

# THE PICKET LINE

March 2007



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Dan Marsh 587-7578

### Vice President

Bob Steinman 282-7166

### Secretary

Nanci Winget 582-5795

### Treasurer

Brenda Kessler 763-4241

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Rich Winget 582-5795

1 yr

Wally Becker 587-9607

Dan Porter 388-0290

Larry Thomas 586-6878

## State Board Members

Rich Inman 2 yr

Dan Marsh 1 yr

Alternate: Jan Elpel 1yr

## Newsletter Editor

Jiffie Hale 763-4105

Mobile 580-6455

[jhale@littleappletech.com](mailto:jhale@littleappletech.com)

## BCH Web Master

Dan Marsh 587-7578

[dmarsh@montana.edu](mailto:dmarsh@montana.edu)

## Backcountry Horsemen Mission Statement

“The purpose of this organization shall be (1) to perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in Montana’s road less back country and (2) to assist the various government agencies in their maintenance and management of said resource and (3) to educate and solicit active participation by various members of the general public in the wise and sustaining use of horses and people, commensurate with our heritage and the back country’s resource.”

## Board Meeting — Thursday, March 1st @ 7p

Dan Porter’s Century 21 office @ 1941 West Main

## General Meeting — Thursday, March 15th @ 6p

Belgrade Alliance Church, Cameron & Hoffman Sts

Potluck supper — bring casserole/eating utensils

Program: Sabrina Hanan speaker

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### President's report March 2007

We had our annual wild game pot-luck and were filled to the gills with a variety of great tasting critters of all kinds and some wonderful salads and deserts to top it off. It went over so well we are going to do it again next month for a membership drive. You don't have to bring a wild game dish for the March meeting just show up with your favorite pot luck dish domestic or wild.

Sabrina Hanon will be our guest speaker and will give us a little taste of what to expect at her clinic she will be offering in March. The details of the clinic will appear in the newsletter later on. Sabrina brings with her a wealth of knowledge as a business coach and organizational development consultant as well as teaching horsemanship. Sabrina now uses her horse Comet in her EQUUS clinics to teach relationship skills in the workplace and beyond.

Our invited guest for the February meeting was Brian McNeil of the Forest Service. Instead of handing out the volunteer forms as in the past or presenting information on trail clearing he proposed that we consider volunteering to work on the trail under a contract instead of the volunteer program we had been using. With the Forest Service struggling with trail maintenance funding, he seemed to think he could make his budget stretch farther under a contract agreement instead of the current volunteer program. The board will discuss his proposal at the next Board meeting, so if you have any opinions on his proposal please contact any of your board members and let them know how you feel.

On a related topic, Becki Heath requested a meeting with all of the people that appealed the Gallatin Forest Travel Plan of which the Gallatin Valley BCH was one. Overall the travel plan was favorable to stock users, but we wanted to keep our foot in the door so to speak so we could try to work out other alternative to closing trails either seasonally or permanently to stock use. I was joined at the meeting by Chick Hale of our club

and former member Dave Schilz and John Chepulis of the Beartooth chapter to discuss the reasoning behind the trail closures. We only had a half hour so we couldn't go into very much detail but we stressed that we would rather put some time and effort into repairing the trails and working with hikers than to have the trails closed. They are supposed to get back to the appellants within 30 days and see if there are some things that could be changed. I will keep you posted on her decision.

We have a resolution that we are going to present at the State Convention in Lewistown. It essentially says because of the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between the Forest Service and the Back Country Horsemen of America that states the Forest Service is supposed to get our input during the planning phase before any trail is closed to stock use. We feel that we were not involved in the planning phase and would like to provide that input before the trails are closed.

We still need delegates to attend the State Convention in Lewistown. If you haven't been to one before or you have not attended one recently please consider attending as one of the delegates. The club will reimburse your \$70 convention fee if you attend as a delegate. The conventions are a lot of fun and you meet a lot of nice people and learn a lot from the vendors and displays that will be set up. Please bring pictures for the convention to enter in the contest. We also need help putting together our display board so if you have a nice 8 X 10 picture of one of the BCH events you have been to please consider giving it to us for the display.

