

The Shoshone Rider

January 2025

Shoshone Back Country Horsemen

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Web

<https://shoshonebch.org>

Officers

President:

Mike Blymyer

Vice President:

Jesse Alcala

Secretary:

Randi Slaughter

Treasurer:

Cindy Geissler

Committees

Watch Dog:

Linda Putney

Activities:

Wanda Shorb

Service:

Howard Sanders

Education:

Cathy Ringler

Publicity/Newsletter/Web:

Kathi Gimmeson

shoshonebch@gmail.com

Social Media/Photo Gallery:

Randi Slaughter

Recruitment & Retention:

Connie Jack

WY-BCHA Delegates

Kandy Christian

Barry Reiswig

Alternates

Jesse Alcala



From the President, Mike Blymyer...

Welcome to 2025! I hope everyone had a great Christmas and Santa brought many useful items you'll be able to show off on the trail this year.

Judi and I were watching PBS last week and low-and-behold, found out that *Wyoming Chronicle's* Steve Peck was interviewing Cathy Ringler about her new book "*Miya's Mountain*". It was a great interview and I hope a lot of you were fortunate enough to catch it.

Judi and I were also fortunate enough to get sent a clip of the Shoshone National Forest's pack string hauling bear poles into the backcountry. I'm trying to get Crosby Davidson, their Forest Packer, to make a presentation at one of our meetings, I think we'll find it quite interesting.

Also on my "to do" list, is to set up a meeting between the North Zone Ranger District and representatives of SBCH to discuss the current budget Continuing Resolution. I want to look at what contingencies they may be looking at for possible or probable Midyear Budget allocation outcomes, and how SBCH might be able to ease a little of the strain.

Mike Blymyer
President, SBCH

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

May good friends ride beside you,
And your ponies be gentle and true.
May your trails be wild and free,
Unhindered, with nary a downed tree.

May your days be busy and useful,
Your bones never ache or complain,
May your joys be many and full,
And a Happy New Year, you proclaim.

May your days be many
and your troubles be few.
May all God's Blessings descend upon you.

~ Unknown

Secretary's report by Randi Slaughter

Minutes of Meeting November 21, 2024

The meeting was held at the Park County Weed and Pest. Following a prayer offered by Mike Blymyer and a potluck dinner, the meeting began at 6:36 pm.

No October Minutes

There were no minutes published because there was no meeting held at the Membership Appreciation dinner. Bob Bessler moved to accept the minutes of the September meeting, published in the October 2024 newsletter. Joe Childers seconded. MSP.

Treasurer's Report: Howard Sanders moved to accept the report as given in the November/December newsletter. Connie Jack seconded. MSP

Cindy Geissler said there was only one bill from Kathi Gimmeson for \$116.46 for Member Appreciation dinner supplies, Newsletter printing and postage. Howard moved to approve, Bob Bessler seconded. MSP

There is a new Memorandum of Understanding between BCHA and the BLM. It is basic and does not include any money transfers. It simply means that we will work together.

Service: Howard sent in our volunteer hours to the state which included more than \$101,000 in equipment provided. We worked 1,920 hours which exceeded our 1,800 hour obligation for the volunteer portion agreement we had with the Forest Service Grant application, for work on the Dead Indian Trail.

Howard got a call from Gregg Bierei, who said he is getting out of the horse business. He is tired of feeding his horse and wants to sell his 15 year old paint foxtrotter. The horse is probably 16h, quiet and with a substantial build. He is willing to deal.

Rocky Mountain Public Lands held a conference on Zoom and you could see which chapters are active and which are aging out. There are some trying to grow.

Publicity: Kathi had nothing to report about the newsletter and reminded us that the next one will come out in January.

Social Media: Randi reported that she has caught up with photos on web.

Recruitment and Retention: Connie reported that there are no new members.

BCHA Delegates: Barry reported on the state meeting held on November 9th and 10th in Casper. This was the meeting to pick the Dennis Dailey award recipient. It was awarded to Rosemary Carr from Cloud Peak. In recognition of our nominees, the State will provide awards to Bob, Bill and Bruce, and will also pay for all three awards. The State has about \$11,000 in the kitty for these awards.

