

# The Trailhead News

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Back Country Horsemen of Washington

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Cover Photo: Snowgrass Trail #96 - Goat Rocks Wilderness. From right to left,  
Doc Wesselius, Tom Conner, Bernie Stratton, Pat Woods. Photo by Deb Wesselius

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# SADDLE UP YOUR PONY & COME CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WINERY RIDE!

It's been a long year and we can't think of a better way to say "Goodbye!" to our pandemic blues and "Hello!" to 10 wineries along the trail. Come ride your horse to various Yakima Valley wineries, sampling wines as you go. Transport available for purchases back to camp.

**When - Saturday, October 30, 2021**

**Where - In the Rattle Snake Hills wine-growing area of the Yakima Valley**

**Earlybird registration is \$25 or \$35 if postmarked after October 1**

- Halloween costume contest & raffle prizes
- Wine tasting
- Catered dinners Friday & Saturday night
- Camping available (dry camping - no hookups or amenities)

**Go to [BCHW.org](http://BCHW.org) or email [BCHWwineryride@gmail.com](mailto:BCHWwineryride@gmail.com) for complete details, including registration, costs, schedule**



A fundraiser for Back Country Horsemen of Washington, a non-profit, statewide organization working to ensure public lands remain open for stock use.

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## Back Country Horsemen of Washington expresses its gratitude to those who contribute to BCHW as "Contributing," "Sustaining," and "Patron," members.

The Optional Membership Program is available to all members for renewal or new membership. Members in this program pay only the optional membership fee, which includes the Family or Single Membership. The optional membership information on this page is provided by the BCHW Membership Committee. **If you have any corrections or questions, please e-mail [membership@bchw.org](mailto:membership@bchw.org).**

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### Ken Wilcox BCHW

*in Memoriam*

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Treasurer, at: 253.709.5052 or [tstrk21@msn.com](mailto:tstrk21@msn.com).

### Tax Deduction

Please be informed that membership dues, paid at the state as well as the chapter level, are tax deductible for the calendar year and subsequent years. Deduct your dues as a charitable contribution under authority of IRC Section 170 (assuming the person paying the membership dues itemizes their deductions when computing their federal net taxable income) or as a business deduction under authority of IRC Section 162 (assuming the person paying the membership dues has a "trade or business" and the payment of the membership dues is directly related to this "trade or business"). When making a donation, ask for a receipt.

Your volunteer mileage is also deductible. Make copies of your volunteer hours logs with mileage for your taxes. 

# Prez Says



## Challenges, Opportunities, and Successes!

By Jason Ridlon, BCHW President

As many know, I have a real passion for organizing and performing trail work. I like trail work of all sorts but I think a good crosscut saw logging operation is my favorite. And boy howdy did we hit the jackpot this July when the HotShot Crew in the last hour had to start a phone tree and switch locations of our project due to the Cub Creek Fire in Winthrop. With little to no in-depth planning, the HotShot crew called the Tonasket Ranger District and left a phone message with the recreation manager, Chris Williams. The message was brief and basically said, “We are on the way to Basin Creek #360 to finish a trail started two weeks earlier at the State Wide Work Party.” He returned my call early Saturday morning and said, “Stop by my house in Loomis and grab some certified hay and give me your plans.” Plans being an evacuation safety plan and clear communication with Chris of our camping locations and travel plans during this event. We logged for four days and removed a staggering amount of live pine trees and laying dead trees from the trail, a number too high to count. The trail is now open to stock! We had Challenges, Opportunities, and Successes. “Challenges” – In the face of fire and closures, we developed another plan. “Opportunities” – We built on a relationship within the Tonasket RD and completed a much-needed project. “Successes” – Trail is now open to stock, new skills were learned, and friendships were made. This is the course all

my trail projects have taken this summer: “Challenges, Opportunities, and Success”.

My two-year presidency has seen many of the same “Challenges, Opportunities, and Successes” that my efforts in trail work have seen. I see many “Challenges” facing BCHW in the coming years (many we have been staring at for years and have failed to address as an organization).

“Is now the time to take a new look at the way we conduct our day-to-day business?” We have a committee looking at new ideas to bring forward to the board. The board will have to decide if, how, or when to move forward. The board will direct any changes that might come. This will have its “Challenges” and these challenges will be at many levels of this organization.

I hope members will see the value of the committee’s recommendations, participate, come forth with constructive, open minds to help guide BCHW into a future that continues to service our Mission Statement. Our current path as an organization, one might argue, is sustainable, but, without modernization, it won’t continue growing to satisfy the increasing needs of the services we provide to public lands.

