

2012 Officers

Issue 2

FEBRUARY 2012

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Hi Guys

Wow it has been so busy so far this year. Rode with my sister down at Daley Ranch this month and we had a great time. How can you not have a great time when you ride? We took this opportunity to do some trail education with the other sharing the trail with us. What we did not expect to see was a tandem bike. That surprised us as well as the horses. We met walkers on the trail, they stepped off the trail on the high side and we explained that is would be better that they are down hill to us. They commented no one had ever told them this. Hum, we have the chance to educate every time we saddle up. Go out and be stewards of the trails.

Our Unit's first event of the year was a packing clinic at Mike Lewis'. Oh my Gosh. We had an amazing turnout even with the questionable weather. There were over 30 people attending including 3 new members. Wow, it was awesome. Mike and Tom Firth had us all on the edge of our seats. You guys did great. Everyone took a try slinging the rope around the metal mules and also the little mule that Mike loaded up with 2- 55 gal drums. There were many people helping make this event a success... THANKS TO YOU ALL. This will be the first of a series we will be doing this year. We are going to do more educating. We took a bunch of pics throughout the day and we also put a video on YouTube. Fantastic Day!! Also we are doing a raffle to continue throughout most of this year for a packsaddle made by Mike Lewis. It will include, boxes, pad and sawbuck saddle. He will make it for a horse or a mule.

Audrey and I took our "pack stock" out yesterday and it was uneventful. That's good. I think that my little black mare is going to do just fine. Joe hasn't knocked her head off.

We have a weekend for the treasure hunt ride. Mark it April 14-15th. We have education and fun things in store for you on Saturday afternoon and the ride is Sunday.

Mark your calendar for Rendezvous at Tehama County Fairgrounds in Red Bluff on March 30-April 1st. The Rendezvous for 2013 will be in Norco. We will be very involved in this project. The Board will be meeting with Roland next month to discuss the project.

Every time you attend any Redshank Riders "Work Parties", or "Packing Gear for Agencies", you get your name put in a hat to be drawn at the end of the year. We can then pull three winners for the total of 75.00 in cash prizes. The winners from our work parties in 2011 were Mike Lewis for two of the 25.00 prizes and Pebbles for one 25.00 cash prize. CONGRATS!!

I attended the first State Board meeting this month in Visalia. They have added a column under administration. A preparation time column was added to the Volunteer hours report for 2012. Print out a saddle bag version to take with you. The "How to tutorial assistance" in filling out volunteer hours form is new. It is real easy to follow. I will print some out for all the members that turned in hours for 2011. I will bring a few extra copies also. There is a new link on the state website. "Unit Projects". This is a great tool to share our projects with other units. A large topic was insurance. The bottom line is each member is not covered under our insurance policy the day they expire. We need to ask for an insurance day if we are having an event with livestock if we have non members attending. It was discussed to possibly make membership cards. The day prior to the event, we will call Chip and ask for an up to date membership list. There was also discussion of doing PayPal at the State Site for membership. Pete Kriger our BCHA National Director gets appx. 10 emails weekly and he will be forwarding them to all unit presidents. Public Lands, Bob Magee is assisting all units to work on the Trail Classification Programs. I am on the state committee with a few others from other units to work on the state calendar fundraiser. This project has been done successfully by BCH Idaho and Washington. We will be working on the logistics for this program. It will be a good way to get funds to the state and also to the units. The executive board stated there was some confusion with the units understanding regarding nonprofit 501C3. The state BCHC is made up of 501C3 (education side) and also 501C4(rest of organization). Our unit is a 501C4. The state

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membership committee expressed over 3 years there were 1500 members lost state wide. They have asked us to contact expired members and try to get the numbers back. The education committee has been working on updating the state website. Educational forms. They have put up the easy to understand "how to volunteer hours, tri folds to use for membership, info brochures, etc. This is great information to make it easier for us.

I thought our first Redshank Riders meeting of the year was great. Great turnout and I think it is gonna be a fantastic year. The General meeting of the year will be at the Little Red Schoolhouse on Thurs Feb 9th at 7 PM... Please come so we can look at the budget draft and get started.

