



PONDEROSA



Back Country Horsemen of Washington
"Educate, Advocate, and Move Dirt!"

Website: PBCHW.COM

June 2022



I LIKE BEING
A PERSON TO
WHOM A
HORSE
MATTERS.

Baxter Black

CALENDAR

***All events subject to change;
Watch facebook and emails.***

***June 1- Ground Work Fun
Day (contact Carol Klar for
info)***

***June 7- PBCH General
Meeting; Knotty Girls and
Rope Halters @RSP***

***June 12- PBCH Riverside
Member Ride***

June 28-PBCH Board

***July 9- Mica Peak Member
Ride***

July 12- PBCH Meeting

***July 26- PBCH Meeting,
Potluck, and Boating***

President's Report
By Tom Birge

Thanks to all who volunteered at the Poker Ride! It was very successful and we cleared about \$4000. We have heard a lot of good feedback about the ride.

I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting on June 7, where Knotty Girls will be telling us about rope halters.

On June 12, Carol Klar will be leading a member ride out of Pine Bluff Trailhead. This is a change of date and location in order to avoid Father's Day, and due to limited parking at the original planned location. Watch for more information from Carol Klar.

At the board meeting we discussed potential work parties, and more information will be coming out on the projects. We will also be querying the members on any projects they have been thinking of.

Summer is right around the corner, and I hope everyone is getting out to ride!

Lake Party in July

By Ken Carmichael

To change things up a bit PBCH will have a lake party. This is to show that we all have faith that the weather will improve.

On Tuesday, July 26 at 6:00 pm we will meet on Lake Spokane for a potluck and lake and lawn fun. Everyone can take their choice of boating, water skiing, kayaking, swimming, floating, several lawn games or just sitting in the shade visiting.

What should you bring? Your favorite potluck and swimsuit and towel for water activities. Everything else is there.

We will meet at my sister's home at 17820 N West Shore Rd.

Directions: From Highway 291 turn onto Charles Rd and cross over the Spokane River. Go approximately 4 miles to West Shore Road and turn right. As you approach West Shore Road there will be guard rails on both sides of the road and there is a fire station on that corner. Go down the hill on West Shore and along the waterfront until reaching the house. It is the next house after a vacant lot. Walk around the house to the lake side.

If you have questions or need further directions please call me at 509-466-2225. On the day of the event you may be able to reach me on my cell at 509-710-1162 but do not count on it.



PONDEROSA BCH 2022 Planning Calendar (as of 6/1/22)

All dates subject to change due to COVID or other reasons.

[Consider printing this page to keep dates handy]

<p>June June 1- Ground Work Fun Day (contact Carol Klar for info) June 7- PBCH General Meeting; Knotty Girls and Rope Halters. Tentative location Riverside State Park but watch for emails. June 12- PBCH Pine Bluff Ride - Carol Klar. [note date change; watch for details via email]</p>	<p>October October Member Ride, time and location TBD October 4 - General Meeting; potluck; Elections October 15-16- ETS event at Spokane Sporthorse Farm October 25-PBCH Board Meeting October 28-29 - Zillah Wine Ride</p>
<p>July July 9: Mica Peak Member Ride, led by Melissa Halpin and Patty Wright July 9-10, ETS event at Riverside Equestrian Area July 12 PBCH Meeting, County Speaker July 26- PBCH Meeting, Potluck, and Boating July 29-31- Ferry county chapter steak ride.</p>	<p>November November 1- PBCH General Meeting; soup social November 29- PBCH Board Meeting</p>
<p>August August 9- PBCH Meeting, Icecream social and Play Day at Dee Dee's; nominating committee for officers will be selected August 13- Antoine Peak Member Ride, led by Andrea and Rod Staton August 30- PBCH Board Meeting</p>	<p>December December 6 – PBCH General Meeting; Christmas Party</p>
<p>September September 6- PBCH General Meeting Sept. 24- Mt. Spokane, led by Ken and Patti Carmichael September 27- PBCH Board Meeting</p>	<p>Other events can be found here: https://www.bchw.org/upcoming_events.php</p>

Poker Ride

By Ken Carmichael

First, thank you to all the people that volunteered to help at the poker ride. It was a success in large part because of the people that helped. We had some additional help from the weather breaking just right for us. This created a lot of registrations at the ride.

