

# The picket line

June 2009



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

Directors

<u>2 yr</u>	
Bob Furu	585.7788
Sandy Kypfer	600.4737
Susan DesJardins	600.5960
<u>1 yr</u>	
Stacy Bragg	222.0077
Dan Porter	388.0290
Larry Thomas	586.6878

State Board Directors

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

Membership

Marianne Meyer 388-2676

Newsletter Editor

Still Looking !

BCH Web Master

Dan Marsh 587.7578  
[dmarsh@montana.edu](mailto:dmarsh@montana.edu)

Back Country 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, June 4 @ 7pm

Dan Porter’s office 1745 So. 19th

\*\*\*\*

General Meeting - Thursday, June 18 @ 7pm

Belgrade Alliance Church, Hoffman & Cameron Sts.

Program

Shannon Podruzny is an ecologist currently working for the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team .

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## June 2009 Schedule of Events

**Wednesday Trail Crew Hell Roaring trail maintenance day June 3rd leave trailhead at 10:00AM call Larry Thomas at 586-6878.**

### **Board Meeting - Thursday, June 4th, 7 p.m.**

We need to elect two new board members left by board members Susan DesJardins and Bob Furu.

**National Trails Day @ Bridger Bowl trail maintenance June 6th leave trailhead at 9:00AM call Larry Thomas at 586-6878. Tools will be available but you are welcome to bring your own tools for water bar repair.**

**Preparation for Urban Riding Safety Clinic June 6th 9am-1pm at Holloway Stables RSVP by June 3rd Jennifer @ 388-5668**

<http://www.gallepmt.org>

### **Trail Ride on Mt Ellis June 13th Trail Boss Sandy Kypfer @ 600-4737**

Meet at the barn in Eagle Rock Reserve and be ready to ride off at 10 am. They should allow an extra few minutes to sign a release form for ERRHO. And since we will be leaving from private property could we limit the number to 6 riders. Anyone interested should ring me at h. 587 1951 or c.600 4737.

### **General Meeting - Thursday, June 18th, 7 p.m.**

Shannon Podruzny will be our speaker for June. She is an ecologist currently working for the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (Federally funded). She has been working with bears since 1993, mostly in the field.

Her current project is waiting for the snow melt so she can get back in the field to the white pines and the bears. Shannon was in Missoula for her undergrad studies and finished with her masters in Fish and Wildlife at MSU.

She is a fellow equestrian with an interest in dressage. She redeems that interest (just kidding-that was stated from a traditional wild west attitude that I DO NOT HAVE) by also owning 2 quarter horses. I've invited her to season her 3 yr. old with us on some of our trails. Come to our next meeting to learn more about these interesting creatures.

### **Pat Green Poker Ride June 20th**

**Monday Trail Crew June 22 Bridger Bowl South contact Ron Rassley at 388-4415 by Sunday if you can attend**

**Work on Spanish Lakes adopted trail Saturday June 27th contact Larry Thomas 586-6878.**

### **BUCK BRANNAMAN CLINIC June 27 – 30**

**For more information visit**

<http://gvbch.bchmt.org/documents/BuckBrannamanClinic09.pdf>

**June 29 -- Bridger Bowl North (Poker Ride) contact Ron Rassley at 388-4415 by Sunday if you can attend**

## Presidents Report June 2009

I want to thank Joe Petersen for his excellent talk on saddle fitting that he presented to our chapter on a beautiful sunny evening with live stock provided by Janice Cartwright. Janice had just got done with a video shoot with a reporter from KBZK channel 7 at Bridger Bowl earlier in the day which will be aired on Wednesday May 27th at 10:00PM. Thanks to members Ed Long, Wally Becker, Ron and Sherrie White, Sandy Kypfer, Ken Yankelevitz, and Janice for their participation in letting people know about the Gallatin Valley Back Country Horsemen.

I also want to thank Corey Biggers for his presentation on the Lionhead National Protection Area proposal as an alternative to a Wilderness designation that would allow traditional bicycle use in the Lionhead area but still retain the wilderness characteristics. It would also allow use of chainsaws for clearing trail and access for fire suppression. I copied the information he presented at the meeting to our website which you can view at <http://gvbch.bchmt.org/lionhead.htm>

I want to thank Janice Cartwright for all of her work pulling off another successful Horse Safety Clinic. Janice had to go above and beyond her normal duty this year as two of the speakers were unable to attend leaving her to scramble to find someone else to present. Janice took on the job of presenting the tack section. She and Rich Inman stepped in to cover the section on trail riding safety that Joe Turner was going to present. Janice reported to me we had about 65 people come through during the day. The two presentations: one by the brand inspector on the necessary paperwork for hauling your horses; and the second one by Lisa Jacobson on First Aid for horses had the crowd asking a lot of questions.