So I ask all members to talk to their directors and really educate themselves at all levels of BCHW and participate in actions that will move BCHW into a sustainable future. 🐾

### BCHW Mission Statement

**BCHW is affiliated with Back Country Horsemen of America (hereinafter “BCHA”) and therefore adopts the BCHA mission statement as follows:** The mission of this organization shall be:

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



# Tony Karniss Saw Class



Robert "Pace" Caldwell, PCTA

Tyson Cross &amp; Angie Panter, USFS

By Tony Karniss, Saw Program and Lori Lennox, BCHW Grays Harbor Director

**T**ony Karniss, one of the Regional Program Instructors and Managers of the BCHW Sawyer Program and a United States Forest Service (USFS) Regional Program Instructor, was invited by the USFS, Mt. Hood National Forest, Hood River Ranger District, to head up a large class of 14 crosscut sawyers to help them to become more skilled C Sawyers and C Sawyer Evaluators for bucking out logs. Organized by Aaron Peterson, Region 6 Saw Program Manager, and Edward "Tyson" Cross, Wilderness Trails and Off Highway Vehicle Manager, the sawyers included not only USFS employees but volunteers from several other user groups: Trail Keepers of Oregon; Siskiyou Mountain Club; Pacific Crest Trail Association; and Northwest Trails Alliance. This was a 5-day, 4-night on-site training work party, which helped to clear a section of the Timberland Trail that leads to the lodge. The job site was a 3.5 mile section of trail from Muddy Fork going towards Yocum Ridge on the Timberline trail that experienced a micro blast during a windstorm in September of last year, which knocked down 486 trees. The crew was able to clean up 89 of them while being taught, certified, and getting lots of experience along the way. Tony trained

the sawyers on more advanced cutting skills and cut log removal. The blowdown area was a great training location, with logs with severe top, bottom, side, end, and torque binds. Most logs had one of the five binds in them plus they had to remove root wads on some.

Casey Hufstader, BCH of Oregon and owner of CH Packstring, took in 7 mules packed with the crews' equipment and food to the staging area, which was approximately 4 miles to Ramona Falls, a campsite in the Mt. Hood Wilderness in the Mt. Hood National Forest.

Tony said that this July 21 – 25th work party was the best collaborative Sawyer training event he had been involved with. And that he, as a professional cutter in the 1970s & 80s, had not seen devastation like this area other than after Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980. But these trees were still green rather than burnt.

Depending on schedules and fire season, Tony plans to go back next spring to continue teaching and working on this trail. This will include a rigging class to deal with large root wads and steep hillsides. To see this work area and what trail crews are up against, there is a wonderful presentation at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f5d657a3b01d48d2b2696be821dc8373> 🏠

## In Memoriam: Robert (Bob) Williams

**I**t is with great sadness that Northeast Chapter reports that our longtime friend and member Bob Williams passed away August 29, 2021. Bob was 83 years young. He was chosen as BCHW 2021 Camp cook in May of 2021 and Jason Ridlon, President, presented him with the award in July. Bob said it was the joy of participation and the fellowship that makes it all worthwhile and they are the "reward".

Bob has been an integral part of Northeast Chapter for many years, previously being affiliated with the Panhandle Chapter, Idaho. Trail work, puncheon building, packing, youth education, and of course, cooking, are just some of the things this very talented and generous man volunteered for. Anyone who spent more than 5 minutes with Bob experienced his sharp wit and great sense of humor. His positive attitude and willingness to step up for any job

made him one of the go-to guys in our Chapter. He was generous with his time, efforts and livestock. There were very few activities where Bob's horses were not involved. He hauled his animals and donated their use at our Kalispel Kids Horsemanship Camp and packed them while on work parties. He shared them if you needed a mount, and attended club rides. He and his wife Lea attended the recent Vicki Gish Memorial Ride, bringing his horse and joining in on the ride and the festivities. He's been our Chapter President and he ran well-organized and timely meetings, never afraid to use his gavel to keep us "on task". He was a great President and an even better person. Bob was always willing to step-in, step-up, and jump-in anywhere we needed help. He was a beloved member of our Chapter and will be sorely missed. RIP Bob 🏠

# 2021 BCHW Awards Program

By Susan Sundahl, BCHW Awards Chairperson

The Awards Program "On the Road Version" has been completed. BCHW President (Jason Ridlon) and I (Susan Sundahl) traveled around our beautiful state in the last few months to deliver and present the 2021 BCHW Awards.

Jason and Heather Ridlon, my husband (Tracy), and I traveled to Sequim to meet with the BCHW Peninsula Chapter to deliver and present awards to Don Gonder for the Desk Jockey Award, Jim Hollatz for the Trail Warrior Award, and Donna Hollatz for the Backbone Award! We enjoyed seeing the Layton Hills Horse Camp, the newly built shelter where the Awards presentation was held and visiting with Chapter members. In addition, we were treated to a delicious dessert potluck!

Next, Jason traveled to the Northeast Chapter on the eastside and delivered an award for Stuart Nieman for the Trail Warrior Award and presented Robert Williams with the Camp Cook Award. Stuart's Chapter presented his award at a later date.

Next on the "On the Road" transport of awards, Jason and I traveled to Washougal on the Westside to the Mt. St. Helens Chapter for a very emotional presentation for the Lifetime Achievement Award to Dan and Karen Stinebeck. There wasn't a dry eye in the house when the nominations letters were read!! We had a great time sharing pizza and visiting with Chapter members.

We continued our journey that weekend northbound on I-5 to my house in Olalla for a potluck and presented Olympic Chapter member Harold Wiese with the Lopper Award and Tawnya Caldwell with the Desk Jockey Award. That was a lot of miles to drive but well worth the trip for these dedicated volunteers.