We had 98 registered riders, 5 of which were kids. Riders purchased 61 extra hands. The winning hand was a full house. Each person that finished the ride received a horse wormer and deck of cards courtesy of Country Store and Northern Quest Casino.

In addition, we had a very successful raffle. We also had lunches and PBCH store items for sale. Volunteers were at all the game stations, outriders, drag riders, photographer and parking committee. Overall, there was a lot going on.

I am calling many of our volunteers and going through participant surveys. Many very positive comments but we are making notes for next time so we can always improve the event. If you have input please call me. Thanks again to everyone that helped. I think we shined a bright light on Ponderosa BCH.



Useful Gear For Trail Riding

By Michelle Eames

In response to my request for articles on trail riding gear, I received a couple emails from members with good information. Thanks to Steph and Mary for the input!

Steph Hanlon:

I have an English saddle and have a bag that is made for in front of the saddle and a custom one for behind me. There is a surprising amount of English trail gear if you look up endurance tack. I leave the halter on the horse under the bridle. The biggest issues is a lead rope but that can be tied around the horses neck and left clipped to the halter or if you have a belt on you can tuck it under your belt. Don't tie it to yourself. My favorite riding pants are made by rideboldly.com. I also love a good half chap or gator. My favorite helmet is a one k. Best hoof boots are either renegade or scoot boot. If you love a campfire the propane fire pit is legal even during a burn ban.

Mary Johnston:

I ride with my rope halter and a lead that is attached without a buckle. I loop the lead and tie it off with a saddle string or loop it over my saddle horn.

As for clothing, fishing shirts are cool and UV blocking.

Several trail riders use English Gear. While English saddles are lighter, and sometimes can have a better fit for some horses than Western, there are often not a lot of rings and strings and straps to carry things. So what are other ways English riders carry their gear on the trail? Some ideas are below.

- Buy a saddle pad with “pockets”.
- Look for an English trail saddle with extra rings to clip or tie things to.
- Add strings to the rings to tie on your slicker.
- Carry a small back pack on the human.
- Wear a fisherman’s vest with lots of pockets.
- Wear a fanny pack.
- Use a halter bridle, so you don’t need the extra halter.
- As Steph noted, you can find trail pouches and bags for endurance riding that connect to the girth billets.
- And my personal favorite: hand your gear to your riding buddy to carry on their Western saddle.

Useful Tack

By Ken Carmichael

Some of the items I take with me on rides:

- Rope halter – I always have a halter on the horse while riding. If I need to get off and do something in a hurry I want the halter on the horse, not at the trailer or in the saddlebags. We cannot depend on tying a horse up with reins. I use a rope halter, rather than a web halter, because it is light weight. I also have the rope tied to the halter without a buckle so we eliminate the weight of the buckle.
- Coat and hat– Good weather can turn bad and rides can last longer than expected. Sometimes it is also advisable to have a good long raincoat along.
- Food and water – Again, it is always a good idea to be prepared for a ride that is longer than expected.
- First aid and survival equipment – This will vary with individuals depending on what you are comfortable using. There are many lists suggesting what to carry for you and your horse. Consider injuries, protection against the elements, and how you will get home. This would make a good meeting program.



Photo from Riding Warehouse (ridingwarehouse.com). Remember that PBCH members receive a discount on purchases at riding warehouse. Contact Carol Klar or Linda White for more information.

Lakeview Ranch Ladies Camping Trip

By Michelle Eames

Things we learned from each other at the Ladies' Lakeview Ranch camping event.