It is with deep regrets that I must inform you that Bob Furu has given me a letter of resignation to our board of directors. Bob began his two year term this January and was a valued member of our board. Bob informed me that due to a recent illness he will be unable to perform his duties. Regretfully he needed to resign to work on his recovery. Please join me in wishing Bob a better prognosis and speedy recovery. He will be missed at the board meetings. Bob informed me he will still try to get to a few meetings and club events when he can.

It is also with regret that I accepted the resignation of Susan DeJardins as a board member. Susan was having a difficult time getting to meetings for personal reasons and asked me to find someone that had more time to dedicate to the club. If you are interested in filling either of these board positions please contact me or any of the other board members as soon as possible. Don't worry if you are new to the organization because it is a great way to meet other members and learn about the Back Country Horsemen and what they do.

The weather has finally started to warm up a bit and it is time to start hitting the trails. We have a number of trail rides and trail clearing rides planned for the month. Please call the trail boss or trail crew supervisor before you show up so the trail boss knows how many people to expect, and to make sure you have the details you need for the ride. If you can't make the midweek trail clearings on Monday or Wednesday, please try to make the weekend trail maintenance events.

In addition to the two new board members we need I am still looking for someone to take over as Secretary for Amy Hathaway so she can take over as the newsletter editor. Catherine Nelson has agreed to help with the newsletter by proofreading and picking up the printed newsletters from the printers and distributing them to members who do not have email, and the local businesses.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Marsh  
President GVBCH

## Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen

### Board Meeting May 7th, 2009

President Dan Marsh called the meeting to order. In attendance were Dan Marsh, Jim Albright, Brenda Kessler, Dan Porter, Larry Thomas, Rich Inman, Stacy Bragg, Sandy Kypfer, with Connie Lien and Sonja Berg as guests. Bob Furu reported he was ill and would not be able to attend. Janice Cartwright was there briefly to drop off a report on the Hose safety Clinic.

Minutes of the past board meeting were in the newsletter which is now posted online. Jim made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Stacy seconded; carried.

Our guest Connie Lien presented information on (VOAD) Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters. This is the same organization we signed up for earlier with Rich Winget. We would be asked to help in case of an emergency with our chainsaws to help to clear blow downs and also to provide animal evacuation. We would be covered under the County for any insurance issues that would arrive while performing those duties. We as a club need to develop a call list of potential volunteers.

**New Bills:** No new bills.

**Correspondence:** No new correspondence.

**Membership:** We had 3 renewals and Connie Lien joined as a new member.

**Issues:** HR980 Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection act to designate about 24 million new acres to wilderness. It was sent to the Natural Resources committee. Anyone wishing to comment should send letters to their representatives. Crosscut & Chainsaw Policy proceeding slowly.

**Publicity:** Stacy apologized for the mix-up of dates on the Horse Safety clinic being sent out in the email as May 5th instead of the 2nd. The information that was attached was correct. Stacy blamed it on too much multitasking.

**Newsletter:** Catherine Nelson has agreed to help with the newsletter by proof reading and picking up the printed newsletters and distributing them to members with no email address and to businesses that are interested. We are still looking for a Secretary to take over for Amy so she could do the newsletter.

**Trail Crews:** Larry and Rich will meet with the Forest Service about the project at Sage Creek to build corrals using the Volney Steele money. Larry is planning on clearing Hell Roaring on June 3rd, weather permitting, and the entire club is asked to help at Bridger Bowl putting in water bars on June 6th.

**Program:** Joe Peterson will do an outside presentation on saddle fitting.

**Poker Ride:** Posters are still being worked on and will be available at the general meeting.

#### **Old Business:**

Horse Safety Clinic: We received about \$173 in donations. We have not yet received a final bill. The heat was turned on for about an hour but was not requested. A mike was available but was not requested or used. Janice received a lot of positive comments from those attending. 501C-3 waiting on John Chepulis information.

#### **New Business:**

Steak Ride: We decided to have the Steak Ride at Battle Ridge on August 22nd. The meal will include a baked potato and corn. Members should bring salads and deserts.

