

# The picket line

MARCH 2008



## Officers (1 yr)

<u>President</u>	
Dan Marsh	587.7578
<u>Vice President</u>	
Jim Allbright	995.4441
<u>Secretary</u>	
Amy Hathaway	282.6089
<u>Treasurer</u>	
Brenda Kessler	763.4241

## 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.”

## Directors

2 yr	
Stacy Bragg	222.0077
Dan Porter	388.0290
Larry Thomas	586.6878
1 yr	
Janice Cartwright	579.3445
Duane Wiltse	586.3597
Rich Winget	579.9866

Board Meeting Thursday, March 6th - 7pm

**Dan Porter’s office 1745 So. 19th**

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General Meeting - Thursday, March 20th, 7pm  
Belgrade Alliance Church, Hoffman & Cameron Sts  
Program

Preparing to ride - your paperwork (info pg 2)

## State Board Delegates

Jim Allbright	2 yr
Rich Inman - 388.1564	1yr
Alternate: Stacy Bragg	1yr

## Newsletter Editor

### Membership

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## BCH Web Master

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**Thursday, March 20th - 7pm General Meeting**  
**Belgrade Alliance Church, Hoffman and Cameron Sts.**  
**Program - Preparing to Ride: Paperwork**

This program deals with some of the legal aspects of owning a horse in Montana and where we choose to ride these horses. Nye Howie will represent the Brand Inspection and Animal Health Divisions, Fred King will represent Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Craig Cameron will represent Department of Natural Resources. All 3 speakers will have time to explain their regulations, requirements and requests as it relates to us as horse owners. A question and answer session will follow.

Fred King is the Wildlife Area Manager for Region Three of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks headquartered out of Bozeman. Fred has been with FWP for 39 years and has been in this present position since 1975. There are 10 Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) scattered throughout Region Three in south west Montana and amount to approximately 135,000 acres. These parcels of land have been purchased, over time, with Sportsmen's license money and serve as the heart of winter ranges for many of the major herds of elk and other big game. In addition to the habitat qualities of these projects all of these lands have opportunities for a variety of recreational activities. Most of these WMA's are located near and offer access to additional public land such as Forest Service, BLM and DNRC. Fred King's main responsibility is maintenance of these projects.

Information was unavailable at this time on Nye Howie and Craig Cameron, but will be announced at our meeting.

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**Saturday, March 15th, Circle L Horse Expo** - Circle L Arena, Belgrade 581.0697 or 570.5711

**Saturday, March 28—Sunday, March 30th Great Falls Convention. Holiday Inn, Great Falls**

Check our web site for more information. [www.bchmt.org](http://www.bchmt.org) Contact Dan Marsh if you would like to attend 587.7578

Schedule of horse events/shows/rodeos for March - go to  
[www.gallatinvalleyhorseresource.com/Events\\_Schedule.html](http://www.gallatinvalleyhorseresource.com/Events_Schedule.html)

**Winter riding has begun in the indoor arena at the Fairgrounds,** Contact Janice Cartwright for information. 579.3445 Announcements for days are sent regularly via email notice. Watch for them. Members and non-members may attend using your horse or her horses. Please call Janice to notify your intentions.

**Bob Steinman @**  
 282.7166 - has a client that has 8 Decker Pack Saddles w/sling ropes, tents, manties, pack pads, etc. that he wants to get rid of ASAP and says, "Members could really make a good buy

on this pack equipment and I have pictures of all the gear." Also, Bob has a 14.1 Molly Mule, broke to pack, 12 yrs old, very gentle and pretty. She is useable, but slightly lame. FREE TO GOOD HOME.



## Presidents Report for March 2008

The annual wild game pot luck was huge success with many tasty game dishes and wonderful deserts. Thanks to everyone that shared in our feast. I didn't hear from anyone that left hungry. The Sweet and Sour Elk was my personal favorite complemented by Bettye White's scrumptious rhubarb creation.