1. *Even if you think you packed a warm enough sleeping bag, throw in an extra blanket. Wool is great, check thrift stores or Army surplus stores.*
2. *Bring a winter hat, and warm socks to sleep in. Those lovely knitted wool socks from your relative that are too nice to wear because you don't want to wreck them? Put them in your camping gear and wear them at night.*
3. *Outdoor propane fire places rock! It made all the difference on a cool evening. Sometimes it is too windy or too dry for a wood fire.*
4. *Sharing is lovely. Folks shared water with me, because I thought my camper tank was full, but it wasn't. I shared my collapsible wheelbarrow. We all shared knowledge and experiences. We shared our cookstoves with folks who didn't have one.*

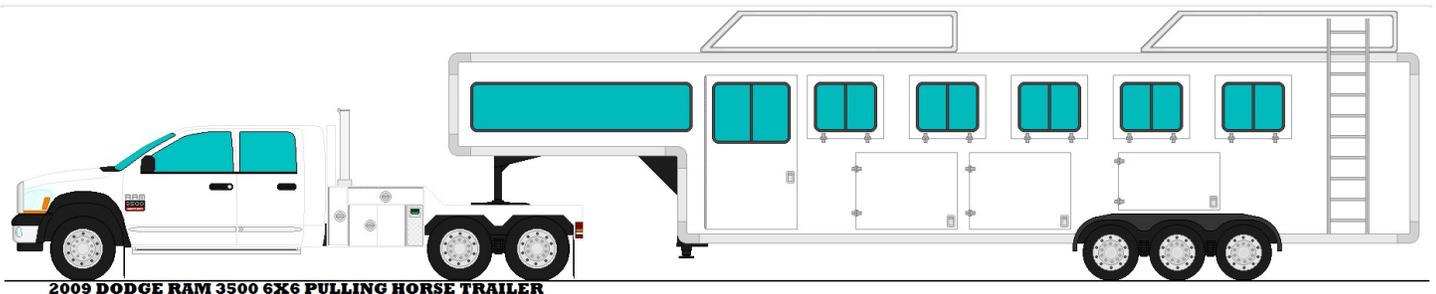




Trailer Tips

By Steph Hanlon

1. G.O.A.L. This is short for get out and look. This is for parking or driving into an unknown place.
2. Gooseneck and bumper pull don't tow the same. A bumper pull follows in the tow rig's tire path. A gooseneck does not; it in fact will turn tighter. This means you can hit stuff with your trailer.
3. When towing any trailer watch your mirrors on the inside of the corner. This can prevent you driving over a curb or into a ditch.
4. Practice looking as far down the road as possible and taking mental notes of everything you see. This could prevent a wreck. Also practice checking your gauges every few seconds. This helps prevent tunnel vision when driving.
5. Carry these in an easily accessible place-- First aid kits both human and equine, and an emergency road kit with triangles and flares. Practice using them. Carry everything you need to change a flat tire.
6. When you stop for any reason and get back to your rig, do a walk around and check tires, doors, hitch, and if you left the equines in the trailer check on them.
7. Stay out of the fast lane except to pass a slower vehicle. If you choose to use it to go faster be aware it is a ticket and your trailer tires are not rated for 70-75 mph at best they are rated for 65mph. Going faster can result in a blowout.
8. Trailer sway is either too much tongue weight or an improperly loaded trailer. To stop a swaying trailer DO NOT JAM ON YOUR RIGS BRAKES. Use either the trailer brakes by hand or stomp on the gas and pull the trailer out of the sway. Once the sway stops then begin slowly slowing and pulling over to find out why and to bring your heart rate down.
9. Know how tall your highest point on your rig is. Post it where you can read it while driving. Such as in range of your mirrors on both sides. This will keep your ac unit or roof rack on the roof and not on the pavement.
10. Relax and take your empty trailer with you for a week any place you need to go. Practice backing up using your mirrors (mall parking lots are great for this).
11. Have great trips!



