



The Feedbag

February 2022

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Website:

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

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/missoulabch/>

Address:

BCH of Missoula
P.O. Box 2121
Missoula, MT 59806

Volunteer Organization, 501c3

The President's Letter:

IT MUST BE GROUNDHOG DAY! Just as in the movie, we seem to be on the repeat mode with Covid-19. We will try to move ahead hoping that the Omicron variant will soon subside. Next up is the Membership Roundup and Potluck Dinner at the Lolo Community Center on February 26th at 6:30pm. The next Membership Meeting is scheduled for March 16th at the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) meeting room. The schedule of events is being developed with more to come.

The board has emphasized our goal of incorporating 3 mph trails (for hikers and horses) in the city and county park plans whenever possible. Dean Hoistad noticed a potential problem when the Missoula Park and Recreation Department proposal eliminated horse use on pedestrian trails in the Jumbo Saddle Recreation Trail Plan. Equestrian use would be limited to the "shared use trails", essentially bike trails. Dean, Smoke, Ken, Eva and I had a cordial meeting with the park planner. Hopefully the plan will be changed to accommodate the "3 mph" equestrian use of pedestrian trails.

These are tough times to try to keep our organization together and functioning. But the sun will shine, the grass will green up and there will be trails to ride.

See you at the roundup!

Happy Trails,

Dan Harper



BCH of Missoula Officers, Board and Committees

Officers

Dan Harper	President	406-544-7296
Eva-Marie Maggi	Vice President	406-531-6037
Carey Powers	Secretary	434-989-8018
Jane Kelly	Treasurer	406-370-4363
Mark Wright	Past President	406-531-2455

Board of Directors

One year remaining: Robert Braun, Charles Erickson

Two year term: Ken Brown, Gary Salisbury, Mike Chandler

State Directors

Randy Velin (Senior Director)	406-544-4582
Judy Allen (Junior Director)	406-274-2339
Smoke Elser (Alternate)	406-549-2820

Committee Chairs

Issues:	Mike Chandler
Project Chair:	Mark Wright
Social Chair:	Nancy Chandler
Membership Chair:	Judy Allen
Defensive Horse Safety:	Dan Harper
Electronic Media Coordinators:	Adam Davis Robert Braun Carey Powers
Feedbag Editor:	Bonnie Doyle

Back Country Horseman Paul Evenson

by Smoke Elser

Paul was President of Missoula BCH in 2009, 2010 and 2011 and was very active in trail work and education. He was also the Education Chairman for the BCH of MT for several years and provided lots of good information to all the chapters.

He was a good friend and assisted in my packing classes with his expertise in packing and leather work. For many years he came 5 times a week for eight weeks to the course. The students loved him and respected his knowledge about packing. He was also a craftsman in saddle making and leatherwork.

Paul passed away at the age of 81 on October 9, 2021. We believe there will be a celebration of life in the spring. He will be greatly missed by all of his horsemen friends.

**Trail Damage by Horses on Marshall Mountain
Bike Racing Trail – Hello Kitty**

by Ken Brown

On Sunday November 21, 2021, I joined several members of Mountain Bike Missoula (MTBM), as the representative for the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula (BCHM). We went to the top of Marshall Mountain in trucks by way of an old connecting logging road to look at and repair damage to trail which is “signed” and designating as a “bike only”. This trail is known as Hello Kitty and is an official racecourse bike trail. I have enclosed a picture of some of the damage.

You may look at this and say, “Yeah, but doesn’t look too bad”, but in fact it is. Allow me to explain. There are several trails on Marshall Mountain that are now “signed” trails by the city of Missoula as “bike only”, or for “bike, horse and pedestrian” use. There are only two trails signed



“bike only” and again Hello Kitty is one of them. These two “bike only” trails are official racecourse trails in which timed runs are used for ranking of racers. For example, the top three women racers in Montana are from Missoula. At the time we were on Marshall Mountain, three Missoula women were competing in races in the south, Belgium, and will be competing in the nationals in Chicago this year. The horse tracks left for the length of this trail would affect the time trials and eventually would develop into potholes if not fixed. Unfortunately, while we had several tools and manpower to fix the trail, we could not, due to the frozen ground. This trail damage is a big deal to the bike racing community of Missoula.

Regardless, if you are a hiker, horse person or simply enjoy riding a bike, AND you are leaving prints on any trail in any trail system, STOP! and do not proceed. Wait until the trails are sufficiently dried out and hardened as to not damage the trail. Be respectful and avoid damaging our image as trail users.

2022 BCHM Schedule of Events

(as of February 3, 2022 and subject to change)

February

- 26th - Membership Roundup and Potluck.

