

Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen est. 1992

P. O. Box 293, Emmett, ID 83617

March 2008

LITTLE BUTTE



mooselys blog and more

Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen

Meet the 1st Thursday of every month at La Costa Restaurant in Emmett, ID

For information about joining contact Ellen Knapp, 208.398.7279 or president@sbbchidaho.org



by Robbin Schindele

Foggy was what it was, cool too. The morning sun barely a bright blur in the dense blue grey sky as we pulled into Charles Lox and Ellen Knapp's. There were already four or five rigs parked there, horses standing tied, people brushing them or throwing on saddles. The February/March ride on Little Butte just north of Emmett is an annual thing for Squaw Butte Back Country Horsemen and this was the second year in a row the weather had gone south on us. But unlike last year when we had about six riders, this year we would have about 15 or so (I never really counted but I remember 13).

As Sally and I unloaded and started our own grooming tasks more trailer kept pulling into the yard, good. It's great to see a big turnout and to see one on a nasty morning like this was doubly great.

As we both were on our final task, putting on the steering wheels after warming the bits in our hands for five minutes or so, Ellen came around saying they were going to split the riders into three groups with Rob Adams, Mike Becker and Charles as leaders. I heard Rob say he was just going to ride around to the Southwest and since that's where I wanted to go we rode with him. Our group was Rob, Joanna Stroeder on Robb's gelding Moosely, Sally and I, and Linda Hays who was riding a young gelding and leading a fully saddled molly mule.

Riding southwest around the butte from Charles and Ellen's you drop down a bit and as you follow the contour of the butte gradually climb up its side. It is all open BLM grass land, what trails there are have been made by grazing cows and an old half there road used to manage them.

The fog had thinned as we left the yard and stayed thin until we started to climb. The higher we went the thicker it got. It is eerie riding in fog, the people ahead of you drift in and out of view, sounds are magnified and sometimes the person you know is behind you make sounds that come from the side or even before you. Some rocks and trees assume more muted colors while the colors of other things, like grass and lichens, seem to become more intense. It was really quite pretty, like we were on the moors of Scotland only not so flat.

We all walked along in a spread out line, chatting, laughing. Sally's horse seemed a little spooked by the whole thing and acted unsure of himself, threatening to run away from whatever it was only he could see, then quickly changing his mind and becoming eager to join the other horses. Linda Hays was behind me, last in line, and would drift back and then rejoin us.

We worked our way up and westward following the contour of the butte. In about an hour the light started to brighten, the fog thin. As we topped a rise our first herd of deer sprinted over another in front of us, maybe 20-25 animals, grey and brown in the soft light. By the time we got back to the trailers we had seen about 150 of the timid creatures, the smallest group was four, the largest easily sixty animals. But these were the first so the most exciting.

We dropped lower again and found a spring and full watering trough. There was a two track road so we followed it soon coming to a gate and fence. We turned back. As we backtracked Linda lost her mule for the first time. We all stopped while she gathered her up and got settled.

A quarter creek bed and It was a steep and when I Linda had lost the ran off ahead of was acting up not mule or us. Rob afoot for the mule. scrub oak and mule and Linda join us. Once we we got aboard and started for home.



mile on we crossed a dry headed up and eastward. climb to a small bench looked back from the top mule again. This time he her and south, her horse wanting to follow the was off and running I got off tied Pancho to a watched Rob catch the convince her horse to were all together again

The day had brightened considerably by now, the fog virtually gone, replaced by a clear spring blue sky. We climbed some more and soon hit the old road that circumscribes the butte. It's pretty there, the trail rolls along through scrub oak and sagebrush beside great tumbles of lava rock, the vertical side of the butte rising straight up for four or five hundred feet above them. Rob asked, "Should we stick to the road or take one of these cow paths?"

"I like the road." I answered. I do, beyond where we were it narrows as it winds through the rocks, a nice stretch of trail. It was here Linda lost the mule again and the horse put her off. We asked if she was hurt as she caught the horse. She said not, but she was going to switch and ride the mule. That seemed sensible, so I held the horse while she took off his reins and attached them to the mule's bridle.

