

2014 President's Report
Squaw Butte Chapter of Back Country Horsemen
Retiring President Kay Ryan

Volunteering to serve as the Squaw Butte BCH interim President for 2014 gave me an even greater appreciation of the steadfast folks who work behind the scenes to keep Back Country Horsemen a viable organization. Thanks to everyone who took offices, showed up to meetings, volunteered (or had their arms twisted) to chair or be on committees, or added work to their fun trips in the back country. Squaw Butte holds regular chapter meetings on the first Thursday of each month and even if there is a lack of a quorum, we still like to get together and tell stories.

January began by pulling a lot of information from past years and synthesizing that information into a President's Handbook, the only way I could know when, where and what I was supposed to do. Hopefully this will be a good reference for future presidents. January is traditionally the planning month and started with the annual board of directors/committee meeting where a plan of action for the year was outlined and tentative dates set for the year. Three Letters of Support were generated for IDPR grants including a commitment of man hours with pack stock.

Mid-February found six members out at Celebration Park for a fun ride, a little tune up for the horses and riders and a chance to pick up some trash; a great way to shake off the winter blues and get some fresh air. A booth was manned jointly with the Treasure Valley BCH group at the Idaho Sportsman's Show in late February.

The State Board meeting and convention was attended in March in Bonners Ferry. Our members who attended had a great time and got to see the north end of the state. A fun ride was held at Succor Creek.

April was filled with another fun ride and BBQ at Wilson Creek and members were introduced to the China Ditch. The Horse Expo booth was jointly manned by Squaw Butte and Treasure Valley with Treasure Valley taking the lead. The Chapter was saddened by the passing of Verl Law, one of Squaw Butte's founding members.

With weather improving in May, a two day Back Country Skills Clinic was held to introduce BCH to the Gem/Boise 4-H. An information day featuring a presentation by a local veterinarian as held at the Gem County Fair Grounds on the first day. The second day included a trail ride and BBQ where the kids got the chance to ride outside an arena. Some kids were a little nervous but the most fun was seeing our members sporting new headgear as all 4-H kids are required to wear helmets and our members followed along. Other May events included the Highway 52 spring roadside cleanup, a trail marking and scouting trip to the North Fork of the Owyhee/Currant Creek conducted by BLM and the annual yard sale where \$1,600 was made and leftover items were donated to the Idaho Youth Ranch.

June saw a small group of Squaw Butte members participating in National Trails Day by picking up 13 bags of trash along the Snake River at Steck Park near Weiser. Packing out old fence for BLM in the Owyhee/Currant Creek area, scheduled for late June, was cancelled and rescheduled for 2015.

Beginning packers and long-time packers joined together for a seven day fun pack trip in the Sawtooth Wilderness in July, cutting over 50 trees only when there was no other way around. In August, members met at Kennally Creek and provided a mini packing clinic for USFS personnel from McCall. Later in the month, the USFS requested clearing of the Middle Fork of the Payette River or as we call it, The Trail to Nowhere. After about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile the trail simply disappeared. Trail exploration continued.

Members explored Buck's Basin near Council Mountain in September with the idea of clearing some deadfall and redefining a faint trail. State Directors attended the September board meeting and welcomed two new chapters to BCHI.

At the October meeting, Alayne Bickle presented her Firewise for Horse Properties program giving valuable tips about keeping livestock and buildings safe from wildfires. Four bags of trash were picked up during the fall highway cleanup and two fun rides completed the month, the Succor Creek Power Line loop ride and Wilson Corral Trailhead ride.

The year ended with election of new officers and the Christmas party. Two members underwent knee replacement surgery and activities for the new year are in the works.