The next National meeting will be held in Prescott, AZ, in April.

The Rendezvous will be the last weekend in June, hosted by the Great Divide Chapter, and expanding into the Cheyenne Rendezvous to be held in the Vedauwoo area.

There is another effort to transfer public lands to the state. An organization called 'Keep It Public' is now restarted to monitor Utah's efforts. Governor Gordon filed an amicus brief with Utah. Tim French also signed on to it.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Mike Blymyer noted that a budget draft will be out to the committee chairs next month. Get any budget requests to Cindy now so she can incorporate them.

Jesse Alcala moved to adjourn, Barry seconded, MSP; the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

MSP = Motion Seconded and Passed

"Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance."

~Theodore Roosevelt

Service by Howard Sanders

SBCH JANUARY 2025 SERVICE REPORT

Happy New Year to you all. This early in the month of January, no meetings have been scheduled with the USFS to discuss 2025 projects. I won't talk about how busy we will be, because it depends on projects scheduled, timing, how many volunteers show up, and how bothered we are by the fact that we are a year older. Ha Ha.

Anyway, more information later. If you did not have saw certification in 2024, then you are due in 2025, whether it is recertification or new certification. Let me know and I will make sure you get scheduled. The same goes for First Aid/CPR. If you have questions, call or text me.

Respectfully, Howard Sanders, Service



Jeff Brock at Mormon Creek

Photos by Howard Sanders



SBCH Crew at Pagoda Creek

WHY SBCH VOLUNTEER HOURS ARE IMPORTANT

- ◆ Volunteering helps keep trails open for all. It shows us as good neighbors with the community and other user groups.
- ◆ Volunteering helps overcome negative opinions about sharing trails and enhances our image as equine users on trails.
- ◆ Volunteering promotes education for ethical backcountry use, horsemanship, etiquette, trail safety and training for saw use and First Aid.
- ◆ Volunteering is our clout. Volunteering gives credibility to BCH during discussions with land managers and legislators. They recognize that our volunteer hours are an asset, and that volunteers perform work that may not otherwise get done because money is not available due to budget cuts.
- ◆ Volunteering shows that as a user group, we take responsibility for keeping our public land in good condition for future generations.
- ◆ Volunteering gives a sense of pride, promotes teamwork and brings a positive attitude to our chapters. Volunteering is the core of our organization.
- ◆ Volunteering provides opportunities for community outreach.

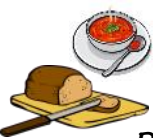
Let's Get Together!

Cathy Ringler is organizing an informative SBCH Member Get-Together! We'll meet on a Saturday with a Potluck or Chili lunch and presentation.

Richard Jones, retired from the National Park Service, will highlight his time spent in the Thoroughfare, and share many aerial photos.

Watch your email for dates and more information.

You won't want to miss this time of fellowship, food and fun!



Told and Submitted by Cathy Ringler

Olga Schaaf Little - First Woman Mule-skinner, Guide and Outfitter in the Old West

The year was 1912 at the Neglected Mine outside of Trimble, Colorado. At 10,400 feet a blizzard raged. Olga Schaaf Little, the first woman outfitter, guide and mule-skinner arrived at the mine to transport a load of ore. She discovered that there were 15 people working at the mine with only oatmeal to subsist on...and that was running out.

Snow was falling heavily and building up outside the mine. Olga knew that there was food available at Transfer Camp Mine 7 miles away. To save the men, she would have to guide them over ice-slicked rocks, cliffs, and snow-covered trails because she doubted that she could get back to them with supplies.

One report stated that the temperature hovered at -30 degrees. This concerned Olga because she knew the men were used to working underground where the temperature averaged between 40 and 50 degrees above zero. Yet, what choice did they have?

Olga instructed the men to pile on every stitch of clothing they could find. She positioned them between the burros in her pack string and had them grasp the burro's tail in front of them. The group set off at 7:00 in the morning. Since there was zero visibility, Olga had to trust her horse, her instincts and her knowledge of the trail. For 16 hours, the men plodded on as they knew this was the only way to safety. At 11:00 PM the group finally pulled into Transfer Mine. Several of the men had frost-bite--but they all lived. Only 28 years old, Olga had managed to bring them all to safety.