Jason presented the President's Diamond Awards to Kathy Young and Tina Short during different work efforts within the Washington wilderness. Pictures were taken at the June Director's Meeting.



Next were the Cinch Awards, which the BCHW Directors choose. These were awarded at the first in-person Director's Meeting since the beginning of the Pandemic shutdown. Jason and I presented those awards to Dana Chambers and Ken Carmichael. It was great to see everyone all together In-person again.

The final road trip was to Tenino on the westside to the Scatter Creek Riders. I presented Laura Dell with the Backbone Award! My cohort, Debbie Ross, and I were rewarded with Root Beer floats and a fresh box of raspberries for the journey. Yum!

Thank you for your patience, hospitality, and, most of all, the hard work that ALL our volunteers give to BCHW each year!

I would, once again, like to thank all the Chapters and businesses that donated to the 2021 Awards Program.

Now we are ready to start all over again. Yes, get your nominations in for the 2022 Awards that will be awarded at our next BCHW Rendezvous in March of 2022. Start thinking and jotting down notes about who you feel are those special people in your Chapter who go the extra mile! I am more than happy to assist you with writing those nominations. Feel free to reach out to me for any help. The forms are located on the BCHW website under Programs/Awards. Happy Trails 🐾





You shop. Amazon gives.

**Be sure to shop at Amazon Smile with Back Country Horsemen of Washington as your charity of choice!**

# Washington State Parks Commission Meeting

By Ken Carmichael

The Washington State Parks held its periodic Commission Meeting in Spokane the week of July 12. This meeting is rotated around the state.

The Governor appoints the seven State Park Commissioners to set policy for about 100 state parks. Peter Mayer is the new Director. There are several new Commissioners.

The meetings consisted of a day-long tour of Mt. Spokane, a full-day working session, a BBQ dinner with area stakeholders at Riverside State Park, the formal meeting, and then several visited the Fisk Property on Lake Spokane.

I attended the two-day-long sessions and was invited to the dinner. This gave me several opportunities to talk individually with each Commissioner and key staff members. In addition, I was able to address the Commission during the meeting formally. While I wear several hats as I work with the two large parks, it is well understood that I represent Back Country Horsemen.



The meetings included topics such as:

- Commission Reports
- Grant process
- Boating Program Update
- Legislative Proposals and Update
- Financial Update
- Spokane Area Parks Overview
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- No Child Left Inside
- Palouse to Cascade Trail update
- Major Projects Update
- Public Comments

I always appreciate the opportunity to attend these meetings. It puts the park system in perspective, puts a face with the names; and I have a chance to network with the staff and other stakeholders. While the Commission must be concerned about all of the parks, it is very evident that the Inland Northeast Area provides many challenges with its diverse recreation and two largest parks in the system.

The time spent at the meetings is well worth the effort. 🐾

## Ponderosa BCH Poker Ride 2021

By Ken Carmichael

For 2021, the Ponderosa chapter changed from a scavenger hunt to a poker ride. We also turned it into a two-day event at Riverside State Park.

BCH was instrumental in developing the equestrian area in the park. This included an obstacle course. This year we did some major repairs and added new obstacles. We felt that this deserved some promotion and developed an open house for Saturday, July 10.

On Saturday, we had people at the obstacles to assist participants and give away prizes. While the event was free, we included a very successful tack sale.

Many people stayed overnight in the equestrian campground to participate in the poker ride on Sunday.

There was some hot weather but that did not deter 91 riders and 25 volunteers from enjoying a nice day around horses. Besides the poker ride itself, we had many raffle items, continued the tack sale, and sold many items at the chapter store including

BCHW calendars, Riverside State Park maps, poker ride T-shirts, and BCH clothing. The local SCOPE unit (Spokane Community Oriented Effort) volunteered as our outriders.

Riders enjoyed playing a “game of skill” to determine the best and worst hands. Several riders were playing more than one hand. The winning poker hand, won by Sandi Lunceford, was four 8s. Second place, won by Billie Steckler, was four 4s. The worst hand was held by Erica Winter. Terri Kneeland guessed the closest to the number of items in the gallon jar. There were 326 and she guessed 325.

The funds will help further the BCH mission of keeping trails open.

Thank you to everyone who helped at and before the rides. All of us coming together makes it all possible. We will have discussions about what we want to do next. 🍷

# What I Learned My First Year on the 2021 HotShot Mission

PHOTOS BY HELEN DEAN



*Rob DeBoer and Bruce Foreman at camp before we leave for the cut line. Basin Creek Trail.*

By Helen Dean

The last night at the trailhead, after we had successfully opened up Basin Creek Trail, Tom Janes (BCHW Independents Director) asked me what I felt was the most important thing I had learned. I couldn't answer him as the entire experience was such a huge learning curve for me that I wasn't able even to articulate it in a few sentences. So when Tina Short (BCHW Secretary) asked me to write a blurb for Trailhead News, I kind of leaped at the chance. Here's what I learned.

