



The Feedbag

May 2017

President's Letter:

Howdy all, Wow was that a long winter! I for one was happy to see some bare ground again. Although it was wintery we had a great membership roundup in February, kudos to the hardy souls that came out. We had a great time of socializing, good food and many great auction items. It is great to have you all as members again. I also sent out a letter to those who didn't make it just to remind them we still have room for more folks and had a good response as well.

Now as members you may be asking what is in it for me, well just about anything you would need to know backcountry and horse wise. We have many experienced backcountry horsemen who are willing to share knowledge and experience. We do this through a variety of ways, our monthly meetings we always have a very interesting program or speakers that share points of interest that align with our mission. We also have several educational opportunities through the year that cover saw training and certification, 1st aid and CPR, spring tune up for horse and rider, defensive horse safety and others as requested or suggested. This education allows us to perform our trail maintenance and other activities safely and effectively.

We look forward to your involvement this year and years to come as we experience the back country of Montana.

Randy Velin, President



Randy with Snickers, his newest Equine addition.

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Website:

<http://bchmt.org/wp/missoula>

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Of Missoula
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2017 Membership Roundup

The annual Back Country Horsemen of Missoula Membership Potluck has become quite an event. It is a time to greet old friends and welcome new members. It is a time to celebrate what we do and a time for great food.

The Membership Potluck is the main fund raiser for the club. This year the live and silent auctions generated \$1747.00! Thank you members. Now we will put these funds to good use to further our mission.



Richard Tamcke was presented the Extraordinary Volunteer Award knife by Randy Velin and Gary Salisbury, who was the first recipient of the award last year.

Officers


Randy Velin	President
Ken Brown	Vice President
Kirsten Pabst	Secretary
Suzette Moore	Treasure

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Marni Angood	
Mike Chandler	
Robert Cross	
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Earl Tidball	
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Trail number 567: Kelly Creek, Idaho

Maybe we should have changed plans completely when we found that the road to the Schley Mountain trailhead in the Great Burn was closed last July for a bridge replacement. However, Dean Hoistad, Mike Hutchins and I were lured by the promise of great fishing in Kelly Creek. Instead of going down the Middle Fork of Kelly Creek from the Montana side, now we were committed to the tedious drive to Superior, up Trout Creek and over Hoodoo pass then down 49 back country road miles to the Kelly Creek trailhead to trail number 567.

We talked to a fellow from Vermont who came to camp at the trailhead every year claiming it was his favorite place to fish. He had a horse but allowed that he would never consider riding up the Kelly Creek trail. Well what would an Easterner know any way. We soon found out that he knew that trail was narrow with steep drop offs into the river in many places. Riding down the wide trail into the Grand Canyon never bothered me. This narrow trail with steep drop offs of 30 to 40 feet did cause a bad case of dry mouth. Fortunately we did not meet any hikers or horse parties while on the trail. In places there would be no passing room for several hundred yards. Oh, and there were wasps. I was in the lead so ask Dean and Mike about the encounter.

We camped on a bench above a nice meadow about 9 miles from the trailhead. The fishing was good for smaller 10 to 13 inch Cutthroats. The entire Creek is catch and release so no fish dinners. We were entertained by two kids, well actually young adults, hired by the Great Burn Study Group to hand spray weeds. There were plenty of weeds of all varieties along the creek. We wished them good luck but didn't hold much hope for a win in the war on weeds.

Mike and I rode up Bear Creek into some beautiful country with open Meadows laced with scattered aspen groves. The Lodge-pole pine population along the trail was decimated by the pine beetle with perhaps a 90% mortality rate. We wondered just who would keep the trail open as all the trees start to come down. Interestingly, over a century after the great fire of 1910, scattered old growth snags still tower over the new growth forest.

Dean won the best toy award with his pump up pressurized shower. Rain and hail teased us as we cleaned up camp and packed up our gear for the ride out. The ride out was mostly dry, but then there were the wasps. Ask Dean and Mike about that. Luck was still with us. We met no one on the trail during the ride out, and none of the loads required any adjustments. We were lucky to make it to Superior before running out of fuel. We had crossed this trip off our list even before we learned that in the past an outfitter had lost two mules and a guest off the trail over the edge into the water. This year we will stay in Montana for our pack trips.

