

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| President's Message    | Pg 3        |
| Education              | Pg. 4 - 7   |
| Unit News              | Pg. 8 - 15  |
| Rendezvous Wrap-up     | Pg. 16 - 17 |
| Membership Application | Pg. 23      |

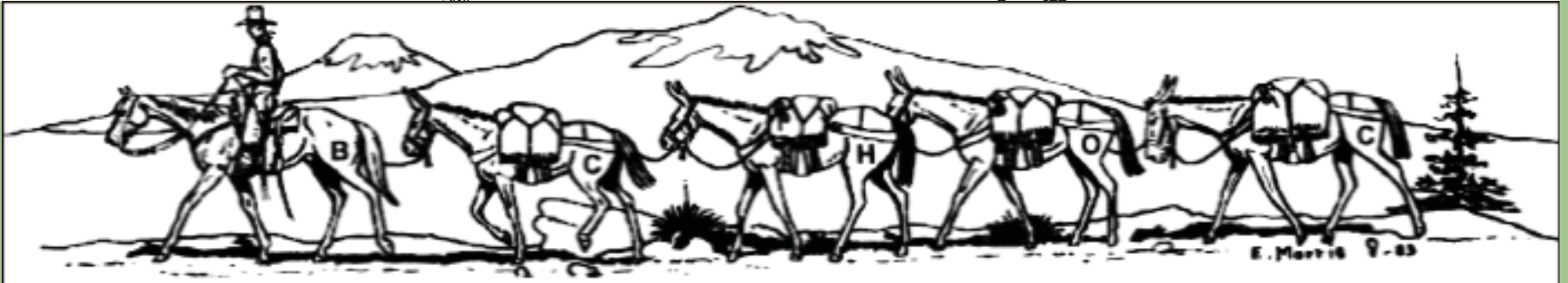
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# The BackCountry News



Volume 26, Issue 5

*The Official Publication of Backcountry Horsemen of California*

Spring 2016



## **BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN OF CALIFORNIA'S 29th ANNUAL RENDEZVOUS**

The Backcountry Horsemen of California (BCHC) gathered together for their 29th Annual Rendezvous at the Calaveras County Fairgrounds for three days in March 2016.

It was a great gathering of members, family, friends, and the general public from throughout California. There was entertainment for both young and old. The days were filled with Clinicians, contests, seminars, hands-on educational opportunities and vendors.

Clinicians included Jerry Tindell of Tindell's Horse and Mule School and JoDe Collins of Double C's Performance Mules & Donkeys all three days, and Steve Bauhr of Bauhr Ranch Horsemanship on Sunday.

Trail Challenge 101 seminars were presented on Friday, and on Saturday and Sunday there were Trail Challenge Classes. In addition to the ongoing Packing Demonstrations throughout the weekend, on Saturday there were competitions for Odd Load Packing, Pack Scramble, Box Hitch, and Diamond Hitch. Buckles were awarded to the challenge and competition winners.

Although our educational focus is always on Leave No Trace and Safety, seminars were also given on a variety of topics such as handling equine emergencies, shoeing trail horses, replacing shoes on the trail, Dutch oven cooking, commercial driver license requirements, trailer safety, and many more. There were representatives from the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Highway Patrol, and Pacific Crest Trail Association.

This year's event was also supported by Oregon's BCHA Director Casey Hufstader. Casey and his son Cody are fourth and fifth generation packers who own and operate CHPACKSTRING in Oregon. Wade and Simone Mauhl of Outfitters Pack Station in Idaho also attended to share their knowledge of packing and equine nutrition.

*continued on page 16*

# The Backcountry News

*An internal publication of the Backcountry Horsemen of California*

*Editor · Lisa Deas*

*Backcountry Horsemen of California Official Website:*

[www.bchcalifornia.org](http://www.bchcalifornia.org)

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**Who is BCHC?** The Backcountry Horsemen of California, Inc. is a 501c4 nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of California, March 13, 1990, with a 501(c)4 education foundation established in 2007. The Backcountry Horsemen of California, Inc., reserves the right to refuse any advertisements and/or articles that are inconsistent with the Backcountry Horsemen of California's objectives and purpose statement. Other material will be printed at the Editor's discretion.

**Disclaimer:** Articles and advertisements that appear in The Backcountry News do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of BCHC or its officers and members. Nor does publication of said articles and advertisements constitute an endorsement of the views or of the goods or services offered therein that they may express. Accuracy of all material is the sole responsibility of the authors. BCHC is not responsible for unsolicited material of any kind.

**Reader Submission:** The Backcountry News welcomes reader contributions, event and calendar dates, and Unit news. These will be printed on a space-available basis. Submissions may be sent on disk in a Microsoft Word format, emailed or sent by regular mail. Longer articles are subject to edit for space at the discretion of the Editor. Photos may not be returned.

**Deadlines:** Advertising, announcements, pictures and other copy must be received at The Backcountry News by the deadlines listed below.

| <b>Deadline</b>  | <b>Publication Date</b> |        |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| August 14, 2015  | October 2015            | Fall   |
| January 15, 2016 | January 2016            | Winter |
| April 15, 2016   | May 2016                | Spring |
| July 15, 2016    | Aug. 2016               | Summer |

**Advertising Rates per Issue:** Rates effective January 2012. All ads must be paid in advance.

| <b>Number of Issues:</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> |  |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| <b>Full Page</b>          | \$150.00 | \$142.50 | \$135.00 | <div style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle;">&gt;</div> Cost<br>per<br>Issue |
| <b>Half Page (h/v)</b>    | \$100.00 | \$95.00  | \$90.00  |  |
| <b>Quarter Page (h/v)</b> | \$80.00  | \$76.00  | \$72.00  |  |
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*For more BCHC information, see our website: [bchcalifornia.org](http://bchcalifornia.org)*

# President's Page

I and other BCHC members spent part of last week at the California State Trails and Greenways Conference. This is the premier trails conference in California and is held in different locations each year.

This year it was in Riverside, California, with lodging at the historic Mission Inn. I had not stayed there before, but, what a cool place, it is a Spanish, Moroccan, Winchester Mystery House concoction, certainly the most interesting and yes, romantic place I have ever stayed. Richard and Pat Nixon were married there. Ronald and Nancy Reagan honeymooned there.

Back to the Conference.....

The Backcountry Horsemen of California has sponsored a portion of the conference for the past few years. We present a seminar on how we can help other trail workers, which includes a live mule packing demonstration held just outside whatever building the conference is in.

This year Pete Kriger put on the demo with help from Marty Jorgensen. We have a booth manned by members who have handouts and can answer questions on our mission. This year the booth was manned by Thad Chodakauskas, and his crew. I put on the seminar using a PowerPoint presentation developed by Dan Horn. Our name and logo is on the literature, and each year we are the named sponsor of a supper or breakfast.

What surprises me most about the conference and the people I talk with, is that there are two groups of trail folk in the state, those who have heard of us and are very appreciative of the work we do and the help we give. And those who have never heard of us and have no idea what we do or how we can help. Those folks are the reason we sponsor each year. We using any combination of the above reach out to agencies, non-profits and for profit companies to let them know we are able to help them, whether it is a welding project, a packing project, a



saw project, even, as Dan did in Sonoma County, toilet and bridge construction.

We are the only equestrian trail group who attends the conference, our presence is important if only to remind trail agencies and planners that yes, there are horsemen using trails.

It is a concern to me, and perhaps to you, that so many have not heard of us. There are only about 3,000 of us in the state, however we do swing above our weight class. Our packers are known and respected throughout the state.

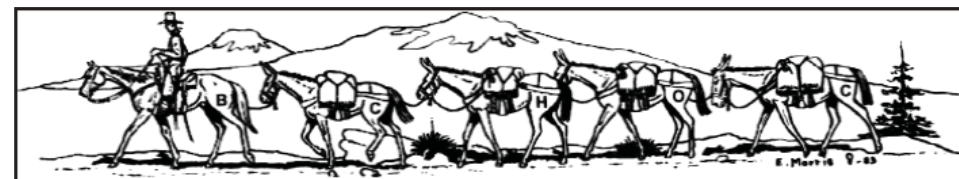
I'd like to see us even more respected and well known. This effort devolves down to each of us.

Each of us can communicate our capabilities to organizations that would benefit from our help.

Each of us can communicate our key concepts of gentle use and leave no trace riding, packing and camping to other riders, hikers, mountain bikers and other trail users. To paraphrase the old anti-litter slogan, "take only memories, leave only footsteps"

How about, "take new friendships."

On a slightly different tack. BCHC can use more trained packers. I encourage you to take part in whatever packing classes and clinics your unit or others offer. Some of the commercial pack stations offer packing schools, generally a week or so at the station and in the wilderness. Certainly the price of these is a concern to many of us. The cost is roughly equivalent to taking a cruise. Packing into the mountains with experts seems to me to beat the heck out of floating around on some giant ship.



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# EDUCATION

## BCHC Safety Program

*Chip Herzig/Dan Horn*

In trying to better educate our members and meet the requirements of our Agency Partners, the BCHC Executive Board voted to send the New BCHC Safety Program policy and supporting documents out to the BOD via Email Vote for final approval. This policy, let us say, is the science behind our Safety Program. Yes, it is lengthy, 7 pages, but it covers most all of the basics of packing and stock use.

