

The Shoshone Rider

February 2025

Shoshone Back Country Horsemen

Email

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Web

<https://shoshonebch.org>

Officers

President:

Mike Blymyer

Vice President:

Jesse Alcalá

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 Alcalá



From the President, Mike Blymyer...

February-already! The Christmas decorations are still by the back door to the garage waiting to be stored in the garage attic.

Judi and I still haven't gotten over to Upper Sunshine for our usual January ice fishing. Don't know if the mallards and geese finally made it to "our" part of the river like they have for the past 25 years, and I never got out to take advantage of the late season Hun and Chukar covers.

The horses **DID** find the electric fence was on the fritz and managed to knock over about 50 feet of fence to visit the neighbors **and** break four line posts in the process. Thanks to Bruce Fauskee for coming to our rescue.

OH yeah...I forgot to mention I managed to come down with influenza A, which then morphed into bacterial pneumonia (this after all the prescribed pneumonia and flu shots) and a stay at Cody Regional.

I read in the Billings Gazette last Sunday that the flu vaccine was a good match for the strain that presently going around - it's keeping people from dying (and, apparently, that's about all). Guess that beats a few alternatives.

Anyway, as I informed our Board of Directors, I went into the VA Clinic after I got out of the hospital. I inquired how long I could expect my fatigue and dizziness to hang on and was informed it would be at least a week or so and could be months. Given that discouraging news I informed our Board I could no longer perform the job I was elected to do and was resigning as club president.

The Club is fortunate that we have a group of really good folks that are dedicated to our core values and mission. It has been great working with them and I look forward to healing up and getting back to work.

On a more positive note, Judi sure was excited when she returned from the Feb 1 Chili feed and presentation by Richard Jones. She said the event was very well attended with lots of fellowship plus Richard's virtual tour over Shoshone SF terrain into the Thorofare. She especially liked the close up of the various cabins in the area and stories behind them. If you'd like to see more of Richard's adventures on video, you can go to: [@wildlandranger9062](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...).

Be sure to attend the next meeting, Feb. 20; guest speaker, Crosby Davidson will talk about pack strings.

Mike Blymyer
President, SBCH



Minutes of the 1/23/25 SBCH Monthly Meeting

Following a potluck dinner, the January 23, 2025 SBCH monthly meeting was called to order by Treasurer, Cindy Geissler at 6:35 pm at the Park Co. Weed & Pest Bldg.

New Members & Visitors: We welcomed visitors Morgan and Tom & Nancy Northern. Tom & Nancy became new members and also signed up their daughter, Lauren O'Leary.

Secretary's Report: Connie Jack moved to accept the minutes of the November 2024 meeting as published in the January 2025 newsletter, Von Ringler seconded the motion. MSP

Treasurer's report: Howard Sanders moved to accept the Nov-Dec Treasurer's Report as published in the January 2024 Newsletter, Connie Jack seconded. MSP

Cindy G. presented a bill of \$11.40 from Kathi G. for newsletter printing and water. Joe Childers moved to pay the bill, Deanne Yoder seconded. MSP

Committee Reports

Watch Dog: N/A

Activities: N/A

Service: Howard reported work projects, the SNF approved trails to clean, and that the corral project at the MF of the Wood River is nearing approval. The Bald Mountain corral project on the Big-horns has some dirt work done, but Ashley Duke is not certain when the corral pads will be finished. We hope it will be first on their agenda, so their work on the project will be finished.

BNF ranger, Mark Foster wants to establish an equine trails system in the Medicine Wheel District.

A'naka Smith (SNF Trails Coordinator) isn't sure of SNF cost share funding, so will apply for a grant to build corrals on the Beartooths near Little Bear Lake where the old sheep corrals were. Casey McQuiston, SNF District Ranger, and Sunlight Sports are writing letters of support. Linda Putney is helping prepare the grant application for submission by the end of January. However, if the grant is approved, the corrals will need to be completed by the end of 2025. We may need to use the panels designated for the Bighorn project if the dirt work there isn't done this spring.