2010 Convention: Dan and Amy visited the Holiday Inn to check out the facilities which seemed to be comparable to the Helena Red Lion. The room charges will be \$83/night and they will hold 80 rooms for Friday and Saturday and 10 for Sunday in case of bad weather. We need to start working on a brochure to give prospective vendors. It was moved by Jim Albright and Seconded by Stacy Bragg to sign the contract with Holiday Inn for the convention.

BCHMT & GVBCB Web site was moved from Powweb to Hostmonster

#### **Meeting Adjourned**

*Respectfully submitted by Sandy Kypfer & Dan Marsh*

## **General Meeting Minutes May 21st, 2009**

President, Dan Marsh, called the meeting to order following a presentation on saddle fitting by Joe Peterson of Three Forks Saddlery and a slide presentation by Corey Biggers on his proposal for a National Protection Area for the Lionhead.

Board members and committee chairs in attendance were Dan Marsh, Jim Albright, Brenda Kessler, Janice Cartwright, Larry Thomas, Dan Porter, Marianne Meyer, Sandy Kypfer and Sherrie White.

**Minutes:** Jim made a motion to accept the minutes as they appeared in the online Newsletter; Sandy seconded; carried.

**Treasurer's report:** Brenda Kessler reported a balance of \$3,460 in the checking account; \$6,044.85 in a CD; and \$2,228.55 in a Franklin Templeton money market. We found out the Franklin account is not FDIC secured. We received an anonymous donation for \$500 for the Poker Ride food expense.

**New Bills:** A bill for \$3.22 was presented by Sherrie White for poster printing. Jim Albright moved to pay the bill and Larry Thomas seconded. It was approved.

**Correspondence:** GALLEP Preparation for Urban Riding Safety Clinic flyer. Gallatin Forest Service Proposed Fire Management Amendment. Bob Furu presented me with a resignation letter.

**Issues:** HB418, Slaughter bill is now law. VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) was presented at the board meeting and Dan asked for people to send in their name if they are willing to be on the call list in case of a disaster. HR980 Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection bill was sent to Natural Resources Committee.

**Membership:** Marianne Meyer, membership chair, reported 60 members; and 2 new members at the meeting. Marianne handed out copies of the most recent membership list.

**Newsletter:** Catherine Nelson has agreed to help distribute and proofread the newsletter.

**Trail Crews:** Larry wants people to call him for the June 3 trail clearing up Hell Roaring. Larry will also assist with National Trails Day cleanup at Bridger Bowl on June 6th. The Sage Creek project is being looked over by the Forest Service and we should be able to begin work on the corrals soon.

**Program:** The program for June has yet to be determined.

**Old Business:** The total bill for the Horse Safety Clinic has yet to be received. Janice got a lot of positive comments from those attending and she had a count of about 65 people that came through during the day. Janice and Rich ended up having to stand in for a couple of speakers that withdrew at the last minute. Dan Archer of MSU's Safety & Risk Management put on a free CPR class for members of our trail crews. Janice paid for a card from the Red Cross and the others received a letter sent to Dan Marsh showing participation in the class.

**New Business:** Volunteers are needed for the Eagle Mount equestrian program. The BCHMT web site which include our GVBC site was moved from the old Powweb host site to Hostmonster which is cheaper and allows more options. Sherrie presented the list of positions that need to be filled for the Poker Ride. We need sweep riders and a few more for registration. Vendors interested on setting up a display at the Poker Ride need to contact Sherrie so we can set aside enough room for them to setup. Dan Porter said people can start giving him \$10 per person for the Steak Ride on August 22nd. We had two members of our board resign recently so if you are interested in becoming a board member please contact Dan Marsh or one of the board members. Sandy agreed to bring goodies for the next meeting. Sonja suggested that we try to pull and bag weeds at the Battle Ridge trailhead when someone has a scheduled ride there this spring.

**Meeting Adjourned**

*Submitted by Dan Marsh & Sandy Kypfer*

# Poker Ride Updates

**Poster Distribution:** Please help to get poker ride posters out anywhere you can. Extra posters are available from [Janice Cartwright](#) and from [Dan Porter](#) at his office. You can also send the Poker Ride PDF poster via email to any horse people you know. Please help to get the word out!

