

Calling All Horse People

by Don Dyer

There are many horse people in the Spokane area and not everyone uses their horses for the same purpose. I am including mule people, because we all are using equine animals. Some of you pull wagons, compete in rodeos or show your animals in the arena. Today I will mainly be addressing the trail rider because I assume all of you at some point like to take your horses out for a nice day ride to see some beautiful Washington or North Idaho countryside. We

have a lot of scenery to see.

If you are a trail rider you may have problems finding someone to ride with, or finding a trail to ride on. You may have ridden all the trails you know so many times that you are bored with them and would like to find someplace else to go, but do not have any ideas where there are other trails. I have a solution.

First, let me explain that we have a growing

problem in the state and the nation as a whole. Budgets are being cut, trails are not being maintained, and services are not being rendered for trail work as we have been accustomed to over the years. This is not going to change in the near future. If you want to have trails to ride on it will be up to volunteers to keep them open.

In the State of Washington an organization exists called Back Country Horsemen of Washington. Within that

group there are 33 chapters, with about 3200 members dedicated to your right to use stock for recreational purposes. They do this through their labor and through legislative action by working with government agencies and lobbying the state and federal government. In the past BCHW has donated close to a million dollars in free labor to the State of Washington, Bureau of Land Management and national forests in various parts of the State of Washington alone. This goes a long way when lobbying the state legislators and congress

for funding for future projects to keep our state parks, BLM lands and national forests open for our enjoyment.

In the Spokane area there are three Back Country Horsemen chapters: The Northeast Chapter in the Deer Park area, the Inland Empire Chapter and The Ponderosa Chapter. Ponderosa is the newest chapter. All are dedicated to the mission of keeping trails open for your use.

If you are interested in becoming involved go to BCHW.org for contact information on any

chapter in the State of Washington except the Ponderosa Chapter. This latter group does not yet have a web site, but you can email me at PonderosaBCH@aol.com for any information about the Ponderosa Chapter.

I hope to see you on the trail in the near future. Remember, when you reach the end of your rope tie a knot in it and hang on.



Photos courtesy Shelly Stevens, Colville, WA



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