



# Southwest Cairn

Marking the trails for our members



## From the Presidents Saddle



It may be winter but seems like we have a lot of activity going on. We had a work day on February 17, removing tumbleweeds at the White Reef (aka Harrisburg) trailhead. We had a large turn out to help so the work was finished quickly. See related story and photos in the newsletter. The Cottonwood trailhead has tumbleweeds but a hiking group has volunteered to clean that area in the near future.

I just received an email about a very interesting story in a movie titled “Call Me Mule.” It features a 65-year-old gentleman who has roamed about the west for the last three decades with his

mules, preferring to live a nomadic life in the outdoors. It is one of the films featured in DocUtah, shown on March 2 at 1:20 PM in the Sunset Megaplex Theater. I plan to attend; hope to see or have seen you there.

Construction has started on the new trailhead area off Exit 13, Grapevine Crossing, aka Brackens Loop. We provided suggestions on the new trailer parking lot, which will be smaller than what we are accustomed to with the intent to have 10 parking stalls. Parking for autos is a separate lot. We strived to get as much space as possible.

Speaking of Brackens, members noticed a very well defined “new” rogue trail, apparently for bikes, with white painted markings, etc. Thanks to those members, it was reported to the land manager and they verified it was not an authorized trail. They attempted to obscure the trail and will be monitoring the area. There also appears to be unauthorized trails with equestrian usage. That is a no – no! Hopefully we all know the authorized trails and follow our credo of “leave no trace.” More about this topic forthcoming. *(Con’t page 7)*

### NEXT MEETING

**Community Building**  
**See Page 9 for details**



**March 9th—Babalon**

**See Page 9 for Details**

**Daylight Savings Time. Spring ahead one hour March 3rd**

### Inside this issue:

President’s Message	1
Ride Pictures	2
Ride Story	3
Meeting Minutes	4-5
Leeds Clean-up story & Pictures	6
Bells on Trails	7-8
Calendar—Sponsor of the month	9
Membership Application	10

**March 6th**

**Meeting at the Community Bldg 6:00PM Education Business to Follow**





## Cottonwood Hills Group Ride

February 10, 2024

By Jeanette Blasdell

After a week of rain it was great to hit the trails again, and not leave them permanently marked by our presence. Thus, our Red Mountain ride was switched to Cottonwood Hills. A lot is happening in front of the Coor's distribution plant so the turnoff to the trailhead was not very visible for those who had not been there lately. Luckily, 13 managed to find their way amongst the construction. In attendance were: Eliza Edgar, Tammy Engeness, Steve Julian, Jarice Butterfield, Tori DeMille, Roger Green, Amanda and Kaily Heinritz, Mike Huntsman, David Barnsworth, Kent Crump, Deja Schweitzer, and myself—Jeanette Blasdell.

We rode the Cottonwood Hills/Spanish Wash/ Prospector loop which turned out to be 6.8 miles. The rain definitely cleared the air and the awesome landscape along this ride just popped with the contrast created by the red rocks, Pine Valley's brilliantly snow covered peaks, the bright blue sky, and then the most magnificent clouds. Family and friends we sent pictures to commented they looked like photos from western movies. Go figure! No wonder so many movies have been filmed in this area.

All went well along the ride. We had some new attendees and it was great to see them, along with seasoned members, helping one another as our large group settled in. It was also lovely hearing all of the networking that occurred as we enjoyed the beautiful day and the awesome scenery that we are so fortunate to have in our own backyard. I feel so blessed to call Saint George my home!



Happy Easter—March 31st



**Meeting Minutes – February 7, 2024**

**In Attendance:** Tammy Engeness, Deja Schweitzer, Ann Guhman, Fran Wilby, Sherry Schmalz, Ric Schmalz, Roger Green, Steve Julian, Wayne Staab, Scott Ford, Paul Sloane, Jeanette Blasdell, Jarice Butterfield

**Call to Order:** Jeanette Blasdell (Chair Lin Hokana is out of town)

**Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions**

**Educational Presentation:** Kristen Comella, Snow Canyon State Park Manager

**Requested Speaker:** Wayne Staab spoke to the group seeking an endorsement for a scenic byway status for Utah State Route 18 starting at Chuckwalla and goes to Enterprise (see attached information)

**Minutes:** Motion to accept/corrected as published in the newsletter.

Motion made, seconded and all in favor

**Treasurer's Report:** Jeanette Blasdell

There was one correction made to last month's budget – room rental was part of a state meeting expense. There is a positive budget. Motion made, seconded and all in favor

**Old Business:**

Chapter Venmo Account – Deja

Small fee charged for each transaction; the VENMO account can be used for sales, fundraiser proceeds and memberships, etc.