Members that need to be certified or re-certified for crosscut and chainsaw use should sign up with Howard. He explained that SBCH volunteers need certification for First Aid, CPR & saw use in order to be covered by FS insurance.

Education: Cathy Ringler reminded us of the February 1st Chili Potluck & presentation by Richard Jones, a retired Park Ranger who will speak about his time spent in the Thorofare. The event will be at the Park Co. Weed & Pest Bldg. at 11:30 am.

Marty Morris has arranged two Desensitizing/Spring Tune-up Clinics at Ron Ostrom's indoor arena, March 29-30, and April 26-27. The cost is \$25 per person, checks payable to Ron, but collected by Marty. Spaces are limited, so sign up soon. Marty will email details and his number.

Publicity

Newsletter: N/A

Social Media: N/A

Recruitment & Retention: Connie Jack is retiring from the position.

WY-BCHA Delegate: Barry talked to the SFS chief via zoom call; there will be no seasonal staff this year except the fire crew; permanent employees are not likely to be laid off this year.

- Senator Barasso's bill to get rid of 7 wilderness study areas passed the Senate, but not the House.
- The WY Legislature wants to transfer WY public lands (except YNP) to the State, which would enable the State to sell the land. Barry suggested writing our legislators if we disapprove. Get more info at: [State of Wyoming Legislature](#).
- Wyoming Wilderness wants to donate to Dano Camp.
- State BCH doesn't have the language yet to make the plaques for Dennis Dailey Awards for Bob, Bill, and Bruce.
- If SBCH is interested, the Bighorn FS seeks donations for signs on the East side of the Bighorns. Wyoming Trails might help.
- The State Rendezvous will be the last weekend in June, hosted by the Great Divide Chapter in the Vedauwoo area.

Old Business

Cindy explained the proposed 2025 SBCH Budget. Barry moved to approve it as presented, Howard seconded, motion passed.

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Secretary's report continued...

New Business

Deanne Yoder proposed setting up the SBCH banner at the NWC horse shows and possibly donating an award.

Howard presented nominees for the SBCH February elections. We need nominees for Vice President and one WY-BCHA Delegate.

Cindy presented an email received by Judi Blymyer, for a survey from a U of WY student researching recreation in WY public lands, wanting perspective from equine users. The Board will decide whether to share the email with everyone.

Howard moved to adjourn, Connie J. seconded; meeting adjourned at 7:30. MSP

MSP (*motion seconded and passed*)

Service by Howard Sanders

SBCH FEBRUARY 2025 SERVICE REPORT

We had our 2025 Cost Share Trails meeting with Shoshone Forest and agreed on the following trails:

Greybull and Wood River: Francs Fork/Haymaker Trail #657, West Timber Cr Trail #664, Dick Cr Lakes Trail #656.1A, and Timber Cr/Deer Cr Trail #656.

North Fork: West Black Water/Natural Trail #775, Clocktower Cr Trail #784, Kitty Cr Trail #756, Crow Cr Trail #751.2A, Mormon Cr Trail #754, and Big Cr Trail #761.5.

Beartooth: Beartooth Loop/Stockade Lake Trail #613.1A, Beartooth Loop/Little Rock Cr Trail #613.1B, Tolman Mountain Trail #613.1C, Beartooth Loop/Houser Lake Trail #629, Deep Creek Trail #613.1D, and Clarks Fork Trail #628.

This a total of 34.9 miles of Wilderness and 69.8 miles of Non-Wilderness, for a Total of 104.7 miles of trail.

Bruce Fauskee is taking the lead on Greybull/Wood River and Clarks Fork.

Bob Bessler is taking the lead on the Beartooth, except Deep Creek, which I will have.

Big Creek is scheduled for July 10-12.

I will take the lead on the North Fork trails.

The Grant application was sent in, so we will see how that goes. I will let you know when saw certification and/or CPR/First Aid training is available. This looks to be a busy season with trails and Trail Head work.

Respectfully,

Howard Sanders, Service

"There is but one hope for repulsing the tyrannical ambition of civilization to conquer every square inch of the earth. That hope is the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom and preservation of the wilderness."

- Bob Marshall

Education by Cathy Ringler & Marty Morris...