Along with this policy, we have developed many other supporting documents to meet the requirements of the Agency. The most important thing we have found is we need to be very strict about doing a Tailgate Safety Meeting before every activity. We have a Safety Meeting sign in sheet that everyone in the group need to sign that they attended the Safety Meeting.

Here is a list of the New Document, they are on BCHC Web Site under the Safety Program Tab.

1. BCHC Packing Policy
2. BCHC Personal Emergency Information Form
3. BCHC First Aid Kit (this is based on NFS Requirements)
4. BCHC Tailgate Safety Review
5. BCHC Tailgate Safety Session Form
6. BCHC Coversheet Tailgate Safety Briefing
7. BCHC Emergency Evacuation Plan Coversheet
8. BCHC Incident Report Form
9. JHA Packing with livestock
10. BCHC EAP Form
11. BCHC TCP Form



The purpose of the Safety Program is to raise our awareness and establish the best practices that lead to a safe and productive Event. These best practices are basic stock training, what the jobs of the ground crew are and the lead packer/outriders jobs. These best practices are supported by the integrity of our efforts, our striving for excellence in what we do, keeping our colleagues on the straight and narrow plus taking a team oriented approach to getting more safely done.

Why all this verbiage about packing safety and doing the right thing? Well, there have been some pretty serious packing accidents across the years which might lead someone to ask do you learn from your mistakes? I'm afraid our answer would leave most people thinking that we do not. So, this is BCHC's attempt to capture the essential elements of a safe pack trip in words. What we hope is that the words will be translated into actions that keep all of us safer!



# EDUCATION

## Chain Saw Bucking Certification

*Dan Horn/ Chip Herzig*

Under the new Forest Service National Saw Policy, Backcountry Horsemen of California will be authorized to do Chainsaw Bucking only Certification. National Forest Service Region 5 has authorized Dan Chartier from Shasta Trinity Unit to be the Instructor of our instructors.



Who is Dan Chartier? Right in the middle of a rather tense sawyer situation I got this email from this Dan character. In his email he introduced himself as a CalFire teacher and that we needed to talk. Little did I know he would turn out to be BCHC's savior! A few months later at Mule

Days we net face to face. Dan knew about the sawyer situation that had caused PCT to call all of us wayward sawyers into a meeting with the PCT, USFS and BLM. The purpose of the meeting was to resolve BCHC being kicked out of a forest due to sawyer violations of USFS protocols.

Dan Chartier is a CalFire sawyer teacher. If you consider the conditions under which CalFire sawyers work you know that their teachers train these young gung-ho newbies to operate as a safe team to the nth degree. Dan offered to teach us BCHCers how to be safer and how to do the job easier on our aching backs. So all of us need to shake his hand and listen carefully to his sawyer wisdom!

On April 23-24, 2016, Eleven BCHC members from throughout the state, met at the Horse Camp at Lake Sonoma here in North Bay Units backyard. The class, sponsored by BCHC C-3, purpose was to certify these eleven members as Chainsaw Instructors. By drawing in members from top to bottom of California, we should be able to insure that there will be a class available in your area.

What we are proposing is to do the same as we do with the Masters Class. State will arrange four main classes each year announcing location in each of the four In BCHC Newsletters. The chosen Unit will be responsible for arranging a location in a Forest where we can sign onto a Volunteer Agreement Form so the class will be covered by Agency Workman's Comp Insurance. That unit will arrange camping and food for the event if folks are coming from out of their area.

## So which Unit would like to be the first for us try our new program on?

Listed under the Saw Training Tab on the BCHC Web Site is a "How to have a Saw Class" with all the information to plan a Class.

**Contact Dan Horn Bearstrap@msn.com or 707 953 4903**

April 7th, 2016, the BCHC Executive Board voted to send the New BCHC Sawyer Certification Program policy and supporting documents out to the BOD via Email Vote for final approval. The New Policy and Documents are available on BCHC's newly designed web site (thanks Jacque) under saw training. There are many new documents regarding saw use and safety under this Saw Training Tab. Be sure to take a look.

All paper work will run through BCHC VP of Education to be processed, so we will handle applications. Chip is setting up a data base to track saw certification so we can alert members when they need to attend a recertification class. At the end of each training session the Instructor will return all paper work to the VP of Education for cards to be issued. There will be a \$10.00 fee from each student to cover documents and mailing cost. We want to develop these program to be self-sustaining.

While researching to set up this program, Chip and I found that we needed to expand the information about the proper First Aid Kit and the importance of holding a Proper Tailgate Safety Meeting first thing in the morning at the Trailhead. Under the Saw Training Tab on the BCHC web site, you will find many new documents to assist you in following the requirements of the Agency.

### New Forms:

- Back Country Horsemen of California Sawyer Certification Program
- BCHC Personal Emergency Information
- BCHC Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) Crosscut Saw & Chainsaw
- Operations
- BCHC Sawyer First Aid Kit
- BCHC TAILGATE SAFETY SESSION
- BCHC Tailgate Safety Review



# EDUCATION

## THE 2015 BCHC EDUCATION UNIT AWARD GOES TO..... MID VALLEY UNIT

- *A unit that promotes education using teamwork:* Mid Valley Unit works together on a variety of programs to promote education. At our monthly meetings, we have a "Take Five" where a presenter gives a short educational tip to the attendees. Topics include LNT, horse safety, and trail clearing safety tips as well. In addition, Mid Valley's board has approved for the second year to sponsor a Forest Service Intern. This intern will educate the public while completing their duties as a summer intern for the Forest Service. Yet another project where Mid Valley Unit is working together is in our Youth Activities. The board approved that all Mid Valley Youth events will be free to our youth members, and we continue to offer various Trail Skills Days, Packing Practices, and Youth Social Get-Togethers for our youth.
- *A unit that participates in a variety of events:* such as (but not limited to): parades, fairs, pack clinics, special events, etc. In addition to those activities mentioned above, Mid Valley Unit has been hosting a Youth Horse Camp for the past three years. This Youth Horse Camp promotes Leave No Trace, Wilderness Education, and provides reliable stock to take participants on two separate trail rides into our Emigrant Wilderness. Mid Valley also has been developing a very active Parade Group, and is looking to apply to the Rose Parade in the future.
- *A unit that has members who have participated in State sponsored programs:* such as the Gentle Use Program, the Wilderness Rider Program, the Master's program, etc. Mid Valley Unit has a number four Wilderness Riders, 3 of which are Master LNT'ers. We are also very involved in BCHA activities, as we have been active in volunteering for the BCHA booth at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Conference for the past couple of years. We also have a member on the State Board and who is also working with the 2016 (& 2015) Rendezvous.
- *A unit that has members who contributes articles for the unit, state, and/or education newsletters:* Mid Valley members regularly submit Mid Valley Unit articles



## BCHC INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION AWARD - ELLIE LIVINGSTON LOS PADRES UNIT

**ELLIE LIVINGSTON WAS NOMINATED and WON the 2015 Individual Education Award.**

This past year, we had a celebration for a local trail our unit is involved with. We orchestrated many outside vendors and had a barbeque that was open to the public. Ellie participated in getting a lot of the food required for the barbeque and managed to get it to the event location. Without her participation in this event, it would not have happened.

She has also taken the reins on our annual Youth Camp-out. This past year, she reserved the camp area, kept track of all the sign-ups, and managed all the preparations. She recruited the teachers for our education clinics, which included – livestock awareness, Gentle Use – Leave No Trace, backing demonstrations, and was able to get a demonstration on spiders, snakes, and other exquisite reptiles. Prizes were given out to ALL the children.

This camp-out involved three days of camping with many adults bringing their children (and/or grandchildren). On Saturday, it was open to the public and several people brought children to the clinics and to experience what BCHC is all about!!! The feedback was excellent and many are looking forward to this year's Youth Camp-out.

Also, this past year she has taken on the responsibilities, along with another member, to teach the youth skills in riding, which include parades. We would like to see more of our youth involved in our parades and want to make sure they are safe.

# EDUCATION

## New Incident Corrective Action Committee

*Chip Herzig/Dan Horn*

With the responsibility of our new Sawyer and Packing Policies, we saw the need to establish our own review committee so that we all can learn from what ever mistakes or incidents that may come in the future. So we created the Description of the Incident Corrective Action Committee (ICAC).

As is stated in the official description below, this is another Educational Tool to provide corrective information to our members. There is a Incident Report Form on our web site under both Saw Training and Safety Program tabs that you can download and print. The ICAC will handle both Incidents and Complaints.

The ICAC is made up of six members, two from the North, two from Central and two from South. Lloyd Erlandson is the Committee Chair Person. This committee has been added as a standing committee under Education and has been added to the Officers Training Manual. Adding in this manner does not require a by-laws change.

### Job Description:

Incident Corrective Action Committee (ICAC)

The purpose of this document is to describe what is expected of the ICAC team.

1. First and foremost the purpose of ICAC is to investigate incidents and close calls in saw work and packing jobs in order to develop a corrective action plan.

2. The decision to pull a Sawyer Card for any Violation or Safety Reason would be the responsibility of the ICAC Team. Immediate Termination Violation of a Sawyer Card would be Felling of Trees or using a Chain Saw in Wilderness. (*Agency variance exempt*)

The findings of this committee will be provide to BCHC executive committee via the VP of Education so that all of BCHC can have the “lessons learned” corrective actions readily available.

The ICAC team will develop their own work plans that define the “how-to” investigate the incidents. These work plans will ensure a thorough and unbiased approach to the investigation of saw or packing incidents. Should any investigation highlight a critical safety issue that requires immediate transmission to BCHC the ICAC will inform the VP of Education by phone so that he may pass this on to our membership in as rapid a manner as possible.

