |
| May 22-24 | Montana Quarter Horse Show, Sapphire Event Center, again on June 26-28. |
| May 29-31 | 2nd Annual Sousa Rendezvous. Weekend of horseback riding and campfire cookout at Lazy Sousa Ranch in the Nine Mile Valley. Jan Sousa—626-4757 |
| June 4 & 5 | Gary Salisbury, Auctioneer, Farm Auction in Polson |
| June 20-21 | Tennessee Walker Horse Show, Sapphire Event Center |
| July 9-11 | Missouri Fox Trotter Horse Show, Sapphire Event Center |
| July 12-15 | 12th Annual National Scenic & Historical Trails Conference, Missoula |
| July 30-Aug 1 | Chris Cox Horsemanship Clinic, Sapphire Event Center |
| July 12-15 | 12th Conference on National Scenic & Historic Trails, Holiday Inn, Missoula |

Ninemile Wildlands Center, where Smoke Elser is an instructor, 2009 clinic schedule can be accessed at www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo/resources-cultural/. Several of the classes are full, but the District is building waiting lists so there's still a chance.

Thanks again, everyone, for submitting so many photos, articles, dates. They are all appreciated. Next *Feedbag* comes out June 1 and the deadline for submitting is May 20.

Myra



Barbara Parker is an amazing, walking, talking miracle. Besides that, she's one tough lady. You will recall that she was involved in an accident and was flown to Seattle's Harbor View Medical Center for treatment. But, she made it home to Missoula for Christmas. She was on soft foods for three weeks after arriving home. Her meds had to be crushed up and mixed with the soft food. On January 8, the arm cast was removed and on the 14th she said goodbye to her neck brace and she is now back to basically caring for herself and preparing her own meals, although the Hungerfords are still caring for her horses. In March the brackets on her teeth will be removed and an assessment of further work to be done will be made then. She hopes to return to work in March.

Barbara is so grateful to everyone for all their help, cards and prayers. And MBCH is grateful to Barbara for her hard work and loyalty to the club and its mission throughout the years. Left is a photo of her at State Convention last year. (Photo submitted by Don Dodge)

.....continued from page 6
 dropped to next to nothing. Then the lightning started. The flash of the lightning and boom of the thunder was simultaneous. I could feel the concussion of the thunder and taste the bitterness of electricity in the air, like licking the electrodes on a battery. A bolt of lightning struck a point below where we rode. At every flash I tensed and grabbed the horn, expecting Pete to blow out from under me. Pete trudged on, never flinching, just keeping that steady pace going through the wind, the thunder and the rain. I was scared to death, but took strength from Pete's resolve.

Eventually the trail dropped off the ridge and out of the storm. We worked our way down into the next drainage to the north, keeping after the horses until we finally caught up with them in a meadow near the bottom. Pete and I kept pushing them down until we hit a logging road. At that point, they seemed willing to head back home and kept a steady trot for miles down to the main South Fork road.

It was getting dark by the time I brought the herd through the front gate of the ranch and into the corral. My father was just heading out in the truck for another attempt at finding me. The look on his face was relief, then pride, as I pushed the herd past the lodge. The lodge guests were having dinner and they all came out to watch me wrangle the herd in. I rode tall as I passed them, pretending not to notice the guests.

I closed the gate behind the herd, unsaddled and grained Pete, then belled the lead horses, and let them out again. My father gave me a subdued "atta boy" and a pat on the back. Karl, the hired man, took me aside and said, "Good work. You did a man's job today." He glanced over his shoulder at my father walking back to the lodge. "I think your dad learned something today, too." I felt like I was eight feet tall. I corrected a foolish mistake and did a man's job to do it.

I didn't grow up on a ranch and my father wasn't always an outfitter, but the time I spent on the trail with my father was something that no other member of my family had the opportunity to experience. During most of my early growing up years, he was fighter pilot and the commander of the Montana Air National

Guard Base in Great Falls. My memories of him from that time were somewhat remote. When he was at home he was either asleep, passed out drunk on the couch, or out in his shop building something. Muffled profanity turned the air blue as he berated himself for his mistakes or miscalculations.

The rest of the time he was flying or hunting. We had a cabin near the Seven-Up Ranch east of Lincoln. We spent most of our free time there during weekends and summers. I remember my mother herding us kids out front when my father buzzed the cabin in his F-89 fighter jet. We would stand out front and wait for him to circle back. He would bring his airplane low and slow just above the trees. He was low enough that we could see him through the bubble canopy waving to us. He would then hit the after burners with a ground-shaking roar, pull the plane up into a steep climb and rock the wings back and forth in a parting wave as he disappeared into the sky.

He retired after twenty-four years of military flying and partnered up with his best hunting buddy, Gilbert, to buy the Diamond R. It was a huge financial mistake for my parents, but one of the most important experiences of my life.

It was a long four-hour drive from Great Falls to Hungry Horse. We drove northwest through the endless, flat wheat fields with ocean view horizons until we got into the rolling cattle country around Chateau. The Rocky Mountain front was a ragged blue wall on our left until Chief Mountain and the eastern front of Glacier Park loomed up in front of us as we approached Browning. From there we would dive deep into mountain canyons with cold rivers and thick, heady conifer fragrant air. The closer we got to the mountains, the more I felt like a dog when he realizes that he is being taken to where he knows he can run free. At Hungry Horse we would turn up the South Fork road. It took another two to three hours to cover the fifty-six miles of bad road to get to Spotted Bear. The road was a continuous, winding axle-buster. It always made me carsick, so I would sit in the back of the truck breathing deep that cool damp air and staring up at the parade of huge old trees rolling by.