Olga was born in Essen, Germany in 1885. Her family immigrated to Holyoke, Colorado when she was two. Olga grew up around horses and the locals claimed that she could outride any cowboy in the country. Olga competed in rodeos and learned to shoe her own horses. By the age of 14, she was breaking wild horses for the ranches around Durango for \$5 a week.

Olga was still a young woman when she began packing supplies into the mines around Colorado and taking loads of ore out. She weighed about 135 pounds but was known for her endurance and strength. Usually in a good mood, Olga cursed, "neither man nor beast."

Most often she chose burros for her rounds because they were short enough for her to see over their backs to pack. The burros were also smaller and more sure-footed than horses on the narrow mountain trails. Olga especially favored male burros or jacks. She became known as the best "jack-whacker" in the Rocky Mountains.

Olga eventually put together a string of 50-60 burros. They received the best treatment in the country. Olga often said that the secret to her success was that she trusted her burros and they trusted her.

Examples of items that Olga hauled to at least 22 mines, often located more than 10,000 feet up in the mountains, were cook stoves, ammunition, cement, coal, lumber, medicine, food, rails for small railroad lines inside the mine tunnels, and hay for the burros at the mines. Sometimes Olga transported injured miners back to Durango, and on rare occasions, she brought out corpses. Many of the men packers refused to ride the dangerous mountain trails during the terrible Colorado winters, but Olga knew the miners needed supplies. She was often their only lifeline.

Once, when Olga was packing dynamite to a mine at Kennebec Pass, three of the burros lost their footing on the steep and narrow trail. They fell several hundred feet off the mountain. Unfortunately, the burros died, but the dynamite was so well packed that none of it exploded.

In the second story, a burro's load shifted, and he slid down an extremely steep slope into a ravine, landing in a pile of snow ten feet deep. When Olga climbed down, she discovered that the burro appeared unhurt. However, the crusted drifts were too deep for the burro to make its way back up to the trail. Olga shoveled snow out from around the burro so that he could move, wrapped him in blankets and left him with a bale of hay. Every week thereafter, until the spring thaw, Olga visited the burro and dropped him plenty to eat. Unbelievably, the burro survived and later that summer re-joined the pack string.

(continued on page 5)

Olga Schaaf Little *continued from page 4*

By her own admission, Olga was no beauty. She wore men's clothing and heavy boots while guiding her pack string. However, the miners always shaved and cleaned up before she came. Olga was treated with respect because the men appreciated the risks she took to provide them with a lifeline of supplies, especially in the winter.

On a supply run to Neglected Mine, Olga was thrown from her horse and broke her leg. Somehow, she managed to get back on her horse and ride to the mine. The miners built a toboggan-type sled for her to lay on and they transported her to Durango to have her leg set. One of the men that helped care for Olga on the trip was a Scotsman, Bill Little. Olga and Bill fell in love and were married in 1915.

The couple lived a long and happy life together. Olga passed away in September 1970, only eleven months after she lost Bill. They are buried side by side and share a headstone at the Greenmount Cemetery in Durango, Colorado.

In 1983, the US Geological Survey honored Olga by naming an 11,246' mountain peak, "The Olga Little Mountain". It is located west of Durango in the high-country Olga loved.

Coming Events

January 16 - SBCH Monthly Meeting at the Park Co. Weed & Pest Bldg, off Hwy 14A at 1067 Road 13, Powell, WY. Potluck Dinner at 6:00 with the Meeting to follow.

Watch for our upcoming Saturday Potluck and presentation by Richard Jones!

February 20- SBCH Monthly Meeting at the Park Co. Weed & Pest Bldg, off Hwy 14A at 1067 Road 13, Powell, WY. Potluck Dinner at 6:00 with the Meeting to follow.

SBCH Membership Dues are due in February!

\$ ~ Dues & Don'ts ~ \$

If you haven't already done so, please **Do pay your 2025 Dues**
and **Don't let your membership lapse!**

A friendly reminder from your Treasurer

Winter Horse Care Reminders

Nutrition Regularly assess your horse's body condition throughout the winter by running your hand over his back and ribs to determine if he's maintaining adequate body fat, gaining or losing weight. Regular dental care will help your horse maximize his consumption.