The ICAC is not a police force. Their purpose described above is to develop action plans that give guidance to correct any mishap in sawing or packing so that all of BCHC becomes safer in what we do.



# UNIT NEWS



## Redshank Riders learn Forest Rule 'Leave No Trace' at school

*reprinted from Anza Valley Outlook*

The Redshank Riders, a unit of Backcountry Horsemen of California, participated in an outdoor education program at Warner School in Warner Springs Nov. 18 teaching students the "Leave no Trace" forest rule, a program funded by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Grant.

The grant program which was applied for by Warner Community Resource Center member Pam Nelson, is based on getting people outside into the forest. The program highlighted subjects such as; geography, nature, wilderness, outdoor skills and preparedness, that the students could learn by applying outdoor "hands-on" activities.

Nelson reported the grant theme was taught using the Pacific Crest Trail as an educational tool. The school is adjacent to the trail making it convenient for the riders and students. The PCT is a long distance trail of over 2,600 miles which travels from Mexico to Canada through the United States.

The grant funded workshops are presented weekly from September through November 2015. Other activities include learning about the PCT, hiking the PCT, learning about animal tracks, and about local flora and fauna. The grant provided each of the students the proper equipment loaned by the local Sierra Club, for a day hike on the PCT.

The Redshank Riders and BCHC used the Warner Community Resource Center which is leased from Warner Springs Ranch owner, Pacific Hospitality Group, as their outdoor classroom. The children were escorted to the resource center in groups, by their teacher at different times during the day. The presenters from the Redshank Riders Unit included Mike Lewis, Anza Valley Outlook Writer Allison Renck, Tom Firth, Stacy Kuhns and Audrey Turpin who have completed the BCHC Wilderness Rider Course.

One of BCHC's missions is to educate the public and horsemen on the proper way to preserve our natural resources. This is done by teaching the principles of "Leave No Trace." The BCHC Wilderness Riders have been trained to teach these principles. Before the presentation these five riders worked together to prepare a presentation that would highlight historical stock use in the creating of trails such as the PCT, show the value of stock in building and maintaining trails and introduce the children to the "Leave No Trace" principles.

Mike Lewis brought his mules – Diamond and Dandy – to use as visual aids in showing the children how stock are packed and what type of equipment mules can take into the wilderness to help keep trails open for use. Dandy showed a historical pack representation of what mules were packed with in the 1800s to early 1900s. Tom Firth answered questions about mules and their usefulness and general questions on the equipment used. Kuhns, Turpin and Renck presented on the historical use of mules in the United States and the seven Principles of "Leave No Trace." The program was presented in different ways to benefit the different age groups of children. The presentation

was given to approximately 220 students at Warner School. The ages included 3 to 18-year-olds, since the school has grades pre-kindergartners to high school seniors. An outdoor camp was held under the nearby natural oak trees. Stacy Kuhns and Audrey Turpin used the camp for "interactive" teaching and encouraged the students to become involved by participating in various activities.

The fourth and fifth grade class participated in a hike earlier in month, guided by Ashley Kvittek from the Anza Borrego Foundation. They learned about the Fish and Wildlife Service theme "Leave No Trace" and applied it to the information Stacy and Audrey presented earlier. The students on the hike conceptualized the material and asked many questions.

The day was a learning experience for both the students and presenters. It gave the students a chance to see how important it is to keep trails maintained and to protect these resources, so they can be enjoyed by everyone. It got the Redshank Riders and the BCHC riders back into a school environment where they could see what was important to the students.

"I believe this will be a good jumping off point to help educate our local school children on the importance of keeping our Public Lands and their trails open, maintained, and presentable for future generations," packer Mike Lewis observed.

For more information on the BCHC Unit Redshank Riders go to: [www.redshankriders.com](http://www.redshankriders.com) and for information on the BCHC Wilderness Riders Program go to [www.bchcalifornia.org](http://www.bchcalifornia.org).



*Local members of the BCHC Unit Redshank Riders; Tom Firth, Stacy Kuhns, Audrey Turpin and Mike Lewis, with Diamond the mule after the Warner School Presentation. Allison Renck photo*



# UNIT NEWS

## IN MEMORY OF our former BCHC Education Chair that started our Wilderness Rider program

*by Christina Difani-Lore*



I miss my dad every-day. I miss everything about him, his sense of humor and his passion for life. I don't know if I will ever get used to not having him around but it helps to know that so many people respected and cared for him.

This past weekend Dad was honored at the Back Country Horseman of California rendezvous in Angels Camp. Dad loved being part of BCHC since horses & packing mules was his life. He understood that the Wilderness was for everyone to enjoy, that preserving it for generations to come was very important and that through educating all that used the wilderness was the best way to do so. He was one of the original founders of the wilderness riders/leave no trace packing and it was so nice to hear others tell stories of their adventures with dad. Thank you to Back Country Horseman of California & the BCHC Mid Valley unit.

It was great to see everyone!

**Love you dad!**



## Yearly Report for the Sierra Freepackers

This year was a busy one. We worked many local trails, had education activities and represent BCHC at the Greenway Conference held at the Tenaya Lodge outside of Yosemite. We had two large projects this year.

We were asked by the Ahwanhee Hill Regional Park in Ahwahnee to develop more trails on a newly opened 160 acres of land adjacent to the current park. Our group worked throughout the winter and early spring to develop 8 miles of new trail there. The park is working to become a nonprofit park. We plan to have our Trail Trials there later this month. Our work will be ongoing there.

Our big event for the year was supposed to be a pack trip with food paid by BCHA Education funds to remove fencing from the Wilderness at 77 Corral. Due to trees being down on the trail we were unable to go there so our focus turned to trail work from the Mammoth Trail Head to the San Joaquin River. Over a four day period we were able to clear four miles of trail and made to the river at historic Sheep's Crossing.

Our lost comrade and member John Glenn assisted and educated us the first day with what he called: "Initiation by Fire!" as the first tree we came to was a 48 inch tree with a couple of other trees piles on top on a steep incline. It took us all day to get it cleared and we all learned so much from John that day.

He will be missed



# UNIT NEWS

## ARE YOU PART OF THE GROUP?

Did you know that Back Country Horsemen of California has a Group membership with CALSTAR?

CALSTAR is a company that provides air medical transport services. Membership guarantees that you'll be covered for the cost of air medical services provided by CALSTAR or their reciprocal partner programs. For peace of mind, it is a cost-effective investment—especially for residents and frequent travelers of remote areas far from leading medical facilities. It is even more cost effective if you are part of a Group membership.

CALSTAR representative Sonja Vargas-Conklin came to the 2016 Rendezvous in Angels Camp in March to share the benefits of CALSTAR's membership program. From the Membership Benefit Service Area map, you can see the coverage area and a map of CALSTAR bases. By reviewing the BCHCalifornia.org website, Sonja was able to determine that:



- CALSTAR 4-Ukiah provides primary coverage to the Lake-Mendo unit,
- CALSTAR 3-Auburn provides primary coverage to the Mother Lode unit
- CALSTAR 7-Santa Maria provides primary coverage to the Kern Sierra and Los Padres units.

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Contact CALSTAR's Membership Department at 1-888-207-LIFE to get all of the details so you can make an informed decision about becoming part of our Group. A list and map of CALSTAR's reciprocal partners can be viewed at [www.calstar.org](http://www.calstar.org).

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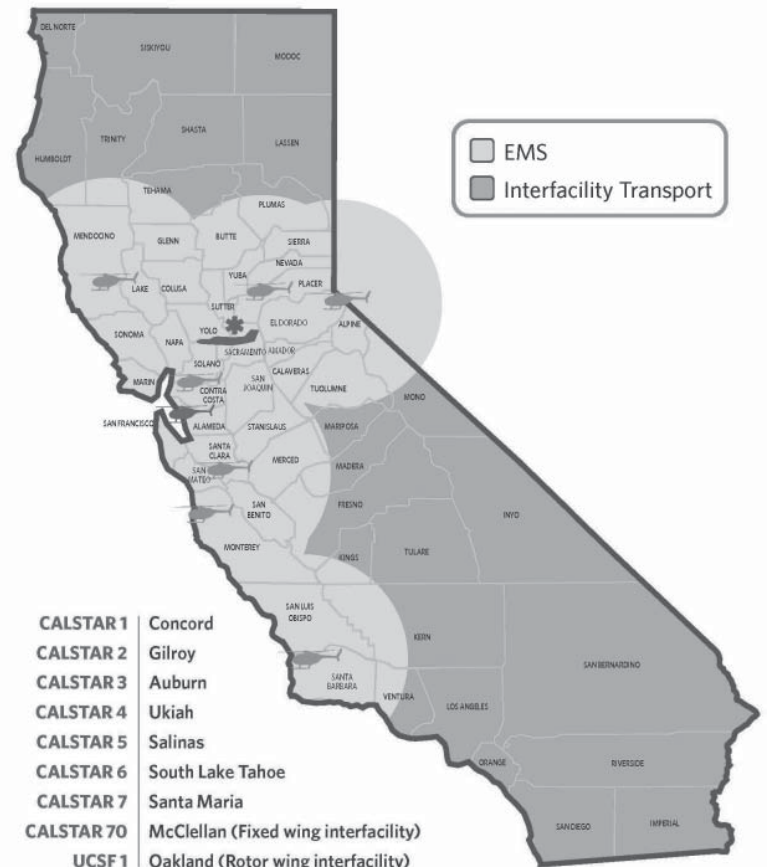


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# UNIT NEWS

## Berryessa-Snow Mountain Monument Project

*submitted by Chris Vallerga, Public Lands Chair, Lake-Mendo Unit*

The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service requested the assistance of the Lake-Mendo Unit during the recent Berryessa-Snow Mountain Monument opening.