6:30pm at the Lolo Community Center. Volunteers needed to help setup at 9:30am and/or at 6:00pm. Bring a main dish, salad or dessert.

March

- 16th - Membership meeting at the Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) meeting room, 6:30 pm.
- 29th - Mules on the Oval at the University of Montana. 12:00 to 1:00pm. Volunteers are needed for manure removal and table hosts. Contact Eva 406-531-6037

April

- 16th - First Aid/CPR Class

10:00am at the FWP meeting room. Preregistration required, no charge. Connie Long will facilitate, contact Dan Harper 406-544-7296

- 20th - Membership Meeting at the FWP at 6:30pm.
- 23rd - Horse Handling Clinic and Potluck at Basham's arena. 10:00am with optional trail ride to follow.
Contact Gary 406-529-7242
- 30th - Defensive Horse Safety at Harpers barn. Time TBD. Contact Dan

May

- 7th - Larry Creek Ride. Contact Gary 406-529-7242
- 14th - Lubrecht Ride. Contact Ken 406-370-7374
- 18th - Membership Meeting at FWP at 6:30pm.
- 21st - Flower Ride. Contact Dan

June

- 4th - Blue Mountain Trails Day
- Date TBD - Missoula Carousel Day hosted by BCHM. Contact Rob Braun

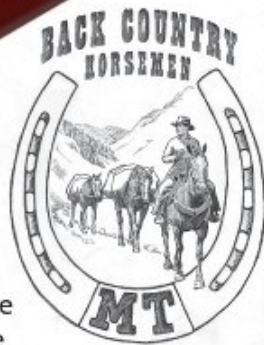
July

- 9th - Gold Creek Trail Ride. Riding and camping available July 3rd - 9th. Contact Ken

August

- 26th-28th - Camp and Ride. Contact Eva and/or Ken

Scholarship



Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters in conjunction with Back Country Horsemen of Montana present:

Horse and Mule Packing & Wilderness Skills Class

5 days/4 nights:
June 6-10, 2022

Scholarship will cover \$2,000 for tuition plus transportation within Montana for the winning applicant.

Students learn by doing the hands on work which is the best way to retain packing skills. We have a classroom setting the first day. We start with teaching you the benefits of the Decker Pack Saddle and the traditional packing methods that have been developed over the years. Next is proper saddling and adjusting of the Decker. We then teach you how to mantle, load, balance and watch the loads on the trail.

Download the application at:
<https://bchmt.org/wp/education/>
Deadline to apply is March 10, 2022.

E-mail or USPS mail essays and video DVDs to:
Greg Schatz | 4720 Trumble Creek Road, Columbia Falls, MT 59912 | gregschatzbuilder@gmail.com | 406.261.5450

Questions? Call, text or email:
Greg 406.261.5450,
gregschatzbuilder@gmail.com
Elle 406.253.0646,
june.sabyr@gmail.com



BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS OUTFITTERS
M • O • N • T • A • N • A

Remembering Paul Evenson

By Dan Tuxbury

I had heard about Paul Evenson from friends around town, before actually meeting him. Paul was always looking for horsemen to join him in the Rocky Mountain Ranger District. There were ample volunteer opportunities, but the long days and difficult trails often made people shy away from participating.

I was at a friend's saddle shop in Missoula, one afternoon in the early 2000's, when Paul stopped in for a visit, and I was introduced to Paul. We seemed to share so many interests that it became evident that we would become compatible traveling together. He told me about his resupplying of the three Lookouts in the Rocky Mountain Ranger District. Prairie Reef, Patrol and Bear Top, needed resupplying every 10 days. They took 2-3 days each, so there wasn't much of a break between trips. Paul asked if I would like to go in with him and help with the Bear Top resupplying. I agreed, and that was the beginning of our friendship, which lasted until his passing.



We traveled together resupplying and working on trails, repairing and maintaining Gates Park, Indian Point, Welcome Creek and Pretty Prairie Ranger Station and Burnt Cabin. Paul and I traveled many trips together. Some days were very long as we rode in the dark more times than I enjoyed.

A book could be written in memory of my experiences with Paul. At this point I'd like to share this one with you. One afternoon we were closing up Prairie Reef Lookout for the winter. The ranger didn't have things quite in order for us to pack upon arrival. Needless to say, we left the mountain top late in the afternoon. We were looking to face the darkness, as the 5-mile trip to the main trail was very steep and rocky. Midway as the dark set in a sleeping bag squirted out of the mantle. This did not sit well with the string, so as you can imagine we had a little yard sale. Later I asked Paul why he didn't tell me to stop and adjust. He replied "I thought it would stay together until we hit the main trail". All said and

done we built our loads again and proceeded to Indian Point without another hitch.