## Work Roster:

Marianne Meyer: Food coordinator

Jim Hamilton: Soft drinks on ice for lunch

Jiffie Hale will pick up the food on Saturday morning. We may need to place a second order, depending on the number of participants. If so, we need to call in the order so Jiffie can pick it up, or have someone else make a second run. Jiffie, we will call you at 10:15.

## Pop Stops:

Bonnie Hammer and Pete Naclerio  
Larry Thomas and Ken Yankelwitz  
Dan and Jamie Porter

Flagging crew (Fri., July 10, 10 a.m.) is in place; if anyone else would like to assist, let me know.

Everyone is welcome to the Friday night setup and potluck at 5 p.m., July 10.

Larry will pick up watermelons, water, muffins/rolls, etc. for pop stops Sat. a.m. (do we need 4 wheelers again or can people drive to all pop stops)

Registration (be there by 7 a.m.): Sandy McManus, Bob Steinman, Fob Furu, Karen Furu, Marianne Meyer, Diane Yankelwitz.

Advance riders: Janice Cartwright and crew

Chick Hale (and Pete: Male escorts, leading riders from registration to trail start

Sweep riders (approx. 10:30): Stacy Bragg, possibly Marianne Meyer. NEED 1 or 2 MORE!

Master of Ceremonies: Dan Marsh

Sanitary Engineers: Jim Hamilton, Jim Albright.

Sun., July 12 (10 a.m.): De-flagging crew. Sherrie and Ron White, Dan Porter, Pat Fritsche, Kay Tate.

## Prize Donations:

Collect prizes ASAP please and let me know because I'm working on signs right now. For the signs, I need to know the item along with who donated it.

Please get prizes in ASAP. You can bring to the June meeting or get them to Kay Tate; she will tag and label prizes and store them in her garage. Call Kay if you would like to drop them off with her: Kay Tate: 587-2758, [ktate@imt.net](mailto:ktate@imt.net). Kay lives off Valley Center Road at 208 Lake Drive.

Member donations: if you would still like to donate, please let me know ASAP so we can get the signage completed. Contact me at 686-9169 or [sherrie@mexico-villas.com](mailto:sherrie@mexico-villas.com).

## Other Donors:

An anonymous donor will contribute up to \$500 to be used toward 2009 Poker Ride expenses (specifically toward the food).

Another anonymous donor has given a generator as one of the poker hand prizes

Harringtons will once again donate the water and pop (do they want to provide a banner to be displayed?)

**TACK SALE:** Interested in selling tack at the poker ride? If so, contact **Janice at 579-3445**. If there is enough interest, a display area will be set up and members of club may bring items to sell: label with name, item and price. This is a good place to sell tack; you'll have a captive audience of riders. Call Janice **579-3445**

**DISPLAYERS:** Businesses, organizations, individuals are invited to display at the poker ride. Here are the requirements:

Displayers **MUST** be pre-registered to display. Call Sherrie, 686-9169.

Displayers provide own tables/chairs; set up 7 to 7:30 a.m. Sat. morning.  
No charge for nonprofits.

Businesses/individuals are required to do one of the following: donate a prize for the poker ride, pay the entry fee (includes poker hand/dinner) or pay for a membership in the club.

**OTHER NOTES:**

Rich will inventory and stock the trailer as needed.

Sage Creek Project status? Id like to include information in the press releases for the poker ride if possible. Someone let me know if this is ready to be announced.

National Trail day is Sat., June 6. BCH will be doing some work at Bridger Bowl (water bars). Volunteers are needed; horses will not be used that day.

**POKER RIDE ATTIRE: Get Western!**

Poker Ride Committee is encouraging Back Country Horsemen to dress in western garb for the poker ride if possible. Blue jeans, cowboy hat, western shirt or whatever you happen to have (chaps, vest, etc.).

## Stuff we need

Ice Chests: Need 10 large chests, clearly marked with owners name, delivered to Big Sky RV before Saturday morning. Lee and Dads usually donates ice.

Dan Marsh 6 (if needed)

\_\_\_\_\_ (# of chests you are providing): \_\_\_\_\_ size \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (# of chests you are providing): \_\_\_\_\_ size \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (# of chests you are providing): \_\_\_\_\_ size \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (# of chests you are providing): \_\_\_\_\_ size \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* Larry Thomas will pick up and deliver, along with ICE and other stuff from Lee & Dads to Bridger by Sat. a.m.