At the direction of Unit President Don Bone, several members participated in the event held March 18 and 19, 2016. The event was located at Cowboy Camp in Colusa County.

On the evening of March 18th, the Lake-Mendo Unit and members of the Lake County Horse Council participated in hosting 80 dignitaries, including Congressman Mike Thompson and several agency representatives.

The next morning, with assistance from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the BCHC and LCHA further endeavored to provide a cowboy atmosphere for this event. Included in the Saturday dedication was Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, Congressman Thompson, Congressman John Garimendi, State Senator Mark McGuire, Assemblyman Bill Dodd, local county Supervisors and agency dignitaries.



# UNIT NEWS

## Top of the State

by Penny Wells-Thomas

On March 11, 2016 the day before the Sportsman's Expo, our unit, the Top of the State Backcountry Horseman of California was invited to put on a demonstration of how to balance a pack when packing into the wilderness to the elementary students of Siskiyou County. There were 374 students separated into groups of 15-20 in a group.

Robert Robustellini, Gail Lyons, Sandy Mason and Caralee Scala had the children try and balance each load. Our unit brought a wooden mule and 4 sets of pack bags to practice with.

First Robert explained how important it is to have each pack bag equal in weight on each side of the animal and the tricks you can use to make the bags even. The kids practiced filling their bags then had them weighed. They came very close to having the bags equal in weight, most bags were less than 6 lbs off. The children really seemed to enjoy the hands on experience and this demo will hopefully encourage our youth to go out and explore all the wilderness Siskiyou County has to offer.



## It's a WRAP!

By Lucy Badenhoop

As a result of a 2013 bequest from an MLU benefactor, BCHC and MLU shared the proceeds from the 2014 sale of a land parcel. As a result, both organizations choose to use a portion of the proceeds to purchase an enclosed trailer to store/transport its equipment and supplies from event to event.

### BCHC Trailer

BCHC purchased a new 18 foot trailer with a drop down rear ramp and walk through side door. This trailer is needed to act as a registration office for the annual Rendezvous and storage of the Wilderness Rider booth, signage, and miscellaneous supplies that can be reused year to year.

It was obtained at a deeply discounted price from another supporter Heacock Trailer Sales in Arroyo Grande, and then BCHC purchased additional equipment needed for various functions. This unit will move about California to support whatever unit(s) sponsor the Rendezvous and other special events..

The trailer's first stop was to the home of BCHC President Richard Waller who installed a solar panel array on the roof and the inverter on the inside front wall, along with storage batteries and ancillary power equipment capable of running power tools or a computer, printer and lights. A total of 18 volunteer hours were expended by Richard.

The trailer's next stop was to MLU President Mike Kohlbaker's home for further enhancements. As a retired contractor, his skills added some practical features, like a security wall to protect the electrical equipment, ceiling insulation and vapor barrier to prevent condensation, electrical outlets, shelving, tie downs, etc. A total of 39 volunteer hours were applied.

### MLU Trailer

The Mother Lode Unit opted for a used 16-foot trailer with a double rear door (no ramp) and a walk-through side door. This unit will be stored at the home of an MLU member who is centrally located with secure, but easy access.

Again, MLU President Kohlbaker used his contractor skills to outfit the unit's trailer with shelving, tie downs and other useful features. This time, he was assisted by Lucy Badenhoop for a total of 24 volunteer hours donated.

*continued on Page 19*

# UNIT NEWS

## Spanish Trail Clearing by BCHC-SJSU Helps with Rough Fire Control Efforts

By Debbie McDougal



From July 28 to July 31, 2015 eight members of the San Joaquin-Sierra Backcountry Horsemen set out on a work party to clear the two mile long trail that runs between the Rancheria Trail and Spanish Lake in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest. This trail has not been cleared in a number of years and there were so many trees across it that in some areas it was difficult to even find the original trail.

The Forest Service manager for this part of the wilderness is Micki Didier. She and her crew, of one paid employee and two student interns, joined us on the project. When it was all done we had cut 64 trees and lopped over 1000 feet of trail to make it once again passable for pack stock and hikers. Little did we know at that time that our efforts would contribute to helping to control the Rough Fire and keep it from spreading into the wilderness.

The Rough Fire started On July 31 with a lightning strike in a very rugged and remote part of the Kings River drainage. Several "Hot Shot" crews were approached about being deployed to control the fire in its early stages but all declined for very valid safety reasons.

The fire quickly spread in all directions including north towards Spanish Mountain and the John Muir Wilderness.

In wilderness areas firefighters often use tactics called MIST (Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics) which enable wilderness values to remain intact when fighting fires. Some of these techniques include using pack stock instead of mechanized transport for supplies for crews inserted into the wilderness. Forest Service packers Debbie McDougald and John Sprik were called upon to supply up to 4 wildland modules that were camping in the wilderness and preparing to set backfires which would move toward the head of the fire, burning out fuels to prevent the main body of the fire from getting into the drought stricken timbered areas.

Another MIST tactic is to use natural features or existing barriers to slow or control the advancing fire. Because of the efforts by BCHC-SJSU to re-establish a viable trail corridor to Spanish Lake it was decided to use this trail as part of a fire line for the back burn. Back burns are intentionally set to burn fuels between an established fire line and the head of a wildland fire. This technique worked well on this part of the Rough Fire as our trail clearing efforts not only gave the fire fighters a cleared area to set the back burn off of, but, it also made it possible for pack stock to get through to supply fuel, backpack pumps and water to various locations along the line.

Once the back burn started moving away from the trail towards the main fire the packers assisted in daily patrols to make sure no burning material came down across the trail which could have started a fire on the other side of the line. Overall this fire line was a major factor in preventing the Rough Fire from getting away and burning into the John Muir Wilderness



# UNIT NEWS

## Master Educator Instructor (MEI) Course

by Thomas Firth

*"a firey, sawed-off, little, blonde, farm gal from Strathmore, California with a smile that could sell toothpaste, the grit of scrambled eggs cooked in sand, and the determination of a border collie."*

One of the driving forces of Back Country Horsemen of America is education, and nowhere is this driven home more than with the Back Country Horsemen of California. This past twelve months saw the culmination of more than forty years of effort. Over those years, dozens of torches were passed, papers were written, tossed, and re-written. Small wars between those struggling to hang onto the past and their ways of doing things were battling others who saw us losing our future in the backcountry entirely unless we changed how we conducted ourselves there.

Then, somewhere along the line, a change in thought and attitude began to take hold and transpired to an organization that was struggling to hold onto its history. And through all of this change and turmoil there was one constant; a firey, sawed-off, little, blonde, farm gal from Strathmore, California with a smile that could sell toothpaste, the grit of scrambled eggs cooked in sand, and the determination of a border collie.

Ruthie Heuer, who loves her Sierras, was by golly determined to take this Leave No Trace business, (or Gentle Use concept, as it was termed back then) and she was going to make it work, and make it work she did.

While Ruthie would be the first person to jump up and tell you there were many others who believed in, and worked like rented mules on instituting the Leave No Trace education as a focus for BCHC, and certainly there were, Ruthie Heuer is still banging pots and pans to get people's attention about Leave No Trace.

It has taken a lot of people to get this Leave No Trace program to where it is today; simply too many people to mention, and undoubtedly I would miss someone, but I would be remiss if I failed to mention Barb Miranda, a ranger out of Yosemite who started the ball rolling, and believed in we stock users. And Larry Difanni, who we recently lost. Larry was an old schooler who saw the writing on the wall, and pioneered what later would become The BCHC Wilderness Riders.

In addition to the upheaval that was going on in the Back Country Horsemen, the Forest Service was going through some transformations as well. Forest service budgets were shrinking like a pair of wool underwear, older forest service staff who had hired on following World War II were retiring, and the money just wasn't there to replace them. As the stock program dwindled, trails began to suffer, and even disappear. Couple that with an explosion by the public to get out and experience the back county, impact on the environment and a need for education became even more important.

Flash forward a number of years when a few people within the forest service put together a proposal in a last-ditch effort to convince the agency to save a way of life and those traditions that were worth saving. Pack stock, and the horse-mounted, backcountry ranger had all but gone the way of the woolly mammoth, but finally, higher ups saw the value, not to mention the economics of keeping these programs, and so, the Pack Stock, Centers of Excellence came into being. This program is designed to maintain the stock programs in California forests. The Inyo National Forest is one of two Centers of Excellence, the other being in the Shasta-Trinity NF in Northern California.

The Mann Ranch is a Forest Service facility located in Bishop, California. Nestled in the Owens Valley between the White Mountains, and the east side of the majestic Sierra Nevada's, it is home for the Region 5, Center of Excellence. This unique stock facility, that houses the forest service pack animals, is important for its purpose as a teaching facility revolving around stock, and in the case of this past week, it became home for a Leave No Trace, Master Educator Course put on by the Back Country Horsemen of California. Why is this important?