I am still looking for a program director to line up speakers for the general meetings. Sabrina is working on quite a few already to lighten your load.

Respectfully submitted, Dan Marsh,  
President GVBCH

## March Program and Clinic information

Sabrina Hanan will be out speaker on **March 15th**. Sabrina will tell us how she uses her horse, Comet, in her business. She will share the fun and sometimes surprising adventure of the last year with her horse. Sabrina will tell us how, “He is my business as I collaborate with him to help people in the work and academic worlds learn Emotional (self-awareness) and Social (awareness of the other) Intelligence. I have put together my two decades of work experience as a business coach and Behavioral Analyst with my four decades of horsemanship experience as a three-day eventer and trail rider to create a special way for people to learn the skills necessary to be happier at work and at home. Asking lots of questions is required!”

On **Saturday, March 24th**, This is Sabrina’s invitation to BCH and friends to attend her ‘All About Work’ clinic. All proceeds going to BCH. The cost is \$35 for 3 hours. Sabrina has reduced her costs to encourage more people to participate. It will start at noon at McKenzie River Pizza Company on Main in Belgrade where each participant will buy their own lunch and go till 1:30p. Then you will go to the East Gallatin Stables heated barn on Spain Bridge Road from 1:30p to 3p. You will find information on her clinics and about her at:

<http://www.allaboutwork.net/>

## March Notes

We are planning another potluck supper this month, Thursday, March 15th at 6pm. Be sure you bring your plate and eating utensils, a casserole, salad, or dessert. Coffee will be available.

Sabrina Hanan will be our speaker. Our monthly meeting will follow.



Thank you Martha O’Meara.

We are grateful to Martha. She is the owner of Century 21 Summit Realty Company and has offered our club the use of an office in her building for our monthly board meetings.

We welcome our new members ...

**Tom and Jill Melum**, Bozeman

**Jeff Banta**, Bozeman

They are listed in the 2007 roster.

Ernie Rajala, our honorary member, and his wife had a wonderful ‘06 fall trip from Amsterdam to Vienna along the rivers. He is looking forward to getting out on the trails with the Tues/Thurs crew this summer when he returns to MT after spending his winter in TX.

Are you apprehensive? *by Jiffie*

Recently I was listening to an acquaintance tell me about a problem with her horse. He spooks at certain places along the trail – especially as they pass large boulders. She admits that as they approach these situations, she becomes apprehensive.

Are you a rider who wonders why your horse gets upset passing gates, refuses to cross bridges, or hesitates at small creek crossings? Or maybe your horse spooks when you put on your slicker, or jumps when you snap off a branch? How about dogs on the trail and small muddy spots?

These are situations we've all experienced at one time or another on one horse or another. To an experienced rider, these are not problems, but to the uninitiated they are intimidating.

Let's think about apprehensive. That's an attitude that sends a message to your horse. If you are confident, your horse gets that signal. But he can also receive a negative signal. In a recent article, Dr. Ron Meredith says this, and I quote...

"A lot of time the interactions between what a person does and a horse does have to do with making sure the person doesn't anticipate what might happen and, in that anticipating, make it happen. You need to teach yourself not to interact with the changes in any situation so that your horse won't interact with them. You need to learn to be the same, the same, the same, and the same from moment to moment. As soon as a rider gets excited or afraid, they communicate that to the horse through some slight change in their body or their breathing which breaks up the feeling of rhythm and relaxation we want to convey to the horse.

"So the next time you're trying to figure out how to keep your horse's adrenaline from surging when something startling happens, figure out what you need to do to keep your own adrenaline level down. In order to be in control of your horse's feelings and the reactions that result from those feelings, you first have to be in control of your own feelings and reactions. You want to convey that feeling of 'everything is routine and predictable' to the horse no matter what else is going on."

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Permission granted from the Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre

© 1997-2006 Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre. All rights reserved. Instructor and trainer, Ron Meredith, has refined his "horse logical" methods for communicating with equines for over 30 years as president of the Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre an ACCET accredited equestrian educational institution. <http://www.meredithmanor.com>

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Cliff Clavin of Cheers was explaining the Buffalo Theory to his buddy Norm as they sat on their stools at the bar. Here's how it went.

