

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

Meeting date | time 8/10/2016 6:00 PM | Meeting location WNMU Watts Hall

Meeting called by Doug Dexter

Type of meeting Monthly business meeting

Note taker Cindi deCapiteau

Attendees

Cathy Brett, Sam Conway, Cindi deCapiteau, Dixie Dexter, Doug Dexter, Gerry Engel, Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Russ Imler, Rawlings Lemon, Maureen McLeod, Ted Miles, Alexandra Olsen (speaker), Lee Perry, Cheryl Roth, Randy Roth, Becky Shumway, Donna Tillmann, Nat Williams, Dean Wilson

AGENDA TOPICS

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

Doug called the herd to order, while a storm gathered outside.

Agenda topic *Recognize guests and new members* | Presenter *[Name]*

Joining us this evening were Dean Wilson and Maureen McLeod as new members, and Alexandra Olson from Gila Bike and Hike. Alexandra is tonight's education segment speaker.

Agenda topic *Additions or changes to agenda and minutes* | Presenter *Doug Dexter*

To this evening's agenda were added a couple of fascinating items. Under the heading of New Business, the chapter secretary is eager to expand our horizons by creating a chapter Facebook page.

Doug Dexter asked if we want to continue the 50/50 raffle. This lucrative enterprise was instituted when Gila Regional Medical Center began charging 10 bucks an hour to rent the cramped (but air conditioned) meeting room where we gathered for oh-so-many years. Doug mused that we're not paying rent on the classroom we occupy at Watts Hall, so there's no need for the raffle to continue—unless we're desperate for pocket cash, crave the excitement of drawing a ticket and squinting at the numbers on ticket(s) we purchased to see if we struck it rich, and want to line the chapter's coffers with a smattering of cold, hard cash every month. Doug called for a vote on the spot and a random display of hands and mutterings in favor of a motion to keep up this risky business indicated that the 50/50 raffle will continue, giving everybody a monthly opportunity to acquire vast wealth.

There's also the matter of fun rides, Doug noted, for which agitation has bubbled up from the membership. Doug repeated his plea from previous meetings for somebody(ies) to step up as ride leaders. Again receiving little in the way of vigorous volunteers to fill that role, Doug adopted his customary diplomatic tactic (instead of jumping up and down, hollering and raging) by commenting that if you have thoughts about places where such rides can happen, and you're willing to organize people, places, and times (but not clear wood from the trail or serve as the trail boss), and if you have read and comprehended this terrifying run-on sentence, please talk to Doug.

The minutes from the chapter's July meeting were approved.

Agenda topic *Financial report* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

See report on page 6. Balance is now **9999.99**. If you have questions, Gerry says to ask Jean (who wasn't present tonight). Doug noted that Jean and Rawlings need to get together to sort out the infinite and durable confusion over the timing of payments to NMBCHA.

Action items

Person responsible

Figure out timing of dues/insurance/etc. payments to the state BCH chapter.

Jean Hill, Rawlings Lemon

Agenda topic *Membership* | Presenter *Gerry Engel*

The chapter is now the proud container of 67 members.

Agenda topic *Publicity* | Presenter *Ted Miles*

Ted, always on board with the important details, noted that the GBCH's change of meeting location has been noted on the GBCH website [calendar](#).

He also said that one of the online newspapers wants to publish an announcement/blurb/article about our monthly meeting, including the speaker. Ted needs to receive meeting information (e.g., name of guest speakers and the topics they cover) a week or so ahead of meeting so he can get it published.

Action items

Person responsible

Send education segment topic and name of speaker to Ted Miles a week before business meeting.

Cheryl Roth

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

Gerry reports that although he's busy remodeling his hacienda, his list of things to do in his spare time includes de-logging the Tadpole Ridge trail. He cleared part of the trail a while back, but would like to get back up there to finish it. See map on page 7 for the location of the Tadpole Ridge trail.

The chapter's last project was the loop up Gallinas Canyon to the Crest Trail, then down Railroad Canyon. As a result, that scenic route is cleared for riding.

The corrals at the Upper Gallinas campground have been off-limits to the riding public since the Silver Fire and subsequent flooding scared the liver out of the Forest Service (but for good reason). Still, the corrals themselves and the vehicle road between the creek and the corrals are intact and appear to have suffered no flood damage. The fact that campers can't take vehicles across the creek to take care of the corralled horses is a significant inconvenience. So Gerry corralled some USFS big kahunas and went to Upper Gallinas to assess the feasibility of re-opening the area to motor vehicles. Gerry is confident that the corrals will probably be accessible again, but he doesn't know when; the forest service engineers need to get a bulldozer up there to move the Jersey wall barriers and maybe even smooth the creek crossings.

The Gila chapter's volunteer agreement with the forest service requires signatures from every chapter member who wants to be a part of it. Gerry urged us to sign it before leaving the meeting tonight.

Doug inquired about sawyer training and recertification, something that needs to happen periodically so that the Forest Service can be confident that a sawing member can cut logs off the trails without cutting a femoral artery. Gerry responded that our best shot at sawyer training is spring 2017.