Learning Some Facts About Rattlesnakes

By Cindy Miller

I grew up in the desert 40 plus years ago, Richland, WA. I spent many hours on the back of a horse riding through the waist high sage brush and up and down the sandy dunes on Rattlesnake Mountain. Back in the day, there were many jack rabbits, scorpions and yes, rattlesnakes. Every now and then, a loud rattle could be heard near the trail. We avoided the sound and calmly let the snake be in peace by giving him his space. There were moments of encroachment in his territory back then which were always uneventful. I felt no fear.

Now that I am a few years older and wiser, I find myself much more concerned with critters that slither through the rocks and grass, especially in areas of the basalt scablands where I spend much time hiking and riding horses. I guess with age, we do become a little more fearful of everything; percentages of survival and longevity of our lives enter into it. I want to ride and hike in rattlesnake country without continually thinking about rattlers lunging at me and causing a horrific bite where I would immediately need to be transported by helicopter to the nearest hospital that carries the Antivenin (which would need to be administered four hours after the bite). Or, what if my horse was bitten on the nose, and it would swell completely closing off the airway, and I would witness the slow demise of my beloved horse. And I could go on with my dramatic terrified thoughts of the dreaded rattlesnake attack.

Sometimes a little factual knowledge can do wonders with understanding why a 36-inch long serpent who lives in the crevices of rocks and comes out basically in the cool of the night (a fact) to hunt rodents would also hunt me down in broad daylight and be waiting for me on the side of the trail to lunge and sink his fangs deeply into my body part or my horse's nose.

So, I decided to read up on the Northern Pacific rattlesnake. One source was an article written by CWU biologist Dan Beck on Washington state's only venomous snake, the Northern Pacific rattlesnake. His studies and research were conducted in Grant County, very familiar and near our own area. I was hoping for information and facts on the rattlesnakes that inhabit our lands near here. Below are excerpts from the article:

Beck and his students have staked out dozens of snake dens across Central and Eastern Washington. They've documented the species' habits, developed ways to monitor growth rates and deployed tiny transmitters to track the animals' movements.

Among their findings is that Northern Pacifics are surprisingly mellow homebodies — with more of a social life than you might expect.

Along the way, Beck says he's also learned a lot about human nature. "The science is fascinating, but as I get older I get more interested in people and the way we react to rattlesnakes," he said. "They are a metaphor for what we fear."

When Beck first started studying Washington's rattlers, it was common for people to stomp any snakes they encountered and even destroy dens. That's changed, and Beck hopes his efforts to introduce schoolkids, scout troops and civic clubs to the state's sole rattler species have helped.

"You just sit down and talk with people about the amazing stuff snakes do," he said. "When you take away the superstitions and stories and replace them with knowledge and understanding, you end up with respect rather than fear."

With a range that extends from California through Oregon, Idaho, Eastern Washington and well into British Columbia, Northern Pacifics are the world's northernmost-occurring rattlesnake.

Compared with other rattlesnakes, Northern Pacifics are also relatively mild-mannered. Maybe it's because they live in a colder climate, Beck speculated. "They're just less irritable, not as defensive."

He and his team are also seeing evidence of more social interactions than previously expected. Beck recently set up a den-like exhibit at CWU with about a dozen rescued rattlesnakes. Two males, called Tickler and Bruce, hang out together all the time. Other snakes avoid each other.

Studies with related species show that females shepherd their offspring — which are born live — through their first few weeks, and that many snakes prefer to associate with their own relatives. Beck and his colleagues discovered that Northern Pacifics in Washington congregate at communal sites to shed their skins — perhaps because that's when females get frisky and males want to be nearby.

Only two deaths have been reported in Washington since 1979 — and none since 1999. But every year, an average of 15 people in the state run afoul of Northern Pacific rattlesnakes, according to the Washington Poison Center.

I liked what Dr. Beck had to say. He was a man who had studied, handled, and followed the daily lives of these little buggers (the Northern Pacific's aren't nearly as big as some of their relatives).