If you wanted to take a Master Educator Instructor, (MEI) Course, you would quickly discover there are only eleven organizations, or providers, that offer Leave No Trace, MEI courses in the United States. Of these eleven providers, some are geared toward hikers, some for rock climbers, and even river runners enter into the fray, as they have a course geared toward their unique environment. The Back Country Horsemen of California is one of those eleven providers, and the ONLY provider in the world that offers a course with the emphasis on LNT stock use in the back country. All MEI courses cover the seven Leave No Trace principles, but BCHC adds an extra one that deals with minimum impact stock use.

# UNIT NEWS

And so, during the week of April 4th thru the 8th, I had the great fortune to serve as one of the instructors for this Leave No Trace, MEI Course. I had the honor of teaching with some of the best. MEIs from the forest service included Ken Graves, Michael Morse, and a long-time hero of mine, lead packer on the Inyo NF, Lee Roeser, and representing BCHC were MEIs Dave Moser, who did double-duty as cook for the week, myself, and that little gal

I mentioned at the top of the article, Ruthie Heuer, who ramrodded the whole show. We had 13 students from all over the place.

They came from the far reaches of California, Colorado, Missouri, a transplant from Switzerland, and a couple from the U.K. It was an incredibly diverse group of students with everything from Forest Service packers, to hikers, to rock climbers, to river-runners, to front country horse people, and even one young man from the Channel Islands who owns an Eco-touring venture that includes kayaking and cave exploring on the islands. *And while this group of individuals was as different as the contents of a Wal-Mart \$5.00 bin*, the one thing we all had in common was our love of wilderness, and of all things wild, and for this purpose, we all came together for one week; some of us to teach, some to learn to teach, and all of us to learn from each other.

**Thanks, Ruthie Heuer, for hanging in there  
all these years!**



# Rendezvous Wrap-Up

*continued from cover page*

In the evenings, there were dinners which included awards, raffles, and auctions. Belinda Gail performed for our dinner guests on Friday night and again on Sunday alongside Pastor Steve Bolewine for Cowboy Church.

BCHC began in 1981 when a group of private and commercial packers met to form the High Sierra Stock Users Association (HSSUA) with the purpose of representing horsemen in dealing with the administrators of public lands.

Five years later the HSSUA joined with three other states to form an affiliation called the Back Country Horsemen of America and thus became the Backcountry Horsemen of California. In a nutshell, our goal is to preserve, protect and maintain public lands to ensure continued access by all users.



*Camping at the beautiful Calaveras County Fairgrounds*

**The BCHC 30th Annual Rendezvous will be held in Bishop CA the week-end of March 17th – 19th, 2017.**

**Mark your calendar and plan to join in the fun.**

Follow Back Country Horsemen of California on Facebook or at [www.bchcalifornia.org](http://www.bchcalifornia.org)



*Lake-Mendo members with Jerry Tindell*

## 2015 Top Hand Awards

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Antelope Valley    | Valerie Zera                                 |
| Eastern Sierra     | Karen Brown                                  |
| High Country       | Sandy Jansen                                 |
| High Sierra        | Bill See                                     |
| Kern River Valley  | Steven Horst                                 |
| Kern Sierra        | Patty Montoya & Pat Mumford                  |
| Lake-Mendo         | Carol Notaro                                 |
| Los Padres         | Nancy Kimmell Chaides                        |
| Mid Valley         | Vicki Whisler                                |
| Mother Lode        | Lucy Badenhoop, Kathy Goodrich & Bob Gilmore |
| North Bay          | Cindy Rowe                                   |
| Redshank Riders    | Tom Firth                                    |
| Redwood            | Lori White                                   |
| San Diego          | Jeani Buchanan                               |
| San Geronio Pass   | Diana Kriger                                 |
| San Joaquin Sierra | Carol Kaminski                               |
| Santa Ana River    | June Scales                                  |
| Sequoia            | Jamie Wilson, DVM                            |
| Shasta Trinity     | Dan Chartier                                 |
| Sierra Freepackers | Cathy Miller                                 |
| Sutter Buttes      | Shirley Sherwood                             |
| Top Of the State   | John Lyons                                   |



*Belinda Gail*



# Rendezvous Wrap-Up

| Odd Load Packing                | Adult Diamond Hitch  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Dennis Serpa and Gary Cain    | 1 Devin Nelson       |
| 2 Bob Herrick and Lee Herrick   | 2 Karen Lopes        |
| 3 Doug and Garrett Dollarhide   | 3 Bob Herrick        |
| 4 Kathy Rhode and Donna Hampton | 4 Doug Dollarhide    |
|                                 | 5 Rudy Dezzani       |
| Pack Scramble                   | Youth Box Hitch      |
| 1 Garrett Dollerhide            | 1 Garrett Dollarhide |
| 2 Devin Nelson                  | 2 Dakota Massey      |
| 3 Doug Dollarhide               | 3 Kaitlyn Rumsey     |
| 4 Rudy Dezzani                  | 4 Nathan Rummerfield |
| 5 Bob Herrick                   | 5 Cody Hufstader     |
| 6 Karen Lopes                   |                      |
| Adult Box Hitch                 | Youth Diamond Hitch  |
| 1 Bob Herrick                   | 1 Garrett Dollarhide |
| 2 Dennis Serpa                  | 2 Dakota Massey      |
| 3 Doug Dollarhide               | 3 Kaitlyn Rumsey     |
| 4 Julia Hellar                  |                      |
| 5 Rudy Dezzani                  |                      |

## RAFFLE WINNERS

**Cheryl Reese** from the Kern Sierra Unit won the Gun drawing and **Melissa Hardy** the Mid Valley Unit won the Pt. Reyes trip.

## Congratulations!!



# UNIT NEWS

## "Courtesy of the Pacific Crest Trail Association"

by Kathleen Lynch

### *Volunteer Profile: Dennis Serpa*

Dennis Serpa runs an almond farm in Turlock, California, breeds mules and is the father of four children and grandfather to 11. In between all that, he is a volunteer with the Mid-Valley Unit of the Back Country Horsemen of California and uses his animals to pack tools and supplies to PCTA Carsonora Crew camps in the Northern Sierra.

Dennis grew up in a cattle-farming family. In college he studied farm management at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. He went into the cattle business after college and began taking horses on backcountry camping and hunting trips.

He got involved with the Back Country Horsemen of California in 1990 after discovering the group at Bishop Mule Days.

"I started doing trail work in local Emigrant Wilderness in the Stanislaus National Forest," he said. "I had been somewhat involved in the backcountry, riding and taking my family on pack trips in the 80s. The kids were about 4 or 5 years old, saddled up and packing in for overnights. We always enjoyed the backcountry.

"After I discovered Back Country Horsemen of California and all the trail work that they do, that was my passion. Giving back to my kind, making the trails better for the general public."

It was a presentation by thru-rider Ben York, a former PCTA Board chair, which brought Dennis to the PCT. "His riding of it and putting on that program got me hooked on the PCT. And that's why I wanted to help out wherever I could to promote the cause of the PCT."

The Back Country Horsemen of California have grown considerably since Dennis joined. "We started doing more volunteer work for the U.S. Forest Service, more backcountry trail work. Now Back Country Horsemen do a lot of training and education in backcountry maintenance. We put on educational events, camps for young people teaching them how to care for the backcountry, how to take care of their stock, Leave No Trace ethics."

With 400 members, the Modesto-based Mid-Valley unit is now the largest in the state. The PCTA Carsonora Crew maintains approximately 84 miles of the trail between Carson and Sonora passes in Northern California and couldn't do it without packers such as Dennis. PCTA partners with Back Country Horsemen and other equestrian groups in all three states. They are key to maintaining the trail, especially in wilderness areas, which often requires crews to walk longer and stay overnight. Horses and mules often bring in the tools and supplies for these crews.

Additionally, the Back Country Horsemen do everything from tree removal and rockwork to packing in supplies for trail crews. This summer, they'll be surveying trails affected by fires with the Forest Service, "seeing where to send trail crews, and we'll be doing a lot of that trail work ourselves."

Hikers will see Dennis packing in mules, not horses, this summer. "Mules are a unique character, they have a different personality. They really get a hold of you. Mules can do anything a horse can do, sometimes better. They may not have the speed that horses do, but they can do it all. They are more sure footed than a horse and smarter too. Everyone thinks that mules are stubborn. They won't get themselves into trouble as easily as a horse. They're fun to work with."



# UNIT NEWS

His children and grandchildren will join Dennis on backcountry trips this summer. “They help pack supplies, pull on one end of a saw. I’m trying to pass it on to the next generation. They’re always ready to go to the mountains.”

What brings Dennis back to the PCT every summer is his love of the backcountry. “We love what we do. That’s our passion is going into the backcountry with a string of mules and trying to make it a better place for those who come after us.”

He says the Back Country Horsemen are, “always looking for new people to get involved. We show them the ropes and share this beautiful part of this country that we get to ride in. We are looking for people who want to participate and give back to the backcountry.”



*It's A Wrap continued from page 12*

The unit’s Board of Directors authorized the purchase of conference tables, plastic storage tubs, chain saws, a PA system, a display booth and other equipment needed for work parties, fund raisers or public information events. The final stop for both trailers was a visit to the trailer beauty spa.....APi Marketing in Auburn. At APi, the BCHC trailer got signage on both sides and the rear door showing the pack string logo and declaring

**“Backcountry Horsemen of California - preserve, protect and maintain”** plus the website [BCHCALIFORNIA.ORG](http://BCHCALIFORNIA.ORG).