Paul was a wealth of knowledge. He was fairly quiet but extremely confident. He was a superb horseman, packer, and leather craftsman. Paul was also a gifted teacher. He would show a task, then have the person perform it. He never lost his patience with people or livestock. One trip he got kicked by a mule, which sent him rolling down the steep trail at Bear Top. The next trip, Paul had the mule carry the heaviest load, consisting of 4 five-gallon jugs of water, plus a top pack.

I didn't know Paul when he was a Smokejumper. He had been retired, as he was in his mid-60's, when we met. Paul was the president of the Back Country Horsemen for a few years and he was involved in many other Back Country Horseman activities.

Paul had a mini stroke a few years ago, which caused him to have dementia. Although you could visit with him, he wasn't perfectly coherent. However, he could remember past events and you could even get a belly laugh from him, while he was reminiscing. Paul went into Hillside Manor about 6 years ago, where he was moved to the Memory Care Unit. He often mentioned that he wanted to return home. He also wanted to plan the next Back Country Trip. Smoke and I visited Paul on a regular basis until Covid interfered with the visitations for about 1 year. When we were all vaccinated, we once again made the effort to see him and to listen to his same stories.

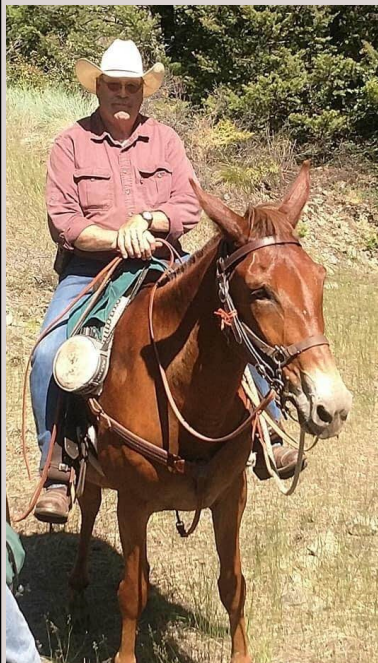
I miss Paul very much, he will be with me for his very last trip into the Back Country this summer. I will spread his ashes, to complete his wishes of returning Home, and continue the next circle of life.



Rosco the Infamous Mule!

by Randy Velin

Rosco came into my life 13 years ago. He was a plain sorrel mule, rather tall (16.3 hands) and somewhat foreboding with his big eyes. I bought him sight unseen over near the Three Forks area. I talked with his owner who told me he had both packed and ridden him. The owner had originally purchased him from a breeder in Ohio as a two-year-old, as he did most of



his mules. He used him in a pack string for four years. When I ask if the mule had any problems, he said that Rosco was to tall for him when packing as he was kind of a short guy. He said that he was really friendly and little pigeon towed but sound with no other problems. The price was right, the mule had packing and riding experience and I was ok with the size as I may want to ride him. He

has walker in him so he could keep up with my lead horse who has a big stride.

We went to pick him up in mid-November. After doing the paperwork it was about 5:00pm when we headed home. We drove in a blizzard all the way from south of Three Forks to Missoula, and of course it was dark. We made it home fine at about midnight. When I went to get him out of the trailer, he turned his head around to look at me with his big eyes. As I untied his lead and started to lead him out the trailer he put his head over my shoulder and walked out with me. He was definitely a friendly guy! I put him into the round pen and gave him some hay for the night. I had two mares and it didn't take him long to bond with them.

Well, fast forward over the years there are many interesting stories about Rosco and his antics. He has always been a good guard mule. Anyone or anything that comes around gets the eye from him. He gets

right up to you and sniffs. If he likes you, you are welcome and he puts his head down to let you scratch his ears. If not, you may get honked at or snubbed. He loves all kids and most women.

One of the things he likes to do is go in and out of an open trailer. One December day I was in the pasture cleaning out my 18' stock trailer to get ready to help someone move. When I was finished I placed a blue plastic tarp on the floor to keep the snow off before moving day. I was taking the cleaning tools back to the garage when I heard a bang. I looked around to see what it was and Rosco was coming out of the trailer. I had left the back door open because I was going to bring a freight cart out to put into the trailer. The next thing I saw was Rosco running towards the back of the trailer, jumping in and BANG! as he slid to the front on the blue tarp because the floor was slick. As I was heading out with the cart and he jumped out of the back and trotted around the trailer and took another run at it and BANG! He jumped out again and tried to get one of the mares to do it. He circled her and got her close but no way was she going to play that game. I watched as he did a couple more slides with a victory lap each time. When I was almost to the trailer, he came out grabbing the tarp in his teeth and ran off with it. When he saw that the other horse were scared of the killer tarp, he kept chasing them around the pasture. I put the cart in the trailer closed the door and thought I had better save the horses from this crazy mule. I was finally able to catch him as the horses ran into the holding area and I got the gate closed before he could go through it. He was really bummed that I stopped his play time and as I took his tarp away. He gave me a honky snort and took off in his high stepping prance with his head high saying "I will get even someday"!