Cya on the trails, Stacy

**For your convenience, all board members contact information is on the 1st page of each newsletter*

Redshank Riders Jan 12, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Location: Little Red Schoolhouse

Meeting began at 7:00 pm

21 Attendees/ 1 new member Jane McGrath and long time members, Phil & Peggy Empey, were there for their first meeting

Anne read the minutes from December; Mike moved to accept, Audrey 2nd.

Treasurers Report: Only expense was the reimbursement to Anne for the maps leaving a balance of \$4297.96

Membership Report: The cancellation of the Turkey Treasure Hunt cost us new members so we are down in our membership which is currently 107

Trail Development & Maintenance: Mike explained why the Forest Service closes off areas for studies before we can put a gate in that will allow us access to much more of Beauty Mtn. Wilderness.

Adopt a Highway: No report

Public Lands: No report

Education: No report

Newsletter: Rhonda is now also doing the BCHC State newsletter. She is planning to create a form on our website which will make recording our volunteer hours easier.

Historian: No report

Unfinished Business: No report

New Business: We drew names for work party participation prize. Mike & Pebbles deservedly won!

Rides: A February ride is scheduled to be stages at Robyn Prinzing's ranch. No details were available. Audrey reported that the rescheduling of the Turkey Treasure Hunt will be in the Spring. Details will be available very soon. A group Trail Day event was suggested by Pebbles. Ron Lawson brought up an idea to adopt the Cedar Springs Trail Camp and to do a RSR camp-out at least once a year. Stacy reminded us that we need to be vigilant about preserving the existing trails.

Next meeting will be at the Little Red Schoolhouse in Anza on Thursday, February 9 at 7 pm.

Meeting Adjourned: at 8:00 pm.

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History of the Sawbuck and Decker Pack Saddles

Story & photos submitted by Michael Lewis

The **Sawbuck Pack Saddle** has ancient origins. It has been in regular use since the time of Genghis Khan. Its design is simple and variations, such as the camel saddle of the Middle East, appear worldwide. As the pack saddle of the fur trapper and the prospector, the sawbuck pack saddle played a role in opening the American west. In the years following the Lewis and Clark expedition, sawbuck pack saddles packed just about everything a horse could carry. Joe Back, in his book *Horses, Hitches and Rocky Trails* had this to say about the Sawbuck pack saddle:

*The Sawbuck pack saddle is most like the one the Indians devised; it has wooden cross-pieces front and back (where the Indians used deer or elk horns) and carved wooden side bars. Just because one of these resembles in construction that old woodcutter's pride, the sawbuck, doesn't mean it has both uses. I believe that of all the kinds and types of pack saddles used in this country and Canada, you'll find more of that good old standby, the **sawbuck**, used than any other. There are many advantages, and, some say, improvements in some of the others. But that old Sawbuck, well-constructed, with good, well-shaped bars and wide enough in buck construction for average animals, is just hard to beat for general packing. When it's rigged even and accurate, of A-1 leather, with snaps, rings and buckles that can be adjusted to suit the build of the particular animal, with comfortable cinches, and breast collar and britchin OK, you can move a lot of cargo.*

The first **Decker Pack Saddle** tree of its kind (with wooden bars and steel bows) was first used by an Arapaho packer named S.C. Mac Daniels in central Idaho during the mining boom of 1898-1900. Several brothers named Decker saw the practicality of the idea, adopted it and made improvements to the Arapaho cover, or "half-breed" as it is know today. They applied for a patent on the tree and rigging, which apparently was never granted, and the name *Decker Pack Saddle* stuck. In the early 1900s, the Decker brothers established themselves as some of the finest packers in Idaho and Montana, packing thousands of pounds of equipment and supplies into the non-roaded, trail-less terrain of the Selway and Lochsa Rivers, over Lolo Pass and into the Bitterroot Valley of Montana. All the while they were demonstrating the durability and versatility, as well as humane nature, of the Decker Pack Saddle.

The modern Decker Pack Saddle tree was perfected by blacksmith/saddle maker, Oliver P. Robinette of Kooskia, Idaho shortly after 1906. Robinette is credited with developing and manufacturing hundreds of the Decker trees and pack saddles for the Decker brothers as well as for local sheep men and other outfitters and packers of the era. The Decker brothers could foresee a rapid increase in the use of this unique and clearly superior pack saddle and they made a deal with Robinette to market the saddle. It was advertised and sold as the **Decker Pack Saddle**. In later years, O.P. Robinette built many trees for the Forest Service (the "OPR" style Decker Pack Saddle tree) until his death in 1945.