SBCH Desensitizing/Spring Tune Up Clinics March 29-20 and April 26-27

Ron Ostrom Arena, 258 Lane 10, east of Powell

SBCH, in conjunction with Ron Ostrom, will offer two clinics
for SBCH members at Ron's arena.

There will be a \$25 charge per person to help defray the cost of heating the arena.

Make checks payable to Ron Ostrom and give them to Marty.

For more information and to sign up,
call **Marty Morris at (307) 899-7510.**

Space is limited so call soon
to reserve your spot!



**“Stay focused on what could go right instead of what could go wrong,
and watch for a try.”** ~ *Unknown*

Horse For Sale

15 yo Grade Tennessee Walker Gelding. Been there, done that.

Packed Wild Game - Not a Fast Guy! - Kept UTD on all Vaccs and teeth. \$4000

Danika Fagan: 307 271 2387

Training Yourself by Marty Morris

Do you have the idea that you want to change the way your horse or mule does certain things, improve some of its movements or change a bad habit? Here are some thoughts to consider about getting this done.

The first thing to remember is that changing the way your horse or mule does anything is your idea not his. In order to accomplish your goal, you will be working with your animal's mind. You reach an animal's mind through its body. You need to be able control the body. The horse or mule has the natural ability to do the things that you want it to do but you need to teach it how to respond to your ques so it does what you want when you would like it done. Your ques and the timing of your ques need to be correct. Remember during this process that we are dealing with our animals not only physically but mentally and emotionally.

We need to have experience and ability to train ourselves in order to improve our animals with any degree of success. No matter what our level of experience is, we all plateau when it comes to self-improvement on our own. That is when you can't figure out what you are doing wrong (or right). Sometimes admitting that we don't know something becomes a barrier to learning. Even with a lot of experience it is amazing how some bad habits can develop. If we have physical limitations that affect our training progress there are ways to work around those limitations, but we need to find ways to get that done.

An easy way for help with training ourselves, so we can improve at training our animal's, is to attend a clinic. A clinic situation with good coaches, will give you a tune up at a reasonable cost in both time and money. Go into the clinic with a motivation to learn, listen and observe. Don't let your ego prevent you from learning. The end benefit will be a better partnership with your horse or mule.



Education by Cathy Ringler... On a blustery Saturday afternoon, thirty-eight members and guests of the SBCH enjoyed a chili potluck and a presentation by former Park Service Ranger, Richard Jones. In the video footage from his airplane, Richard flew from Cody, up the South Fork over Ishawooa Pass and into the Thorofare. Some of the landmarks viewed were the Trident, Two Ocean Pass, Bridger Lake, the Thorofare Plateau, Petrified Ridge and the Forest Service, Game & Fish and Hawk's Rest Cabins. The scenery was amazing! -- It was fun to see members from years past, Florence Caulkin and Ron Ferguson. Ron wore his old SBCH jacket which bears the original SBCH logo.

Below: Cathy introducing Richard



Bruce Fauskee & Richard Jones



Photos by Cathy Ringler



***"Make the most of the moment you are in,
it only happens once!"***
~ Unknown

Caisson Detachment of the United States Army by Cathy Ringler

Many of you may remember my son-in-law Alex Whisler, who performed a liberty demonstration at the SBCH Youth Clinic two years ago. Since that time, Alex and his family have moved to Haymarket, VA so he could pursue his dream job of head trainer for the Caisson Detachment of the United States Army.

In the ensuing year, Von and I have learned a great deal about these beautiful horses and the soldiers who handle them.

The rich tradition of the detachment dates back to the Civil War and World War One. Originally the caisson wagons were used to pull cannons onto the battlefield. When they weren't hauling ammunition or weapons, caissons were used to transport the dead or wounded.

Today, as in early days, six horses are hitched to the wagon in pairs. This traditional configuration is known as the "Postilion." The lead team in the front set the pace and maintain proper distance. The swing team in the middle assist in cornering as they "swing" wide to make turning easier. And the wheel team, closest to the caisson is responsible for most of the pulling and braking.