"We'll ya see, Norm, it's like this...A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers."

## BCH Program February 15, 2007

By Nancy Winget

Brian McNeil, FS Trails Supervisor spoke to the club regarding the relationship between the Forest Service and BCH. He outlined two types of relationships and requested that the club choose which relationship we wish to proceed under. The decision was made and presented to Brian prior to any trail work this spring.

The first relationship is the Volunteer Agreement. In this relationship the BCH members are government employees while working on trails. As employees the FS will require specific training, and members will be covered by Workman's Comp. This Volunteer Agreement is how BCH and FS have done business together in the past.

The second relationship is the Cost Share Agreement. In this relationship BCH is a partner with FS in trail maintenance. The two entities would draw up an agreement which could include payment for gas, training supplied by FS, etc. However, since members would not be government employees, they would not be covered by Workman's Comp. Per Brian, this type of agreement is being driven by lack of FS funds. In the past the FS has had contractors to support trail work. This year those funds have been reduced. As a result he would like to use funds at his disposal to help defray costs of organizations that chose the Cost Share Agreement.

Brian advised that he is approaching all types of volunteer organizations in his jurisdiction with these two agreements. He said that BCH has been a unique group in the past in that we have been willing to insure all members are trained, and have worked closely with him and his crews on all trail work.

Rich Inman pointed out the Discretionary Recreation Function law that holds individuals responsible for their actions on public lands. This law applies to all trail users, whether using the trail for recreation purposes or working to clear the trail. He pointed out that BCH could simply choose to remove trail impediments during a ride without having either agreement with the FS.

Chick Hale also brought up at the program a compromise plan that people be covered by their own medical insurance and that any cost exceeding the individual insurance would be covered by the FS. Brian would take that under advisement.

Dan thanked Brian for the presentation and agreed to advise him of the club's decision.

*Editor's note: My thoughts about the FS and their workman's comp, or lack thereof, for volunteers is that we, the public, own the forest, have the FS run it for us, yet as volunteers in our own forest we cannot be protected while we volunteer our work to maintain our own trails. We pay our taxes to provide for this.*

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*My colleague and I were eating our lunch in our cafeteria, when we overheard one of the administrative assistants talking about the sunburn she got on her weekend drive to the shore. She drove down in a convertible, top down, but "didn't" think she'd get sunburned because the car was moving." **This person votes!***

*My sister has a lifesaving tool in her car. It's designed to cut through a seat belt if she gets trapped. She keeps it in the trunk. **My sister ALSO votes!***

MARCH 2007

**February 1, 2007 BCH Board Meeting**

Meeting called to order at 7 PM by Dan Marsh. Present: Dan Marsh, Brenda Kessler, Dan Porter, Rich Winget, Rich Inman, Jiffie Hale, Chick Hale, Proxy - Larry Thomas, Maggie Geortz, Wally Becker, Dan Alderman. Absent: Bob Steinman

Minutes of Jan 4<sup>th</sup> Board meeting was approved as printed in the newsletter.

New Bills: \$27.30 to Kinko's for Dec. newsletter /\$39.00 for postage for two months - both approved for payment

Correspondence:

Rich W. presented a letter from Senator Max Baucus outlining his concerns about the multiple-use management plan for public lands.

Committees

Membership: Jiffie provided a roster of members. A board member will contact each unpaid member to encourage membership.

Issues: Dan Marsh advised that the Right to Ride Bill has no sponsor yet. He did send the club's resolution today as outlined in the last general meeting.

Publicity: Maggie resented the Board with public Relations Ideas . She was advised that her committee has no set budget, each expenditure must be submitted to the Board for approval. She will pursue the ideas as outlined in her document. Jiffie presented the idea of business cards for members - each set of 12 would cost members \$3.00. Rich Inman moved that the club pay for the 1<sup>st</sup> set of business cards for board members. Rich Winget seconded the move, it was approved.

Newsletter: Jiffie again requested that members submit topics to her.