I didn't know the definition of a Wilderness Area until Jason Ridlon (BCHW President and Special Projects Coordinator) told me about the Wilderness Act of 1964. A Wilderness Area is land that has been historically minimally impacted by humankind and preserved for future generations. So, when I got home, I immediately started researching it. It's a pretty interesting reading (although maybe not just before bedtime).

*continued on page 9*



PHOTOS BY HELEN DEAN

*Trevor Stewart and Jason Ridlon. Basin Creek Trail, yes that is the tread they are standing on.*

## What I Learned My First Year on the 2021 HotShot Mission

*continued from page 8*

But, at the moment, it gave new meaning to what the HotShot crew was trying to accomplish.

Pasayton is a French word and roughly translates to “Country of the Devil.” I’m not sure why they mislabeled this incredibly beautiful country unless they attempted to clear the trail for five days. Every morning when we would get to the cut line, and I would gape at the number of downed trees and debris camouflaging the trail, there was a silent pessimistic chant in my head telling me, “It’ll never work.” But, of course, I never voiced my misgivings as I was a total newbie, and everyone else just knelt and started sawing.

The crisscross of fallen logs and new growth was astounding and, at one point, Rob DeBoer (BCHW Vice President) took his bright orange neck saver off his helmet and tied it to a tree up a steep hillside, and said, “The trail is there, aim for that.” I looked down and couldn’t see a trail, but, as I had total faith in him, I dutifully started cutting and lopping, and the tread magically appeared. Unbelievable!

My body ached, I missed fresh fruit, and I was covered in ash and dust from head to toe. However, every night at camp, when I looked at the crew, I’d feel this overwhelming connection to them as we reconstructed our packets of freeze-dried food (think summer camp but multiply exponentially). They were all so supportive and funny, and I’m in awe of all of them, but I do have to give a special shout-out to Rob DeBoer. He noticed my mule’s shoe was coming off and, in his laidback, nonchalant, capable way, pulled out his tools from his Mary Poppins Magical Packs and reset the shoe.

My animals seemed to accept the monotony of their day with little grumbling, and I was so proud of them. I have so much more faith in their abilities than I did before.

PHOTOS BY HELEN DEAN



*Trevor Stewart, Mary McHugh, Jason Ridlon and Ed Letcher.*

I remember thinking and mentioning after the SWWP (Statewide Work Party) why in the freaking heck are we not using chainsaws to open up these trails that have been impassable for years. Still, I felt a deeper connection to the meaning of the wilderness mission of less mechanization after my experience on the HotShot crew. I get it now (or at least more than I had ??). The work was so mindlessly fulfilling and something so totally out of my wheelhouse. I can’t emphasize enough how important it felt. I’ll never forget the experience, and I’m dying to do it again.

Shout out to the crew who I had the pleasure to work with: Jason Ridlon, Rob DeBoer, Ed Letcher, Mary McHugh, Bruce Foreman, and Trevor Stewart 🍀

## My Horse and Me

By Ken Carmichael

**D**uring May and June, the Ponderosa BCH sponsored a seminar, “My Horse and Me, Learning to Care for and Enjoy My new Best Friend”.

This series of six evening seminars was designed for families that are considering getting a horse or recently purchased one.

### The classes included:

- Buying Your First Horse
- Housing a Horse
- Equipment, Tack and Tools
- Nutrition and Health Care
- Types of Equestrian Disciplines
- Farrier
- Traveling with Your Horse

The classes included sharing our experiences, handouts, and guest speakers. We emphasized safety throughout the program. We met at the picnic tables in the Riverside State Park Equestrian Area so they could experience the facilities that BCH built. For the last meeting, we met at our house to share what we have for fences, barn, trailer, and general facilities.

All the students were very involved and asked many questions. We all had a good time. Patti and I enjoyed putting together information and sharing it with the group.

For BCH to grow and prosper, we must engage new and young members. Part of this process is exposing horsemen, and potential horsemen, to our mission and all that BCH has to offer. Two of our students joined BCH. 🍀

## “The Finishers” HotShot 2021 Team



2021 HotShot Crew

By Tina Short BCHW Independent Member

A small team of hardy BCHW HotShot volunteers met up at the Cathedral Driveway/Chewuch Trailhead on Saturday, July 17th, about 25 miles outside of Loomis, Washington. The small group of volunteers would be split up to limit stock numbers in the two Pasayten Wilderness camp areas and focus our efforts on a couple of missions. At the main safety meeting, our members were provided further details about our mission from Jason Ridlon (HotShot Coordinator). Our group would be tasked with the upper logout of Basin Creek Trail #360, but first, we would need to log out the section of trail between Topaz Mountain and Sunny Pass. This new effort would benefit Darwood Outfitters out of Carlton, Washington, their crew, and clients and hikers who enjoy this area.

We would carry two long crosscut saws (5 and 6 feet long), a couple of saddle saws, multiple Silky saws and loppers, and two high-lift jacks (these are like adding two people to your team). We packed and loaded our stock early on Sunday to head up Windy Creek Trail #362. Our team split up to ensure each packer had an outrider to support them. The views were outstanding at the top of Windy Peak. It is a steep climb up the last bit.