The MLU trailer received a full body wrap.....color picture background, plus signage. This special design and application was created and donated by MLU members and APi owners, Merrill Kagen-Weston and Brad Weston. Signage depicts the pack string logo and announces

**“BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF CALIFORNIA MOTHER LODE UNIT”** and website [BCHCMLU.ORG](http://BCHCMLU.ORG).

*Added to the rear doors is*

**“Volunteers on their way to care for California trails”.**

Both these trailers were on display at the March 2016 Rendezvous at the Calaveras County fairgrounds near Angels Camp, CA.

Afterward, the BCHC trailer went to its new temporary home for the next two years with the Eastern Sierra Unit while they sponsor the 2017 and 2018 Rendezvous.

Many thanks to all the supporters who did their part to make these assets available to our volunteers and simultaneously make the general public aware of our volunteer service to the community.....

**BRAVO!!!!**



# UNIT NEWS

## MLU Training Travels - By Lucy Badenhoop

The Mother Lode Unit followed its tradition of monthly training campouts. The February 2016 outing was for gate practice in cattle country near Commanche Lake and Rancho Campo in the foothills East of Lodi CA. Two riders (Daryl Shankles and Chelsea Guerrero) and their horses became quite proficient at maneuvering the multiple gates on both trails.

Early bird MLU members set up camp Friday afternoon at the Turkey Hill Equestrian Campground on Commanche Lake. A total of seven rigs and ten riders arrived in time to enjoy the evening camp fire.

The breakfast and supper pot lucks provided the usual wide variety of dishes with minimal work. The group didn't see any turkeys at the campsite this year, and very few people were on the trails.

Saturday morning, the riders mounted up for a 12-mile ride along the perimeter of the almost dry lake. Water levels were so-o-o low the lake shore was way off in the distance. It's an out-and-back route taking about 4 hours with a mix of single track and fire roads. Some early portions were rocky, so boots are advised for barefoot mounts.

The first training obstacles were two gates followed by a trail bridge with a loud steel frame and wood deck. In the picture of the bridge, the water is normally covering the rocks below the bridge and reaches to within a few feet of the trail on the left. The picture was taken from a mound that is normally submerged.

A mile or two later is a tricky gate beneath the Buena Vista Road overpass. It's a narrow trail with traffic noise above and fairly steep grades on each side of the gate. About 5 miles into the ride, there is an abandoned mine on the hillside only 50 feet off the trail, surrounded by lush vegetation. About a mile later, is a good turnaround spot for heading back to camp.

Sunday morning, the group packed up after breakfast and drove half an hour to Campo Seco near Pardee Reservoir for more gate practice in cattle country. This was a 3-hour ride covering 8 miles of beautiful single track. The ranchers helpfully plade about half a dozen gates along the ride out. Returning to the trailhead provided a second go at the same gates.

At one point a small herd of yearlings straddled the trail and it was necessary to move them to one side. Marshall Zavatt, an experienced cattleman, demonstrated how to walk your horse toward the shoulder at a 45 degree angle from the rear to turn the cattle in the desired direction. After his demonstration, the equestrians continued on the trail without upsetting the cattle. This was an unplanned learning experience.....one the ranchers surely appreciate.

Upon returning to the trailhead, the group pulled out potluck leftovers for a gourmet picnic before loading up and scattering for the drive home.



# UNIT NEWS

## *Rendezvous 2016 - Sierra Freepacker Style*

*by Mary Odell*

About 15 plus members of the Sierra Freepackers were able to attend and participate in the 2016 Rendezvous this year. Our unit had volunteered to run the BCHC Art Show and our committee of three, Joyce Granger, Gloria Garland and Linda Sadler did an excellent job of getting all things organized! We had a set up crew, volunteers to be in the Ranch House to receive, set up and visit with anyone who came through. Members took items over to the Saturday night dinner where many of the 38 items entered were auctioned off for the benefit of all us. Thank you to those who donated their items and to those who participated. Our judge had a tough job. Thanks to Mike Hogelund for taking on that roll.

### *In the three categories the winners were:*

#### **Crafts:**

- 1st Chris Beebe - metal work
- 2nd Debra Mason - leather chinks
- 3rd Laurie Wagoner - quilted wall hanging

#### **Art:**

- 1st Jerry Heitzler - photo-"No Left Turn"
- 2nd Al Kaiser- photo-"On Top of the World"
- 3rd Skott Borello - pen & ink sketch

#### **Other:**

- 1st Ann Bates - hand-made 8/12 plaited reins with kangaroo leather
- 2nd Lee Owing - saddle bags
- 3rd Pat Wolff - porcelain plate

### **People's Choice** 3 horse metal sculpture by Steve Southerland

Our unit also was awarded the Most Hours per Capita award. We are very happy to have earned that! Our Top Hand was awarded Cathy Miller. As my Vice President and Trail Boss for our unit she has been instrumental in organizing rides, activities and taking over for me when I have had to miss our monthly meetings. Thank you Cathy!

Other activities on our agenda were helping out with youth and families visiting Lora Handley of the Oakdale Equine Rescue and Stanislaus County 4-H Equestrian Drill Team & Color Guard. They set up right next to us under the cover at the Ranch House. They had the "Kids Corner" where kids were able to color equine/LNT pages for a contest (thanks Laurie & John Wagoner for judging). They also were able to make corn husk dolls and see all the great displays there on Equine Education. Cody and Mini Pearl,

two minis where there for the kids to pet and love on too. Those manning the Art Show were able to connect with the youth and parents as they took in all there was to offer. The 4-H group also presented Colors, cleaned tables, and helped as runners for the auction. They were a busy group!

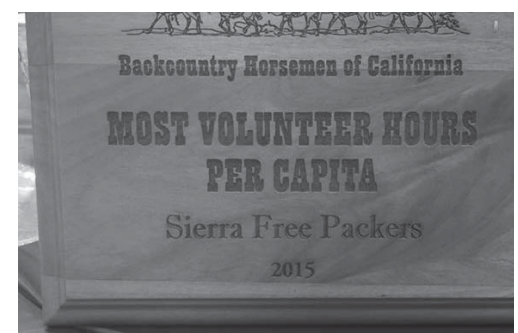
Our unit also ran the Stick Horse Event on Saturday at noon. Since the area was pretty wet and muddy, we decided to stage a mini gymkhana for about 10 participants age 2-9 years right above the arena. The kids were excited to pick their pony or mule and run the barrels. And of course there was even a bull to ride. Patricia Vallentyne brought a huge bag of ribbons so all the kids won ribbons. They loved wearing them. It was fun for all of us.

Members attended classes including two youth, James Powers and Amber Prince. Both participated in the Youth Packing Class and in the Youth Packing Challenge. It was a great experience for both. Both also took part in the Youth Safety & Control Clinics given by Jerry Tindell and Amber learned so much that she won her category at the Trail Trials on Sunday! Her grandparents Sue & Mike Hogelund were very proud as the course was very challenging! What an awesome buckle she won.

James (per Patricia) "attended 1 Jerry Tindell class and participated in 2 Jerry Tindell clinic sessions, youth packing class and 2 adult packing classes, youth box hitch competition, saddle fitting class, Cowboy Church and Stick horse races. He also adjusted the audio equipment for the South Arena and thoroughly enjoyed riding the trolley and the trolley drivers, especially the gentleman in the green shirt." He was a very busy boy!

Denise and Robby Robinson and Sharon Seslowe rounded out our group. Sharon and Robby were our go to people for setting up and taking down the brag booth, helping with the Art Show, helping set up our table decorations and assisting in any way they could. Denise spent Sunday morning doing a Dutch Oven Cooking demo of some of the best Peach Whiskey Chicken I have ever eaten.

As usual it is always a great time at the Rendezvous, seeing old friends and hanging out with unit members. We kept pretty busy and even go to check out Angels Camp a bit.



# BCHC

## MANY THANKS TO THIS YEAR'S RENDEZVOUS SPONSORS:

Belinda Gail - Prescott, AZ  
Black Oak Casino - Tuolumne, CA  
Elk Grove Milling - Elk Grove, CA  
Garton Tractor, Inc - Turlock, CA  
Jode Collins, Double C's Performance Mules and Donkeys - Lincoln, CA  
Projection Photography - Carson City, NV  
Redmond Equine - Redmond, UT  
Spence Ranch Feed & Supply - Angels Camp, CA  
Star Milling Company - Perris, CA  
Terri Arington - Columbia, CA  
Tindell's Horse & Mule School - Wilton, CA  
Winton-Ireland Insurance Agency - Turlock, CA  
WJM Auction - Acampa, CA

## MAX & IRENE COCHRAN JOURNALISM AWARD

First Place - Los Padres Unit  
EDITOR - Susan Tuttle  
Second Place - San Diego Unit  
EDITOR - Gaby Daigneault  
Third Place - Top of the State  
EDITOR - Kathryn Matthews  
Fourth Place - Sutter Buttes Unit  
EDITOR - Corky Layne  
Fifth Place - High Sierra Unit  
EDITOR - Bob Herrick

# Congratulations!!!!!!

## TABLE DECORATIONS

Humorous : San Joaquin Sierra  
Most Original: Shasta Trinity  
Best Over All: Shasta Trinity



# BCHC Membership Application

**Backcountry Horsemen of California**



**MAIL TO:** BCHC Membership  
1280 State Rt 208  
Yerington NV 89447

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

New  Renewal or  
 Change

(select change)