At that time – the twilight of the old west – a generation of packers skilled in the use of the sawbuck and the traditional diamond hitch were passing into history, while a rapidly growing Forest Service needed transport for heavy, often bulky equipment through the vast roadless back-country. The **Decker Pack Saddle**, a rugged versatile saddle that could be



easily packed to capacity by Forest Service personnel, filled this need. It caught on quickly throughout Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington, while in Wyoming, Colorado and California packers continued to use the sawbuck. In 1930, a "Remount Depot" was established in the Ninemile Valley west of Missoula, Montana, as a place to raise and train horses and mules, as well as train packers for the Forest Service. Horses and mules in sufficient quantity to supply fire fighters during critical fire seasons had become difficult, if not impossible, to obtain from private sources. The Decker Pack Saddle was adopted as the official saddle and packing style in Region One (all of Montana, Northern Idaho, North Dakota and a bit of South Dakota). Part of the mission of the

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newly established Ninemile Remount Depot was to "develop improved methods of packing and standardize packing practices." In 1937, a standard specification for the Decker Pack Saddle was prepared and that specification, with only minor modification, is still used today as the basic design of most **Decker Pack Saddles**.

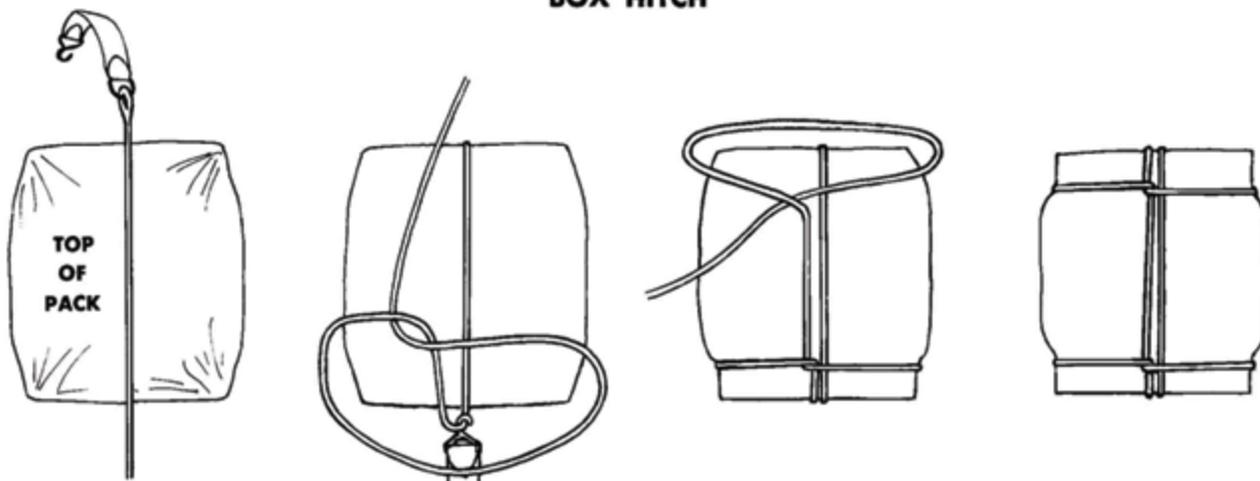
The above information was taken from "Packin' In on Horses and Mules", Elser and Brown, 1980, "The Packer's Field Manual", Hoverson, 2005 and "Horses, Hitches and Rocky Trails", Back, 1959.