Dan Harper

Annual BCH Convention Update

Montana's BCH convention was held in Polson this year at the KwaTuqNuk Inn and was hosted by the Mission Valley BCH. Kudos to them for making a great convention the speakers, business meeting, vendors, auction, banquet and crosscut saw completion were all well attended with over 200 BCH members from around the state. Missoula BCH had 20 members in attendance. Thank you to our members that represented our club at the convention.

There were 2 resolutions that were proposed and passed.

Resolution 1 – Resolution to Support Montanans for Healthy Legislative Proposal for Newly Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers in Montana.

“That the chairman of the BCH of Montana send a letter to Senators Tester and Daines, Montana’s forthcoming Congressman, and Interior Secretary Zinke asking that they introduce the Montanans for Healthy Rivers citizens legislative proposal for new wild and scenic river designations on select rivers and streams in Western Montana, in order to maintain current and future use and values for which those rivers and streams are eligible to be designated as Wild and Scenic.”

Requisites: to be eligible, rivers must be *free-flowing* and possess one or more *outstandingly remarkable values* (ORVs) (fisheries, recreation, etc.)

If a river is designated as Wild and Scenic, then:

Water quality **must** be maintained, AND

A Comprehensive river management plan must be implemented

Designation doesn't affect private property or local development regs; existing water rights; outfitting, trail building, horse packing; motorized/mechanized activities; public or private access; fishing or hunting regs.

Montana has very small number of protected river miles compared to other states, given our large geography. All 3 forks of Flathead River and 150 miles of the upper Missouri are protected (about the same as New Jersey). Efforts to include East Rosebud Creek have been re-introduced which, if passed, would be the first addition in Montana in over 40 years.

Current focus on headwaters in greater Yellowstone and Glacier areas.

For Qs or more info, contact Kascie Herron, 406-546-2316

kherron@americanrivers.org or Rick Potts, 406-366-9685 montanatrials@hotmail.com

Resolution 2 – To Rescind the 2004 Resolution and make additions to the Constitution, recommended by the Constitution Committee to allow membership in more than one chapter.

Establishing dues in each; limiting duplicative dues for state and national memberships; and limiting representation as a delegate or state director.

Looking forward to next year's convention in Lewistown MT.



Barb Parker and Ken Brown receiving service awards.



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Calendar of Events

June 3rd- National Trails day at Blue Mtn. and saw/field work training at 8:30am Lunch provided contact, (Randy Velin 544-4582). Saw Training contact Mark Wright (531-2455).

June 16-18 : Monture/Burnt Cabin , Trail clearing and corrals or Cabin work. Contact Richard Tamcke (258-6621)

June 24 : BCH Rendezvous and Ride, Blackfoot Clearwater Game Range, Contact Mike Moore (370-7549)

August 18 : BCH potluck picnic at Holt's museum. This is a must attend for a view of their private western memorabilia exhibits.

September 9 : Primm Meadows Ride, Richard Tamcke (258-6621)

September 20 : BCH General meeting and ice cream social at 7:00pm at ORI.

October 6 : Wire roll up at Blackfoot Clearwater Game Range

October 18 : General meeting at ORI

November 15 : General meeting at ORI

December 2 : Board Meeting and BCH of Missoula Christmas party (Potluck at 6:00pm) Location TBA.

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BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA SUMMER RENDEZVOUS

BLACKFOOT CLEARWATER GAME RANGE
(40 MILES EAST OF MISSOULA ON MONTANA HIGHWAY 200)

JUNE 23 -25, 2017

THE BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO SHARE IN THIS RENDEZVOUS WHICH IS MEANT TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO THE COMMUNITY FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR ORGANIZATION AND OUR MISSION.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

SATURDAY JUNE 24:

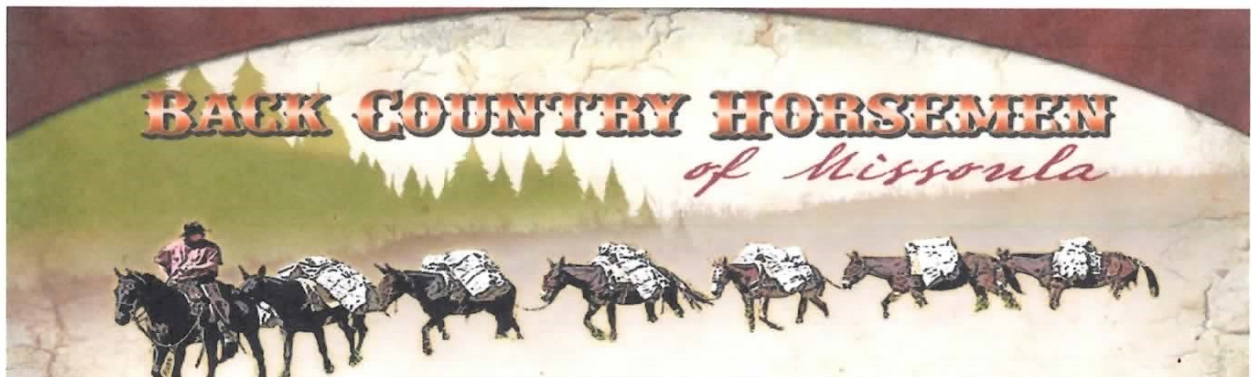
- 10:00 OPENING CEREMONY, PRESENTATION OF THE FLAG, NATIONAL ANTHEM
- 10:15 – 11:00 HORSE/MULE PACKING DEMONSTRATION BY SMOKE ELSER
- 11:00 – 3:00 FREE BBQ LUNCH
- 11:00 – 11:30 STOCK HOBBLER AND HIGHLINES
- 11:30 – 12:00 STOCK, PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE ENCOUNTERS ON THE TRAIL
- 12:00 – 12:30 HORSE AND TRAIL SAFETY/ETIQUETTE
- 1:00 – 1:45 HORSE/MULE PACKING DEMONSTRATION BY SMOKE ELSER
- 2:00 – 2:30 CROSS CUT SAW DEMONSTRATION
- 2:30 – 3:00 STOCK HOBBLER AND HIGHLINES
- 3:00 – 3:30 STOCK, PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE ENCOUNTERS ON THE TRAIL
- 3:30 – 4:00 HORSE AND TRAIL SAFETY/ETIQUETTE



ALL- DAY EVENTS/DEMONSTRATIONS * WAGON RIDES BY BIG SKY CLYDESDALES *DUTCH OVEN COOKING *LEAVE NO TRACE CAMPING *HOMEMADE ICE CREAM *HANDS-ON SKILLS

DRY CAMPING AVAILABLE FROM FRIDAY TO SUNDAY. POTLUCK DINNER FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT HORSEBACK RIDING (**MUST HAVE WEED SEED FREE FEED FOR STOCK**)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT MIKE AT 406-370-7549



Wilderness Animals at Play

When humans venture into the Wilderness pleasure is a strong motivator. The pleasure of quietness, the joy from scenic views, and joys of physical exertion all add to the Wilderness experience. Are we alone in our enjoyment of the Wilderness? Do animals at home in the Wilderness also experience pleasure?

My friend Don and I packed into the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness establishing a camp at Flower Lake in late July. After an invigorating ride on Goat Flat, experiencing the pleasures of alpine vistas and exploring on horseback, we returned to camp in a mellow mood. As we sat in the meadow with a cup of coffee we enjoyed the alpenglow. We remarked on the view of Rainbow Mountain to the north. At that moment, with the sun at the back, a herd of 17 elk appeared on the summit. The herd came off the top down to a snowfield then to our surprise all the elk slid down the snow perhaps 150 yards. Then, to our amazement, the herd headed back up the steep slope and preceded to glissade down the snow before disappearing into the trees below.

That night I had trouble sleeping. I could "see" the elk on the snow and could "see" the joy in their eyes. Later at home we eagerly shared experience with our wives who seem to wonder whether we were indeed drinking coffee.

Two years later in early August, Don and I with our wives packed into Flower Lake. In the evening we were all in the meadow with our stock. Don and I pointed out the snowfield on Rainbow Mountain and started to tell our story again. We were astonished to see a herd of elk appear on the summit. We all stood speechless as we watched the elk move down to the snowfield and then skid down to the scree slope below. Once again the elk hoofed it back up to the top of the snowfield to repeat the slide down before disappearing into the trees.