Tables (need 10; 4 are in trailer):

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) \_\_\_\_\_

Easels (need 4-8)

- 1) Sherrie White: 1 large; plus 1 tabletop easel
- 2) Jiffie (# \_\_\_\_\_)
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

***If you have em bring em:***

- 1) Lawn chairs
- 2) Picnic tables or benches
- 3) Bales of hay or straw (must be weed seed free) for people to sit on (take it home with you)

If you have any questions or comments or you'd like to help, please contact Sherrie (686-9169 or [sherrie@mexico-villas.com](mailto:sherrie@mexico-villas.com))



## Horse Safety Clinic 2009

Another successful Defensive Horsemanship Safety Clinic completed. This was our 3rd one open to the public. Unlike last year, we had beautiful weather. Thank goodness. Our speakers were very knowledgeable with lots of valuable information to share. The horses and mules used for demos were patient and performed their jobs well. I have received numerous thank yous and positive comments on the clinic from the participants. I'd like to thank all of the BCH members that helped me get everything set up (and taken down also at the end of a long day). I knew that one of our presenters was unable to attend a week ahead of time and figured that I'd cover that segment of our program but on the way to the arena at 7:40am that morning, I found out that another speaker was very ill and unable to make it also. Getting everything set up and ready by 9am was a job well done. Especially since I was trying to configure a trail safety presentation in my head at the same time. Rich Inman offered to co-present with me and then it turned out that he didn't even need me at all!

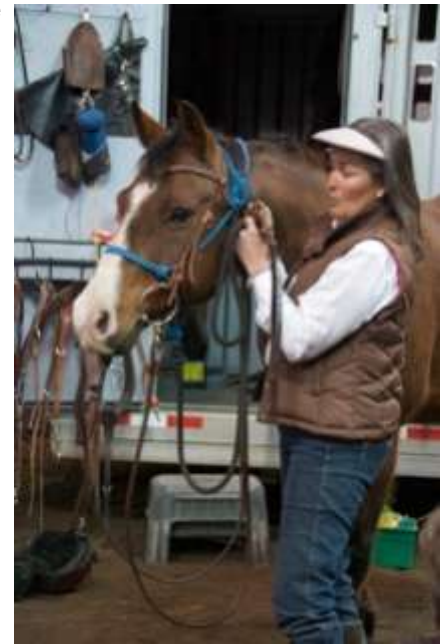
For anyone that has completed this course in the past 3 years, I have an "Official" Course Completion Card. Please contact me and I'll fill one out and get it to you. The USFS requires that we complete the course once every 3 years to comply with their safety concerns with trail clearing.

Safe and Happy Trails,

Janice Cartwright/Montana Horse Sense



Jan Elpel @ registration.



Janice shows why correct tack adjustment is important.



Mountain mule meets mountain bike!



Gallatin Valley Weed District Display



Pete Melniker explaining safe trailer loading techniques.



Duane & Jan Wiltse, Larry Van Dyke - Packing and Ponying



## Gallatin Valley BCH CPR Class

Rich Inman, Dan Porter, Larry Thomas and myself went to renew our CPR class last week. We partnered up and practiced on each other. (There were numerous comments about newly discovered love handles during the choking victim segment.) I've enclosed a photo of one of our sessions with our victim. There were some changes to old techniques and methods so a refresher course was definitely in order. It was a great class and we all passed in spite of ourselves. Thanks to Dan Archer at MSU's Safety & Risk Management for hosting/teaching it.

Janice Cartwright



Joe,

Well done and many thanks for sharing your time and effort for our saddle fitting presentation.



Joe Peterson of Three Forks Saddlery presentation on saddle fitting.

The newsletter only contains the first four pages. For the complete story go to <http://gybch.bchmt.org/documents/utah2009web.pdf>

May 2009

Diehard battery: \$100. Horse trailer tire: \$118. Septic and gray water tank: \$360

## UTAH RIDING EXPERIENCE: PRICELESS



**O**ff we went in late April with our new-to-us truck camper bound for southern Utah with fellow travelers, Kay Tate, Ron Rassley, Jim Albright and Brenda Kessler.

Experiences on our 9-day excursion, included:

- Several mechanical failures (not just ours!)
- Sand storms
- A search by horseback for a missing 15-year-old diabetic hiker who had wandered away with no food or water
  - Five days in the saddle with the odometer reading approximately 73 miles
  - Quicksand: That terrible sinking sensation.