After navigating down the trail towards Horseshoe Basin, we identified a location that would provide grazing and water for our camp around noon that day. As soon as we dropped packs and minimally set up a base camp, we set out on cutting logs, brushing, and removing jack pine growing into the trail corridor. By late afternoon, the team decided to scout the remaining section up to the Boundary Trail intersection. The log count was about 26 logs and heavy brushing in some areas.

On Monday, the team started back up that section with the goal

of having the trail logged, and the corridor widened to the intersection by noon. We attained our goal (that is how we got the name “The Finishers”). During the morning, we met Steve Darwood, his staff, and clients coming down the trail. We visited with him later on Monday as they rode through the sections of the trail we cleared. His clients indicated they didn’t know that teams like this opened the trails back to standards that are more easily navigated.

Monday afternoon had the “Finishers” moving back up the trail towards Topaz Mountain and Basin Creek. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were all focused on the mission to logout Basin Creek. On some of these days, we had three crosscuts running at all times. We even would have two saws with four people on the same log! The high level of communication shared among the team provided us a safe mission. You could clearly hear many times, “I got the saw! Bring the highlift! Watch that tree! Do you have any water bottles?” Each of us were surveying for things that might cause us or our stock harm (for example, wind, trees that stock were tied to, logs that were pinned under other trees, dehydration, etc.). Out in the Wilderness, one mistake can be fatal. Having a team that has your back is everything! Trust is key to the success of work like ours.

The “Finishers” team consisted of Beau LaCrosse, Leonard and Sherri Wright, Tom Janes, Lori Hauser, and Tina Short. Sherri came up with the name of our little team this year. Despite the smoke (that at times made the middle of the afternoon dark like evening), you could hear songs being belted out for the hills to enjoy. It was fun to see how many songs that we knew and could sing together. In addition, our team enjoyed sharing meals, stories, laughter, and a little whiskey! I would ride and work with these folks any day and look forward to the next work party! 🌲

# 2021 Statewide Work Party Recap



By Jason Ridlon and Tina Short

Our 2021 BCHW Statewide Work Party was held June 30-July 5. Volunteers had safety meetings on the evening of June 30th. Folks traveled home on July 5th. The location was the Pasayten Wilderness around 20 to 25 miles out of Loomis, Washington.

The three camps were located at Middle Fork, Long Swamp, and Cathedral Driveway Trailhead. Volunteers were assigned camps prior to arrival.

This year's event was a challenging one. Heat, long distances to travel across the state by many of our volunteers, three camps, and our cooks delivering meals to two of the camps made for several challenges. The distance between the cook's

camp and the farthest camp was around 8 miles.

Predictions of high temperatures caused some concern by some volunteers, but we still had a great turnout to work on trails in need of maintenance. Safety meetings reinforced focus on ensuring volunteers' hydration levels and taking more breaks as needed during the day. BCHW volunteers' spirits remained high despite the challenges thrown at them.

The Tonasket Ranger District was extremely helpful in planning this complicated effort. Chris Williams was very responsive to all the groundwork needed to be done prior to the event happening.

*continued on page 12*

## BCHW Membership Announcement

BCHW Memberships Expired on Dec. 31, 2020. Please go to [BCHW.org](http://BCHW.org) and click on the "Members/join/renew" tab. You can take care of things online or print off a paper application for specific chapters. If you have any questions, issues or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Dana Chambers, your State Membership Chair at [membership.bchw@gmail.com](mailto:membership.bchw@gmail.com) or call 206-498-6952, She is there for you!!

### PRICING FOR OUR MEMBERSHIPS

*In Addition To Chapter Dues*

Single .....	\$41.00
Family .....	\$54.00
Contributing .....	\$75.00
Sustaining .....	\$125.00
Patron .....	\$250.00
Benefactor .....	\$500.00
Lifetime (Single) .....	\$1200.00

## 2021 Statewide Work Party Recap

*continued from page 11*

### The below trails were concentrated on:

Middle Fork Trail #387 – Our volunteers found the trail was cut out far too narrow in many places. In several places, crews re-cut logs to allow for safe passage of stock.

Trail #342 heading to Deer Park was cut to width within 1/2 mile of the intersection of the #341 trail coming out of 14 Mile. This trail had a large log load in areas. In the future, the trail needs new growing pine trees cut back. Then this trail would be a pretty decent route for all users.

Trail #343 heading to Two Bears was logged out about a 1/2 mile starting from the Middle Fork.

Trail #342 – Out of Long Swamp was cut out clean to stock standards to the intersection of the #342 at Two Bears. A re-con expedition was made to Topaz Mountain and the trail is passable with only a few easy step overs and ride arounds. This trail had a large log load with several trees cut far too narrow and crews had to re-cut logs to allow for safe passage of stock.

Trail #362 Windy Creek is cut out to stock width to Windy Peak. Future work to be addressed would be the Jack Pine needing to be removed to widen the corridor. There are a few places that need to be widened to give pack stock additional room.

#510.1 is cut out to #510 Chewach River Trail then up to Basin Creek #360.