I want to personally thank Mary Erickson, our new Gallatin Forest Supervisor, for taking time out of her busy schedule to meet with us and I wish her the best of luck in her new job. It was also great to see our past member Jose Castro back at our meeting. Everyone wished him well and hoped Jose and Janet would come back to us again soon. Brian McNeil the trails supervisor thanked us for our past and future help in keeping the trails cleared. Brian warned us that he has reports the trails are going to have a lot of blow down that will need to be removed in the spring. Brian sent a signup sheet around so he can get a core group of people trained in chainsaw and crosscut as well as First Aid and CPR so we will be compliant as a volunteer group working for the Forest Service. Brian also sent volunteer signup forms around so those attending the meeting that wanted to volunteer for trail work could be recorded. If you were not able to attend the meeting I would encourage you to go to the Gallatin Forest web site and download the volunteer form sign it and send it in to Brian if you want to help with our trail crews.

Janice Cartwright has agreed to chair the Defensive Horse Safety course again this year which will be at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds on April 5<sup>th</sup>. If you can help out in some way please contact Janice and let her know you are available to help. Janice is going to have a tack sale again this year and could use someone to watch over the items during the clinic. She could also use someone to check folks in and take donations and hand out membership forms.

The Back Country Horsemen of Montana state convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Great Falls on March 28<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>. We have identified our eight voting delegates but you are welcome to come and enjoy the conference as a non voting member. I would also encourage you to bring your favorite 5X7 or 8X10 mounted photograph to the next meeting to enter into the convention's photography contest. I would also like to have you purchase a raffle ticket that will be available at the meeting for some great prizes. The raffle tickets are one of the host chapter's main sources of income for the convention. If you haven't been to a convention lately you should come take a look at what is offered. You won't be disappointed.

I had thought we were next in line for hosting the convention in 2009, but I just got an email that indicates we may not host it until 2010 or 2011. I have requested that chapters know at least two years in advance of when they will be hosting the convention to give them plenty of time to prepare. I am still looking for someone to volunteer to chair the convention committee.

Our board decided at the February meeting to support the GALLEP organization in their efforts to promote equestrian use in and around the Gallatin Valley. A number of our members attended their first open meeting in February and were encouraged by what they heard.

Be sure to bring your photographs to the March general meeting for the convention photo contest and don't forget to buy a raffle ticket to support the Charlie Russell chapter that is hosting the convention. For you budding sleuths out there, we are trying to find out what happened to the black foam boards and pictures that were used on our horse display at the last convention. We are also looking for the whereabouts of the blue Poker Ride three ring binder with all of the information we have compiled over the years.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Marsh  
President GVBCH

## The best horse in the world

by Darla Nassif

I really believe that the Rocky Mountain Horse is the best horse in the world for people that want to trail ride. I have loved and trained this breed of horse for 16 years exclusively after training almost every breed of horse in the US in the past and I am now convinced that they are the best horse in the world.

Now before all the other breed owners start beating me up lets admit I have a right to my opinion and I have a right to voice my opinion, as does everyone else in our wonderful world today. I am speaking as a professional trainer with many years of experience in the horse world. You do not even have to read this newsletter if you choose not to, but if you read on you will find out why I believe as I do.

Over the past 16 years I have trained many Rocky Mountain Horses and with very few exceptions they are the easiest horse to be around and work with. The few exceptions have been Rockys that have been from a cross breeding - that is another newsletter all together. I do not believe we should breed gaited horses to non-gaited horses. It weakens the best of each horse's good breed traits and worsens the bad ones in my opinion and I speak from first hand experience.

When I was showing this breed on the East side of the US, I loved to take my show horses out on trail rides. They always seemed more relaxed and happy on the trail rides and I just knew if they had a choice they would choose trails. But showing is fun and the horses really get into it when they are in the ring -they give their all. I have seen some two year olds in the show ring that looked like they wanted to lay down and die after gaiting full out for three or four laps around the huge arenas in both directions then standing in the center being judged on quietness, etc. But they hold up and do the bidding of their owners and trainers and even have a bit of gusto left for the ribbon and presentation lap. I actually sat in tears watching that spectacle a few times.