The average horse needs to consume 2% of his body weight in hay or forage per day to maintain body condition, but this varies depending on weather, quality of feed, age and if he's an easy or hard keeper. Very cold weather may require upping rations to 25 or 30% of body weight. Horses generate heat through digestion, and good quality long stem, high fiber grass hay or a grass/alfalfa mix are good choices. If your horse can't maintain his weight with increased hay, consider adding extra calories with alfalfa, oil or concentrated feeds formulated to balance his starch intake.

In very cold weather, horses should have access to hay continuously or be given extra meals throughout the day and night.

Water and Salt Increased hay and cold or frozen water sources can lead to dehydration, colic and impaction, so make every effort to ensure your horses drink the 10-12 gallons they need daily. Water should be between 45° and 65° for optimum consumption. Use GFIs if you use tank heaters and check daily for damage to the heater, wires and cords, as well as the water for electrical shocks. Provide salt blocks or loose salt free choice.

Shelter Horses need access to shelter from wind, sleet and storms. Low areas, trees, buildings and solid fences offer windbreak, but open sheds give the best protection. Make sure there is enough room for all horses to have protection, including the one lowest in the pecking order.



"Every minute spent on thinking about what you can't do is a minute spent forgetting what you CAN do."

~ Unknown

The recent turn of weather into “real winter” may discourage many of us from riding, but if you get a hankering for saddle time, here are some cold weather tips...

by Marty Morris, as featured in *The Shoshone Rider*, January 2020...

Solid Winter Advice from an Old Timer

Those of us that ride during the winter months might give serious thought to an old timer’s advice. The man was Pike Landusky. He was from Missouri and went to Montana in the 1860’s. He trapped, wolfed, prospected, cut wood for the steamboats and traded with the Indians. He was said to have a violent temper, could become ferocious and would go into a rage even when out-numbered many times by Indians. He was shot and killed by Kid Curry in 1894.

Pike and his family lived in a cabin between the Missouri River and Milk River. His wife was the only white woman in that part of the country. That was Blackfoot Reservation at the time. Grandville Stuart, a cattleman, hired him to take a pack outfit and ride the range the harsh winter of 1886 - 1887 because Pike was a hard man and a fighter. Stuart didn’t want Indians killing his beef or rustlers stealing it.

Pike’s partner that winter was Teddy “Blue” Abbott, who was then in his 20’s. His advice to Teddy was, “you’ve got to dress so if you break your leg and have to lay out on the prairie, you won’t freeze to death.”

Here is what Teddy wore, 2 pair of socks, a pair of moccasins, a pair of Dutch socks that came up to the knees, a pair of government overshoes, 2 suits of heavy underwear, pants, overalls, chaps and a big heavy shirt. He took a pair of women’s stockings and cut the feet out and made sleeves. He wore wool gloves, big heavy mittens, a blanket lined overcoat and a sealskin cap. He said that he kept warm enough but not any too warm.

Pike also carried pine splinters that had been soaked in coal oil to start a fire.

I hope that none of us has to lay out in the prairie injured, but just in case, be sure to put on or have with you an extra layer of clothes and the ability to quickly start a fire in case something unexpected does happen on a winter’s ride.



Shoshone Back Country Horsemen Membership

Membership is \$40 per year

Name (print) _____

Mailing address _____

e-mail address _____

Phone number(s) _____

How would you like to receive the newsletter? by mail _____ -or- by e-mail _____

Mail completed form with your check to: SBCH, P.O. Box 465, Powell WY 82435

When your dues are paid, it is noted on your newsletter mailing label after your name (PD 2025). *If you receive the newsletter via email, you can write to:*
shoshonebch@gmail.com *to check if your membership is current.*



PO Box 465
Powell, WY 82435
shoshonebch@gmail.com

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

~ John Muir



NEXT SBCH MEETING:

January 16, 2025

**at the Park Co. Weed & Pest Bldg,
Hwy 14A at 1067 Road 13, Powell, WY.**

**Potluck Dinner at 6:00 with the
Meeting to follow.**