#360 Basin Creek was a focus due to a promise made to past President Trygve Culp back in 2015. One of his wishes was to replace the old puncheon over Basin Creek. To make this effort happen, wood planks and materials were packed in by longtime local Tonasket volunteer Mike Buchert, his nephew Jesse Todd, and Mary McHugh. Part of the crew worked two days on the bridge. The remaining crew assigned to this trail had a tough run at the log out due to the length of time since it had been maintained. Log load was punishing heavy and the trail was hard to find on the last day. The before and after photos indicate a trail corridor brought back to standard. All pine trees were removed, the new bridge built, and all logs were removed to stock width



*Basin Creek corridor.*

or more up to within the remaining 1.5 miles.

As always, we have volunteers who don't have horses or need duties that meet their physical requirements. They are true blessings to the work crews as they take on missions that benefit all users to our trails. These folks are our "grounds crews". They did another amazing job this year. All restrooms at trailheads to 14 Mile received new paint. Several picnic tables received a fresh coat of paint. The bridge at 14 Mile received a new coat of oil.

Lastly, we want to mention our cook crew. We had a new lead cook in our SWWP kitchen! Ranae Stevens and her volunteers had the task to deliver lunches and dinners to two camps besides managing their main camp. July 4th brought everyone together for the last dinner to celebrate the end of the event and to also allow volunteers to enjoy all the many delicious dishes that didn't have to be delivered in a to-go-box.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered this year at the 2021 SWWP. For those interested, keep a lookout for information in 2022! 🌱

Add Back Country Horsemen of Washington to your awards account. See the Donate page at BCHW.org for more information.



*Basin Creek bridge.*



# Regional Work Party Keenes Horse Camp



*Tony Karniss with packer Slim.*



*Crew leader Gary Zink with wilderness crew.*

By "Doc" Wesselius

Back Country Horsemen – Lewis County Chapter conducted a three-day work party at Keenes Horse Camp. It was a collaborative effort of several organizations that are advocates of recreational trails. In addition to volunteers from eight Back Country Horsemen chapters, Tony Karniss organized Washington Trails Association, Pacific Crest Trail Association, and Northwest Motorcycle Association members to clear and repair trails near the camp. Crew leader Leonard Wright directed non-wilderness trail crews that logged out and brushed back trails that intersect the horse camp. Gary Zink organized a wilderness trail crew that repaired the Muddy Meadow Trail, a feeder trail to the Pacific Crest Trail.

Keenes Horse Camp (pronounced KEY-ness) was named to honor Keenes Meade, a long-time USFS packer. The camp is located southeast of Packwood on the northern edge of the Mount Adams Wilderness. A variety of non-wilderness trails loop from the camp offer rivers, meadows, and mountain scenery. The spectacular Muddy Meadows/Killen Creek wilderness loop trail is accessed from the camp.

It took Tony two years to prearrange the regional work party headquartered from the horse camp. Recreational Trails Program Grant (18-2380) from the federal Recreation and Conservation Office was first obtained to finance the multifaceted work party. A requirement for the grant necessitates a volunteer labor match, based on hourly work values that are accumulated throughout the project. Deb Wesselius kept daily records for each volunteer's hourly work values and tabulated them at the project's completion. These records were submitted to the BCHW Grant Administrator for reimburse-

ment of expenses. Thirty-two volunteers for the project contributed \$24,964 labor match.

Every small aspect must be addressed in order to make a project of this magnitude a success. After the necessary trail tools for the project were selected and put in order, the camp particulars were addressed. Food purchases for the large assembly of volunteers were a huge undertaking and coordi-

*continued on page 14*



*Brushing back the trail corridor.*

## Regional Work Party, Keenes Horse Camp

*continued from page 13*

nated with the cooks' menus. A cadre of cooks, led by Anna and Bill Neal, were arranged to prepare and serve three meals a day for the volunteers. Rising early in the morning, the cooks had breakfast ready for the crews and then sent them off to their worksites with a lunch. During the day, mounted packers were organized to deliver liquids to the remote worksites where trail workers sweltered in the heat. In the evening everyone looked forward to arriving back at camp and partaking in a hearty meal plus cool liquid refreshments.

Some volunteers camped in the day-use area of the horse camp. Restroom facilities were arranged to be delivered to the encampment and also set up in the main campground. A portable shower was set up for the tenters, complete with a device to manufacture hot water. A metal sink with a large water tank was constructed for the cooks – they had to boil their hot water. A generator powered a freezer to preserve perishable foodstuff and keep ice.

Ten days before the commencement of the work party each trail project was identified and surveyed before solutions for corrections were determined. Trail maintenance adhered to USFS standards and safety regulations. Gary reported his wilderness crew was involved in 2.9 miles of trail maintenance that included tread work (removing rocks and roots), removing deep washed-out steps, cleaning out drain dips, and installing a large climbing turn at a switchback. An 8' by 10' trail corridor was created with the removal of small trail-side trees and brush (huckleberries). A mounted trail clearing team first logged out the non-wilderness trails radiating from the horse camp. Leonard's crews then conducted maintenance on three trails, where mechanical tools can be used, creating standard corridors free of encroaching trees and brush.