Okay now back to why I believe the Rocky is the best horse in the world. They are consistently smart and willing to listen and they want to take part in training. They show interest in what they are being taught and they are so very forgiving when we

make mistakes. They do not ever seem to hold a grudge. I am fortunate to be working as a trainer on one of the largest Rocky Mountain horse ranches in the world. We have over 250 horses and we train constantly. I meet a new "horsonality" every day! When I bring in a coming three year old to start training they always seem interested in what I am trying to ask them even when they first come in from the fields away from their buddies they grew up with. I usually do not have to let them settle a while like I have in the past with other breeds. They are ready to pay attention and start getting to know me right away and will follow me around with interest.

Once training begins these horses are so easy. Getting on them bareback, then saddling and mounting them is amazingly easy and they almost never buck and if they do it is just a small crow hop and only one because if you make the *wrong buzzer* sound they stop as if to say, "Oh I'm not supposed to do that?" The bit is the part that takes a little longer because it is so intrusive at first and they would prefer to be able to spit it out. They do settle pretty fast into the feeling though. I can see them think and reason things out and they try so hard to please. I sometimes bring another horse in the pen when I am training and that horse will help me train if I will let him or her. I know you are saying okay let's get real here. Okay, but I am serious. I have had horses help me teach another horse - but that's for a future article.

We recently took two of our young horses to a lovely couple in Bozeman to be started on ground-work by them. They both do not believe the horses have not been handled before. They just could not believe how sweet and willing they are. We actually went out to our two-year-old herd with a trailer and loaded them from a pen in their pasture then took them to Bozeman to be trained. Three days later I went in to take pictures and they were loading them in and out of the horse trailer and leading them through, geese, turkeys and other animals and they were just fine with that. The couple were in awe of this breed of horse.

When we take them on their first trail ride it is usually alone. They are fine with it! We use Natural Horsemanship techniques from the ground up and these horses really seem to combine very well with that training type. It is difficult for us to take the time to put all the trail and ground hours re-

quired by our ranch policy because they are so calm and easy to communicate with. With scary things they stop, look, investigate, touch most of the stuff with their nose when possible then move on. They are also versatile and can do anything any other horse can do and will try anything. Combine all that with a smooth gait and a horse that is an easy keeper with an overall sound and healthy record for many years, their amazing beauty and unique colors and you have what I call the best horse in the world.

I could go on because there is more, but I think you get the idea. So all that is left is for you to come see for yourself that what I am telling you is true. We will be at the Circle L Horse Expo in March and we will bring some of our young trained horses to demonstrate. So make plans to come on out and you are invited to come out to our ranch on 13206 Buffalo Jump Road in Three Forks MT and see for yourself why I say that they are the Best Horse in the World!

Darla Nassif, known as "The Gaittrainer" at Mountain Magic Ranch,  
breeders of Rockys in Three Forks - 406 980 0779 [www.gaitedmtnhorses.com](http://www.gaitedmtnhorses.com)

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### **Just Where is Open Range?** *by Diane Fuhrman*

This past week I had a problem that I think folks need to be aware of. I have a horse pastured just outside the city limits of Three Forks. His buddy went to AZ for about a month with his owner to do some team roping. I knew that my horse, Bud, would be lonesome so I have been calling everyone that I know to see if I could borrow a horse for a month or so, but with no luck. I kept Bud corralled for a couple of days trying to get him used to being alone and then I would let him out in the pasture. He was fine the first day, but with the wind and a few other comical errors (including ambulance with their sirens visiting the neighbors earlier that morning) he was spooked and jumped the fence tearing down two strands of wire. He then ran down the gravel road, across a highway and into the path of a truck. 6 AM is not a good time to get a call saying that they thought my horse had just been hit by a truck!