Randy and I were pulling our pack strings along the North fork of the Blackfoot River in the Scapegoat Wilderness in mid June. The river was high and strong with frothy rapids. As we looked down from the trail, we stopped to observe a large cinnamon colored black bear in the willows along the shore. As we watched, the bear waded out into the main current, the water foaming along his side. He turned with the current floating through the rapids avoiding the boulders. He was unfazed as the water boiled over him. When he reached the pool at the end of the rapids, he worked his way to shore, shook the water off his coat and ambled into the willow thicket.

We camped near a small a lake in the Bob Marshall Wilderness in August. After the long ride on a hot day the horses were pretty well sweated up. As we set up camp a mule deer doe joined the herd perhaps enticed by the salt crusted horse hair. She seemed especially attached to one of the geldings and stayed near him for the two days we were in camp. She watched closely as we broke camp. We saddled and packed our stock expecting that the deer would wander off. To our delight she fell right in behind the last pack horse. A mile and a half down the trail we stopped to adjust a load. She patiently watched and then fell in behind as we moved on. Soon on a steep switch back she moved on into the trees.

The understanding that animals at home in the Wilderness have pleasurable experiences, has enhanced the pleasure that I experience on my wilderness trips.

Dan Harper

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Meeting a Horse on the Trail

What to do when you meet a horse/rider on the trail

- Horses have the right of way – yield to them.
- Stop, get off your bike and stand still.
- Speak up and let them know you are there, especially if you are coming from behind the horse. It identifies you as a human, not an animal that wants to eat them.
- On a narrow trail, step off on the down side of the trail:
 - Give the horse plenty of room. Horses may kick with their hind or strike with their front legs if they feel threatened.
 - Prey animals attack from above. Horses feel safer with people below them. ◦ If the horse becomes frightened it could spook and may run away from you. ◦ It is easier/safer for the rider to stay on a horse going uphill.
 - If in a group, all the riders need to be on the same side of the trail.
- Stay in full view of the horse. Don't hide behind a tree or bush. They don't like sneaky.
- Wait for instructions from the rider on what to do.
- Do not try to pet the horse unless you have permission from the rider.
- If on a bridge. Get off the bridge to let the horse/rider pass you safely. Don't get smucked!

Adapted from: an article by Appalachian Mountain Bike Club, a mountain bicyclist club, Blue Ridge Trail Riders, Inc., an equestrian club; and Harvey Broome Group of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club, conservation and hiking club; by Ginny Fay & Tom Brigham, Missoula, Montana, May 30, 2017. Summarized by Ken Brown, Back Country Horsemen of Missoula.
This information has also been made into laminated touch cards.

Blackfoot-Clearwater Game Range

Back Country Horsemen of Missoula recently enjoyed a morning ride at the Blackfoot Clearwater Game Range. We met up with some of our friends with the Upper Clark Fork Back Country Horsemen for an amazing spring day in Montana. Despite avoiding any grumpy bears, we were lucky enough to ride near the large herd of elk and saw some cranes along the way.

Kirsten Pabst



THE FLOWER RIDE



The weather was kind to us for the annual Flower Ride this year. We enjoyed warm spring temperatures and enough cloud cover to keep it comfortable. The trail provided beautiful scenery in every direction. We spotted over 15 different wildflower varieties in bloom. The only wildlife we saw was a chipmunk and a raven perched in an arrow-straight dead tree

We also encountered a few hikers with dogs, mountain bikers with dogs, and one vehicle. Dan expertly demonstrated how to handle each of these encounters. He immediately called out a hello and engaged the hikers and mountain bikers in conversation so that the horses would recognize them as people, not predators. The people we encountered were friendly and gave yield to our group, restraining their pets. The horses did a great job along the way, other than one mare that got a little grumpy.

Thank you Back Country Horsemen of Missoula and Dan Harper for providing us with this great riding opportunity.

Bonnie Doyle



Back Country Horsemen of Missoula

-Mission Statement-

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
2. To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreation and stock use.
3. To assist the various agencies responsible for the maintenance and management of public lands.
4. To 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.
5. To foster and encourage formation of new Back Country Horsemen organizations.

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