



# The Feedbag

May 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:

The spring events have been rewarding and the membership meeting on May 18th featured the interesting and informative Kent Krone. Kent and Charlene write popular articles for the Horse and Rider Magazine. Their presentation was on their recent horse travels to Shelbyville, TN, Fort Robinson, KS and Yellowstone, WY. And summer will be upon us! The next membership meeting and ice cream social will be on September 21st. Meanwhile there will be three scheduled events where we could campout and ride. See the schedule of events for dates and information.

Ken Brown is developing a list of members would like to be notified of more spontaneous summer rides which could include evening as well as weekend rides. If you're interested you may email Ken at [kenbrown1042@gmail.com](mailto:kenbrown1042@gmail.com) and indicate your preference for being contacted by message or email. Rides will be limited to eight riders and will usually end with a few laughs and snacks while sitting at the trail head. So bring a chair and a snack and good humor.

The Trails Day on June 4th at the Blue Mountain Trail head will involve a table to hand out the "Meeting a Horse on the Trail" cards and there will be some trail work as well. Ken is in charge of this project. It is abundantly clear that Ken is a most valuable and dedicated member of our organization. Thanks again Ken, for all you devote to the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula.

Mark Wright is organizing work projects which will include a pack into Burnt Cabin out of the Monture trail head. Please contact Mark for more information on possible work projects. And with all that summer will be here and gone.

We want to welcome our new members. If you have questions, special interests or if you are looking for a mentor please contact myself or any board member.

Happy Trails,

**Dan Harper**

*President BCH of Missoula*



## 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

## **BEWARE!! Horse Selling Scam BEWARE!!**

You are scrolling through your Facebook feed looking at all the pretty horses for sale! BAM! You see your dream horse and it's priced at half of what all the other horses you've looked at are selling for! You get excited and start dream of riding off into the sunset on your perfect steed! "What a deal, my dream horse and at a price I can afford"!!

Scammers post pictures and video on Facebook showing what they think you want in a horse. They include a phone number for you to text. Once in contact with the scammer they may tell you that the horse is NOT a rescue horse but that they are "rehoming" it for someone else. For example, someone has died, or a daughter has gone off to college, etc. They use the rehoming term to justify why the horse is for sale at about half price or significantly less than the current market.

Next the scammer will give you an address of where the horse is located and request payment via bank transfer. They may also offer to deliver the horse for an up-front fee.

### **How to avoid being scammed:**

- DO NOT send money without first seeing the horse in person.
- Have a Brand Inspector or Deputy Sheriff in the area verify that there really is a horse for sale at the location given if you cannot go yourself.
- If it sounds too good to be true then it probably is!

Unfortunately, those who have fallen for this type of scam find out that the money they sent is gone and there is no horse, in fact there never was a horse. When the seller is contacted at the phone number listed in the ad it is no longer in service.

Contact **Gary Salisbury** at **406-529-7242** if you ever have any questions about buying a horse.

## **BCHM SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

*As of May 2022 (watch for updates)*

**June 4:** Blue Mountain Trail Day. Ken 406-370-7374

**June 11:** Missoula Carousel BCH Day. Rob 406-241-7223

**June 24-27:** Montana State BCH gathering Monture Ranger Station. Randy 406-544-4582

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

**Dates pending:** Burnt Cabin and other potential work projects. Mark Wright 406-531-2455

**August 26-28:** Camp and Ride with camp fire dinner on the 27th. Location TBD. Ken and Eva 406-531-6037

**September 21:** First fall Membership meeting with Ice Cream Social starting at 6:30 at FWP meeting room.

**December 17:** State Board Meeting at the FWP meeting room on Spurgin Road.

**December 17:** BCH Missoula Christmas party at Lolo Community Center.

**Back Country Horsemen of Montana**  
**Invites you to the 2022 Gathering to camp and ride**  
**at Monture Ranger Station!!**  
**June 24th-26th, 2022**

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The Monture Guard Station is about 8 miles north of Highway 200 near Ovando MT. It is a trailhead for the south end of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex.

We have permission to use the guard station and there is plenty of room to set up your highline or portable corrals and room to park your trailers and campers.

The public trailhead has corrals as well as feed bunks and hitchrails. There are several trails in the area for all riding abilities.

Please bring weed free hay for your horses. There is water in Monture Creek and multiple hydrants on the property.

Please bring food for yourself and your family for the weekend.