Panicked, got dressed, hitched up the horse trailer and drove to the accident scene. Bud was walking around with no serious signs of injury, but the adrenalin in me was extreme - I didn't crash until about 3pm that afternoon. I loaded him up, took him home, got unloaded and made an appointment with the vet. Loaded him up again, which by now he was not a happy camper. He was checked out and everything seemed O.K. I tried loading him again, but the little shit - maybe better to use #%&\*&X!!!! - was NOW being stubborn, but I finally got him home. I had the highway patrol of-

ficer's number and I called him. He was on the way to a major traffic accident and would call me back. I got the vehicle owner's name and all the necessary information. My next call was to my homeowner's insurance agent and he advised me NOT to contact the owner of the vehicle, but I was curious about the damage to the vehicle and I asked around. Major damage - hood of the truck was badly crumpled along with fender damage. With that much damage I thought that Bud should have had more injuries or broken bones. He was fine with just some hair missing on his fetlock and a very minor wire cut.

But back to my story... I waited around all day for the patrol officer to call - no call. Talked with folks around town who thought that the area where Bud was hit was Open Range. I have been trying to call around trying to find this information. No one seems to know. The Montana State Laws have changed and not all of Montana is Open Range anymore. Interstate Highways, some two lane highways just in certain areas are not Open Range, and not far from where Bud was hit is not Open Range. I bet I have made at least 20 calls and still haven't found the person that knows the answer. But I haven't given up yet.

Well, to date I have made up to 30 calls and I finally found the answer to my question - where is Open Range? It seems that Open Range areas are actually called Herd Districts. The Gallatin County Courthouse-Clerk and Recorder

had this map and my answer and if you have any concern about Open Range, contact the Clerk and Records Office. They were very helpful. Bud's accident was in Open Range.

P.S. A lot of good has come from this experience. I can now mend a fence, might not look like much, but it kept Bud in until his buddy came home. Neighbors and friends are very helpful in case of emergencies and I have even received messages from other members of the BCH with concerns. Thanks to all for your thoughts and concerns, Diane

**Reminder....**now is the time to clean and condition all of your tack. While doing so, check it over for areas that need stitching, repairing or replacing. Think ahead!

### **Program of February 21, 2008,**

by Amy Hathaway

United States Forest Service officers Mary Erickson, GNF Supervisor, Jose Castro, District Ranger and Brian McNeal, Roads and Trails Supervisor provided an informative program in regards to the Gallatin National Forest.

Brian McNeal organizes the volunteer trails program. An application to volunteer, as well as a sign-up sheet for certifications were passed. Certification is required to all volunteers who will be using chainsaw, cross-cut saw, or pepper spray. Refresher courses must be taken every three years for chainsaw use. All volunteers are now required to get the first aid certification. The horse safety certification is required as well.

The Horsemanship Safety course will be offered on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers can get their certification at this time. CPR and First Aid coordination is still in progress so as to include as many organizations as possible. Brian will let us know the dates. Chainsaw and Crosscut training will be provided by Jim Hanson and Brian McNeal. This certification will be coordinated with Larry Thomas as the Trails Chairman.

Upcoming projects include Cherry Creek, 401; and Time Share trail signing. Rich Inman as well as other suggested that it will be a very full year for trail maintenance as many trees have been snapped off this winter. Brian reminded all that the chainsaw certification is only for *bucking* trees and only the USFS can *cut* the standing trees. All in all, it looks to be a busy summer.

Mary Erickson is the new Forest Supervisor for the Gallatin National Forest. She has been in Bozeman since December having moved from central Utah. Mary has served as Forest Supervisor prior to her position here and will be a great asset to the Gallatin National Forest.

Jose Castro spoke in regards to the Master Plan for the Gallatin National Forest. The *Master Plan* has now been implemented. It was required to be submitted to the USFS Regional Office. As Mary Erickson described, the Master Plan is a strategic plan to utilize funds from a very large pool of money (93 Million) that had been withheld by the National office. Gallatin National Forest was the recipient of approximately \$600,000. Without having the Master Plan, these funds would not have been released. So, even though every plan has issues, it is better to upgrade facilities being used most even if some not able to be upgraded are lost. USFS needs to manage itself like a business. Jose pointed out that there have been no campground or trail closures. There has been the loss of some older cabins and horse barn—Yellow Mule Cabin and Duram Meadows.

