



Keeping Trails Open and Maintained - "we are the workers"

## Minnesota Back Country Horsemen – 2021 Summary Newsletter

**December 2021**

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The 2021 Board of Directors has decided to send a simple brief “summary” style newsletter to members as a way of sharing activities from 2021, announcing the 2022 BCH-MN Annual Meeting and reminding members to renew memberships for 2022. Here it is!

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### **2022 BCH-MN Annual Meeting –**

**General Membership Meeting – Saturday, January 15 from Noon to 3:00 PM at the Culver’s Restaurant in Northfield, MN. Address – 960 Hwy 3 So. Northfield, MN 55057**

Lunch at Noon with meeting beginning at 1 PM. Meals – Dutch Treat. Room is free with purchased meals.

Review of 2021 activities, election of officers (president & treasurer), MN DNR Commissioner, Sarah Strommen, is invited to speak, and other business as necessary.

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### **BCH-MN’ S President Report for the 2021 year**

This year’s Annual meeting is being held January 15, 2022.

Some History - our first membership meeting was held Feb. 2016 at which time the Articles of Incorporation and the first By-Laws were approved for BCH-MN. BCH-MN was formed as a 501 C3 tax exempt organization. The first officers were President, Marvin Breitzkreutz, Vice President, Russ Wright, Secretary, Ken Olson, and Treasurer, Barb Partington. A new set of By-Laws were ratified and adopted at the January 2020 annual meeting.

Last year’s annual meeting was held on line because of Covid using Zoom Conferencing which worked ok. This year we will be holding an in-person Annual meeting.

This past summer our chapter members completed almost twice as many work hours as last year which results in a much larger total dollar value using National Forest Service values. A chain saw safety class was held this summer resulting in several additional members being certified/licensed to help clear falling trees on trails.

Your State Board and Chapters continue to work to add new members. I would like to develop support to help BCH-MN recruit membership from all areas of the state, especially in the northern part of the state.

We seem to be at a disadvantage recruiting new members when comparing equine trail riders' numbers with other none equestrian user groups. These other user groups have access to funds from their equipment companies. Equestrians need to work as a unified recreation group to offset our difference.

Generally speaking, if we were able to generate additional interest within the younger and middle-aged generation, we may move from maintaining to growing in numbers.

I believe the time has come that we need to think outside the box if we intend to grow our long-term viability as an organization.

Adding riding and other activities along with maintaining the camps and trails could increase interest from new riders in becoming part of BCH-MN. I believe this is something worth looking into.

Merry Christmas and safe riding to All

Marvin Breitkreutz

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## 2021 Volunteer Hours Report

This year we were able to do more work with the relaxation of Covid restrictions. To date we have recorded 1456 hours of volunteer work, 55 hours of power equipment use, 20 hours of heavy equipment use, 12 stock days and \$557 in donations. This gives us a total value of \$61,073 in BCH MN service. This is double of what we were able to do last year. Work was done at Zumbro Bottoms, Forestville, Vinegar Ridge, Beaver Falls, and Hay Creek. Thank you to all who participated in camp and trail improvements. If you have hours not yet reported, please get them to me by December 31. You can send them to me at [freese.diane@outlook.com](mailto:freese.diane@outlook.com).

Diane Freese  
Volunteer Hours Coordinator



## BCH-MN 2021 Rendezvous

July 31, Aug 1 2021

Beaver Falls County Park – North Unit  
Morton MN

Submitted by Barb Partington, Rendezvous Committee Chair

This year's Rendezvous was held at a Renville County Park, Beaver Falls. Located near Morton, Minnesota. Beaver Falls County Park is a beautiful park, with 10 miles of trails. For most of the participants, this was their 1<sup>st</sup> time coming to this park. The Rendezvous included group rides, poker run,

potluck, silent auction, music around the campfire, Dutch oven cooking and lots of comradery.

Jesse Diehn, Renville County Park Manager, was our guest speaker. It was very informal question/answers session. With limited park staff, he is very appreciative of volunteers. Marv Breitzkreutz (BCH-MN President) and Larry Gunderson have a great working relationship with him. They have done hours and hours of work in the park. This past year they have done the below improvements.

- Cleared the huge brush pile and extended the camping area next to the creek.
- Added gravel to create level campsites
- Added posts to the existing tie line
- Added new tie lines.
- Cleared and repaired trails
- Created new connecting trails.
- MTRA has given grants to the park
- Planned improvement – add an additional camping area, with electricity.