HORSE HEADING



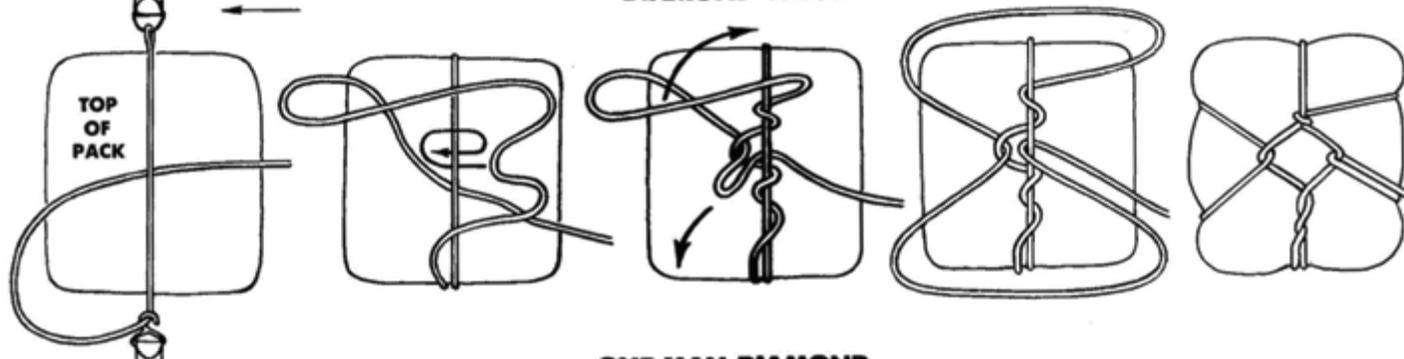
BOX HITCH



HORSE HEADING

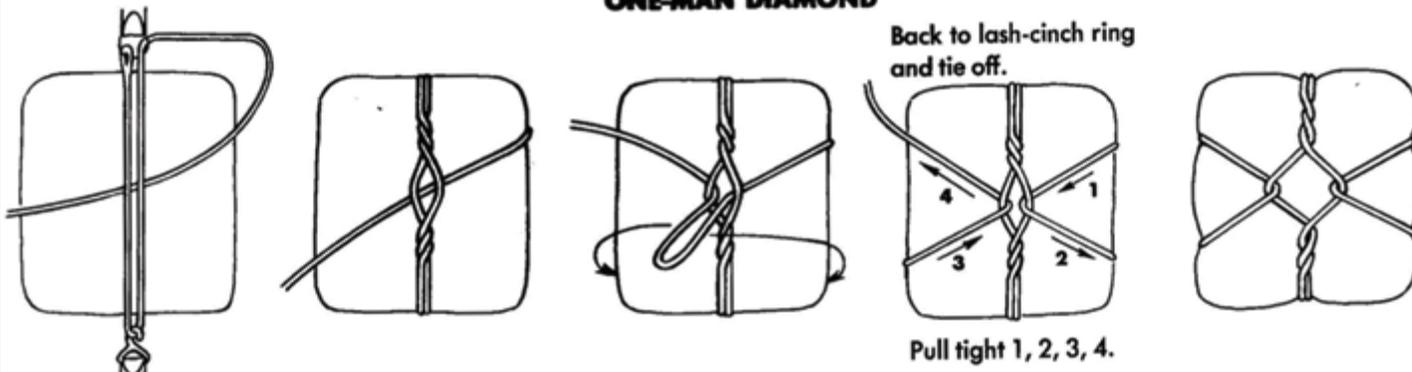


DIAMOND HITCH



ONE-MAN DIAMOND

Back to lash-cinch ring and tie off.



Pull tight 1, 2, 3, 4.

Packers Corner

By: Michael Lewis

As 2012 arrives with 2011 in the past, I look back on some of last years projects. March and April found us at Mission Creek providing pack support for SCA and PCTA trail crews. April and May saw trips to Little Paradise in support of some San Diego Natural Museum research crews. May was also the start of summer long supply and re-supply trips to Deer Springs camp with provisions and tools for CCC crews working on the Fuller Ridge re-alignment of the PCT. June was a trip to Apache Springs, once again for an SCA crew. July, August, and September were numerous trips to Deer Springs Camp. October found us on the Desert Divide with tools and supplies for Pete Fish's Trail Gorilla's. It has been an honor and a privilege to have worked with and along side the other packers. What is also nice is the appreciation and help we get from the crews we pack for. The first few lines of the BCHC "Objectives and Purpose" statement reads as follows:

To improve and promote the use, care and development of California back country trails, campsites, streams and meadows; to advocate good trail manners.

To promote the conservation and utilization of our back country resources in concert with livestock transportation.

To keep the back country trails and forage areas open to horsemen on all public lands.

Without the support of packers, many of these things would be much more difficult if not impossible. That is why, as packers, it is our responsibility to continue our support and to pass on our knowledge to whoever is willing to listen and learn. To this end, we were able to hold a very successful packing clinic at our ranch in Aguanga. Story to follow.