Rich Inman asked two questions: Is the Forest Service Travel Plan implemented now? And what is the status of the lawsuit? Mary Erickson said that implementation is moving forward as seen with the Time Share Trails and the motor vehicle use maps. Pieces are still being expanded on. The lawsuit is still in litigation, no hearing on the slate. Rich then asked: Is it enforceable? Answer: It is just a plan. Rich: If you see violations can the USFS enforce it? Answer: Yes, they do have legal authority.

### **My Horse Will Not Stand Still For Mounting, by Don Funke**

Does your horse walk off when you are trying to mount? Does he move ahead as soon as your seat touches the saddle? I see this on many group rides and have experienced it myself on many horses.

Bill Dorrance said, "A horse that will not stand still for mounting is just a few steps from a runaway." Often the root of a dangerous behavior can be found in the smallest of details.

**Standing still during the mounting process is no small detail.** Sometimes the problem lies with the rider, sometimes with the horse. Let's take a look at the responsibilities of both.

The rider's responsibility is to mount the horse causing the least discomfort or stress to the horse as possible. This means not gripping the reins to cause tension in the horse's neck, not poking him in the side with your boot as you insert your foot in the stirrup, not gripping the saddle horn as you pull yourself up thereby using the maximum amount of leverage to jam the bars of the saddle into his withers. It also means sitting down lightly in the saddle instead of plopping yourself on the saddle like a sack of potatoes.

The horse's responsibilities include finding a way to place his feet for maximum stability before you give him the cue that you are going to mount, standing still even though there is a lot happening up on his back as you prepare to ride off - focusing on you, the rider, and not on the herd that may be moving away or being left behind in the paddock. He should be waiting for your cue to walk off before moving a step.

So most of us know what we don't want to do. So how do we learn to mount correctly and teach our horse to stand still? That depends on the rider and the horse. If we concentrate on the rider's responsibilities first we can make a faster progress and avoid correcting a horse when the problem could be with the rider.

When helping a rider learn how to mount correctly I often use a sturdy fence. Many riders have trouble climbing over a fence and then get angry when their horse will not stand still. If you can not gracefully climb over a three rail fence then you will not have much success at smooth mounting. For these riders teaching a horse to side pass up to a mounting block is essential. That way their horse can be mounted with a minimum amount of stress and strain to both horse and rider. Teaching the horse to do this is a topic for another article (it's not all that difficult).

**So here is a big secret to teaching your horse to stand still for mounting - GET OFF.** That's right - get off. Let me elaborate. When a horse stops walking away at any point in the mounting process the way to reinforce that behavior is to get off, rub on your horse and start over again.

I alluded to the mounting process. At any time in the training of a horse and you get frustrated, there is the need to break the task into steps. The more steps you can break it into the better chance you have at succeeding in one or more of those steps. So here are the steps of mounting.

1. Approach the left (near) side of the horse
2. Check your cinch to be sure it is snug.
3. Grasp the reins and the mane in your left hand
4. Facing the rear of the horse use your right hand to turn the stirrup to insert your left foot.
5. Lift your left foot and place it in the stirrup.
6. Turning your body to face the front of the horse, bounce on your right foot a couple of times.  
Be sure your left foot does not touch your horse's body.
7. Gripping the reins and pulling on the mane, bounce up to standing with your left foot in the stirrup.

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8. Reach over and pet the horse on his right shoulder with your right hand which tells him your leg is coming over next.
9. Swing your right leg over and gently rest your seat in the saddle.
10. Relax your whole body and allow the horse to stand there without moving. If at any point in this process the horse moves his feet, go back to the previous step, perform that step and get off the horse. Getting off is the release that rewards the horse for a job well done.

All this can take a fair amount of time. It can also take quite a lot of physical agility to stand on your right leg with your left foot in the stirrup waiting for the horse to quit walking in circles so that you can finally reward him by removing your foot. For a horse that has been walking off for years expect to spend several hours over the course of a month before he learns to stand still.

This is a great training project for the winter months. You do not need much space and your horse will not break a sweat. You will probably break a sweat, but that will keep you warm. Happy trails.

