

Southwest Cairn

Marking the trails for our members



From the Presidents Saddle



We close a busy 2025 with a few bumps in the road this summer due to several forest fires. As we start a new year we're so blessed to have these beautiful, breath-taking views and gorgeous red rock scenery all around us.

While horseback riding we are building cherished moments with friends, recording trail routes and miles, and taking pictures of our horse pal buddies riding through the aroma of fresh sage brush. In the spring we see countless blooming, colorful, wild flowers and all sizes and shapes of catus. However, it's important to keep an eye out for the desert tortoises and cactus along the edge of the trail. We're so fortunate to be able

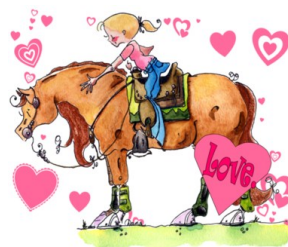
to access these trails and share them with bicyclists, hikers and dog walkers.

Trailing north from St. George, Pine Valley Mountain and Cedar Mountain afford us horseback riding in a higher elevation with a completely different terrain and scenery. Here we ride through Junipers, Pinyon Pine, Aspen and Douglas fir trees listening to the sounds of birds singing and water flowing gently down the mountain.

Thank you chapter members, friends and those who are traveling a longer distance to put their footprints on these trails. It's always important that we maintain a great relationships with our multiple public land managers. Our chapter riders take the time to help with trail maintenance by constantly clipping brush limbs and picking up trash.

Our annual fund raiser was another great success! Chapter members, please thank our generous sponsors by shopping at their businesses and referring them to others when possible. And be sure to thank the staff at those businesses for continuing to help support our chapter.

Happy Trails to all. Tammy



Happy Valentines Day

NEXT MEETING

Community Building
See Page 8 for details



Monthly Ride!

February 14th

Valley of Fire, NV

See Page 8 for Details

Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
Ride Story	2
Ride Pictures	3
Confluence Park Cleanup	4-5
Meeting Minutes	6-7
Calendar-Sponsor of the month	8
Membership Application	9

February 4th

Meeting at the Community Building 6:00PM

Grapevine Crossing/Brackens Chapter Ride

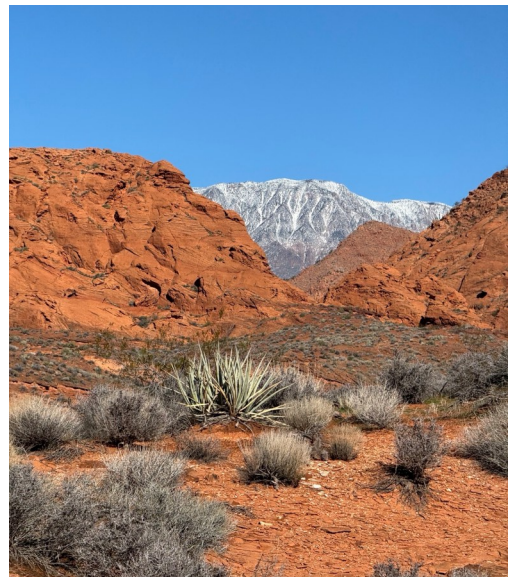
By Maria Harris

Saturday morning Jan. 10th started out sunny but quite cold, even at 11:00 as we started out on the Chapter ride at Brackens Loop/Grapevine Trailhead. There was a group of six of us, with Lin Hokana leading the pack on Gracie. Also joining us were Deja Schweitzer on Kiss Me, a cute youth member Hazel Zetterquist on her MFT pony Firefly, Eliza Edgar on Chief and my friend Michelle Gilbert (new to BCHA with a new-to-her gelding) and myself. I have been a continuous member for about 9 years, I think. I haven't been on a chapter ride however for maybe 3-5 years. I honestly can't remember, but I think it was our ride up in Enterprise out of the Duvall's.

My 19-yr old quarter horse had a stifle injury several months ago and has been laid up for a couple months. Both of us were quite out of shape for this 8 + mile ride, which gave me some concern. I had not been on this trail ride in the past. It was rated "easy" and while much of it was that, there were defiantly segments and hills that were rocky, steep and, for me "difficult". The afternoon warmed up, the scenery was gorgeous as the desert has a beautiful green flooring of moss like grass, scattered between red rock and areas of black lava rock, it was stunning! We all made it safety back, although my friend Michelle swore her horse turned and gave her a "sink eye" at how long the ride was...LOL. Good memories were made, although I think I was sorer the next day than my horse. I really need to get out more!