All in all, it was a successful Rendezvous. The comfortable temperatures were a boon and no bugs. A big thanks to all who participated and donated to the silent auction and poker run. We were very happy with the \$375 raised for BCH-MN.

In talking to everyone, they enjoyed the weekend and would do it again. Beaver Falls is worth the drive!

Thanks to everyone for coming to the BCH-MN 2021 Rendezvous!



Scavenger Hunt was a good time for all that participated. We hung 6 buckets in different places in the park at Beaver Falls and had directions as to the locations that needed to be followed.



## Chainsaw Training Wrap-up

ZB BCH\_MN set up a training session for chainsaw operation and safety. We applied for a grant from National BCHA and received approval for the grant. Thanks, BCHA.

Once we got started the State Board voted to join us and with their help a trainer was lined up that happened to be the retired National BCHA president, Darrell Wallace. He is a certified National Forest Service trainer that has done many training sessions throughout the country. We appreciated his time and talent as our trainer, we learned a lot about safety and how to safely cut up a fallen tree. Darrell's knowledge and presentation was very enlightening is that he had stories from different times he had been cutting trees and stories he was told of by others. Most of them involved safety and how to be prepared for anything that could happen when cutting trees.

We held two different sessions involving two locations and a dozen people. Special thanks go to Dawn Dick and Angie Murphy for offering their places for our training session.

We had four hours of classroom instruction and then went outside to a few trees that were laying on the ground. Everybody got a chance to cut on a couple trees where we got to practice the safety and process' we had learned, and each got a lumper to do the dirty work as we cut the trees into moveable pieces. Safety was stressed as the others watched, much like if we had group out clearing trails and ran into a large tree blocking the trail. Darrell was very cautious with us, but we all gained great knowledge. The day outside was a great time with sunshine and nice breeze to keep us cool. The training session was approved by the DNR so we have a group of certified, trained trail clearing people ready for spring.



## Chapter Reports

### **Southeast Minnesota Back Country Horsemen (SEMNBCH) was busy in 2021**

- \* Our 2021 annual meeting was via zoom due to Covid.
- \* Very successful Tack Sale at Forestville State Park the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend of May raising money for projects.
- \* Trail cleaning at Hay Creek in May 2021
- \* Work day in May 2021 working on the mounting blocks / benches for Historic Forestville.
- \* Installed mounting blocks / benches at Historic Forestville.
- \* Install a hitching rail and repaired 2 hitching rails at Forestville State Park.
- \* Purchased and had delivered 51 tons (3 loads) of gravel to Hay Creek for wet areas on the trails.
- \* Trail cleaning at Wet Bark.
- \* National Trail Day we cleaned trails at Vinegar Ridge.
- \* Placed a mounting block / bench at Vinegar Ridge.
- \* Placed a mounting block / bench at Hay Creek.
- \* Trail ride, camping & potluck at Wet Bark.
- \* Cleaned trails at Hay Creek - again.
- \* Repaired a picnic table at Hay Creek.
- \* Cleaned horse camp at Forestville State Park.







## 2021 Wrap up for ZB-BCH-MN

What a season we had this past year, great weather mostly, and great times for enjoying horse riding anywhere around.

ZB-BCH-MN had a good year as for the projects we worked on. Last year you remember we started fund raising for adding tie lines at West Camp. We planned to add about 10 sets and had everything ready to go at our spring cleanup day. Well, we found out we needed to have an Archeological study done to be sure there were no historical items located near our planned sites, anyway we are still waiting to get that done. We have items ready to build them and some funding for gravel etc. and the plans are complete, but the study is on the DNR list. Maybe in 2022 we can put them up, however this past year we were able to repair some of the ties as posts broke, total of 8 post were replaced at West camp and 1 at Central camp. Speaking of central camp next year, you will notice hitch rails by bathroom and new gravel on the tie lines at Central and North camp. We got donations from members for the hitch rails and placed them so riders can tie their horses when using the restroom. We also requested the DNR provide some gravel as the tie lines at those camps were desperately in need of hole filling. Thanks, Frontenac DNR managers Jake and Sonja for getting that and having it spread this fall so it can settle all winter and be solid for next season. Great improvement there so we all can enjoy those camps.