Rob said, "I'll lead this horse, Robbin, you lead us back." So off we went; me, Sally, Joanna, Rob with the recalcitrant horse and Linda behind on the mule. We traversed the bench and started down. This is the only half unpleasant part of this ride. From the bench you ride down a steep grade for about three-quarters of a mile, about half as far as you need to go to get to the bottom. The footing is good but it is steep, slow steep. The horses don't like it and neither do I

As the hillside graduated to an easier slope I looked back and the rest were far behind Sally and I. Linda was afoot, the horse Rob was leading was ahead of him. Sally and I turned right to the easiest way to the bottom. I assumed they would follow, they didn't.

So as the trailers came into view we were alone on the grassy hillside. We rode on a bit and I asked Sally to hold up as I turned Pancho to look for the rest of our group. I had a drink and as I retied my canteen they topped a rise above us to the west, Joanna in the lead and Linda aboard the mule again. We turned and headed on. They caught up shortly and we all got back to the trailers together.

Soon after, riders from the other groups started to drift in. I don't know where Mike's group went but I know Charles took his up the North slope to the top of the butte. It's flat as a tabletop up there and the view is spectacular.

Once our horses were unsaddled, watered and tied to the trailer. I wandered into the house and was greeted with the wonderful aromas of a Squaw Butte potluck. I don't know how many dishes there were but I do remember the ham, venison stew, scalloped corn, beef enchiladas, three kinds of beans, two types of salad and a cherry crumble dessert and I know there were at least that many dishes I didn't try. Good food, good company and lively conversation, a bright and warm end to a day that started foggy and cool.



Squaw Butte



The fifth annual Squaw Butte Back Country Skills clinic was a success for another year. Counting BCHI members (and not children) there were 85 attendees; 43 paying guests and 42 members. All the sessions were well attended.



Bill and Marybeth Conger started the day with their fine presentation on what to bring on a back country pack trip.

Dr David Hayes presentation on “*One Step Horsemanship*” kept audience interest as a talk and as a hands on demonstration of his technique with two leas than yearling horses; Rob Adams mustang colt *Payette* and Ellen Knapp’s filly *Lacey*.



Idaho State Brand Inspector Larry Hayhurst was especially well received and sparked many questions and conversations that went on long after his presentation was over.



The hands-on packing sessions by Rob Adams and Ellen Knapp saw lots of activity as novices and veterans alike tried their hand at slinging a load.





Mike Becker's talk on saddles and saddle fit had a good audience and lots of interested questions.

The back country medicine talks, human and equine, both drew crowds.



We'd also like to thank Mike Russo from Quality Trailers in Caldwell who spoke on Trailer Safety and Maintenance; John Erickson, Emmett Ranger District for telling us about trail opportunities in the Boise National Forest; and Steve Leonard for his information on the BLM Wild horse and Burro Adoption Program.

But I do have to say, in truth, the most popular event was lunch.