Maria Harris



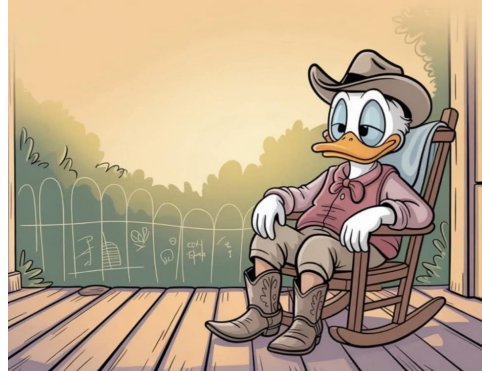


Confluence Park Cleanup Project with Falcon Ridge 4H Members

January 2, 2026

Confluence Park in La Verkin, Utah is a historic place, dating back to the 1850's. It is a beautiful place with several trails for all to enjoy horseback riding, hiking or biking among desert tortoise, birds and wildlife. Oh, and the views are outstanding from one of the trailheads, one at the rim in Hurricane. Utah occasionally has some monsoon rain. After one such downpour in late 2025, debris washed across one section of trail that made it hazardous to cross and eroded a spot that dropped off several feet down a bank. It was time for a work party to come to the rescue. January 2nd was a cloudy morning with the sun slowly peeking through the clouds. Seven from our chapter teamed up with six youth and three adults from Falcon Ridge 4H gathered at the main entrance of Confluence Park to head down the trail for a couple hours of work removing debris from the old dumpsite that had sifted down the steep hillside. Prior to everyone arriving, Jeanette marked the trail with orange flags and staged empty grain bags for the trash. After mustering together for a short meeting, we headed out for a short walk with our gloves, carrying shovels, rakes and wheeling two wheelbarrows downhill to the trail in need of cleaning up. We found small pieces of glass from broken bottles, general litter, and small metal pieces. As time passed, we were shedding our layers of clothing with the blessed warm sunshine. The Falcon Ridge 4H members did an awesome job helping us fill a dozen grain sacks. Then the hard part came; the girls (thank goodness for the youth) used lots of strength and muscles carrying the tools and pushing the wheelbarrows uphill to the parking lot. At the end of the day this trail was so much safer for horses, hikers and dog walkers. Later that day, Jeanette delivered those grain bags to the official county dump. We logged 32 volunteer hours, helping keep the BLM land open and safe for public use. Thank you, Falcon Ridge 4H, for volunteering your time to help our BCHA chapter. Your assistance was greatly appreciated, and we made some new friends.

**I will never be over the
hill – I'm too darn tired
to climb it!**





BCHU-Southwest Meeting Minutes January 7, 2026

Members Present (in person) Tammy Engeness, Debra Grise, Lin Hokana, Freddy Dunn, Deja Schweitzer, Jeanette Blasdell, Ann Guhman, Dana Millsap, DeAnn Fieselman, Eliza Edgar, Mel & Marie Langness, Fran Wilby, Kathy McGann, Linda Bissett and Justena White

Pledge of Allegiance & Introductions: Meeting was called to order by Tammy Engeness and the Pledge of Allegiance was done. We have two new members joining us Linda Bissett and Justena White and introductions were done.

Approval of December 2025 Meeting Minutes as published. Motion made to accept the minutes once they are reviewed and published.

Treasurer's Report: Jeanette Blasdell reported financially we are in very good shape. Money is invested and earning interest for future-needed dispersals for Pine Valley Equestrian Campground. All 2025 budget disbursements were reviewed. A new budget was constructed for 2026 and approved. Minor changes regarding lowering Three Peaks funding and misc. meeting costs. These are going to be included in a budget revision next meeting. Freddy to check on our dues that we paid to the state chapter for 2025.

Old Business:

Three Peaks signage is done and to be delivered to the area. We previously committed to supplying water lines for water hydrants at the two horse corrals.

-Babylon Grapevine development is tabled at this time as no further information is available.