Here's our report:

Wed., April 22: Left with plans to overnight in Pocatello, Idaho, and meet up with Kay Tate, Ron Rassley, Jim Albright and Brenda Kessler some time on Thursday or Friday. We were delayed briefly

when we had some mechanical problems. We spent the night at the fairgrounds in Pocatello, replaced our damaged goods and hit the road the next morning.

Thursday evening, April 23 we arrived in Escalante, Utah (741 miles from Bozeman). We pulled into the rodeo grounds to spend the night. Our traveling companions arrived about an hour after us; not bad considering we left Wed., and they left Thurs. a.m.

Friday, April 24, we departed for our final destination on the Utah desert, 33 miles south on Hole-in-the-Rock Road. We made a brief stop at Devil's Garden to take photos of the elaborate red sandstone rock formations called "hoodoos" or "goblins."

Hurricane Wash was our intended camping site; Ron and Kay had camped here 10 years ago. When we arrived at Hurricane Wash we discovered the shed and corrals had been washed out and it was apparent that we couldn't stay there. So we back-tracked 4 miles



to Red Well where we had seen a sign for “Cowboy Cabin.” We followed Jim and Brenda’s rig and noticed a steady stream of water in the middle of the road. A nasty cattle guard (probably a hoodoo) had knocked out their septic and gray water storage tanks.

Fortunately, cowboy cabin was unoccupied so we set up camp using three of the half dozen corrals for our horses. The cowboy cabin door was not locked, so we



*Brenda, Jim and Shep by by one of the “hoodoos” in Devil’s Garden.*

took that as an open invitation to use it each night for our evening meal. An additional bonus was the portapotty, though it leaned mightily to one side, had a broken toilet seat and had absolutely no door.

Riding was not possible that first day due to gale force winds. Instead, we hunkered down on the porch of cowboy cabin for some protection from the wind. Still, we were covered in the fine red sand which coated our exposed skin and found its way into every crack and cranny. A lizard crawled up Jim’s back and then disappeared in a hole under the porch. Later we went inside the cabin where we visited, imbibed and ate.

Sat., April 25: The wind subsided a bit so riding was on the docket. We rode toward the Red Well TH only to find out dogs aren’t allowed in the wash. Brenda and Jim headed back to put Shep in the trailer while we scouted the gulch to find a location where horses could make it down. After waiting an hour for Jim and Brenda, we decided there must be a problem, so we returned to camp and met them just coming out. They had turned the wrong direction and went a few miles out of their way before arriving back at the cabin. Now that we were all together again, we searched for another way into the gulch; finding none, we hunkered in a draw protected from the wind. Brenda saw a snake and T spied a rodent. After lunch, we circled to Chimney Rock and split again: Jim and Brenda headed back to camp via the road while the rest of us went to the wilderness study area overlook and back to camp via a cow trail that brought us close to camp. Surprisingly we all arrived at camp at the same time where we discovered that cows had invaded our camp to dine on some of our hay. They were happy, happy cows and returned daily after that, hoping we’d serve up more of the same. The wind, once again, was ripping. The evening was filled with yarning in the cabin. 13+ miles.

Sunday, April 26: With sunny sky and no wind, we headed toward the Red Well trailhead. When we arrived, a park ranger asked where we were going. He told us that a 15-year-old boy named Josh had been missing for 24 hours. He had no food or water and was diabetic. Mr. Ranger suggested that we travel up Dry Fork and search that area. In some areas, we removed brush and branches to make our way through; we vowed to bring a saw on the next ride. We called Josh’s name frequently.



*Cowboy cabin provided shelter from the wind.*





*Ron scans the horizon with binoculars for a sign of Brenda and Jim*

During the search, we had a bit of excitement when Ron's horse, Jessie, sank up his belly in quicksand (or whatever it's called in the desert). Ron jumped off and retrieved a rope from his saddle in case it was needed. I half expected to see Jessie disappear from this world completely. I yelled to ask what we should do. Ron and Kay were cool as cucumbers. They said we just had to wait, let Jessie settle down and see what would happen. It didn't take Jessie long and he was able to jump out of his sand trap. It was a good lesson in the importance of remaining calm. We stopped for lunch at 12. Jim and Brenda caught lizards; T and I climbed the red rocks and tried to get our bearings. Heading "home," Scooter was in the lead, squirming his way out to Coyote Gulch with no trouble. Instead of climbing out the way we got in we opted to try another route. Kay and I hiked ahead through a narrow slot canyon, deciding it was doable on horseback. We returned and led them out through a great slot with open reprieves for the claustrophobic and with one jump up. 10.5 m.

