



TRAIL TALES

December 2009

Notes from the President

Whatcom Chapter
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Bellingham, WA 98228
2009

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BCHW mission statement: To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness. To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational stock use. To assist various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resources. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in the wise use of the back country resource by horsemen and the general public commensurate with our heritage. To foster and encourage the formation of new state chapters in the state organization.

Hello Everyone,

Wow! What a year it has been, I can't believe we are already into the holiday season. We have had some great rides and some even greater work parties. It has been a lot of fun taking part in our clubs activities throughout the year, but we must also remember that we are a political club working to keep trails open to stock and horse use. With that said; we had members go down to Olympia for the Legislation Day and have been working with the Whatcom County Parks Dept. in designing the new South Fork Park. We have worked with the DNR in creating their new land use rules, been part of the Sustainable Recreation Work Group discussions, and have participated in DNR work parties. I'm very proud of everyone's efforts and our volunteer hours show our commitment.

We voted in our 2010 officers at the November meeting and I would like to thank you all for your commitment. Let me introduce to you your 2010 officers: Rocky Levitt - President, Susan Sebastian - Vice President, Mick Blakely - Alternate Director, Shirley Toddhunter - Treasurer, Kathy Adams - Secretary, Roger Nelson and Cindy Piccolo - Trail Bosses. Some committee changes are as follows: Work party Coordinator - Roger Nelson, Volunteer Hours - Verna Walker, Sunshine Committee - Lori Hunt, and the Scrapbook will be taken over by Debbie Lagerway. I look forward to working with all of you in 2010.

Instead of a December general meeting we have our Holiday Party scheduled for Saturday December 12th. We will have a potluck dinner and a white elephant gift exchange (this should be interesting). This is always a fun filled event and we also like to help out the less fortunate. Please bring some items to donate if you are able, this year we will be collecting new unwrapped toys, food, warm socks and blankets. Hope to see you all there.

In closing I would like to thank everyone that participated in the Herman Miller 4-H park work party on November 14th. The turnout was more then I could have ever even dream of and we accomplished our goals for the day. Way to Go Club!

Happy Holidays and Thank you!
Susan

2010 Officers and Committees

Rocky Leavitt -----President
Susan Sebastian-----Vice President
Shirley Todhunter-----Treasurer
Kathy Adams-----Secretary (backup-Sharon and Nancy)
Mick Blakely-----Alternate Director
Roger Nelson-----Work Coordinator
Roger Nelson and Cindy Piccolo-----Trail Bosses
Verna Walker-----Volunteer hours coordinator
Lori Hunt-----Sunshine
Debbie Lagerwey-----Scrapbook

2009 TRAIL BOSSES

Adopt a ride for 2009

WORK PARTY COORDINATOR

Melinda Hardin
has agreed to be work
party coordinator
temporarily
360-312-1113

**Check out our Website:
www.Whatcom-bch.com**

Please welcome our new officers and thank them for volunteering!

If you have any questions or would like to contact the officers, please feel free to do so. I'm sure they would appreciate any input or suggestions regarding the Chapter.

Also if you have some time and would like to volunteer to help out with the trail rides, please give Roger or Cindy a call. This past year we had people adopt a ride, which was a great success, so that's another thing we can do for 2010.

Fran Van Diest

Sunshine Committee

**If you know someone that needs a little ray of sunshine,
please contact Toni Blakely at 360-332-7120**

Lynn Johnson: Our condolences sent to Lynn. Her father passed away on Monday, November 9th. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Aaron Aamot was killed Nov 5th while serving in Afghanistan.

His Grandmother is Charlotte Aamott.

Charlotte had a horse trailer sales and tack shop on the Guide Meridian for many years. She was an avid trail rider, riding an Appy on many group rides. Our hearts go out to Charlotte and her family.



FOR RENT:

I have covered parking for your trailers, boats, campers or whatever you have that you do not want to rust. Very secure at my home and reasonable rates.

Take care of your rigs and they will take care of you.

I have two slots available. Conway area.

Call or email me please.

425-356-7356 or

rancho49@yahoo.com.

BCH minutes**General meeting minutes – Laurel Grange Nov 12 2009**

The meeting was called to order by President Susan Sebastian at 7:05 After the Pledge of Allegiance a thank you was given to veterans, Veterans Day was 11/11. The memorial service for Aaron Aamott was announced., The agenda was adopted. Minutes were approved with one correction: the Christmas party location is off of Kelly Rd, not Smith.

Hospitality: Alice Yancey introduced Jenny Jimmerson. We had 23 members last month.