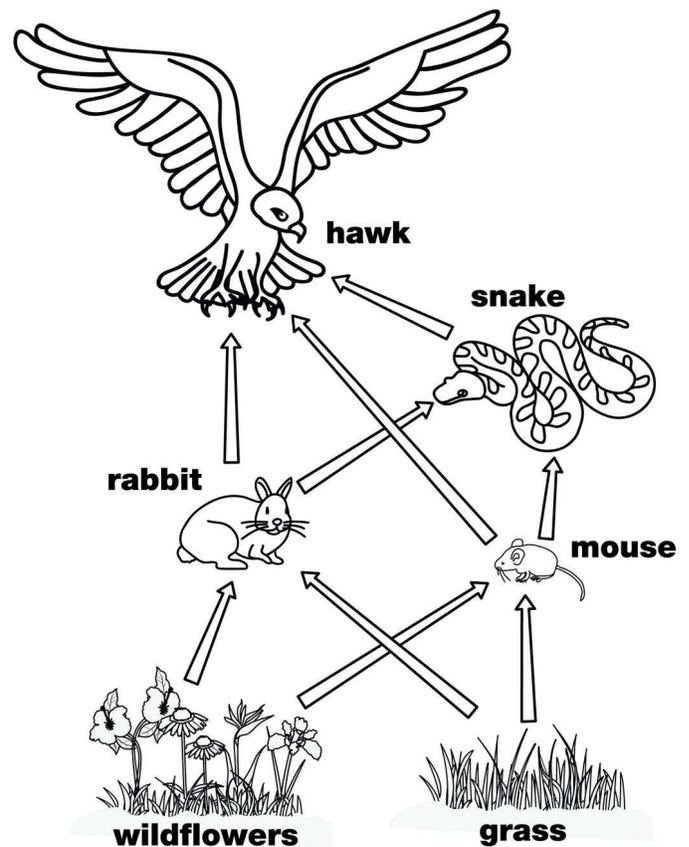
I continued to read a few more articles, and here is what I came up with to make me more comfortable and courageous, but cautious, out on the trail where Mr. or Ms. rattlesnake hang out:

- Don't crawl up on a basalt outlook for a better view. Your foot may slip into a crevice where there could be up to 50 rattlers nesting.
- Encounters with snakes will never happen when it is freezing cold outside. They are deeply below the frost line hibernating. They can't move or digest food when it is very cold.
- Be alert and listen for their rattles. It is loud. If you meet up with a rattler, he will let you know he is there. Move out of his way.
- Don't go walking through the brush during a warm summer night. Snakes are hunting at that time.
- Enjoy your ride out in rattlesnake country, but pay attention to your surroundings.
- If you or your horse accidentally step on a rattler, good luck! Remember, 40 to 60% of bites are dry bites or no venom.
- If you see a snake crossing the trail, don't immediately jump to the conclusion that it is a rattlesnake. It could be the common bull snake. A big beautiful bull snake is very beneficial (and it has no venom).
- This species of rattlesnake is a generally passive, non-aggressive species. They generally come out at dawn and dusk or are nocturnal during the hot summer. They will sometimes come out during the day to bask on rocks, but normally stay hidden in crevices most of the day



Fun Facts

- You cannot tell the age of a rattlesnake by counting the segments of the rattle. They shed different amounts throughout their lives; sometimes up to six times a year. Being made of keratin, they will break off when they get too long.
- The Northern Pacific rattlesnake is part of a group of venomous snakes called pit vipers, named for the deep pits in front of its eyes that act as heat-sensing organs for locating warm-blooded prey.
- 40-60% of bites in the US are dry bites. This means that the snake did not inject any venom.
- A female rattlesnake can store a male's sperm for years until an optimum time for fertilization.
- Rattlesnakes will not always rattle before they strike. When a rattlesnake is fearful of its life, they will rattle as a warning to stay away.
- The primary use of venom is to kill and begin digestion of prey; **they will only use it as defense if absolutely necessary.**
- Between August and October, females give live birth to 4 to 21 young.
- Oftentimes, many females will gather at a single den to give birth.
- Northwest winters are brutal for ectotherms like snakes, which are at the mercy of their environment when it comes to regulating body. Rattlesnakes can't even digest a meal if they aren't warm enough.
- A good den is crucial, and most snakes use the same site year after year. There can be more than 50 snakes in a den. Dens, or hibernacula, are almost always on south-facing slopes, where the animals can soak up sun when they emerge from their chilly months of hibernation, Beck and his students found. The refuges must be deep enough to extend below the frost line, while also being sheltered from wind, rain and dripping snowmelt.
- Northern Pacifics are a protected species in British Columbia, but not in Washington. The snakes help keep populations of mice and small mammals in check, while in turn are preyed upon by hawks and other predators. But the biggest threat they face is people and development, Beck said.



