

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 7/14/2021 6:00 PM | Meeting location Watts Hall

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Joan Bacon, Cathy Brett, Cindi deCapiteau, Doug Dexter, Vicki Dowd, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Matt Rehani, Cheryl Roth, Randy Roth, Nat Williams

AGENDA TOPICS

Agenda topic *Call to order* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

Doug dutifully called to order the meeting of the ragtag remnants of the Gila Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico promptly at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda topic *Financial & membership report* | Presenter *Dave Imler*

The chapter's bank balance is in the \$8,400 neighborhood. Dave expects \$3,000 in grant money to arrive soon. He noted that the chapter is using the "Billpay" program offered by our bank (1st New Mexico), so chapter members receiving reimbursement for project expenses will be receiving bank checks instead of checks from GBCH.

The chapter now has 66 members. Some new folks have joined: Laura Iverson, Henry Jiminez, Maria Langton, Becky Shumway (welcome back!), and Margaret Streams.

Agenda topic *Publicity* | Presenter *Vicki Dowd*

Vicki has sent an article to BCHA for publication in an upcoming newsletter. Incidentally, BCHA is adopting electronic distribution for its newsletter, so no more paper on your dining room table unless you print out the file that will be sent to you by email. For that reason, BCHA needs to have email addresses for all members (if they don't have your email address, you won't have a newsletter). Dave plans to forward email addresses BCHA.

Action items

Person responsible

Deadline

Compile list of member email addresses and send to BCHA

Dave Imler

In due time

Agenda topic *Public Service/Communications* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

Gerry attended the July BCHNM meeting last Saturday. The big deal topic was the Rendezvous, to be held in the October 21-24 timeline at Ft. Stanton.

Rendezvous. Ft. Stanton isn't open now, but the folks putting together the Rendezvous are checking to find out what the venue's status will be in the fall—and details will be forthcoming. If you're planning to attend, you have to sign up by September 30, but Gerry advises waiting for more info. No food will be provided, so bring your own victuals and liquid refreshment.

This year, BCHNM expects to host Randy Rasmussen, BCHA's wilderness advisor and director for public lands and recreation.

The chapter reps attending agreed that every chapter would donate a new \$50 item for the major raffle, along with other items (doesn't have to be new stuff) for other raffles.

Tee shirts and hoodies. The Rendezvous registration form will show information about BCH-themed tee shirts and hoodies, along with a web site where the acquisitive among us can purchase them. Proceeds from the sales will be distributed among the chapters.

State, regional, and local fairs. **BCHNM** will have a booth at the [2021 New Mexico state fair](#) (September 10-20 in Albuquerque). The **Rio Grande chapter** wants to contribute a presence at the SW New Mexico region's version of the state fair and invited chapters down here to partner with them. The [SWNM fair](#) will be held September 29 through October 3.

The big bucks. The state BCH is in good financial shape (\$6500 in BCHNM bank accounts) because COVID chaos eliminated the expense of sending people to the national convention.

Gerry's Gila chapter report. Gerry outlined the Gila chapter's agreements with the Forest Service and Melisa Green, which enabled us to produce stupendous results on Gila trails so far this year. Gerry mentioned to the (envious—or if not, they should be) representatives of other New Mexico chapters that we have completed work on some 70 miles of trails this year.

Membership application forms. Gerry inquired about membership procedures: Do we have to submit new applications for chapter members every year? Apparently we don't because membership policy and procedures are up to each chapter. So Dave Imler (you know Dave, our 501c3 and finance guy) will require applications for one more year and then remove the date from the application form. The application form will be revised to capture email address information for (in the case of family memberships) multiple applicants.

Disposition of money. We've been wondering what happens if the Gila chapter goes extinct: What happens to residual money? We down here in the stinkin' desert are a 501c3 organization. BCHNM is a 501c4 outfit. The difference creates complexity over who gets what; but the situation can be remedied by sending residuals to BCHA, which takes a small percentage of the wad and ships the rest to BCHNM.

Trail projects. Now that the monsoon has arrived and the muscular heat of May and June has abated, the Gila chapter has three projects on the board. Two projects will work in the **Signal Peak area**: **Saturday, July 31 and Saturday August 14** to work on part of Continental Divide Trail. Those projects will involve mostly brushing and treadwork, so these are not horse-appropriate projects.

During the period **August 19-24** we will be working on **Iron Creek Mesa**. We will pack in from Snow Lake to a campsite on Iron Creek. The project features plenty of logging, so pack animals, sawyers, wranglers, cooks, and curious adventurers are needed. Sign up for Iron Creek at the Gila Trails Info website, <https://www.gilatrailsinfo.org/volunteer>.

Gerry urges that if you know any other horse people, recruit them for membership by explaining that a lot of what we do is provide packing support to hikers and we also need more people to pack and clear logs off the trail.