**A GREAT BIG THANK YOU
TO ALL THE PRESENTERS
& VOLUNTEERS**

MOOSELY'S BLOG



By Moosely Adams

The months of February and March have been very busy around the old homestead. With the snow we have had this winter in our pasture Rob has been feeding us some extra hay as the nice brown grasses we normally get to munch on have been covered. The snow has been sort of fun. We have all sorts of trails through it and have made horse angels in it. Payette thinks it feels very funny on his nose and tries to eat it. The snow gets packed and balled up in our hoofs making footing kind of tricky sometimes. Rob and Payette have been working hard on learning to lead and other ground work. Being young, Payette doesn't have much patience yet, so after being tied up for more then a few minutes, he gets antsy and wants to do something else. I am not much for being tied up either, very boring, so I am trying to teach him how to paw like I do. The other day we all got to take that yucky worming paste and have our hoofs trimmed for spring. Rob did all the older horses first, but being spring we all danced around giving him a bit of a hard time just for fun. My toes had grown over an inch this winter and it felt good to get my feet back in balance. Rob did Payette last, he was very good for his front feet, but is still not sure if he likes his rear feet picked up and rasped. He will have to work on that a bit. Payette is going to be a featured performer in the "Back Country Skills Clinic" as am I and my mom "Mestena". Payette will be working with Dr. Hayes so Rob has been working on trailer loading him so when the time comes to travel to the Circle G River Ranch he will be ready to go. That training has been going very well, in part due to the fact that when Payette first came to our ranch, Rob left the trailer in the pasture and Payette used to climb in and out of it, if he wanted to get out of the weather. I got to go to the February Ride and BBQ this year as a riding horse. I enjoy getting to be a riding horse from time to time, it is more exciting than packing, where all I am asked to do is follow Willow's tail and carry heavy noisy stuff. Joanna rode me with some other horses and a mule. It was a cool and very foggy morning and you could not see very well. The ground was damp and a bit slippery. I could hear things out in the mist, but it wasn't until the sun came out later in the ride that I found out that there were a lot of deer living up on Little butte. They were everywhere and running and jumping. It was very exciting and I would have liked to run and jump with them. Joanna didn't think that was a very good idea, and besides, it would have meant leaving Willow and I am not sure I am brave enough to do that. I did get to lead some of the ride and I sure enjoyed that.



By Joanna Stroeder

Sunday March 30th at 8:30AM was not the warmest of mornings. It seemed like it would be a little bit better than the day before when I was freezing in the Indoor arena at the Pack Clinic. Sally Schindele pulled up to my house, we loaded my mare *Desi* and we were off for the first "Cowboy's Horsemanship Clinic" by my friend, Shannon Allison (hosted by the Ten Mile Riding Club in Kuna). While we were driving over, Sally and I discussed the issues we had with our own riding abilities and skills. Neither of us had ego issues with our hang-ups and we were joking about what we wanted to improve upon today.

We met up with Linda Hayes at the gate of the arena. We didn't wait too long before the gate was opened and we were unloading our horses. Shannon, his wife Renee and their son Dalton were the next to arrive. Soon the parking area was filled with trucks, trailers and horses. My mare has never been in an arena before so there was plenty of snorting going on for quite a while. Sally and Linda soon joined the rest of the riders, ten all together plus some auditors and "observer horses". Shannon was riding a big, beautiful bay gelding named *Top* (his favorite work horse).

"Suppling Your Horse" was the first thing on our agenda after the introductions. I didn't have a clue what that meant. We worked on bending our horses and looking for the perfect moment to release. That sounded easy enough to me but explaining it to my horse wasn't so easy. We had quite a time with that! When you spend all your time on the trail, you forget that riding (really riding) a horse is more than stop/go/don't get bucked off, etc. I really thought my mare and I had a good relationship but apparently there needs to be more communication than "please don't kill me!"

At first some of folks there seemed to be "clinic savvy" individuals who thought this was stuff they already knew and seemed disappointed they had come. What could this cowboy teach them that they hadn't already done? These perceptions started to fall away as the speed of the

exercises increased. By the time we broke for lunch the humans started to change their way of thinking and it became a more humbled and friendlier class. Lunch was provided by a great lady named Janet from Ten Mile Riding Club. Home made soup, bread and cookies, yum! After lunch, we worked on "Gait Transitions, Stopping and Backing"! Sounded easy but the only ones having an easy time were Shannon and *Top!*

Shannon is a great teacher and communicates very well. I never felt like I was going to get into any real trouble with my horse. One point really hit me hard and Shannon pointed out to the class my reluctance to change my way of thinking. Wow! Talk about exposing some issues! Hey, I thought this was horseback riding not therapy! This is not just a horse thing. The horses in your life are just an extension of all the other relationships you have in your life. They just happen to be covered in fur and smell better. If I have to change myself, I can't think of anyone better to change for than *Desi*.

Shannon and I hope this is the start of a really great thing. Having a good relationship and communication with all horses is just so important if you are going to continue riding. We will let you know when and where the next clinics will be. Shannon Allison can be contacted at (208) 834-2363 if you have any questions for him.