I remember the farmers, cowboys, and packers I met as we stopped at roadside waterholes along the way. I would belly up to the bar with my dad and drink my 7Up as the men drank their 7Up and whiskey. I would listen to tales of horse wrecks, wild cows and open country. I developed a sense of what it was to work hard and play hard, often in the same event. These men weren't sophisticated and articulate storytellers, some were downright crude, but the stories were as genuine as the men telling them. Listening to their stories, I started to develop a sense of honesty and self-reliance, born of hard work and big country.

The Diamond R was heaven for a young boy. The lodge sat atop a cliff overlooking the Spotted Bear River. A mile downstream the Spotted Bear poured into the mighty South Fork of the Flathead. The mouth flowed out at the base of a vertical cliff that forced the South Fork into a bend and big eddy that formed a sandy beach on the other side of the river. This geology created the coolest swimming hole imaginable. We would go upstream from the beach, jump in the big river and float down to the mouth of the Spotted Bear. The water was so deep it was almost black. Submerged cliffs would loom up under us, glowing green below our white legs and feet as we floated over them. The force of the current from the smaller river would push us back across the current of the big river and right up onto the beach. The fishing was beyond great. We practiced catch and release before it was fashionable. The cutthroat populations were so healthy that we could keep enough to eat and then fish for the fun of it. In our backcountry camp I, as a kid, could get up early and catch enough good-sized cutthroat to feed the crew for breakfast. Sometimes on long trips it would become a necessity when we started to run out of packed-in food. I was pulling a pack string by the time I was twelve.

My involvement with horses started long before we bought the ranch, but this was my first experience with horses as a central part of a working operation. It was my job to take care of the stock when we got to camp. Once unsaddled, I brushed, fed, belled and released the horses to graze for the night. In the morning, my father would shake me out of my bunk at



first light to wrangle them in after a night on open mountain pastures. When I was younger I would go out with someone else, but eventually I would be the one to saddle up in the dark to go chase the ghost bells on the benches above camp.

I learned to love the country and the landmark names I heard in the saloons became familiar places. Names became stories. Black Bear Crossing was where Karl raced at a gallop through the river shallows, swinging his lariat to rescue my dog as she was swept away by the strong current of the river. Big Prairie was the place where the old Ford trimotor crashed in the thirties. The planes carcass still lies in the brush and trees. Kelly Bend is where our camp was and the place where our business came to an end, a story in and of itself. The Danaher, the Confluence, the Wall, White River Pass, all became names, places and stories that define who I am and who I still wish to be.

The land itself, in all its manifestations of nature, became a focus for me. I developed a spiritual awareness that defined my sense of place in nature and the world. When you are immersed in wilderness, you get a sense of what is real. When you are three days ride from the nearest road, phone, or person you become much more aware of what you are doing and the potential consequences of your actions. You come to realize that you are experiencing the real world and what goes on beyond the last ridge of wilderness is temporary and somehow less important than that culture would care to admit. What you are doing now requires you to be fully present in the moment and the moment is all there is.

My sisters never knew the man I did. They knew the hero in the sky, but when he was home, his alcoholism was the most noticeable feature. He was the controlling commander who expected

his word to carry weight. He was an insecure man of small stature trying desperately to prove his worth to himself. His addiction never would let him see that he already was that which he sought to be.

When I rode with him, he was living his dream and I was fortunate to share that dream with him. I spent four years with him on the trail in the Bob. It was the best four years of my life. I learned who my father was and learned to see past his flaws to the good man beneath. In the process, I learned about myself. I learned what I could do and that life is much more than the status of material accumulation. Life became an accumulation of experiences.

Mule Days

Montana Mule Days June 12, 13, 14, Ravalli County Fairgrounds in Hamilton, www.montanamuledays.com

Bishop Mule Days, May 19-24, Bishop, CA, www.muledays.org

Hells Canyon Mule Days, September 11, 12, 13 Enterprize, OR, www.hellscanyonmuledays.com

Jake Clark Mule Days, June 17-21, Ralston, WY, www.saddlemule.com

Last Issue of *The Feedbag*

This will be your last issue of this newsletter unless you have renewed your membership. If you need an application form please e-mail one of the officers.

March Book Review and Trivia

Montana's Bob Marshall Country by Rick and Suzie Graetz

Ever wonder how some of the creeks, mountains, rivers and meadows in our surrounding Wilderness Areas got their name? Like:

1. Gibson Reservoir?
2. Hahn Peak?
3. Danaher Creek, Mountain, River & Meadows?
4. Monture Creek?
5. Sock Lake?

For a hint, the answers are somewhere in this newsletter. The first person who calls President Paul, 251-2163, wins pie and beverage of your choice at Riverside Grill in Bonner with Paul and any other members who are available at the time!

Montana's Bob Marshall Country by Rick and Suzie Graetz gives concise and detailed information about the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, Great Bear Wilderness Areas and surrounding wildlands. The book is very readable with lots of good pictures that make you want to be there. The history section is especially interesting—Bob Marshall's legacy and the creation of the Wilderness Area. There are wonderful sections on weather, wildlife, geology, fire, and a 1907 Forest Ranger. Two visionary chapters end the book: "Shoulders to the Wheel" by Jim Posewitz and "Wilderness" by A. B. Guthrie, Jr.

It's a fast read and it's in our MBCH library! So you don't even have to buy it. Just give me a call and I'll get it to you.

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