When arrangements were finalized the first morning, work crews were consigned after a safety meeting. Thereafter the daily work schedule was briefed each morning and



*Reestablishing the trail corridor.*

appropriate crews were reallocated to complete a project or start another. In addition to the wilderness trail repairs, the work party cleared and maintained 8 miles of trails. At the last evening gathering, the volunteers thanked Tony for his organization and guidance of a successful work party and gave resounding applause to the kitchen crew.

The Keenes Horse Camp Regional Work Party is an example of how to conduct trail maintenance with the involvement and cooperation of several trail advocacy organizations. A project of this magnitude demonstrates the necessity for a large workforce to keep neglected trail systems open for future generations. 🌱

## Content Deadline for the November/December 2021 Printed Newsletter is October 1st

Cover Photos can be sent anytime, 8x10 Vertical orientation is best (300 dpi).

**You can send articles, photos and calendar of events early!**

Please email your articles (700 word maximum) and 3 or 4 photos with caption and photo byline to [thn@bchw.org](mailto:thn@bchw.org) as soon as possible.

**ATTENTION!**

# Calvary Bible School



By Ken Carmichael

The Calvary Bible School had a four-day session that used a western theme. Irene Ewing asked if I could bring about 10 horses for the kids to pet. This was in conjunction with other equestrian activities. Later she asked if I could provide a rider dressed out as an old-time, working cowboy. I said I thought this could be done.

This project involved calling on the Ponderosa BCH chapter then calling the Northeast chapter and SCOPE. Together we put together 13 horses, including the minis. Our own Craig Volosing was the resident cowboy. He fit the part perfectly.

On July 27, we gathered in the old Fairwood Shopping Mall parking lot. Besides our group, there was a mini pulling a cart and people showing the kids how to use a lariat.

The 150 kids were divided into 4 groups. Craig kept the kids' attention showing them a good working horse and talking about being a cowboy.

Our group of 13 horses were in line patiently letting the kids pat them on the side, shoulders, neck, and face as they asked questions. They showed a lot of interest in the steel shoes. For many of them it was the first time to see a horse up close and personal. The kids enjoyed moving from one horse to the other and learning about each one. You have not seen a group of better-behaved horses. They seemed to know what was expected of them.

On this day equestrians got some good press with the 5 to 8-year-old crowd. Some expressed an interest in owning horses. There is the future of BCH. 🌱



# Bees!! Last Horse In Line

By Leah Smith

I recently returned from a camping trip with a group of friends at Camp Wilkerson, near Rainier, Oregon. It's a beautiful camp with an abundance of shade for warm days. We enjoyed riding the forested trails and roads.

On Tuesday, after about a mile, we encountered what I feel is the most dreaded and dangerous challenge to anyone riding a horse.....BEES!!! I was last in a line of seven horses. By the time the last few horses approached, the bees were really angry and agitated! I've encountered bees on my horse, Cassie, a few times over the years. Her usual reaction is to stand, stomp, and try to bite the painful pests, while I kick and push to get her to move forward.

This time, her response was different. I don't know why. Perhaps she felt her escape route was blocked by the other horses on the trail? Perhaps she decided her prior responses had been futile at escaping the bees? Whatever the reason, in the time it takes a bee to buzz, she dashed off the trail, plowing into the forest with thick and heavy underbrush! She bounded and leaped through the gnarly undergrowth as she went blindly careening downhill in her desperate attempt to escape! After two or three leaps through the brush, something caught and I felt the strap of my camera case briefly tug at my neck and then slide off when the strap broke. My best camera is now a home for bugs!

What seemed like an eternity finally came to a halt when Cassie stopped. Amazed I was still in the saddle, I looked up the hill before me. The ascent back to the trail was a tangle of bushes and branches with a downed log hidden in the heavy growth that we needed to navigate. Urging her forward, we



*Bee sting on horse.*

slowly made our way up the hill. I've pushed my horse through brush and bushes before, but nothing quite so extreme. Thankfully, we reached the trail safely.

Once reunited with my friends, we kept our horses moving as stray bees continued to follow. After we felt we were past the danger, I asked to stop for a minute to catch my breath. During the rugged descent, I got what I can only describe as whiplash, or something like it, because I wrenched my upper back. I was in pain with small spasms that almost took my breath away. Soon, I realized the pain was too severe to continue riding for much longer.

After checking my GPS and seeing a short way back to camp, I announced I was riding back but encouraged the others to continue on. Mickie and Deb would not hear of it and insisted on escorting me back to camp. I can be stubbornly independent and resisted

their offer. But I must admit, it was a big comfort to have them with me and I'm deeply grateful!!! Then they sat me down; unsaddling my horse and took care of her needs. Once they felt I was settled, they left to ride more.

That evening, thanks to medication and rest, I was feeling a bit better. Using my GPS to locate the forest roads, Cindy's husband, Kelly, drove me to the section of the trail with the bees. It was a short hike. We had hoped to "zap" the nest and find my camera. We were unsuccessful at both.