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By Sally Schindele

I rested up a bit after the Backcountry Skills Clinic and got up again Sunday at 0dark:30. All five equines were sure surprised to see me at sunrise. My horse *John W* thought it best to park himself strategically behind any other one he could find, but when he saw them in the pasture and he was alone in the paddock he said, "Sure mom, I'll go with you." I (David) Hayesed him for a moment and showed him the only feed around was in the trailer and we were off to Nampa.

Joanna and *Desi* got aboard without ado. As she noted, we had a pleasant drive down to Kuna and got our minds set for whatever we would find. We met Linda Hays at the gate which was shortly unlocked. We got the horses out and started removing mass quantities of hair while Shannon and family arrived. Once in the arena my horse acted as if he did this all the time instead of the last time being about four years ago when we finally passed our Parelli Level One. This was different, with more doing on horse back, no ground work, and less talking.

We starting doing exercises very slowly until everyone was doing the same thing and actually feeling the difference in their mounts. It was good to get the feeling that the horse was physically comfortable because he understood what was being asked of him. It was also very helpful to watch other people getting to the same point with their horses as Shannon talked us

all through it. We started with simple bending: nose to the right, then the left, then breaking at the poll. Then we did this bending at a walk, then at a slow trot, a fast trot, and some at a lope. With about twelve of us that took about two hours. By lunch break we knew each other's names and helped each other laugh at ourselves, in other words, we became a group with common goals.

The day was warming up some and it was good to sit at a picnic table in the sun over a bowl of warm soup for half an hour. I looked around for the nap room, but finding none, I hauled myself back aboard *John W* – he was about a foot taller after lunch than before lunch. After lunch we did forward motion, then stopping – look Ma, no hands, then backing. This took a bit of time and my horse still thought we were bending instead of going forward. We practiced spinning to get the feeling that you go where you look and you look where you go. We must have done more because the second two hours went by as fast as the first two. I was impressed with Shannon's skill in bringing the group together and his facilitative way of sharing the wisdom he has gained by 100s of hours with young horses. Riding in control has a whole new meaning for me.



SBBCH Monthly Meeting-Thursday, April 03, 2008-La Costa Restaurant, Emmett ID

BCHI Convention & Backcountry Outdoor Show-Friday, April 11-13, 2008-Lewiston Fair Grounds

IDAHO HORSE EXPO-Friday, April 19-20, 2008- Nampa Horse Center - Volunteers needed to help set up Friday AM, possibly man the booth Friday afternoon, evening, man the booth Sunday & strike the booth

SBBCH Run Ride - Hard Trigger-Saturday, April 26, 2008- Owyhee's This will be a new loop ride
http://www.sbbchidaho.org/assets/applets/hard_trigger_front.pdf for directions

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for the most up to date information



This new feature is at the suggestion of Rob Adams and I think it is a good one. There are a lot of good cooks in the Squaw Butte Chapter so we hope they will share their knowledge and contribute to this column. If not we'll get recipes wherever we can find them. 'Cause as our late friend Bob Howard used to say, "There's nothing better after a day in the saddle than good groceries."

We'll start with a recipe so simple even a pilgrim can put it together and make a meal fit for a king! Sally has made it many times and it is always a hit. It can be cooked in a standard casserole or pan but we prefer the Dutch.

Sally's Camp Chicken

Coals: 12 on the bottom & 8 on the top

Ingredients:

2-4 pounds chicken, your favorite, thighs, breasts, quarters or a whole chicken quartered

1 package dry Onion soup mix

1 8 oz. jar apricot jam

1 bottle, or 8 oz., Catalina or Russian salad dressing

Brown the chicken in the Dutch with a little olive oil. Mix the other ingredients in a bowl and pour over the browned chicken (you can drain the grease first if you like, I don't). Cook for at least one hour (or until the chicken is done through) and the sauce has thickened.

Serve with steamed white or wild rice. I guarantee there won't be any leftovers.

Sally Schindele

Emmett, ID

And for desert we'll have... *something next month!*