We had discovered when we got back to camp that our battery for the camper was dead. Without it, we didn't have lights or water. We could have gotten by, but Jim and Brenda had a generator and a battery

charger. Yippee for us! Jim became our go-to-guy for charging batteries (camper, camera, etc.).

Sorry to say, we didn't see any trace of Josh that day.

Monday, April 27: We decided to head to Hurricane Wash area to ride in the canyon area toward the natural rock arches. The deep canyons felt cool and refreshing; it was like riding in nature's icebox. We got as far as Jacob Hamblin Arch where we had lunch. We arrived back in camp at 5:20 in camp to find a guy wandering around our camp looking for a car part he thought he had lost on an earlier visit. Brenda thought he was a little creepy and woke up in the middle of the night sure that he was going to return to rob us. 17+ miles

Tuesday, April 27 was the day to ride the high ridge to the west. According to T's GPS, we climbed from about 4700 feet in camp to approximately 6700 feet. When we had gone as high as we could with the horses, Kay suggested that some of us hike to the top to see the high plateau. I was the only taker on that offer but Kay went with me part of the way. It was a steep and rocky climb. Surprisingly, someone had taken horses up that way and I followed their



tracks. One of the horses must have been hurt, because I followed a trail of blood and horse hair. Just when I was about to the top, I heard movement of something coming toward me down the trail in the bushes. I have a pretty good imagination, so my first thought was that a mountain lion was stalking me. I yelled and the noise stopped. It started again. I yelled and it stopped. I thought perhaps there might be horses coming down the trail. "Is someone there?" I called out. I heard nothing. Thoughts of the hiker who cut off his arm in order to free himself after being pinned by a falling boulder popped into my head. I didn't feel comfortable continuing by myself and turned back to join the group who had been waiting patiently for almost an hour. I told them my tale. Ron Rassley assured me that if I had been trapped by a boulder, he



*Kay leads through a narrow slot canyon*

had a knife and they all would have helped to cut off my arm. It's nice to have friends like that.

Moving on, Ron and Kay went into exploration mode,

searching for a trail that would take us down to the desert floor. They forgot to tell us that they had indeed found that trail and we were on it. Meanwhile, the rest of us were sure they were taking us down the slippery side of suicide hill. Photos just don't show the trickiness of it. Horses did fine and nobody died, so it was a good ride. Once down, T led back with his GPS. Back at camp, Jim and Brenda were out of water and our camper battery was dead again. Since Jim had a charger feature on his nice quiet generator, Jim charged T's battery in exchange for a jug of water. 17 miles

Wed., April 28: Our battery was dead yet again; something was obviously wrong! There was a meeting of the minds but no solution. We departed for our final day of riding, hoping to do a loop through the canyon at Red Well back through Hurricane Wash. We took our usual trail and stopped for a photo op as riders negotiated the steep slide into Big Hollow. It only took 30 minutes to Dry Fork this time and lots of fun trail finding from there. It is always good to take a saw along and T did. We anticipated that we'd need one as Kay's trail book referred to a log jam barrier but there wasn't one. A water fall with narrows and a series of pools was impassable but the trail around to the south was fine. We went through the gate in the park fence and had lunch shortly after along a creek. Brenda's horse, Sunny kept trying to turn back to camp; Brenda said Sunny had contracted for only 4 days, not 5, so she had to pay him time and ½. Willie hesitated at Hurricane but it seemed too soon after lunch so we ignored him and forged ahead. We noticed that other horses had been that same way. Turns out we were re-tracing our own tracks from two days earlier until Ron finally got us turned around. No wonder, one of the trails is called "Hikers Maze!" We explored a likely spot to come out of the gulch toward Chimney Rock and—lo and behold—we came right up through a gate in the fence to the rock. We aimed for the monolith with the hole in it and sheltered from the sun taking many photos. Snickers decided to finish the ride without me but T caught up with her. The ride home was uneventful and we returned to camp, tired and hungry. 16 miles.

Thurs., April 29: We loaded our horses for the return trip home (except for Kay and Ron, who signed up for the 2-week tour). We arrived home on Friday with no further breakdowns or equipment failures. We did come home with many, many memories.



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