**New Business:**

BCHU State Meeting Report –Freddy

(see handout attached) there will be monetary awards for chapters with the most new members.

There is a chapter grant of \$500 – chapter must have a specific project in mind

Brackens Loop and unsanctioned bike trail – Jeanette

BCHU-Southwest Logo on Apparel – Jeanette

It was emphasized that it is important to wear apparel with organization logos to promote the organization and get new memberships.

**Committee Reports: Appoint Committee Chairs - Lin**

Liaison to local public lands agencies: Freddy Dunn and Lin Hokana

Confluence Park fencing – Lin notified land manager-the fencing is not up yet

Rancher is supposed to finish fencing. The animals are gone but fencing is not fixed.

o Bracken's Loop – there is a new trail that has been marked with paint circles; this was reported to see if it is a legitimate, approved trail.

Freddie and Lin plan to meet with the Pine Valley Trails Manager, Braden Yardley, to walk the trails and come up with a potential plan for a dedicated equestrian campground. This will take place on February 21, 2024.

Membership – **A Chairperson is still needed** – anyone interested and willing to serve should contact Lin Hokana

Social Media – Announcements coming from source (BCHU-Southwest) : Deja/Freddy

The State is going to try and put an interactive calendar up so that all of the various rides organizations are going on can be posted. Emails will now be coming from the State organization versus local folks.

Work Projects: Jeanette Blasdell and Deja Schweitzer

Add gravel/sand to step overs at 600 in Hurricane, Harrisburg near campground.

Harrisburg (White Reef) Cleanup and ride February 17, 2024 10am (White Reef Trail Head Across from KOA) – more information will be forthcoming

Education: John West – excused (out of town)

March – Holly Snow Canada, Executive Director, CSU

April – Ron Cooper, Trails Crew Foreman, UT Div. Outdoor Rec. Trail Crew

**Ride Calendar:** February 5, 2024 (see new calendar)

- February 10 Cottonwood
- March 9 Gunlock
- April 13 Babylon
- May 11 Mount Carmel (there is primitive camping and corrals are available)
- June 1 Pine Valley Camp Out (members should reserve and/or RSVP to Jeanette)
- August 10 Navajo Lake
- September 14 Buckskin Gulch

### White Reef (aka Harrisburg) Work Party

Shovel, rake or pitch fork, which works best at removing tumble weeds? Well, the answer was researched on Saturday, February 17, 2024. A crew of 19 folks, two of which were from Big Brothers – Big Sisters and two staff from our BLM office, tested these tools to find the ideal tumble weed remover. It was a good day to work, not too hot, not too cold with a light cloud cover and light breeze. Two dumpsters were provided to deposit our unwanted “friends” and of course they needed to be stomped on to make room for all the material. Thanks go to those who “jumped in” to pretend they were crushing grapes to make wine. Too bad there’s no use for crushed tumble weeds; couldn’t we come up with a new nutritional use? We would make a fortune with all the supply we had.

Many of us came with a horse or two in a trailer, or came in a car or SUV. Luckily for all, Scott and Sophia Ford brought their pickup, which was an enormous help with loading and stomping weeds in the bed and then hauling them to a dumpster at the other end of the parking lot. With the great turnout of workers, we were finished in about 45 minutes, but the dumpsters were full and there were still tumble weeds to remove. We did clear the parking lot at the trailhead so it looks inviting to use, as it should be.

Thanks go to those who turned out: Judy Zumwalt, Tammy Engeness, Eliza Edgar, Richard Boschee, David Mayfield, Judith Mayfield, Carol Gregory, Jarice Butterfield, Tori DeMille (who can ride backwards), Steve Julian, Scott Ford, Sophia Ford, Jeanette Blasdell, Lin Hokana, Melissa Umand (spelling?), Isabelle Derrick, Hannah Merrick and Melissa Buchmann. And we can’t forget Dawna Ferris-Rawley for getting things set up for us. It was a good day, with an informal trail ride after work was done.

Which tool works best? That’s a personal choice – there was no consensus



Our educational session for March will feature Holly Canada, Executive Director of Conserve Southwest Utah. She will be discussing the proposed North Corridor Bypass through the Desert Reserve and her organization's opposition to it. Come hear the latest status of this project backed by our elected officials.

Also in the newsletter is an article about bells, and how horses interpret or react to them. Should bicycles have bells to announce their presence? It's an interesting article with pro and con comments.

Happy Trails...Lin

---

## Bells on Trails

February 18, 2024

Horses can hear bells. Hikers, runners, horseback riders and bike riders can all hear bells. Wildlife can hear bells. Noise is pollution, and many trail users wear ear buds to listen to music instead of to nature, when out in the nature. Everyone is different.