Gerry observed that for trail clearing, it's better to get as much as possible done in the spring. The public is out on the trails in the summer and hunting season takes over in the fall.

The Lower Rio Grande BCH (LRGBCH) chapter has adopted part of the Continental Divide Trail from Highway 35 north up to North Star Mesa Road (map on page 8), an area that encompasses Brannon Park and Rocky Canyon. Those good people hope to work on their clearing commitment this year and suggested beginning the work on October 22. That particular date bumps into hunting season, which means the notoriously narrow, rocky, and gullied North Star Mesa Road (a challenging route in the best of times) would be even trickier than usual because of the added congestion of hunters and their hotel-like rigs. Amy Hartell (recreation coordinator for the southern section of USFS Region 3) is meeting with the Rio Grande people on September 17. Gerry will advise us when he hears from Pat Buls (current president of the LRGBCH) so that those of us who want to help out on the project can do so.

Action items**Person responsible**

Advise GBCH membership by email of dates and details about LRGBCH project in Rocky Canyon area

Gerry Engel

Agenda topic *Equine Evacuation* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Doug Dexter has been working continuously on the challenge of maintaining the call tree that supports the chapter's emergency evacuation communication strategies. He expects to be finished with it before the September meeting.

Action items**Person responsible**

Complete the emergency notification call tree.

Doug Dexter

Agenda topic *Grant County Search and Rescue* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Search and rescue has been slow this year, so the Gila Chapter's mounted team has had lots of time for training. A session took place recently out in the Burro mountains. Participants learned about signal mirrors, fire-starting in less-than-ideal conditions, and basic survival skills.

Agenda topic *Christmas party and horse camp* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

Doug has reserved the Buckhorn Saloon for Sunday, December 11 for the chapter's Christmas potluck event. The Buckhorn will provide a bartender, but chapter members will have to take care of setup. The party is to be held from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Doug asked for party activity suggestions. Ted Miles offered that we could show the video if Doug gets a screen. (The video was shown at the 2015 party, but nobody could appreciate it because it ran in an obscure location off the Buckhorn's bar.) If you have other ideas for the party, spill them to Doug directly.

Doug reported that he hasn't been able to resolve the matter of a campout location on property belonging to Griffin Propane. Dates for the camp-out are also up in the air as the summer of 2016 passes into oblivion. An autumn timeframe coincides with hunting season, of course, which complicates the use of the Celebration site we have used in the past. That said, we'll see how the request to Griffin Propane pans out.

Action items**Person responsible**

Follow up with Griffin Propane about use of their property for the GBCH horse camp.

Doug Dexter

Agenda topic *Hidalgo-Lordsburg Parade* | **Presenter** *Doug Dexter*

As Doug mentioned at the July meeting, the Hildago-Lordsburg Chamber of Commerce invited us to participate in the parade held prior to the county fair. Two riders, Cindi deCapiteau and Cheryl Roth, have stepped up. If anybody else wants to join in, talk to Cindi or Cheryl. The parade will be held on August 26 beginning at 5:30 p.m. Line-up is near the Lordsburg high school.

Agenda topic *NMBCHA Rendezvous* | **Presenter** *Rawlings Lemon*

Rawlings reported that he and Mickey Lemon, along with 50 or 60 other BCH members, attended the 2016 NMBCH Rendezvous on behalf of the Gila chapter. The event was held at the Resumidero campground in the San Pedro Wilderness (northern New Mexico). It was a nine-hour drive up and back. Rawlings commented that the venue is a great place—a wide-open meadow ringed by trees and through which a stream flows. It has lots of trails to support long or short rides. The campground is at 9000 feet, so the temperatures are cool at night. During the day, while the rest of us were complaining about the 90+ degree heat in Grant County, the rendezvous riders enjoyed daytime temperatures in the 70s. The attendees did some trail clearing. Breakfast was prepared by the Santa Fe chapter, which hosted the rendezvous.

Rawlings said he and Mickey became better acquainted with members from other chapters, as well as with the people who run the state organization. A rider from the Zuni tribe said she rode at NAN Ranch and had almost nothing but good things to say about that event; she did complain that she gained 10 lbs. there.

Action items

Person responsible

Schedule a board meeting to discuss hosting the Rendezvous next year.

Doug Dexter

Agenda topic *Adopt a Highway* | **Presenter** *Cindi deCapiteau*

The next highway cleanup will be held September 20, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Maureen McLeod has offered to take over coordination of the program.

Action items

Person responsible

Provide highway cleanup procedures and recordkeeping procedures to Maureen McLeod

Cindi deCapiteau

Agenda topic *Education Segment* | **Presenter** *Cheryl Roth*

Cheryl introduced Alexandra Olsen from Gila Hike & Bike, who joined us this evening to talk about the interaction of bicycles and horses on local roads and trails. Alexandra, an equestrian and a mountain biker, came here from New York, where the relationship between equestrians and cyclists is contentious. She is delighted to discover that the relationship is much friendlier here in Grant County.