Dinner tickets for Saturday night need to be purchased ahead of time for \$10 each, please send payment to:

Back Country Horsemen of Montana  
Monture  
2130 9th St W #109  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912

**Thursday:** Arrive in the afternoon and ride trails on your own. Socialize around the campfire.

**Friday:** Ride trails on your own.

2:00p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Horse Training Clinic - preparing for the trail with Wade Murphy

RSVP with Wade to attend this clinic, limited to 12 participants

*Wade Murphy, 406-431-1717, wadeandlonnie@hotmail.com*

**Saturday:** Ride trails on your own.

3:00 p.m. Round Pen Clinic- ground work training by Wade Murphy

5:00 p.m. Forest Service Discussion with Forest Managers

6:00 p.m. Dinner and Campfire

**Sunday:** Ride and leave for home.

For more information contact: **Randy Velin, 406-544-4582, rhvelin@gmail.com**

**Looking forward to a great time!!**

## Montana to Utah Riding in the Desert

Ken Brown and I enjoyed a wonderful opportunity to take horses to Saint George, Utah and ride with our snowbird member Kathy McGann. Kathy is also a member of the Southern Utah BCH chapter.

We bucked a strong headwind from Butte to Pocatello eking out mileage of only 9 miles per gallon. The Pocatello fairgrounds is a well used overnight stabling facility which worked well for us.

Kathy has a nice horse place in the Diamond Valley eight miles north of St. George. She had a desert ride scheduled for us on a different trail each day. The first ride included Lin Hokana the President of the Southern Utah BCH chapter and Freddie Dunn the past president of the national BCHA. Lin explained that the chapter does not do trail work since without trees very little maintenance is needed for desert trails. Instead the chapters projects include the installation of tie up rings, bolted into the rock walls and placement of metal posts at scenic overlook sites. Other projects improve the horse trail heads with mounting blocks step over gates.

Southern Utah is indeed horse country with a plethora of trails and lots of horses. Most of the horses are kept in small dry lots and fed hay year around. Cathy reported that about half the horses are performance horses and half are trail horses.

Each days trail ride revealed splendid multicolored desert scenery, rugged sandstone formations and sand, lots of sand. Each ride was special and included visiting the nearby Bureau of Land Management Red Mountain Wilderness, the Red Cliffs Desert Tortoise Reserve and the famous Snow Canyon. Amazingly those rides were all within a few miles of Kathy's home.

The ride that we found most challenging required traveling about 40 miles to the Babylon Trail head out of Leeds, Utah. In the late 1800s silver was discovered near Leeds. Miners from many nationalities with numerous languages and dialects aston-



ished the local Mormon community which named the mines Babylon.

We rode out with seven members of the Southern Utah BCH. One of the ladies rode a beautiful well behaved Mammoth Jack. The event started with a cross country ride to the imposing red sandstone cliffs. Following the leader we soon found ourselves in a slot canyon leading to a very steep rock slide which proved that our horses were quite capable. We survived! Next came steep and rocky trails and patches of deep sand. With a little off trail effort we encountered the Babylon arch and we all rode underneath it. Next the group crossed the Virgin River twice while hearing stories of a horse that was lost in the quicksand along the river bank. On we rode to the Babylon mine ruins. Circling back to the trail head we encountered two Native American pictograph sites. Even the trip out was an experience pulling the loaded horse trailers through areas of drifted sand along the road which was really more of a trail.

Thank you Kathy and Lin, it was a wonderful horse experience.

***Happy Trails, Dan Harper***

*(Photo's curiosity of Kathy McGann)*



## Missoula Open Space Trails and Horses

By Ken Brown

After the first of the year the Missoula's Parks and Recreation Department put out a survey for Mount Jumbo, in particular, Lincoln Hills. Back Country Horsemen of Missoula (BCHM) sent out this survey to the membership to encourage them to respond.

Just prior to the deadline for submitting requested information for the survey we learned that the then proposed "pedestrian" trail to be built in the saddle of Jumbo was in fact, only for pedestrians and not like the Forest Service pedestrian trails that are for both hikers and horses. A group of us met with Parks and Recreation the morning before the closure of the deadline. We thought we had this straighten out but when this proposal went before the first level of a committee review, it was not.

As a group we then met again with Parks and Recreation prior to the Park Board vote on the proposal. We had just prior to this gotten requested information on what city trails were open to horses. The surprising answer was Kim Williams trail, US West phone line road on the base of the south side of Mount Jumbo, the road on north hills of Jumbo were the only trails open to horses. Put another way, Water Works Hill, Sun Light development, Mount Sentinel and Mount Dean Stone were closed to horses. The new Blue Bird trail acquisition is now also open to horses as are a few trails on the proposed Marshall Mountain Park.