Below are some pics from 2011 packing.



Tom & Cathy at Mission Creek



Headed into Little Paradise



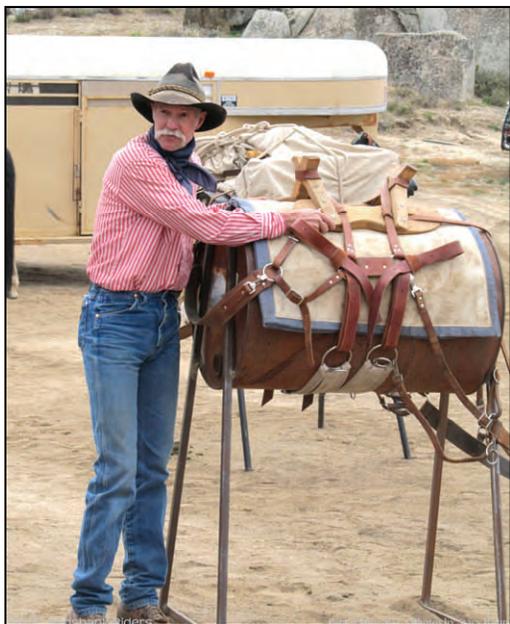
Ron and Sandy CCC / Fuller Ridge re-supply



Audrey and Tim - Desert Divide

HOW TO PACK PART 3 - THE PACK CLINIC

Story submitted by Audrey Turpin Photos by Stacy Kuhns & Pebbles Lewis



Well I guess this will be my third chapter on learning How to Pack. Our ultimate goal is to pack in the Sierras for a few days with our own stock and feel comfortable doing it. Our previous experiences have been a 3 day trip with the Sierra Unit taking us up to the Golden Trout Wilderness giving us the taste and then last fall we went with Mike Lewis as outriders to pack out the Trail Gorillas.

Mikes enthusiasm for packing is contagious. He has a real passion and a great ability to teach. He wants to give everyone an opportunity to learn and enjoy packing so he gave his first pack clinic last January 12. Morning dawned and lucky me we are only a 1/2 mile from the Lewis's homestead. I saddled up Mr. Pete the painted pony and threw on the old pack saddle we had bought from rendezvous last year on Tanner and went to school. The weather was threatening to rain and Pete was feeling all 14.2 hands of himself doing the Charro dance all the way. Tim loaded up the truck with the panniers we had bought used and met me there.

Riding up there were already people milling



about and the sun was beginning to peek out. Mrs. Pebbles Lewis had the coffee on and donuts to be had. Tied up the boys to Mike's trailer and got to work. We had 34 people signed up and we were ready to go. Mike had asked Tom Firth to assist him in the clinic and bring some of his pack equipment. We also had some members bring they're equipment and when you laid it all out there was every different type of pack saddles, panniers, bags and boxes you could imagine.

Everyone settled in and we were introduced the Don the steel mule. Mike started out with why we pack. Why walk when you can ride, to



get to the beautiful places in the wilderness and bringing the comforts of home with you i.e. bed rolls, tents, food, Pebble's shower and beer. Mike and Tom also pack for various service organizations such as United States Forest Service and the Pacific Crest Trail Association bringing in supplies and taking them out. Using Don as our model we learned the different pack saddles mainly settling on the saw buck design and the Decker saddle. The importance of proper rigging, cinching and balancing your load were covered. Mike and Tom covered the different types of bags, boxes and manties (a canvas to cover and protect your load) and answered questions.

The next topic was knots and hitches. How to secure you load with a rope. Of course there are as many opinions as there are what kind of ropes to use. Did you know that rock climbers will only use a climbing rope 3 times unless they fall with one? Then that rope is useless. Climbers will cut that rope into small pieces so it won't be used to climb anymore. But wait!! Used climbing rope is one of the best ropes to secure your loads with. There is minimal stretch. Amazing!

Next our teachers went over the versatile box hitch and the diamond hitch. Of course they make it look easy. Over this, pull here, this is your tight rope, knot here piece of cake right? As with everything related to equestrian there is a

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different way of doing everything. Mike showed us the diamond hitch then Tom showed us the eastern sierra diamond and the western diamond. Huh? You know same thing but different! Ok brain is in overdrive. Someone said cake, time for lunch.