Logging is happening this fall on the west side of the river up the hill to "Phone booth". We will see what that does to our trails there. We have had meeting with the ZB Coalition to discuss trail repairs with an FRTP grant with additional money from Trail pass funding, that has been waiting for a couple years. The group decided together that the money would be best invested in the area to the west of the river towards West Camp. West Scenic trail, Ritchie's Mountain trail, Rock Hill and others up there. Well, that is some of the area that logging is happening so we will see. The area will be viewed, and engineers will plan things and a plan will be presented to the coalition group for our thoughts. This process might take a couple years, but it will be worth it in the end.

A number of years ago the DNR started a trail review of the Richard Dorer Forest trails, well that is still in limbo. They met with groups and asked for ideas and it has been on hold for a couple years and is still on hold. The Zumbro Bottoms, Krueger and Hay Creek areas are the first to be reviewed but it is still holding for the DNR to proceed. Many reasons for this delay but we will keep checking on the progress and more meeting will be coming as they restart the review. We will spread the info of public meeting as we get it, we need your support to strengthen our desires to ride at Zumbro Bottoms.

On the first weekend we could ride we hosted a Chicken barbeque, we served 98 half chickens grilled to perfection by Ed and Al. Thanks guys for your expertise with preparing that many. We hope to do it again in 2022. First weekend in May for opening riding season.

We also hosted a Poker run with the MN Walking Horse Association as a fund raiser and fun event. Maybe next year we will do that again as the event raised money that will help us with improvements at the Bottoms. Thanks, Susie, for your work in preparing this event.



Again, this year we had a scavenger hunt on National Trail Day, what a great time those that participated had figuring out the clues and locating the chips that were placed on the trails. We might be planning it again for 2022 as everyone had a great time.

I want to thank everyone that has joined the Zumbro Bottoms Back Country Horseman of Minnesota chapter. We support the trails and camps at Zumbro and with your support and help we improve them. Please consider joining, we show over 1,000 followers on Facebook which is good, as we use that to spread info of concerns and ideas but joining, gives us funding to continue work along with a better voice toward improvements on trails. Membership is a good way to show your support for our cause and you get membership in the National Back Country Horseman along with communications of things other states are doing. There is strength in numbers when we present these number to the DNR it helps get us recognized.

Remember the opportunity to ride our trails in Minnesota is a privilege and with your support we plan to keep that opportunity around for many years.

Bruce Kvittem  
President ZB-BCH-MN



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## Calendar of Events

Jan 15 – Back Country Horsemen of MN – 2022 Annual Meeting – Noon – 3 PM – Culver’s – Northfield MN

Jan 22 – Southeast MN Back Country Horsemen of MN – 2022 Annual Meeting – 1 PM – Forestville State Park

Jan 30 – Zumbro Bottoms Back Country Horsemen of MN – 2022 Annual Meeting – Noon – BJ’s/Whipperwill

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## 2021 BCH-MN Officers and Directors

President – Marvin Breitkreutz – 320-212-9843 [mp horses43@gmail.com](mailto:mp horses43@gmail.com)

Vice President – Diane Freese – 507-319-5808 [freese.diane@outlook.com](mailto:freese.diane@outlook.com)

Secretary – Ken Olson – 507-251-7401 [oakridgefarm244@gmail.com](mailto:oakridgefarm244@gmail.com)

Treasurer – Steve Freese – 507-271-0052 [sfree49@outlook.com](mailto:sfree49@outlook.com)

### SEMN Chapter Delegates –

Dave Robson – 507-273-8401 [crazyhorses@gmail.com](mailto:crazyhorses@gmail.com)

Nola Robson – [nolar2@gmail.com](mailto:nolar2@gmail.com)

### ZB Chapter Delegates to State Board –

Dawn Dick – [winddancer55945@yahoo.com](mailto:winddancer55945@yahoo.com)

Jim Reisinger – 612-919-6382 [jtreisinger@yahoo.com](mailto:jtreisinger@yahoo.com)

**National Delegates** – Marv Breitkreutz and Diane Freese

### Chapter Presidents -

- Southeast MN BCH-MN - Dave Robson - crazyhorses@gmail.com
- Zumbro Bottoms BCH-MN - Bruce Kvittem - kvbranch@mail.com

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**Renew your membership for 2022!!**  
**Contact your chapter or state treasurer**