*Don Funke trains horses, teaches clinics  
and practices both animal and human chiropractic in the Gallatin Valley.  
For more information log onto [www.donfunkehorseworks.com](http://www.donfunkehorseworks.com) 406.209.3585*

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Leisa Cook @ 599.9949 cell or 587.1334 work - needs to find a good home for Bandit, a 7 yr old QH mare. She is a beautiful horse that has been very well taken care of. She has had basic ground work, but needs extra attention due to an eye injury. She would be perfect for someone that has the ability to further train or perhaps choose to foal. Asking price is very reasonable. She is more concerned with finding the right owner. Call anytime.

#### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mike and Jeannie Anderson, Spalding Bridge Rd, Belgrade

W J Anderson, Warbler Way, Bozeman

Jo Beaty, Morgan Creek La, Bozeman

Mike and Lori Einhaus, Clyde Park

Marianne Meyer, Yellowstone Ave., Belgrade

Tom and Amanda Steele, Tag Along Rd., Three Forks

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#### **Board Meeting Minutes, February 7, 2008**

President Dan Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Dan Marsh, Jim Allbright, Brenda Kessler, Dan Porter, Jiffie Hale, Rich Inman, Larry Thomas, Stacy Bragg, Janice Cartwright, Amy Hathaway and Chick Hale proxy for Rich Winget.

Minutes of January Board Meeting were in the newsletter. Jim motioned to accept; Larry seconded; approved.

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**Treasurer's report:** New bills from Insty Prints for brochure in the amount of \$26.64 (as the difference after grant money); Newsletter for \$51.89; and Postmaster for \$41.00.

Janice will need a deposit for \$500.00 to go to the Fairgrounds; motion to make the deposit by Amy, seconded by Rich, approved.

**Membership:** Jiffie said of ~100 members only 47 renewals have been turned in. February will be the last newsletter for unpaid members.

**Issues:** BLM Budget is 1.002 billion. Funds are mainly for upkeep. Wildland fire appropriations have been moved away from BLM to Secretary.

*Horse Protection Act S311 Amendment.* Prohibits transport etc. of horses to be slaughter for human consumption. This issue may cause unwanted horses to suffer further neglect or to be abandoned.

*Public Lands Act S2283, Preserving our Equine Heritage on Public Land.* Dan received a pleasantly worded letter from Tes-tor, but he has not committed to sponsoring the bill. As of yet, there are still no co-sponsors. Once again, Dan urged to contact Senators and Representatives to *sponsor* and not just *support* this bill. All links can be found on the website, as well as mailing addresses.

*Fee Repeal and Expanded Access Act of 2007, S.2438 IS* has been introduced to Senate.

**Publicity:** The brochure has been printed. Numerous brochures were passed out to board members to distribute when needed. Brochures will be kept by Amy Hathaway.

**Trail Crews:** Larry Thomas has moved his trail day to Thursdays. Ron will be on Mondays. Larry and Dan have been un-successful meeting with Brian of the USFS as was planned, will still try to accomplish prior to the general meeting.

**Program:** Program for General Meeting in February will be with Brian of the USFS. Janice has programs scheduled through July.

**Old Business:** CBU Thank You letter has been sent. Dan Marsh has contacted Jehnet Carlson. The June meeting will be held at her facilities. Jehnet has a clinic on Friday following the June meeting that will be open to public.

**New Business:** The Safety Clinic is April 5<sup>th</sup>. Janice has been moving forward with organization. Dan Marsh will contact State to request more safety booklets to prevent additional cost. Janice will supply a list of trainers to USFS when all the train-ers are confirmed. A suggested donation of \$10.00 will be made to offset costs of fairground rental.

Dan Marsh suggested compiling a list of trails for travelers who request information. It was suggested that perhaps offering a rating system on the trails may be a problem causing issue as perceptions of individuals vary so greatly.

Gallatin Equestrian Partnership, GalEP presented at the last general meeting and requested that 1). Gallatin Valley Backcoun-try Horsemen be included in the list of supporters for this organization and 2). That a letter be composed to reflect that support. After some discussion, Dan P. made a motion to support GalEP; Chick seconded, approved. Dan Marsh asked that Amy fol-low up on the letter format requested.