Helmet hype. In New Mexico, you can ride at high speed on your motorcycle and you don't have to wear a helmet. That's not true for trail workers, who are required to wear them when working (regardless of speed). Melissa Green wants to develop stickers for helmets that show who we are. The chapter has a logo that appears on our stationery, but it was developed a long time ago and is so small, uncolorful, and detailed that it's not a good choice for communicating who we are when we're out there. Melissa wants something bigger and more colorful; the logo on the chapter's flag is a suitable candidate.

Tokens of appreciation. An outfit to which the chapter has access sells ball caps and requires no minimum order (means we don't have to store them, which is advantageous for Gerry's garage). Then there are the celebrated water bottles from when the Gila chapter hosted the rendezvous, of which we still have a whole bunch. We can get them out of the Lemons' garage and give them to trail volunteers. Everybody present thinks this is a good idea.

Agenda topic *NATRC* | **Presenter** *Vicki Dowd*.

The Gila chapter still has a toe in the water for the twice-delayed (everybody knows why) competitive trail ride at NAN Ranch. Vicki reported that money for insurance on the cancelled ride has been refunded.

However, that money is still in NATRC accounts, so because we intend to try again, all the work for the ride is done except for trail marking.

Vicki noted that chapter members will need to vote to do the ride, but Cheryl Roth expressed reluctance to take a vote at tonight's meeting because so few people are present. Vicki suggests supplementing a meeting vote with online voting.

In addition, somebody needs to be in charge, so she is recruiting a ride manager (volunteers are eagerly anticipated). The ride secretary, Charlen Perez, is still willing to oversee the clerical and recordkeeping tasks; therefore, the ride just needs somebody to keep an eye on things.

Dave asked for the number of people needed to run the event. Vicki responded that about 30 people are necessary to get things going on the first day, then 20 people for each ride day. She will call all the people who volunteered at the last ride.

The ride dates are limited and uncertain. An available date in April conflicts with the Easter holiday, so Vicki needs to check the NATRC schedule to see what ride dates are still available for 2022.

Agenda topic *Search and Rescue* | **Presenter** *Dave Imler, Gerry Engel*

A recent SAR mission involved a woman who was last seen by a neighbor several days ago in the Rodeo NM area. A search involved four or five agencies with 30 people (including riders from GBCCH). The woman was located, but didn't survive her ordeal in the desert.

Gerry noted that the search was an impressive operation that employed horses, dogs, drones, and the border patrol, and drones. Mounted searchers, Gerry mused, are the best way to cover that territory because the riders sit up so high and have a wider field of view. Mounted searchers rode for three hours at 96 degrees.

Agenda topic *Highway Cleanup* | **Presenter** *Matt Rehani*

Find your gloves, long-sleeved and brightly colored shirts, sturdy boots, and sunscreen for a highway cleanup detail on **29 July 9:00 a.m.** Meet (as always) at the Wind Canyon fire house.

Agenda topic *Changes to management structure* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter/Dave Imler*

Recent changes in the Gila chapter's management structure have given us a couple of more members for the board of directors. Doug will get with Mickey to have her update the state in case the change has implications for insurance.

Agenda topic *Independent contractor agreement* | **Presenter** *Gerry Engel/Dave Imler*

The chapter's contract with Melissa Green is a done deal.

Agenda topic *Plan for a social GBCH event* | **Presenter** *Discussion*

Now that (at least for the moment) COVID-19 restrictions are easing up, it's time for a chapter social event. The Gomez Peak pavilion is a suitable site that can be reserved [online](#). Tonight's attendees like the idea of holding a potluck picnic mid-week in October, perhaps as a substitute for the October business meeting and working around the trail projects planned for October. Doug will coordinate.

Agenda topic Grant County Fair | Presenter Doug Dexter

Doug wants the chapter to participate in this year's Grant County Fair, scheduled for **September 22-26 in Gila**. We need people to staff a booth, display a map of what we accomplished, and recruit people with pack animals to help with trail clearing. Doug has the canopy, chairs, and banners we normally use at such events. Doug urged members to mark their calendars and plan to help out in Gila.

Christa Osborn (Gila Forest recreation director) is talking about updating the poster the USFS put together the year the Gila chapter cleaned up 100 miles of trail. Gerry will confer with Melissa about creating a poster. Given several copies of the poster, we could put up posters at area feed stores.

Agenda topic Insurance | Presenter Doug Dexter/Gerry Engel

Gerry thinks we "have passed" the insurance requirements for trail project volunteers. Non-GBCH volunteers are covered under the chapter's volunteer agreement with the Forest Service, which has consented to let us sign up people under that agreement. The agreement requires that we have general liability insurance, but nobody knows what that means.

The Gila chapter has medical insurance and some kind of policy provided by BCHNM (but, again, nobody knows exactly what or who it covers).

Agenda topic Johnson Fire | Presenter Randy Roth

Randy Roth recently flew over the Johnson fire area. The burn scar starts south of Snow Lake, extends beyond Aeroplane Mesa, then moves to the SW. Randy reported that the northern half is not burned as much as the southern half. The first three or four northern miles of the Gila River West Fork is charred but northern half is in better shape than the southern part, which was thoroughly torched.

Agenda topic Announcements |

Next Meeting: August 11, 2021