Lunch was hamburgers, hotdogs, beans, three delicious salads oh and did I mention cake? Yeah baby! At lunch we started selling tickets for Redshanks drawing for a pack saddle made by Mike and the drawing for a free pack trip to Trinity Alps for two and a round pen from Rendezvous. If you did not make it see what you missed?

After lunch we broke into small groups to practice



the box hitch on the steel mules. Now I will let you on a little secret. The weekend before Tim, Stacy and I stole Don the mule and set him up in our tack room. Four hours later and a bottle of whiskey all three of us had the box hitch down. Again, I will mention everything related equestrian everyone has a different way of doing the same thing different. Maybe we had an advantage so Mike trots out his little mule Diamond and we get to try our hand on real stock. Believe me it is totally different tying on a real mule than Don. Following your tight rope on a moving mule can be a challenge.

All in all the day was a success. Everyone had a great time and wonderful day. Congratulations to Terry Wright for winning the drawing for the handmade horse hair vase. Thank you to Mike and Pebbles for opening your home and putting on a wonderful clinic. Thank you Tom for helping and

sharing your knowledge. Stay tuned for clinic number two. I know I'll be there!

The video and more photos are posted at the website. www.RedshankRiders.com

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Trail Classes:

- Navigation on Horseback
- Trail Maintenance & Construction in the Wilderness
- Tools for Trail Building & Maintenance
- Crosscut Saw Use
- New JHAs for Region 5

Equine Classes:

- Natural Hoof Care
- Legs & Leg Issues
- Colic - What is it?
- General Equine Health
- Equine Dentistry
- Saddle Fitting
- Stock Emergency First Aid
- Animal Trail First Aid & Treatment
- US Marine Corp Packing Demonstration
- Predators
- Livestock Poisoning Plants
- Manure Management
- Pasture & Paddock Management
- Barn Yard Economics
- Livestock Law
- Security & the Family Farm
- Grazing/Fire Suppression
- Farm Accounting & Tax Filing
- Environmental Pasture Management
- Breeding for Mules

Packing Classes:

- Packing 101
- Packing 101 with Stock
- Advanced Packing Skills
- Odd Load Packing
- Highlines and Picketing
- Packing Knots & Their Uses
- Pack Saddle Types & Use
- Pack Stock & Packing Techniques in Wilderness

Gentle Use Classes:

- Gentle Users Plan & Prepare
- Gentle on the Trail
- Gentle Stock Management
- Gentle Use of Campsites
- Gentle with Plants & Animals
- Gentle Concepts

Miscellaneous Classes:

- Dutch Oven Cooking
- Trail Head Horse Camping
- Wilderness First Aid for People
- Trailer Safety
- Leather Working for Adults
- Miniature Donkey Demo

Contests:

- Western Art Show
- Trail Trials
- Dutch Oven Cookoff
- Odd Load Packing Contest
- Gentle Use Camp Contest
- Kids Art Contest

Kids Classes:

- Youth Safety with Horses & Mules
- Leather Working for Kids & Adults
- Plan & Prepare for the Backcountry Trip with Kids
- Survival 101 for Kids
- LNT for Kids
- Kids Costume & Stick Mules Contests
- Animal Footprints
- Kids Art Contest
- Youth Iron Mule Packing
- Balancing & Matching Bags & Boxes
- Wild Animal Encounters
- Stick Horse Obstacle Course
- Stick Horse Rodeo

Art Created by Jacque Murphy

February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 General Mtg @ the Little Red Schoolhouse 7pm	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Tentative Event & Ride Schedule 2012

Feb 4-6 Horse Expo Pomona

Feb 9 – RSR General Meeting @ the Little Red Schoolhouse
on Hwy 371 at 7 pm

Mar 30-Apr 1 – Rendezvous Tehama County Fairgrounds

Apr 14-15 – Event & Treasure Hunt Ride (more info coming soon)

Next General Meeting
Thursday, February 9th
@ The Little Red Schoolhouse
Anza ~ 7:00 pm

Backcountry Horsemen of California
2012 Cowgirl Calendar



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Unit Meeting
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BCHC

Redshank Riders



***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 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.