Horses are not trained in sport or recreation to recognize that a bell sound can mean danger. An unexpected noise or movement is often what sets a horse off and into fear and flight. Unexpected encounters with trail users and people with horses often lead to accidents and fear.

Here are some comments about bells being used to solve the multi-user trail etiquette challenge.

- If the other person is wearing headphones, how is a bell a less-startling or less-confrontational way to get their attention? If they are wearing headphones, shouting is likely your only option whether you have a bell on your bike or not.
- "I thought these bells would be a great idea since I trail ride alone. My horse found them to be annoying at all paces above a walk. His head would go up and ears back at the noise. I also found them to disturb the peace and quiet of riding alone."
- Horses, as prey animals, are trying to understand everything and everyone around them for survival. Allowing horses to pass by you while you stand off the trail and the human voice is the best way for horses to comprehend the relaxed intensions of the other trail users.
- While the horses may hear bells, they need to decode the bell sound, adding an extra step to their survival calculations, and still try to assess the intensions of the people, so actions by trail users giving horses a sense of spatial awareness (the horse has to relate their bodily movements to objects in their environment) or an escape path or a pleasant human voice is much more helpful to horses than bells.
- Bells have been used for centuries on bikes, for bikes, horns on cars, for cars and with people with horses the human voice is the best choice. Horses can assess the intensions of trail users through their tones of voice.
- My horse can hear you from quite a distance ahead of him but doesn't hear your voices or your bells from behind until you are right there.
- "If you are coming quickly or come up on a corner, EVERY bad encounter I have had with a bike has been from behind or an unexpected corner confrontation!"
- Shouting "On your left!" to pass someone can work, doesn't always get the reaction you expect—a startled person is rarely a happy one—and often they hesitate like a squirrel in the road or even jump right in your path.
- The bell can alert you, but does this mean the bell on the bike has to constantly ring?
- Bells are less startling or confrontational than shouting at someone, especially if they are wearing headphones. By comparison, sounding a bell from a distance announces your presence without making it seem like you have more right to be on the trail than anyone else, which is how it can seem when you shout.
- From one article from REI – our favorite is... "I hate bells," said one Pacific Northwest rider interviewed who wished to remain anonymous. "They are super annoying. If I rang a bell going

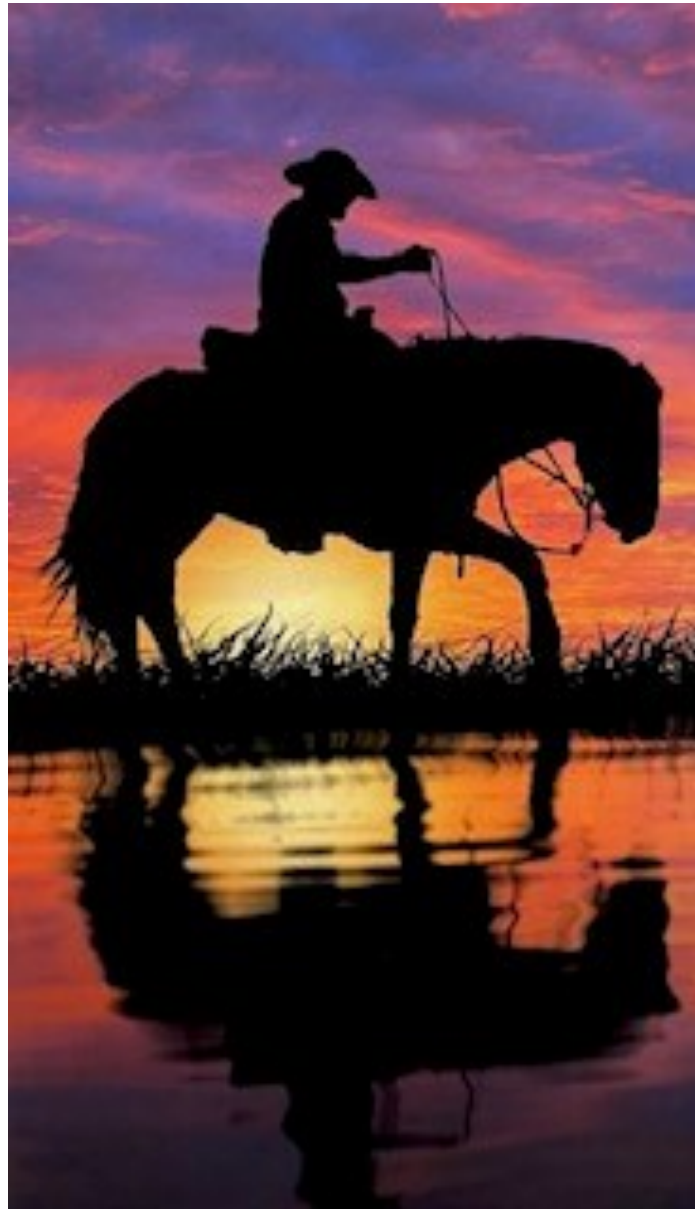
every corner, I'd drive myself crazy. Why not just ride under control and speak nicely to people as you approach?" Thanks to REI <https://www.rei.com/blog/cycle/opinion-put-a-bell-on-it>