Note from the editor: A special thanks to PBCH member Vern Hopkins as he continues to share a few of his western stories and tall tales with us.

THIS OLD HOUSE - LOBO STYLE

By Vern Hopkins

The old he-wolf was shaded up under the edge of a chokecherry bush, ever testing the wind with his super-keen sense of smell. He was aware of everything that was happening in the meadow that stretched out below him. A bear had been working the berry bushes down along the creek but was gone now. Some elk were down there; grazing along and bedding down for short naps in the mid-morning sunshine. It was June, the calving month, and a few elk calves were playing baby elk games and having little stiff-legged races.

Satisfied that his corner of the world was okay, the wolf got up, stretched the cramps out of his legs, yawned and trotted back up the little valley.

The den, in the rimrock up above the next fringe of timber, was home to his mate and four six-week-old pups. The pair had used this rock-protected hole for several years and had raised a few batches of pups here. On his way home, the wolf jumped a blue grouse, and quick as a lightning flash he had the slow-witted bird in his jaws. This would give the young pups something to practice their survival skills on.

Circling around to get with the wind he approached the den from the east and picked up the alarming but not unfamiliar scent of man and horse. Always alert to what was needed to protect his household, he melted into the grass and studied the situation. He stashed the dead grouse in the rocks and, like a ghost, drifted back into the shadows to scope out this latest intrusion.

A horse and rider topped the rimrock ledge upwind from the den. The old lobo knew his mate well enough to know that she and the pups were well-hidden. A master stalker, he had no trouble being invisible in the sparse timber as he followed the horse. The rider didn't seem to be hunting; it loomed like he was just riding through.

The wolf trailed along anyway just to make sure. When he was satisfied that the threat had dissolved, he worked his way cautiously back toward home. Seeing no activity around the den, he scouted a big loop around his territory "reading his newspaper" (that is, his sniffing posts and markers) and analyzing the information carried on the wind. His nose told him that his world was secure and that that mom and the kids were still safely tucked into their hide-away home in the rocks.

The he-wolf backtracked and picked up the grouse. Back at the den he placed the prize on the ground and called to the pups. They tumbled out into the daylight and the four of them immediately started a tug-o-war with the dead bird.

The old wolf smiled to himself. For the moment, all is well in wolfdom.



Highline Kits-- Still Available

By Ken Carmichael

Ponderosa BCH has put together a highline kit which is being offered for sale. Before offering it to the general public we want chapter members to have an opportunity to buy them. We have only made 12, and several have now been sold. The price is \$40 for the package and can be picked up at my house or at a PBCH meeting for as long as they last. We can also provide instruction on highline installation using the Bowline and Truckers knots.



From the Editor:

I invite you all to continue to send me your stories, tips, jokes, articles, photos, words of wisdom, or whatever. I especially would like to encourage our officers and committee chairs to share their thoughts, visions and projects. The goal here is to make the newsletter fun, entertaining and informative.

Please send me photos of you and your equine buddy so I can highlight you in our newsletter. Introduce yourself to other members with background on you or your horse.

Photo by Carol Klar @ Lakeview Ranch



Michelle Eames, Newsletter Editor

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The Executive Board for PBCH includes the officers, plus Doug Bailey, Trail Boss; Michelle Eames, Newsletter; and Melissa Halpin, Spokane County Lands Coordinator.