In 1999 I sat on the Mount Jumbo Management Plan Committee after Jumbo became city property. The trails on Mount Jumbo were open to horses, including the Backbone Trail whose name I personally coined and gave the city permission to use. There is a lot of historical use by horses which Smoke Elser highlighted in the Missoulian. However, the city's 2010 Land Management Plan changed all that. Out of that hundred and some page document the only place horses are mentioned is a small chart of trail metrics. In this the tread for horses is to be 4 to 8 FEET wide! In comparison, Forest Service metrics are 18 to 24 INCHES. Metrics were also stated for steepness or slope, way more conservative than practical. Also accompanying this article is an article/document that BCHM member and professional trail development/builder person for the Forest Service and now independent contractor, John Favro wrote. His letter was submitted to the Park Board prior to their making their decision.

During public comment to the Parks and Recreation Board, being the final say on the matter, we also stated our case. The Board passed the proposal without modifications.

Parks and Recreation did say they are going to open up the Land Management Plan for revisions this winter. BCHM will be participating in this process. Hopefully, we can make a difference.

February 21, 2022

Morgan Valliant  
Ecosystems Services Superintendent  
428 Ryman Street  
Missoula, MT 59808

*The Trail Management Plans within the City of Missoula*

Dear Superintendent Valliant,

The Backcountry Horseman of Missoula recently asked me to comment on your draft Mt. Jumbo Preserve, Mt. Jumbo Management Recreation Trails Plan. I realize that the date for comment has passed but I would like you to consider my comments as a trail professional as you move forward towards approval of this and any other trail plans you are considering.

I have worked building and planning trails in many states in the west, including Alaska. My last trails position was as Northern Region Trails Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service where I was responsible for 25,000 miles of trails.

In the draft Mt. Jumbo trail management plan, part of your purpose and need statement states that this plan will protect natural and cultural resource values. On page 8 of your draft plan, you recommend an equestrian trail tread width (From the City's 2010 Conservation Lands Management Plan) of 48" to 96". I submit that a tread width of from 4' to 8' is in conflict with your purpose and need statement.

The U.S. Forests Service has an equestrian tread width design standard of 18" to 24" which has been deemed adequate for equestrian use on all of the Forest Service trails in the country for many years. A 48" to 96" tread is unnecessary and would actually severely impact the natural environment.

I urge you to not consider such a wide tread width for your equestrian trail in order to be consistent with your purpose and need.

Also, there are many equestrian users who recreate within the city and I would urge you to strongly consider their needs in this or any future trail plans.

I would be happy to discuss this with you anytime. My phone number is 406-864-8000.

Sincerely,

*John Favro*

*Northern Region Trails Coordinator, U.S. Forest Service (retired)*

## Packing with the Forest Service in Wyoming

by Olivia Fox

For three years while I was in college I would spend the summer months horse packing on a trail crew in the North Zone of the Shoshone National Forest. It was here I first discovered my love of packing. I was privileged enough to visit some truly incredible country over those three summers. To commemorate these moments I would try to write each night about the events of the day. This day in particular we were headed up the South Fork of the Shoshone River to resupply a MCC crew that had been supervised by another Forest Service employee, Jami Hicks.

**30 July 2020**

Critiques of my coffee taste was how my morning started in town. I know most of the office staff means well as they all have developed a taste for exclusively expensive or high quality coffee, but, we broke college students are trying to save money wherever we can and sometimes it means a nuked cup of coffee.

My dry bag, my lunches, my water bottle, my hat, and I were loaded into the truck (I specify I was in the truck, because it would not be surprising if one of these days I was sentenced to the trailer as my smart mouth can occasionally out wit Bill, which he does not always appreciate). Bill and I were on the way to Boot and Bottle to grab critters rather promptly that morning. I'm not sure if it was the extra days off or the beautiful morning but most of the critters were such a joy to catch today. Mabel soon realized after I jumped the fence between the two corrals, I meant business and it was time to go, so her brief morning stint as the wild child fled. By the time we hit construction on the South Fork it was only 8am. This morning was not only bringing a new trail but also a new road for me too. Instead of taking the left and heading to the ranger station and pastures (the only route I have ever taken on the south fork) we kept straight, bringing new views, new bridges, and a campground I did not know existed. Seven other trucks and trailers welcomed us at the rather crowded trailhead. In the marginal space available we got stock and packs ready for the day. Everyone stood sweetly for their morning brush down, but when it came to fly spray, Myrtle again proved how scary a fly spray bottle could be. Between pets and some sweet talk I got about two spritz on her. She is not alone in developing trust issues with me. I walked up to Trooper going for the classic "fake a head scratch move" then squirt eye drops into his eye. Luckily these issues are not a deep seeded problem yet, allowing for a pleasant ride down the absolutely gorgeous trail. Seemingly lonely behind the string of horses, Trooper and I kept each busy. Every