Baxter Black's final column:

A Horse Matters

Posted Wednesday, January 5, 2022, 2:58 pm

By Baxter Black

I like living someplace where a horse matters.

There is just some country where horseback is the only way to get the job done. Places where the four-wheeler is a poor second, not to mention a noisy, track-leaving unnatural conveyance. Besides, it's hard to throw a rope from.

Helicopters can spot and scare, if that's what you need, but it's helpless when you have to doctor a calf. It is a great feeling to be pushing a cow out of a mesquite thicket, packing a dude down the Grand Canyon, or tracking a mountain lion on a high ridge, knowing you're on the perfect tool for the job. You look at a horse different when he's on the payroll.

I like being a person to whom a horse matters.

It puts me in such good company, Robert E. Lee, Teddy Roosevelt, Rudyard Kipling, Ray Hunt, Queen Elizabeth, Jerry Diaz, Casey Tibbs, cowboys, Mongols, Gauchos, teamsters, Lipizzaner's, and vaqueros of all kinds. Granted being a horse person doesn't make me easier to get along with, better at spelling or richer. It simply gives me a direct connection to one of the most ancient,

mutually beneficial interspecies relationships on the planet.

Winston Churchill said, "There is something about the outside of a horse, that is good for the inside of a man."

I like being there when a horse matters.

When you can't do the job alone; a cow in the bog, a race against time, a boulder to move, a detour to take, a mountain to cross, a crevice to leap, a war to win, a sweetheart to impress, or...when you've gone too far to walk back.

Shakespeare's King Richard III said when fate hung in the balance, "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

I've also come to believe that you either are a horse person or you aren't. Many who are, never know it because they never have the chance. It's a primitive acceptance, often mutual. A lack of fear. You see it in some children when they are first introduced to the horse. It always gives me a sense of wonder to be there and help them make their acquaintance. I believe the horse can sense the child's innate trust. It is the beginning of a natural bond.

I count myself very lucky that I get to be a part of the wonderful world of horse sweat, soft noses, close calls and twilight on the trail.

I like living a life where a horse matters.

Back Country Horsemen of Missoula

Purpose Statement

- To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country, roadless backcountry and wilderness areas.
- To work to ensure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
- To assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource.
- To educate, encourage and solicit active participation by the general public in the wise and sustaining use of the back country resource by horses and people commensurate with our heritage.
- To foster and encourage the formation of new state back country horsemen organizations.
- To seek out opportunities to enhance existing areas of recreation for stock users.

BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF MISSOULA

P. O. Box 2121 Missoula, MT 59806

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2022

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

Street

City

State

Zip

PHONE #: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

ATTENTION!!

Notice of Risks Inherent in Equine Activities!! Serious injury or even death can result from equine riding and related activities. There are risks inherent in equine activities, and these dangers or conditions that are an integral part of equine activities include but are not limited to: a) the propensity of an equine to behave in ways that may result in injury or harm or the death of persons on or around the equine; b) the unpredictability of an equine’s reaction to such things as medication, sound, sudden movements, and unfamiliar objects, persons or other animals; c) hazards, such as surface and subsurface ground conditions; d) collisions with other equines or objects; e) the potential of another participant to not maintain control over the equine or to not act within the person’s ability.

Participants in any equine activity shall act in a safe and responsible manner at all times to avoid injury to themselves and others and shall be aware of the risks inherent in equine activities.

The Back Country Horsemen of Missoula shall not be liable for injury to or the death of a participant as a result of their voluntary participation in any sponsored activity.

****I certify that I have read and understand the above notice****

MEMBERSHIP DUES

_____ **Family: \$45/year** **New Member** _____
_____ **Individual: \$30/year** **Renewal** _____
_____ **Secondary Membership: \$15/year**

The membership list will be distributed to the members to be used only for legitimate BCH Missoula business. You may choose to opt out by place a check next the following options:

opt out of email sharing _____ **opt out phone number sharing** _____

Membership is on a calendar year basis (expires December 31st). Please make payments to Back Country Horsemen of Missoula. Any membership dues received after October 1st will be applied to the following calendar year.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Feedbag (quarterly club newsletter)? **EMAIL** _____ **MAIL** _____

Occasional notices of meetings, rides, and special events? **EMAIL** _____ **CALL** _____

State BCH Newsletter? **EMAIL** _____ **MAIL** _____

Print Name _____ ****Signature** _____ **Date** _____