Announcements: The Christmas Party location is on the Kelly Rd .6 mile east of the Mission Rd or .4 miles west of the Sand Rd on E. 26th Dr .It is a big red barn ¼ mile off the road.

Treasurer: treasurer was not present

Director: Rick Olsen- At the next meeting the state officers will be elected. Nominations for awards are being taken: Lopper award, Lifetime award, Camp Cook award, and a special plaque award for people who help BCH.

Leadership training will be Sat Dec 5th in Ellensburg. Treasurers need to attend. Congress has approved additional funds for national parks. At the next directors meeting a different dues structure will be discussed. There may be a \$1200 lifetime membership. Legislative Day will be March 1st in Olympia. Trailhead News has had several articles from other chapters on trail work. We need to submit articles. We need pictures for the 2011 calendar. It was noted that Public Lands commissioner Peter Goldmark is a horseman.

Finance: Sam Miller- no request

Legislative/trailhead: no report

LNT: Mick Blakely- Plan ahead for trips, Know Before You go- have necessary permits, correct food, water, and clothing, compass, leash for pets, horses in condition, and learn about the area you are visiting.

Volunteer hrs/ newsletter: Fran Van Diest- we have 1803 basic skills hour, 11,175 mileage, 77 equipment , and 236 stock hours, for a total monetary value of \$ 61,347. Calendars are ready, they are \$10 apiece.

Sunshine: Lynn Johnsons Father passed away- our condolences to Lynn and her family.

Old Business:

Verna Walker reported on the Halloween Ride. There were 16 riders, the trail was well marked. Pam Ritter cooked a stew. Susan Sebastian and Lisa Oostema and others wore special costumes on the trail.

Auction committee: Mike Bjornstad reported-Mike Bjornstad, Gary Anderson, Sam Miller, Chick Long, Sharon Hoofnagle, Marilyn Tefft, and Roy Van Diest were present. Many options were discussed but it was unanimous that we keep the auction in a similar format but with less pressure on the committee, i.e. smaller and simpler. A tentative date is May 14th. Proceeds will be earmarked for general club funds, not primarily the trailhead.

Christmas Party: there is a s sign-up sheet. Volunteers are needed to cook hams and turkeys. The date is Dec 12th at 6 pm. It was suggested that we drop the gift exchange and play other games. A show of hands was in favor of keeping the exchange. Donations will be taken for a charity.

T-posts have been capped at Herman miller.
No report on the parking lot at Lake Padden.

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General Meeting Minutes

New Business:

Nominations for offices were open

Since there was only one nominee for each office a motion was made to accept the slate of new officers as listed. It was seconded and passed. New officers are:

President: Rocky Leavitt

Vice-president: Susan Sebastian

Treasurer: Shirley Todhunter

Secretary: Kathy Adams with past secretaries Sharon Hoofnagle and Nancy Giordano as back-up

Alternate Director: Mick Blakely

Trail Bosses: Roger Nelson and Cindy Piccolo

Work-Party coordinator- Roger Nelson

Sunshine: Lori Hunt

Volunteer hrs: Verna Walker

Officers Training in Ellensburg Dec 5th- car pooling is suggested.

Herman Miller work party: Mick Blakely has organized the work. Safety and the agenda will be at 9 am, work at 10 am until done, lunch will be provided by 4-H. Sharon Hoofnagle suggested that kids should not hold horses, possible exceptions if an adult is right with them.

General trail conditions: There was a discussion of trail conditions, especially slippery puncheon bridges. It was suggested that they are often hazardous and should only be installed if there is no other option. Over-improving trails to park-like conditions was discussed. Rick Olsen will bring the issue up at the state level.

Re-conveyance of DNR land to Whatcom County Parks is being re-discussed by the new county council. It isn't known if this will impact our trailhead.

Daryl Weidkamp will lead a ride at Heady Rd on Saturday Nov 28th. Dennis Mauler announced a New Years day ride at Cowboy Camp, hot soup will be provided.

There is no general meeting in December instead we have the Christmas Party on Dec 12th.

Meeting adjourned at 8: 15

Submitted by Sharon Hoofnagle, secretary



A Special Thank You to:

Laurel Farm & Western Supply

America's Horse Country

Weylin & Amy Eldred

325 W Laurel Rd., Bellingham

360/398-1216 * 360/398-8050 fax

Hours: Mon – Fri: 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Sat: 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

EDITOR'S POLICIES

Trail Tales is published monthly. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month. Non-copyrighted submissions are welcomed (subject to space limitations). Opinions and views expressed in letters or personal articles are not necessarily the opinions of BCH.