Trail Crews: Chick met with Jose Castro and Nancy Halstrom to discuss possible trail closures in spring. They are open to our club working on trails to avoid closure; specifically Porcupine and Swan Creek trails.

Programs: Dan Marsh advised that Brian McNeil, FS Trails Supervisor will be the speaker at the Feb. general meeting. Sabrina Hanan will be the speaker for the March general meeting. Rich Inman and Jiffie Hale will complete a grant request from Insty Prints for our newsletter.

Old Business:

Resolution: Dan Marsh provided the Board with a copy of the resolution sent today to the BCH 2007 Convention

Letter to BSHC: Dan sent a letter of thanks to the club, and suggesting that the 2007 Christmas party again be a joint party. He also invited the club to our steak ride to be held on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

New Business:

Gallatin Travel Plan Appeal: was mailed today by Dan Marsh.

New Member Packets: Rich Inman will contact Jenny Tuthill to get material that has already been prepared.

Volunteer Status with Forest Service: The Forest Service is considering a plan to eliminate volunteers. If that happens the BCH would become a contractor for the Forest Service. Discussion was held regarding the subsequent need for training, insurance, etc. Brian McNeil will discuss the issue in detail at the Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> general meeting.

BCHMT Convention: Rich Inman supplied a miniature version of the display board. Members will be solicited for photos and ideas on how the photos will be mounted on the display board. It is 7 feet high, 2 feet wide and 3 feet long. The convention will be held March 30 through April 1. The club can send 8 delegates.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted Nancy Winget, sec.

MARCH 2007

**February 15, 2007 BCH General Meeting**

Meeting called to order by Dan Marsh, new members Sherry and Ron White were introduced.

Minutes of the Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as printed in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Brenda reported that the balance in checking is \$2,205.21.

Bills: payment for P.O. Box of \$50 for the next 12 months was approved.

Correspondence: news letters from other clubs are available for members to review.

Standing Committee Reports:

Membership: Bob advised that he will be sending welcome letters to all new members. He also requested that members provide him with information on other folks that own horses, he will contact them regarding BCH.

Issues: Dan reported that the Right to Ride bill has not been presented to the Senate

Publicity: Maggie is to bring a brochure for membership to the next Board meeting for approval

Newsletter: Jiffie advised that she can place buy/sell information in the newsletter.

Trail Crews: Chick advised members that he will be contacting anyone who indicated a willingness to work on trail crews. He is hoping to establish 3 or 4 crews before spring.

Old Business:

Travel Plan Appeal: Dan listed all trails that are closed to stock use on our appeal. On trails that are seasonally closed BCH is asking for a shared use agreement rather than having the trails closed. The review process is 30 days. When the decision is announced, BCH will need to review the decision, and determine next steps - to withdraw the appeal or sue.

Resolutions: several resolutions will be presented at the convention:

Resolution requesting input from BCH by Forest Service before any trails are closed.

BCH resolution requesting change to current law to allow recreational stock users to shoot or harass wolves that are attacking or biting stock.

BCH resolution to commend Max Baucus

BCH resolution to include Rocky Mountain Front as a Protected Area.

New Business:

Program Committee: club still needs a volunteer for Program Chair position

BCHMT Convention:

**Convention will be held March 30 through April 1.** Early registration ends March 9, after that date fee increases. The club will pay early registration fees. Delegates will be Dan Marsh, Rich Inman and possibly Bob Steinman. **Club can send 8 delegates - members interested in attending should contact Dan Marsh.**

The display board was presented - thanks to all who worked to hard to get it ready! Janice will add a tail, reins and hooves. Rich will make the body 1 foot longer, and add preservative to the wood. The decision on how to secure pictures was delayed until the next meeting - members please bring pictures and ideas!

Dan will send a thank you note to Big Sky RV for cutting the display.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted Nancy Winget, secretary

*My mind works like lighting; one brilliant flash and it is gone!*

GALLATIN VALLEY BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN ARE INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2006 POKER RIDE. Please patronize:

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 George Zanck

*Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen*

*P. O. Box 3232*

*Bozeman MT 59772-3232*