*continued on page 17*

**Our newsletter (Trailhead News) will be electronic to all members in 2021, with the exception of the May-June and Sept-Oct issues, which will be printed and mailed out to all memberships. This is due to the unforeseen reduction in revenue in 2020.**

**Starting in January 2021, please go to [bchw.org](http://bchw.org), Trailhead News, to view your publications.**

**This decision was not made lightly, and we are sorry for any inconvenience it may cause.**

**As always, please continue to send all articles and/or event announcements to: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com).**

## Bees!! Last Horse in Line

*continued from page 16*

The next morning, Sue, Cathie, and Deb came over to help pack up my gear and empty my muck bucket so that I didn't have to stress my back before driving home. Again I resisted, but was so thankful they insisted! I'm truly blessed with caring friends!!

All my pictures are on my lost camera so I only have inferior pictures using my phone showing two huge welts on my horse! I had to pull the stinger from the neck welt!

I've lost a camera and I'll be in discomfort for a while, but the special memory of this trip was the camaraderie of good friends and how they pitched in to help me in my time of need. Thank You!! To riders everywhere, BEE Careful. 🐝



*Bee sting on horse.*

## What's up with the 20th Anniversary Winery Ride?

By Barbara Thomas, BCHW Mt. St. Helens Chapter

**J**ust about everything! We already have over 150 riders registered and over a quarter of our camp sites are taken. This is way ahead of the 2019 figures, where most participants didn't register until mid-September of 2019. We hate to think we may have to turn away those procrastinators but it might come to that this year if things keep going the way they are now.

We also have some exciting changes this year. We have a new winery, Whitman Hill winery, and they will also have some craft beer for sale at their location. Another returning winery, Silver Lake, has added a distillery to their menu which includes the opportunity to try some samples. This should be interesting.

Three of the wineries on the route are adding additional tie up's, which will abate some of the overcrowding and add some safety for our riders, volunteers, and the mounts.

At the September Director's Meeting, we will be handing out some flyers so keep helping us spread the word. If you want an electronic form of the flyer, shoot an email to [bchwwineryride@gmail.com](mailto:bchwwineryride@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing many of you there on October 30th, or before if you have signed up as volunteers to help. If you still want to volunteer, email Deb Wesselius [wesselius@zimbracloud.com](mailto:wesselius@zimbracloud.com). 🐾

## Wednesday in the Woods

By Ken Carmichael

**E**ach summer (except last year) the Riverside State Park Foundation, in cooperation with the REI store, puts on a series of seminars in the park on Wednesday evenings for the public. On several occasions, BCH has participated.

This year we presented a class on "Trail Etiquette". It is for the general public (not horsemen) on how they can make a difference in the recreational outdoor spaces. We had stick horses, bicycle helmets, and walking sticks, including a stuffed dog, so that the audience could participate. We used Velcro to create and discuss the Yield Triangle. They learned how to respectfully share our trail system with all user groups to promote a safe and enjoyable recreation experience.

At the same event the park, staff presented the seven principles of Leave No Trace.

Handouts included the Front Country Leave No Trace brochure, Trail Etiquette notes prepared by Ponderosa BCH, and the

BCHW brochure. The event is held at the Bowl and Pitcher campground and is free to the public.

### Other weekly topics include:

- Hoot Show – Birds of Prey
- Moose, Cougars, and Bears
- Cycling Adventures
- Flora and Fauna in the Park
- Hiking in the Inland Northwest

In the past, I have taken horses into the campground to expose participants to our best friends and companions. They thoroughly enjoy getting up close to the horses.

Between Riverside and Mt. Spokane State Parks, we have 207 miles of trails, most of which we share with bicyclists and hikers. There are over 20,000 acres. 🐾



The Trailhead News BCHW  
P.O. Box 1132  
Ellensburg, WA 98926-1132

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## FREE Listing on BCHW Chapter Events Calendar

Be sure to: • Contact the ride host to check for updates on the event.

• Check to see if dogs are welcome.

Note: The BCHW Trailhead News represents as many events as possible; however, it makes no guarantees an event will be published. The calendar of events is subject to change. Please check with ride contact for most updated information. Please send calendar corrections to: [bchw@wamedia.com](mailto:bchw@wamedia.com).

### 3rd QTR BCHW Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, September 18, 2021  
Kittitas Valley Event Center  
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA  
BCHW President Jason Ridlon  
[president@bchw.org](mailto:president@bchw.org) • 509.699.9927

### 20th Anniversary Winery Ride

Saturday, October 30, 2021  
Rattlesnake Hills wine growing area of the  
Yakima Valley  
Earlybird registration by September 30th:  
\$25  
Register after October 1st: \$35  
Halloween costume contest & Raffle Prizes  
Wine tasting  
Catered dinners Friday & Saturday night  
Camping avail (*dry camping -  
no hookups or amenities*)  
Go to [BCHW.org](http://BCHW.org) or  
email [BCHWwineryride@gmail.com](mailto:BCHWwineryride@gmail.com)

### 4th QTR BCHW Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, December 4, 2021  
Kittitas Valley Event Center  
901 E 7th Ave, Ellensburg, WA  
BCHW President Jason Ridlon  
[president@bchw.org](mailto:president@bchw.org) • 509.699.9927



### Mark Your Calendars for the Fee-Free Days!

Saturday, Sept. 25 — National Public Lands Day  
Thursday, Nov. 11 — Veterans Day  
Friday, Nov. 26 — Autumn free day