Convention deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>. Again, it is encouraged that we have as many attendees as possible so that we will be better able to plan for next year's convention.

Rich and Janice will work on the horse display. Photo board may need updated as well.

Photo entries for the photo contest are needed.

Rich Inman is willing to Co-Chair for the Poker Ride. It is hopeful that Sherrie will continue assisting with the Poker Ride as well.

Dan Marsh said a Publicity Chairperson is needed for promoting the Poker Ride, Safety Clinics and other activities of the club. Stacy Bragg has done numerous news releases and has many contacts in that regard. Janice suggested that Sherrie has quite a list as well. Radio advertising for non-profits is free. This should be taken advantage of as well.

Jiffie has confirmed the date of the Christmas party with Lee Hart. It will be December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Appaloosa club will join us again, and Larry will confirm with Gallatin Saddle & Harness Club. The band's price is slightly higher than last year at \$500, but that does not seem to be a concern.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Hathaway, sec

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### **General Meeting Minutes, February 21, 2008**

Following the wild game potluck dinner, President Dan Marsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Board members in attendance were Dan Marsh, Jim Allbright, Brenda Kessler, Dan Porter, Rich Inman, Larry Thomas, Stacy Bragg, Janice Cartwright, and Amy Hathaway.

Larry made a motion to accept minutes as printed in the newsletter; Jim Allbright seconded; approved.

**Treasurer's report:** Brenda Kessler reported a balance of \$2,259.48 in the checking; \$5,893.52 in CD; and \$2,183.70 in a Franklin Templeton money market account. Total account balances are \$10,336.70. No new bills were presented.

**Correspondence:** Travel Montana website sent information for posting to the calendar of events. Dan M. will provide the dates for the Defensive Horsemanship clinic and the Poker Ride.

The insurance provider will be changing our renewal date to March to allow all events to be completed on a year policy term.

**Membership:** No comment for now. Non-renewals will not be receiving the newsletter in March.

**Issues:** Gallatin Forest Timeshare meeting has brought about a monitoring systems for the five trails with the timeshare in effect. These trails will be monitored during June 16 to September 5. It would be great to ride some of these trails. (A schedule may be viewed on the Forest Service Web site at [www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/gallatin) and click on *timeshare* on the main page.)

*Public Lands Act S2283, Preserving our Equine Heritage on Public Land.* Dan urged to contact Senators and Representatives to *sponsor* and not just *support* this bill. This is the hot issue and it is not getting anywhere currently. Testor's office is off of Haggerty and Baccus has his in the old Post Office. Stop by from 8-5, Monday through Friday, to make comment for sponsorship of this bill.

Backcountry of America had recently sent out a letter requesting donations to assist in education and legislative funding. Currently \$25.00 of each of our membership fees goes to the national organization.

GalleP meeting was attended by several members. A proposed trail plan has been devised to present to PROST.

**Newsletter:** Jiffie wanted to thank everyone who has been contributing.

**Publicity:** Stacy Bragg is the new Publicity Chairman. He has had experience with CBU and has some fresh ideas. He has suggested that the organization join with others to assist in a Veteran program for those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Stacy will work with Sherrie White to get publicity rolling for the Horse Safety Clinic and Poker ride.

**Trail Crews:** Sign up sheets were passed during the presentation by the USFS for training certification for chainsaw, cross-cut, first-aid and CPR. Trail bosses should be contacted prior to work days.

**Program:** Program for February was with the USFS. Janice has many programs confirmed, but there are some openings. Suggestions are welcomed. The March program will be the *Legal Paperwork* issues presentation.

**Old Business:** Dan M. has given the insurance providers dates of the parades of the Belgrade Fall Festival and the Manhattan Potato Festival incase we ride in them. The insurance does not cover members, only bystanders etc.

Convention 2009 may not be in Bozeman. There are two clubs with standing prior to ours, but if they back down, it may still be here. It will be held in Bozeman within the next two-three years.