**PARENT Unit Affiliation:** (Select and CHECK a Unit as your Affiliation)  
 Antelope Valley  Kern Sierra  North Bay  San Geronimo Pass  Sierra Franciscana  
 Eastern Sierra  Lake-Mendocino  Oldman Rider  San Joaquin Sierra  Shasta-Rutter  
 High Country  Los Padres  Redwood-Riders  Santa Ana River  Top of the State  
 High Sierra  Mt. Valley  Redwood  Sequoia  
 Kern River Valley  Mother Lode  San Diego  Shasta Trinity

**DC/IR** (your Membership Number): \_\_\_\_\_ (For new membership, will be assigned by Membership Clerk)

**MEMBER'S NAME**—No Surname Names, Print Clearly

**ROOMS / CO-MEMBER'S NAME**—MUST SHARE SAME ADDRESS

Street Address / PO Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code (Full 9 digits, if known) \_\_\_\_\_ Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_

Rural Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (please print legibly)

Donation to BCHC Education Fund (tax deductible) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Unit Membership Types:** (CIRCLE ONE)

Individual \$50 - Family \$60 - 2 year Individual \$90 - 2 Year Family \$110 - 3 Year Individual \$125 - 3 year Family \$150  
 Young Adult (18-25 years old) \$15 - Benefactor \$100 - Patron \$250 - Mt Whitney \$500

**Associate Memberships:** AN ADDITIONAL \$15.00 PER UNIT IS ADDED TO YOUR PARENT UNIT DUES.  
 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP UNIT AFFILIATIONS MAY NOT BE FOR THE SAME UNIT AS YOUR PARENT UNIT.

Associate Membership for: \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00/unit  
 Unit Name (from above list) \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Membership for: \_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00/unit  
 Unit Name (from above list) \_\_\_\_\_

Please write additional checks on back.

Please clip form along dashed lines and keep the below portion for your records

**Parent BCHC Membership Types**

Individual, Family (Shared\*), Benefactor, Patron, and Mt Whitney.

A Parent Membership is affiliated with a single Local Unit. BCHC members may NOT hold more than one active Parent Membership.

\*A SHARED Membership is for two adults with differing last names who share a common address.

**Associate Memberships**

These special Memberships are only available to persons already holding Parent BCHC Membership. No one may sign up for an Associate Membership without 1) having registered one of the Parent Membership types, and 2) having selected Parent Unit affiliation.

HE/ON may sign up for as many Associate Memberships as you like.

HE/Associate Memberships may be initiated at any time during the term of your Parent Membership.

HE/Associate Memberships must expire concurrently with the Parent Membership and are renewable only at the time of renewal of the Parent Membership.

Complete information regarding BCHC Membership is available on the MEMBERSHIP pages at [BCHCCalifornia.org](http://BCHCCalifornia.org) or call (775) 463-3634

**KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS**

I submitted an Application Form for a new -

- Individual Membership \$ 50.00
- Family (Shared) Membership \$ 60.00
- Young Adult (18-25 years old) \$ 15.00
- 2 Year Individual \$ 90.00
- 2 Year Family \$ 110.00
- 3 Year Individual \$ 125.00
- 3 Year Family \$ 150.00
- Benefactor Membership \$ 100.00
- Patron Membership \$ 250.00
- Mt Whitney Membership \$ 500.00

On that form, I also requested -  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Memberships \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My Total Remittance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My Check Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Mailed: \_\_\_\_\_

Verification of BCHC membership is available via (1) BCHC unit president's reports (2) BCHC membership chair reports (3) a self addressed stamped envelope submitted with this form or (4) a valid email address.



# BCHC

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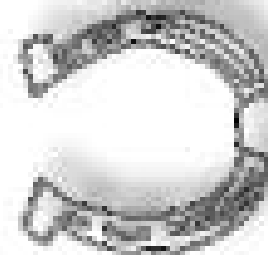
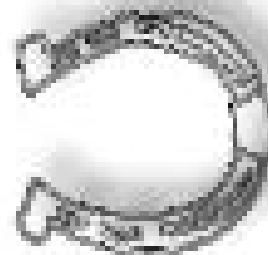




# BCHC



Sierra Freepacker youth member Amber Prince



# BCHC

The deadline for submissions for the  
SPRING 2016 EDITION  
of the Backcountry News is:

**JULY 15, 2016**

Submissions to:

Lisa Deas

(831) 402-7482

[muledaze@yahoo.com](mailto:muledaze@yahoo.com)



## Logan Coach Rebate Program

Exclusive to BCH Members

As a special rebate for Backcountry Horseman members, Logan Coach will give the following rebates/donations when you purchase a new Logan Coach trailer:


- .5% of Retail Price Paid Donated to BCH State Organization
- .5% of Retail Price Paid Donated to Customer's Local BCH Chapter
- .5% of Retail Price Paid as Rebate back to Customer

Ask Your Logan Coach Dealer for details.

See the 2012 Logan Coach Line at [www.LoganCoach.com](http://www.LoganCoach.com)

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**BCHC Membership**  
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Yerington, NV 89447

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A donation in the amount of your choice is tax deductible. You can now donate easily and quickly, using a major credit card or PayPal. Simply go to the BCHC website ([bchcalifornia.org](http://bchcalifornia.org)), Scroll down to the bottom of any page, press the DONATE button and help us in our many efforts. **THANK YOU!**



*“If you are lucky enough to be in the mountains,  
you’re lucky enough.”*

*In Memory of  
Ron Arington*

# BCHC

## OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE of the BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN OF CALIFORNIA (from the BCHC Bylaws)

- To improve and promote the use, care and development of California backcountry trails, campsites, streams and meadows; to advocate good trail manners.
- To promote the conservation and utilization of our backcountry resources in concert with livestock transportation.
- To keep the backcountry trails and forage areas open to horsemen on all public lands.
- To keep current information before the Corporation membership and its local Units regarding new legislation or management plans related to government regulations of the backcountry.
- To support or oppose new proposals, plans and restrictions as related to the interest of horsemen and those persons interested in recreational stock use and enjoying the backcountry.
- To promote the interest of people who, due to health or physical factors, need transportation other than by foot on backcountry trails.
- To promote public awareness and interest in the historical aspect of horsemen and stock in the backcountry and to help educate backcountry users on ways to use the trail and forage in a manner that conserves the backcountry resources.
- To assist in keeping the public informed of the vital need for a clean backcountry.
- To promote a working relationship with and keep the work and interests of the Corporation before our local, state and federal officials.
- To assist in the formation and continuation of local Units to carry out these purposes

GET INVOLVED, DO YOUR PART

**DON'T FORGET:** The BCHC Executive Committee will no longer send out membership renewal verification "green slips" via regular mail. Instead, each unit president and membership chair will get a personal email from the BCHC Membership Chair (Chip Herzig) with each units' data AND it will be put on the web page in the password protected section.

# Recognition of Special Individuals

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!**

Benefactor Funds are used in a variety of ways to support BCHC's Public Lands activities. Uses of Benefactor Funds may include but are not limited to hiring consultants to perform in-depth reviews, financing special studies and reports, and reducing out-of-pocket travel expenses for those who testify at state and federal hearings.

## BENEFACTORS

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Antelope Valley          | Stephen and Mary Ann Colf<br>Heidi Furer  |
| Eastern Sierra           | Bill Carter<br>Susie L. Harms<br>Michelle Layne (Tom's Place Resort)<br>Troy and Susie Patton<br>Russ Rantz   |
| High Sierra              | David and Juli Beale-Van<br>Richard and Dena Cochran<br>Ruth Gerson<br>Nancy Hamill   |
| Kern Sierra              | Brad Allen of Rosedale Farrier Supply<br>Robert L. Anderson<br>Boyce 'Buzz' R. and Joann F. Caffee<br>Mylon Filkins, DVM and Pat<br>Larry and Pat Mumford   |
| Lake-Mendo<br>Los Padres | Carol S. and Bill Biggs<br>William Chaides and Nancy Kimmell<br>Janice and Phillip Kissel<br>Kathleen L. Redden   |
| Mid Valley               | Glenn and Karen Teixeira<br>Jay and Elizabeth Barnes<br>Gary A. and Michelle L. Cain<br>Dennise A. Davis<br>Carol Jo Hargreaves and Larry Schneider<br>David and Kristine Kraft<br>Bob and Sandra Magee<br>John V. Marshall<br>MID VALLEY UNIT - BCHC<br>Dan and Toni Peterson<br>Dennis M. & Loretta Serpa |

## BENEFACTORS, *continued*

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Mother Lode<br>North Bay<br>Redwood<br>San Diego | Ken Bourn<br>Sarah and David Schoen<br>Maris Hawkins<br>Walt J. and Suzie Kirkwood<br>Lynda Sterns  |
| San Gorgonio Pass                                | Susanne Holenstein<br>Peter and Diana Kriger<br>Ron and Korcky Robertson<br>John Cunningham<br>Fred Gleason<br>Stephen and Jill Naylon<br>Patrick and Karen Warnshuis |
| San Joaquin Sierra                               | Kathryn C. Bennett<br>Steve Ladrigan<br>Jamie Wilson, DVM<br>Dean and Laura Angelides<br>Lyle and Lauren Charter<br>Lori Henderson<br>Joe R. Wilburn                  |
| Sequoia  | Corky Layne<br>Ulla Park  |
| Shasta Trinity                                   |   |
| Sutter Buttes                                    |   |

## PATRONS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| High Sierra   | Jeff and Alice Kampen<br>Dennis and Cathlyn A. Keller<br>Karl and Trish Pendegraft<br>Lloyd and Susan Erlandson<br>Timothy and Michaela Durbin<br>Ken and Allison Renck<br>Larry Nishma, Knapp-Yosemite Trails PackStation<br>Jim and Pat Holly<br>Larry and Jody Young |
| Mid Valley<br>Mother Lode<br>Redshank Riders<br>San Joaquin Sierra<br>Sequoia |   |

## MT. WHITNEY

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Mid Valley | Teri Arrington |
|------------|----------------|

## **WANT TO START A NEW UNIT?**

If there is no unit in your area and you are interested in starting one, contact BCHC Secretary Susie Patton for more information. [bludog60@hughes.net](mailto:bludog60@hughes.net)

# Information



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## Wilderness Rider of the Year!