- Keep in mind, however, that simply sporting a bell does not grant you a special privilege to ride like you're the only one out there—the International Mountain Bicycling Association's "Passing Horses Safely" in Ride Vibes (and good old common courtesy) still very much apply. Whether dinging or not, mountain bikers still yield to all other trail users.

into • Our safety action plan is Passing Horses Safely. The Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) is like a highway guideline for trail transportation. Stop! Speak and Stand Back was developed because many trail users do not know what to do when meeting people with horses on the trails.

Anecdotal evidence suggests many trail users are not interested in making a passing plan with strangers, or they don't want to wait until a horseback rider, or a hiker is near enough to communicate instructions. We conclude: It is best to know what to do, BEFORE you encounter other trail users.

- LINK to the PDF 18 Slides Trails Safe Passing Plan (TSPP) Stop! Speak and Stand Back
- LINK to the PDF 28 Slides RFVHC Trail Sign Presentation by Karin Reid Offield





# Calendar of Events

## CHAPTER MEETINGS :

**March 6th—St. George Community Bldg. Education 6:00PM—Business to Follow**  
**Come and Participate in our Chapters Success**



**CHAPTER RIDES: Every 2nd Saturday of each month  
(unless specified otherwise)**

**March 9th—Gunlock Reservoir In saddle 10:00 AM—Bring lunch.**

Directions : Take SR18 North from St George to Veyo. In Veyo turn left on Center St. and proceed 1 mile south of the dam, park on the shoulder of the road.

Travel time 30-40 minutes from St George

**REMEMBER:** Dogs are only permitted on leashes in the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve and in Snow Canyon. We as Back Country Horsemen must set the example, so we thank you in advance for your compliance with the rules.



## Sponsor of the Month!

**Tom at IFA**



## Chapter contacts

**President:** Lin Hokana 209-790-9022  
BCHU.southwestpresident@gmail.com

**Vice President:** John West 678-360-0999  
johntaylorwest@gmail.com

**Secretary:** Jarice Butterfield 805-368-2132  
bjarice@aol.com

**Treasurer:** Jeanette Blasdell 818-415-1305  
bchswtreasurer@gmail.com

**Newsletter:** Paul Sloane 632-7642  
psloane@infowest.com

**Media/Public Relations:**  
Deja Schweitzer 669-2759  
dejaschweitzer@gmail.com

**Website:** www.bchutah.org—click on Southwest link-  
**Chapter email:** bchu.southwest@gmail.com

**Back Country Horsemen of Utah**



Southwest Chapter Newsletter  
P.O. Box 3174  
St. George, UT 84771

**The Purpose of the Back Country Horsemen of Utah is:**

1. To perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses and mules in America's back country and wilderness.
2. To work to ensure the public lands remain open to recreational pack and saddle stock use.
3. To assist the agencies responsible for the management of public lands.
4. To educate, encourage and solicit active participation in wise and sustaining use of back country resources by horsemen and the general public, commensurate with our heritage.
5. To foster and encourage the formation of new chapters of Back Country Horsemen throughout Utah.

To:

**BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF UTAH—Southwest Chapter**

PO Box 3174, St. George, UT 84771

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

New Membership: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME/S: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please list names for family membership. Children over 18 may be included in family membership or join as individual members.

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER HORSE/MULE ASSOCIATIONS YOU BELONG TO: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Liability Release: (MUST BE SIGNED)

Recognizing the fact that there is a potential for an accident wherever horse/mule use is involved, which can cause injuries to horses/mules, riders and spectators and also recognizing the fact that Back Country Horsemen of Utah, including units, officers, directors, or members cannot always know the condition of trails or the experience of riders or horses/mules taking part in trail rides or other BCHU functions, I do hereby release the above named from any claim or right for damages which might occur to me, my minor children or horses/mules.

By signing this release, I/WE recognize the following Utah State Law, \*UCA 78-27b\* Limitations on liability for Equine and Livestock Activities. \* It shall be presumed that participants in equine or livestock activities are aware of and understand that there are inherent risks associated with these activities. \* Inherent risk\* with regard to equine or livestock activities means those dangers or conditions, which are an integral part of equine or livestock activities. The equine activity sponsor is not liable for those inherent risks. If you are unwilling to assume these risks for yourself or for those under your supervision, you should not participate in these activities.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO BCHU: Individual: \$30.00; Family: \$40.00; Patron: \$100.00