Alexandra asked for feedback from us on how cyclists behave. Cathy Brett noted that everybody behaves cordially and respectfully, so interactions are good except when cyclists quietly leave the trail and hide behind trees. We need cyclists to say hello because horses can get spooked when oncoming traffic acts (in a horse's perception) furtively. Lee Perry said she prefers that cyclists ride on past without stopping because a horse sees them coming and is accustomed to their motion, although she acknowledged that this concept is not necessarily true for all riders and horses. The group agreed that under most conditions, cyclists should stop and let the horse pass.

Alexandra also introduced the matter of trail footing. Chapter members noted that a trail torn up by bikes isn't a big problem. Cheryl Roth commented that cyclists who wear headphones represent a danger to themselves, as well as horses and riders, because the headphone-burdened cyclist can't hear a horse's approach or the warnings issued

by its rider. Alexandra responded that the cycling community recommends cyclists don't wear headphones for that very reason.

Doug Dexter requested that the cycling community notes the location of trees that block the trail and to let GBCH know about them. GPS coordinates for trail blockages are ideal and that information can be conveyed to the Gila chapter by way of the chapter's website contact form (<https://gilabchnm.com/category/contact/>).

Alexandra noted that she sees most equestrians on Ft. Bayard. Gila Hike & Bike has adopted the Tadpole Ridge trail and it's there that horses and bikers often interfere with each other. Ted Miles (also both an equestrian and cyclist) said he once encountered a fast biker who apologized for his speed and then wanted information about how to behave around horses. The bottom line is that cyclists need to talk with riders when they meet each other on the trail. Conversation is key.

Donna Tillmann related that her experience with mountain bikers has been good, but there is sometimes a problem on Highway 15, where cyclists seem to want to teach drivers a lesson by taking up the whole road. Donna asked what are drivers of horse rigs expected to do? Highway 15 is notoriously narrow and twisty. A driver can't pass a group of cyclists, so must drive at their speed. She has followed a group for a half-hour until the cyclists decided to let her by. Donna noted that she is always courteous to the cyclists, but she doesn't know what to do about this. Alexandra responded that the cycling community engages in many conversations about Highway 15 and is working with local police patrols because although the law says bikes can be on the road, courtesy toward other travelers is an important safety factor. A trailer doesn't necessarily track with its tow vehicle. If a driver sounds the vehicle horn, it can startle the cyclist. Donna observed that cyclists are so vulnerable and she is concerned for their safety.

Conversations within the local cycling community are beneficial, but some of the cyclists are from other areas, especially around the time of the Tour of the Gila. Alexandra noted that out-of-town cyclists are often friends with local bikers, so an information exchange can still occur. She commented that it might be useful to work up some cyclist-specific signs.

Alexandra closed by reminding us that the Signal Peak Challenge cycling event will occur over Labor Day. The challenge happens on September 4 and traverses the west trail. She asked us to plan for that and maybe not ride that trail that day. She also reminded us that the Tommyknocker race will occur on Ft. Bayard at the end of February. That race begins at the Servis Corrals, but doesn't travel on the Dragonfly Trail.

Cheryl Roth reported that about 12 people showed up for last month's packing demo, which was held at her barn in Arenas Valley. Somebody left a chair, which Cheryl brought along tonight, hoping to find the owner.

Agenda topic *Announcements*

Cheryl Roth announced that the chapter's next education segment will feature local veterinary rock star, Dr. Bradberry.

Cindi deCapiteau expressed interest in setting up a Gila chapter Facebook page, where information about trail projects and other announcements could be posted. The group agreed to let her do this, so long as she didn't post the surnames of anybody mentioned there. Somebody observed that a Facebook page might be useful to recruit younger talent to our cause.

Dave Imler (or was it Russ?) asked for a status report on the big bucks awarded to the Gila chapter from the Southern New Mexico Resource Allocation Committee (RAC). (This refers to a \$15K grant that Gerry Engel applied for to reimburse chapter and member expenses for trail equipment, food, and mileage in connection with trail projects.) Gerry responded that the money is there for us, but nothing has been set up yet to pay it out. Apparently a change in RAC personnel or procedures has occurred and Gerry isn't getting very good responses to his inquiries. He's not sure how requests for reimbursement will be handled and he's waiting to find out.

Finance and Membership Report

Gila Chapter BCHA

August 10, 2016

FINAL Treasurer/Member Report

(bank statements available at meeting)

Bank Balance June 15, 2015 \$4,909.87

Deposits

two \$ 47.64 1 membership, 50/50 July, & interest

Withdrawals

2 checks \$ 152.99 Natrc & RAC expenses.

Bank Balance July 17, 2015 \$4,804.52

Transactions after July 17

7/19	#1312	\$83.00	R3 Natrc fee
7/19	#1323	\$84.39	Natrc-Desert Exposure ad
8/2	#1319	\$41.51	State meeting expense
8/5	#1320	\$28.05	reimburse Roth groceries pack trip

Bank Balance August 10 \$4,567.57

2016 membership One new member joined at July meeting, so now we have 67 members, 21 families and 23 singles.

Tadpole Ridge Trail (from USGS Twin Sisters 1999 map)



Sapillo to North Star Mesa Road via Rocky Canyon CDT segment (from USGS North Star Mesa 1999 map)