Congratulations to our newest "Wilderness Rider of the Year" Jerry Heitzler for 2015. A letter of commendation was received from the Lead Wilderness Ranger for the Amador Ranger District, Eldorado National Forest, Chip Morrill. In his letter he commended Jerry for his great service to the district.

Chip was especially impressed with Jerry's communication skills, adherence to safety, protocols, implementation of work plans, preparation and accountability.

Over the course of the season there were three trips, first one in July packing with several horsemen they packed 250 pounds of supplies and tools 8.6 miles into the wilderness.

Second trip was in early August and put together in the 11th hour but Jerry not being able to go, he still arranged for another packer to get the job done.

The crowning achievement for Jerry was this last trip. He organized eight horsemen and 20 animals coming from around the state to haul fill materials to a severely eroded trail. The planning included camping, food and water needs for this group.

**Congratulations Jerry Heitzler for this great achievement and earning Wilderness Rider of the Year!**



*Jerry Heitzler on left and Dan Horn on right presenting award.*

# BCHC Units Around the State

## **Antelope Valley**

PO Box 84  
Pearblossom, CA 93553  
Paul Frisbey  
(661) 944-3601  
[phfrisbey@aol.com](mailto:phfrisbey@aol.com)

## **Eastern Sierra**

PO Box 157  
Olancho, CA 93549  
Susie Patton  
(760) 872-9951  
[bludog46@gmail.com](mailto:bludog46@gmail.com)

## **High Country**

PO Box 161  
Milford, CA 96121  
Ernie Coe  
(530) 253-2177  
[echorseshoeing@frontiernet.net](mailto:echorseshoeing@frontiernet.net)

## **High Sierra**

PO Box 6938  
Visalia, CA 93278-4427  
Dick Cochran  
(559)-686-8725  
[rcochran@visaliaalaw.com](mailto:rcochran@visaliaalaw.com)

## **Kern River Valley**

PO Box 2179  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240  
Mike Hughes  
(760) 379-5617  
[4HRanch@earthlink.net](mailto:4HRanch@earthlink.net)

## **Kern Sierra**

16347 Stephenie Rd.  
Bakersfield, CA 93314-9669  
Scott Rogers  
(661) 587-4555  
[hardlwater@gmail.com](mailto:hardlwater@gmail.com)

## **Lake-Mendo**

PO Box 1067  
Lakeport, CA 95453  
Don Bone  
(707) 261-2663  
[bonesmules@yahoo.com](mailto:bonesmules@yahoo.com)

## **Los Padres**

606 S. Hart Drive  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
Kaye Bruns  
(805) 466-8270  
[kowgrl@charter.net](mailto:kowgrl@charter.net)

## **Mid Valley**

PO Box 1709  
Modesto, CA 95353  
Denis Serpa  
(209) 848-4017  
[dmserpa@velociter.net](mailto:dmserpa@velociter.net)

## **Mother Lode**

PO Box 2088  
Elk Grove, CA 95759-2088  
Mike Kohlbaker  
(916) 214-6505  
[4horsen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:4horsen@sbcglobal.net)

## **North Bay**

PO Box 9435  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
Thor Bodtker  
(415) 328-4545  
[thunder.t@hotmail.com](mailto:thunder.t@hotmail.com)

## **Redshank Riders**

PO Box 383  
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Greg Bruce  
(951) 514-9999  
[equinesmiles3@gmail.com](mailto:equinesmiles3@gmail.com)

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Carole Polasek  
(707) 786-9637  
cell: (707) 599-8021  
[muleride@frontiernet.net](mailto:muleride@frontiernet.net)

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[pkrigerjr@yahoo.com](mailto:pkrigerjr@yahoo.com)

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PO Box 25693  
Fresno, CA 93729-5693  
Joe Kaminski  
(559) 7433-9170  
[kaminski clan@gmail.com](mailto:kaminski clan@gmail.com)

## **Santa Ana River**

PO Box 736  
Norco, CA 92860-8062  
www.bchcsaru.org  
Thad Chodakauskas  
(951) 233-8027  
[ctchod@aol.com](mailto:ctchod@aol.com)

## **Sequoia**

PO Box 456  
Springville, CA 93265-0579  
Gail Inman  
(559) 539-2260  
[president@bchc-sequoia.org](mailto:president@bchc-sequoia.org)

## **Shasta Trinity**

10855 Beaver Rd  
Oak Run, CA 96069-9602  
Larry Shuman  
(530) 527-8907  
[lshuman62@gmail.com](mailto:lshuman62@gmail.com)

## **Sierra Freepackers**

PO Box 64  
Oakhurst, CA 93644-0064  
Denise Robinson  
(559) 877-3532  
[robnden@netptc.net](mailto:robnden@netptc.net)

## **Sutter Buttes**

110 Medley Lane  
Oroville, CA 95965  
Bob Gage  
(530) 521-7369  
[bobgage@wildblue.net](mailto:bobgage@wildblue.net)

## **Top of the State**

PO Box 461  
Etna, CA 96027-0461  
Duane Eastlick  
(530) 468-2286  
[duaneeastlick@gmail.com](mailto:duaneeastlick@gmail.com)

## Questions? Membership Matters

Contact Membership Coordinators are Chip and Linda Herzig. They will be happy to address your questions or concerns. Chip and Linda may be reached Monday through Friday.

By mail: BCHC Membership  
1280 State Rt 208  
Yerington NV 89447

Email: [membership@bchcalifornia.org](mailto:membership@bchcalifornia.org)

Phone: (775) 463-3634

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# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

## WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Antelope Valley</b>    | DeAnne Nevarez<br>Tamara Robinson   |
| <b>High Country</b>       | Jeffrey Harris<br>Deby & Allen Phipps   |
| <b>Kern River Valley</b>  | Luanne Simon & Jim McClure  |
| <b>Lake-Mendo</b>         | Jaymen Cooper   |
| <b>Los Padres</b>         | Cindy & Bill Anderson<br>Julie Beaver<br>Jennifer, Stephen & Valerie Best<br>Vicky Duniven<br>Christina Forren<br>Rick Kline<br>Catrina Tarabini<br>George & Donna Tracy          |
| <b>Mid Valley</b>         | Jared Borba<br>Lora & Kayla Handley   |
| <b>Mother Lode</b>        | Kaylyn Keller<br>Phyllis & Bryce Keller<br>Jolene MacFarlane<br>Sandra Overholtzer<br>Steven E. Smith<br>Annabelle & Virgil Toothaker   |
| <b>North Bay</b>          | Frank Biaggi<br>Melinda Hughes-Berland<br>Ron & Claudia Stevens   |
| <b>Redshank Riders</b>    | Jackie & Daniel Hare  |
| <b>Redwood</b>            | Colby Hay & Annika Satter   |
| <b>San Diego</b>          | Anne Nelson   |
| <b>San Geronio Pass</b>   | Thomas Andretta   |
| <b>San Joaquin Sierra</b> | Georgia Davis<br>Lee Herrick<br>Gene & Arlene Simeone   |
| <b>Santa Ana River</b>    | Nance Fite<br>Theresa & Rich Strehl   |
| <b>Sequoia</b>            | Belinda & Al Guzman<br>Anne Hemsley<br>Pam Hubbard<br>Wanda Hulsey & Kelli Dean<br>Michelle Jacobson<br>Shirley Maxon<br>Jewel A. Paschall-Marcak<br>David Schuetz<br>Stacy Vehrs |
| <b>Shasta Trinity</b>     | Sage Baker<br>Shyloe Corson<br>Susan & Scott Johnson<br>Denise Leone<br>Jack & Sheila Shields   |
| <b>Top of the State</b>   | Barth Campbell & Patricia Ponzo<br>Colleen & David Nye  |

These new members have joined BCHC  
between  
January and March 2016

**THANK YOU NEW MEMBERS**

*We look forward to meeting you!!*



## Riding Warehouse

**Hello, fellow members!!**

We are happy to inform you of a new member benefit!

We've recently arranged a **15% discount for members-only** at Riding Warehouse. **The discount code will be provided to your Unit President.** This code is good even for additional savings on clearance items. A few exclusions apply (e.g. oversize items and brands with min. pricing requirements). You may use your discount online or at RW's retail store in San Luis Obispo, CA.

*Please note: This generous discount is intended for BCHC members only and may be revoked or changed if it is shared publicly with nonmembers. Please respect the discount privilege. Happy shopping!*

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- American Cowboy Magazine** –
  - One of the Top 50
- Country & Western Performers of all Time

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