-Red Mountain weed control is on hold waiting on a reply regarding herbicide use. We plan to again remove the tumble weeds manually with the help of BLM supplied dumpsters. Lin to contact BLM. Freddy and Kathy to pick a date. Additionally BLM requests no cairns be built on the trails.

-Confluence Park trail cleaning and trash pickup old dump area. This project was completed with our club and the help of the Falcon Ridge 4-h girls and their staff. Looks great!

-Confluence Parks stepover has been lowered and a new electric gate installed so the issue has been fixed.

-Gooseberry Mesa we have requested equine campsites from the BLM. Freddy to follow up.

-Santa Clara we are still awaiting BLM input.

New Business:

-Please review the BCHU state and chapter bylaws minor changes. These are to be voted on at the next meeting.

-Lin presented the cost for the water lines and hydrant improvements for Three Peaks at less than \$1000. Our Zion project has left over funds that could be used to offset this expense.

-American Hiking Society has requested we join them in a request to senators for an increase in trail funding. You can join the petition on their website.

BCHU Fundraiser/Auction. We are considering charging \$20 per person for the meal next year as our catering costs are increasing. Deja is looking for someone to take over the fundraiser coordination after having served many years. Please let her know if you're interested.

- Contact the local paper about an article on our Pine Valley Fundraising and sponsors.
- January 12 thank you notes are being written at Jeanette's house at 6 pm to our sponsors.
(Lin, Debbie, Kathy, Eliza, Tammy, Deja and Jeanette)
- Club ride committee is being formed. Deja, Jeanette, Eliza and Kathy plan to meet and select the trails for this year.
- Looking for overnight horse camping areas for the club. Corrals with ample trailer parking.
- Consider going north in the summer. Beaver, Cedar City possibly Antimony for overnight. Fran Wilby to get prices for Antimony. Deja to contact Amanda regarding the Beaver area. DeAnn will check into the trails at Cedar and Panguitch.
- Freddy was voted as our backup representative for our chapter at the state meetings if Lin or Tammy are unable to attend and vote.
- Our chapter has the largest membership in the state this year at 106 members.
- Harrisburg/Leeds parking lot needs a tumbleweed cleanup and dumpsters. Sand for the stepover.
- Cottonwood needs sand for the stepover.
- Lin is working on a grant for the Pine Valley Equestrian area. Please read the synopsis below:

Pine Valley Equestrian Campground Grant Update:

Lin Hokana has met with the head of the grant department for the State of Utah IRR Grants. He is in the process of applying for a \$60,000 grant. We would have to fund fifty percent of the grant or \$30,000 or less. Potentially it could require \$15,000 in cash and \$15,000 of labor or other contributions with equipment or [supplies](#). We could sell plaques for corrals to sponsors to help offset some costs. The plan continues to be corrals purchased in 2026. Infrastructure and hydrants in 2027. Setting up corrals in 2028 and leveling the land. More campsites to be added with all having two corrals and water. Tent camping eliminated so we can expand the trailer campsites. Goal is to be only an equestrian campground.

Rule of Ride.

- If you are going to be even 5 minutes late, Please call the ride leader. We never want to leave you behind.**
- We now require you to sign in at the ride and leave an emergency contact number of someone we can reach that day.**

Rides:

Brackens Loop Grapevine Trail Saturday January 10 at 11 am in the saddle.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbi Grise, Secretary

Calendar of Events

CHAPTER MEETINGS :

February 4, 2026—St. George Community Building 6:00PM

Come and Participate in our Chapters Success



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

February 14th - Valley of Fire, Nevada - In the saddle at 10:30A Utah Time—9:30 NV time (leave by 8:30 Utah time) bring lunch. Directions: Take I-15 south to the Logandale/Overton exit and turn left over I-15. Go 19.6 miles and turn right at Valley of Fire. Go another mile to the park gate. Travel time from St George should be 1-1/2—2hours NOTE: At the Park Gate pay the entrance fee, then turn around and come back to the parking area for the trailers. (They are in sight of each other)

NOTE: Due to the fact that there are about four rather technical spots on this ride we are asking that only members who are experienced riders (NO beginners) join us on this ride. Guests who have ridden with us in the past are OK providing that they are experienced riders.



Sponsors of the Month!



Chapter contacts

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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 Southwest Chapter: Individual: \$35; Family: \$45