once and a while Bill interrupted my train of thought telling me where we were or a fascinating story about what this place once was. This forest amazes me



each time I get on the back of a horse and explore. The places you've seen many times never cease to take your breath away and today the South Fork trail really took the prize. There's a cabin here up in needle creek that a local woman and her family used to live in all spring summer and fall coming out only briefly each year to resupply in town. They mined out there, irrigated a pasture, and welcomed

outfitters and their hunters. Then come to find out most of the mountains surrounding are old volcanoes. You can see where entire sides or tops were completely blasted out in Ancient eruptions. Stories of Bill's grandfather, an outfitter that used to roam this entire area, also piqued a historical interest and gave even more life to the forest. It was truly an incredible ride in. The scree slopes would cause a momentary disruption in my gawking, reminding me to trust Troopers four feet and one good eye. Eventually after a grand tour of only a little piece of the area we ran into Jami and the MCC crew cutting out the last few trees of their day. I'm not going to lie, I did enjoy getting to spend the entire day in the saddle without having to cut a single tree out. This trip was different, Bill and I were only resupplying Jami and the MCC crew on their 17 day hitch. They had already cleared to camp so Bill and I had a miraculously easy 20 mile day. We rolled into camp, our critters were unloaded and unsaddled then the electric fence put. Immediately came

an absolutely delicious dinner of sweet and sour chicken. So not to let Jami starve Bill and I each had our two helpings then watched Jami scrape all he could from both pots. Post dish cleaning the antsy and rather vocal, (Bonnie was



over there singing some kind of song for quite a while) critters were let out to graze in some thick luscious grass. The MCC had a table set up to cook on which then became the card table. We all played cards, laughed, screamed, yelled, slapped hands, won, lost and everything else that happens when you begin to play games with some very competitive people. The sunset came sooner than expected so the games wrapped up, as did the MCC crew in their tents. Bill, Jami and I stuck around camp extending bedtime from 9 to 10 and chatted, catching up with Jami. Eventually they agreed that my idea of bedtime was a good one. My tent smells a little more than it should for only having ridden in today and not having cut any trees but these pack pads do make for a nice cushion underneath my sleeping bag so hopefully it's a good night's sleep.

## Annual Flower Ride

Seven BCHM members along with their equine partners enjoyed a beautiful day on Marshall Mountain. We had some sunshine, perfect temps and stunning views in every direction. Thank you Dan Harper for sharing your beautiful backyard!  
*(Pictures curiosity of Rob Braun and Bonnie Doyle)*



## Saddle Storage in the Backcountry

by Dan Harper

Every time a packer spends the night in a backcountry camp there needs to be a strategy for storing saddles, keeping them clean, dry, and protected from chewing animals looking for salt. Over the years I have tried a number of approaches for saddle storage.

A popular plan has been to cut a large pole and tie it between two trees. The saddles are then placed to straddle the pole and covered with a tarp or manly canvas. The underside of the saddles is not well protected from nibbling animals. All too often this approach resulted in the saddles rolling off the pole, always in the middle of the night. In addition, cutting a pole and finding trees the correct distance apart involves a lot of work and in some cases would not be legal. A similar approach, using sling ropes strung between trees does not work well for me. One problem is that often properly sized and spaced trees are not available near the campsite.

Canvas manties are often used to cover saddles but are too small to provide complete watertight coverage. This approach also allows easy access for small nibblers of leather. Indeed, the salt present on the manly canvas may invite critters looking to add salt to their diet. For a time, I even packed a small tent for saddle storage. This was not practical due to the work involved in setting up the tent and the weight of the tent.

I have found a quick, easy solution to safe saddle storage using a plastic tarp. A lightweight plastic tarp 12' x 16' (good for up to six saddles) or a 16' x 20' (good for 12 to 15 saddles), hopefully in a brown or green color, works just fine. First spread the tarp out then in the center place the saddles in piles with the pad on top of the saddle and riding saddles on top of the pack saddles. (figure 1). Next, pick up each corner of the short side of the tarp and fold over toward the middle. Make the corner square (figure 2). Next fold the long sides over the saddles using wood or rock to hold the last flap down (figure 3).

With this approach, the saddles never touch the ground. Rain and snow cannot penetrate the wrap. The plastic is not inviting to chewing animals and with square corners small animals find it difficult to penetrate. When breaking camp, the lightweight tarp can be easily packed last in a top pack. You can count on clean, dry, and intact saddles as you ride out of camp.



## 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.