Send submissions to: Editor, Fran Van Diest, 723 Van Wyck Rd, Bellingham, Wa 98226. E-mail to: wbchnewse-ditors@msn.com or fvandiest@msn.com.

CALENDAR



Dec 7 Monday

Board meeting at Bob's Burger & Brew (Barkley Village). We would like to invite the officers for 2010 to this meeting. Hope you can make it. Dinner at 6:00 p.m. and meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.

Dec 12 Saturday

Christmas Party at the red barn located at 5066 E. 26th Dr. Bellingham, WA. The Chapter will provide turkey and ham. Please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share. Please bring you own plate, utensils and a non-alcoholic beverage. There may be some punch there. **Dinner at 6:00 p.m.** This is usually a great time eating and visiting with everybody. It's usually the time we see our members so come and have a good time!
Gift exchange--(optional) this year it will be a white elephant gift exchange.

Jan 4 Monday

Board Meeting.

2009 COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

LEGISLATIVE:
Mike McGlenn
360/966-9117

LEAVE NO TRACE:
Mick Blakely
360-332-7120

VOLUNTEER HOURS:
Fran Van Diest
360-734-2567

PROGRAMS:
Sharon Hoofnagle
360/734-4258

HOSPITALITY:
Alice Yancey
360/733-5063

SUNSHINE
Toni Blakely
360-332-7120

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Sam Miller
360-398-7992

TRAIL HEAD COMMITTEE
Mike McGlenn
360-966-9117

SAFETY

New Year's Day Ride

This year we didn't have a New Year's day ride because of the weather. How about for 2010? Does anyone want to have a New Year's day ride and if so where? January 1, 2010 falls on a Friday. In the past we have had it at Saxon and then the year before we had it at Heady trails, we had an nice ride, then met for lunch and even had a fire to keep warm. This was not discussed at the meeting, so at this point no plans have been made.

Fran Van Diest





**Christmas Party
December 12, 2009
Red Barn at 5066 E. 26th Dr. Bellingham, Wa.**

The club will provide the Ham and Turkey. The rest will be potluck.

Please bring a salad, side dish or dessert to share. Bring your favorite dish, anything that goes with ham and turkey!

Please bring your own table service (plates, cups, utensils)

If you would like to participate in the white elephant gift exchange please bring a wrapped gift.

This year we would like to collect, unwrapped toys, food, warm socks and gently used blankets for Hugs in a Bag.

Come and have a great time visiting with everybody and enjoying great food!

Directions: From Bellingham, take WA 542-Mt. Baker Hwy turn left on Mission road, turn right on E. Kelly Road and then left on E. 26th Dr. Bellingham.

For more information please contact Lisa Oostema @ 360-319-7390



Herman Miller 4H Work Party

All week it had been raining and it didn't look to promising for the work party on November 14th with Backcountry Horsemen members helping the 4H groups work on the trails. What a pleasant surprise when Saturday came and there was no rain, it was sunny and not cold--great day for a work party! Our next concern was how many would show up, November is not the best month for a work party but there was work to be done and it had been scheduled.

Well guess what, we had approximately a total of 80 people that showed up. First thing was meeting for a quick safety review and discussing what needed to be done on the trails. The pack animals were ready to haul in gravel. The 4H youths headed for the trails to rake all the leaves off the trails, while others headed for the gravel piles to start filling up buckets to load on the L boards and fill up the gravel bags.

Another group headed for the muddy sections of the trails to get area ready for the gravel and then spread the gravel. Some cleaned trails, clipped low branches. There were 4 different sections that were completed that day. At each work section there were backcountry horsemen, 4H youths working together. We had plenty of buckets so while they waited for the pack animals, the group would load buckets and as soon as the pack animals arrived, buckets were loaded on the L boards and the gravel bags were filled. Rocky Leavitt, Mick Blakely, Gary Anderson, Roy Van Diest, John Hollins and Bill McKenna were all ponying the pack animals and hauling gravel to the sections of trails that needed work. Back and forth this continued until it was time to break for lunch.

Thanks so much to the cooks for a great hot dog and chili lunch! There was plenty to eat and of course there were plenty of deserts--cupcakes, brownies and caramel bars. Everybody had a good lunch and got to visit for a little bit before it was time again to get back to work.

Thank you to everybody that showed up and helped fixed the trails. The backcountry horsemen members that showed up were Mick Blakely, Shirley Todhunter, Gary Anderson, Rocky Leavitt, Roy and Fran Van Diest, John and Sage Hollins, Mike Bjornstad, Verna Walker, Andy McLeod, Roger Nelson, Karin Snavely, Susan Sebastian, Jack Carr, Bill McKenna, Rodney Vandersypens and his daughters Anne Marie and Erin. And thank you to all the 4H youths and their parents that showed up to help! Great job!