All six horses are saddled, but only three, the ones on the near, or left side, are ridden. (Von pointed out that there are no stirrups on the saddles on the off side of the wagon.) Traditionally, the horses on the off side were used as pack horses to carry supplies and provisions.

In Civil War Days, two teams at a time were sent into battle. One led the way and the other followed with ammunition and tools. If something happened to the first wagon, the three off horses on the second wagon could be unhitched to recover the members of the gun crew.

A seventh horse, ridden by the squad leader is not attached to the caisson. He is known as the section horse. The squad rider is mounted on this horse. The squad leader's job is to direct the riders on the team. In battle, he rode back and forth between the two teams.

One of the oldest traditions in this ceremony is the use of an eighth horse, the caparisoned horse. He is the horse who is riderless and led behind the caisson during the funeral procession. Some say this practice can be traced back to the time of Genghis Khan, when a horse was sacrificed at the burial of a soldier to serve him in the afterlife.

Today, the caparison horse represents the Soldier being buried and takes on his or her rank. The boots placed backwards in the stirrups denotes the rider facing backward for their final ride, overlooking family and troops. The saber is also carried backwards.

A horse-drawn caisson used to convey a casket is authorized for Military funeral honors with escort for military members who attained the grade of E-9, CW-4 and CW-5, and O-4 and above, or service members regardless of rank who receive the Medal of Honor, who were POWs or who were KIA. The Caisson is also authorized for all state funerals.

Unfortunately, The Caisson Program was suspended 19 months ago after two horses were euthanized within days of each other due to gut impactions. Other horses were suffering from overwork, age, poor nutrition, lack of veterinary care and unsanitary living conditions.

Since then, there has been a total overhaul of the program. Army staff began working with experts such as David O'Connor and Jim Westbrook. Alex was also hired! 40 horses were retired based on their age and length of service. Equipment was totally overhauled including procuring custom saddles and redesigned breast plates to alleviate pressure points. The wagon was redesigned to make it 1,400 pounds lighter.

Soldiers are now trained under gold medalist David O'Connor, who is president of the US Equine Federation. All soldiers attend a rigorous 12-week basic horsemanship course in addition to a 6-week immersion training in Ocala, Florida.

Many of the horses are stabled at the NOVA Equestrian Center where they receive first class care and conditioning. Von and I visited it and were amazed at the facility. It is spotless. Even the rafters are dusted. The army is hoping to purchase a bigger site as they add horses to the teams.

Despite the caisson's role in the state funeral, the detachment won't be allowed to resume funerals until further conditions are met.

As I listened to Alex describe the behind-the-scenes preparation for President Carter's funeral, I admired all of the hard work that went into the ceremony.



Caisson Detachment

Continued from page 6

This squad and the support staff dealt first with an unexpected snowstorm. Most of the horses had never taken part in a funeral and they were also fresh from being exercised only lightly over Christmas break.

The squad had to practice on Pennsylvania Ave at 3:00 AM because of traffic. The horses have been working on desensitization to loud music, simulating brass bands, guns shots and cannon fire, but they were not able to practice a fly over. However, the team barely flicked an ear when that occurred. The caisson horses practiced standing still, but the trainers didn't realize how long the horses would have to remain in one spot during the parade. Burns, the mustang from Nevada, got a little bored and nippy. (I think I would have too!)

From talking to Alex, I know that all of the soldiers and horsemen are honored to be a part of this grand tradition and are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to resume their role laying soldiers to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. For more information follow this link to the Caisson Official website. <https://jtfncr.mdw.army.mil/Caisson-Detachment>.

Coming Events

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.
Guest speaker, Crosby Davidson will talk about pack strings.

March 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.

March 29-30 - Two SBCH Member Desensitization/Spring Tune-up Clinics, Ron Ostrom arena, and 258 Lane 10, Powell. \$25 per person per clinic. Space is limited, register ASAP!
April 26-27 Call Marty Morris at (307) 899-7510 for more information and to sign up.



SBCH Membership Dues are due in February!

Thank You to all who have paid your dues!



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

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

*This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

Psalm 118:24



NEXT SBCH MEETING:

February 20, 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.**