### **New Business:**

Both of the videos are now available online through Google. Links are available on our webpage.

Defensive Horse Safety Clinic is April 5<sup>th</sup>. Janice will need volunteers to assist in various ways.

Convention deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>. The convention is to be in Great Falls March 28-30<sup>th</sup>. Get any pictures you would like to submit to a board member. Speaking of pictures, the picture board is missing...very mysterious...

Poker ride will be chaired by Sherrie White as long as she has all the fabulous help she had last year, and as long as Rich is co-chairing. The Poker Ride Book is missing also...also, very mysterious.

MARCH 2008

Janice has been approached about contributing information to the Bozeman Cultural Plan. This organization will be doing a publication with respect to the Gallatin Valley in historical, present, and future context. Janice would love comment from others. March 15 is the content deadline.

The Livingston Ranger District contacted Stacy Bragg in regards to trail maintenance.

Janice suggested that while we are all waiting for the footing to improve and the snow to leave that we get out our tack and get it cleaned and repaired before riding season kicks in. She has been using Hoppe Tack with successful turn around time.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Hathaway, sec

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### **GalleP's First Open Meeting Report, *from its founders* –**

Hello and thank you to all the wonderful supporters we had at our first public meeting! The following is a summary of GalleP's first public meeting.

The meeting was a success and we had a fantastic turnout. We packed the large community meeting room at the library-- over 60 people! They were very enthusiastic and supportive of our efforts, and upset that equestrians hadn't been included in the PROST (Parks, Recreation, Open Spaces and Trails) plan. A big thank you goes out to Ted Lange from Gallatin Valley Land Trust who assisted us with answering some questions, and we appreciated hearing from Ada Montague, a Gallatin County Planner. Unfortunately, no one from the city or RPAB (Recreation, Parks, and Advisory Board) came. Another wonderful surprise was the vocal support of State Senator Gary Perry. Not only does he support the equestrian trails and park idea, but he wants to advocate for us on the state level and facilitate cooperative efforts among various agencies to achieve our goals!

Our meeting agenda consisted of:

- GalleP's background: petition last summer, lack of inclusion in the city's PROST plan
- Challenges we face: loss of equestrian lands and roads, lack of awareness among city/county officials of equestrian needs, etc.
- GalleP's mission: advocate for all equestrians at the city/county level for equestrian access to trails and the creation of an equestrian park
- GalleP's goals
- PROST amendments: proposed trails
- Comment and question period

The attendees expressed support for our goals, mission, etc., and were very enthusiastic about the trails we selected on the PROST plan for equestrian access. The trails form a sort of wagon wheel around Bozeman, with access to the fairgrounds and MSU and attempt to link the major equestrian areas (barns, arenas, etc). Overwhelmingly, the public supported mixed-use for proposed trails vs. equestrian only trails. Many spoke to the wisdom of working with other groups to achieve common goals.

There was also great support for a multi-discipline equestrian park. Many people from the fairgrounds planning board attended and voiced their concern that the proposed park not compete or detract from the fairgrounds. After more discussion there was a general consensus that a park would function as a place to do events that the fairgrounds can no longer accommodate, such as 3 day eventing, polo, driving competitions, etc. We also learned that a vast majority would be willing to pay a membership fee to help run the park. We were pleased that everyone who attended had their voice heard and contributed to the future of GalleP. It's wonderful to be reminded of the diverse, passionate, and active equine community that resides in this county and motivates us to push on!

As we move ahead, we plan to form committees (trails, area coordinators, equestrian park, etc.) and put the volunteers who signed up to work! First on the list is to formalize the PROST amendments to present to RPAB and then the city. We plan to use email to keep you updated! In the meantime, if you attended and want to help keep our momentum going, consider sending a letter to the editor to any publications such as the Chronicle, Belgrade News etc., or write the city or county and let them know you support "Trails for Horses Too"!

Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Marianne Amsden, Jennifer Mohler and Maire O'Neill

GALLATIN VALLEY BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN ARE INDEBTED TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES AND MEMBERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR 2007 POKER RIDE - THANK YOU ONE AND ALL

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