Fran Van Diest



"Last Chance in a Million"

It happened so sudden, 12 years in my past,
 For the rest of my life the injury would last.
 The cars hit head-on, not a chance to slow down,
 The next I remember, I lay on the ground.
 My hip joint was crushed beyond all repair.
 "You're too young to replace it," Doc said with a stare,
 "You will walk again, but never will run."
 These words hit me hard like a shot from a gun.

Ten years came and went, the pain more severe.
 I said to my wife, "Time to replace it is here."
 When the surgery was over, Doc said to my wife,
 "He can't ride a horse for the rest of his life."
 We own our own farm with a full riding stable,
 So horses and riding put food on our table.
 I could sell horses and tack, and some money I'd make,
 But to ride one myself was a risk I can't take.

And then it did happen, one night at the sale,
 As I stood selling halters inside of the rail.
 My wife came up to me with that look in her eye.
 She said, "There's a horse out back ready to die."
 As I walked to the killer pen and looked over the fence,
 There stood a starved gelding whose frame was immense.
 His eyes were three inches sunk back in his head;
 If he were lying down, you would have sworn he was dead.
 He stood sixteen-one, weighed about four and a quarter,
 His hair was three inches and not one-half shorter.
 A skeleton with hide stood before my own eyes.
 If he walked through the ring, it would be a surprise.

As the barn door slid open and they led him on in,
 The auctioneer said, "Two hundred is where we'll begin."
 The kill buyer said, "Two-oh-five's all I'll give."
 I said, "I'll give two-ten just to see if he'll live."
 The bids then quit coming, not a sound from the crowd,
 The next word was "Sold" he said very loud.
 As the trailer backed up to the wood loading gate,
 I said, "Let's get him home before it's too late."
 He had to have help to step up to the floor,
 But we got him in and then closed the door.
 As I drove home that night, I looked back at a glance
 And said, "If he lives, we'll call him Last Chance."

Well, we made the trip home, and he lived through the
 night.
 When the vet came next morning, he said, "What a sight."
 We floated his teeth and trimmed all his feet,
 Gave him wormer and thiamin and a little to eat.
 My vet said his heart was as strong as a drum,
 If we brought him along slowly the rest may just come.
 Well, his weight starting coming and his health soon
 returned.

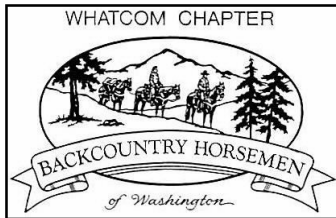
He showed us his love he must have thought that we
 earned.

He would whinny and nicker as I walked to the shed,
 As if to say, "Thanks, 'cause of you, I'm not dead."
 He would stroll the whole place without being penned,
 He'd come when I call, just like man's best friend.

Three months had gone by since the night of the sale,
 My wife had him tied on our old hitchin' rail.
 I asked her, "What's up?" as I just came outside.
 She said, "It's time to see if he'll ride."
 She threw on the blanket, saddle, bridle and said,
 "The worst that could happen, I'll get tossed on my head."
 As her seat hit the leather, he stood like a rock.
 With a tap of her heels, he started to walk.
 He reined to the left and he reined to the right,
 The bit in his mouth he sure didn't fight.
 He did what she asked without second thought.
 She cantered him on and not once he fought.
 When she returned from the ride with a tear in her eye,
 She said, "He's the one, would you like to try?"
 I thought to myself as I stood at his side,
 If this giant's that gentle, why not take a ride?
 It had been a long time, but the look on his face,
 Said, "Hop on, my good friend, let's ride 'round this
 place."
 We rode round the yard, then out through the gate,
 This giant and me, it must have been fate.

He gave me back part of my life that I lost,
 Knew then I'd keep him, no matter what cost.
 I've been offered two-thousand, and once even three,
 But no money on earth would buy him from me.
 You see, we share something special, this gelding and
 me,
 A chance to start over, a chance to be free.
 And when the day comes that his heart beats no more,
 I'll bury my friend just beyond my back door.
 And over his grave I'll post a big sign,
 "Here lies Last Chance, a true friend of mine."

(received from a member by email, author unknown)



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Check out the BCHW
Website at:
<http://www.bchw.org>



Next
Whatcom Chapter Backcountry Horsemen
Meeting:
General Meeting: None in December

Christmas Party December 12, 2009
5066 E 26th Dr. Bellingham, WA.

Next meeting January 13, 2010

