

Gila Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico | MINUTES

3/19/2024 6:00 AM | Grant County Extension Office

Meeting called by	Matt Rehani	Attendees
Type of meeting	Monthly business meeting	Cindi deCapiteau, Gerry Engel (Zoom), Dave Imler, Nancy Imler, Mickey Lemon, Rawlings Lemon, Matt Rehani, Cheryl Roth, Donna Tillmann, Laurie Wlosinski, Ted Wittmore (Zoom)
Note taker	Cindi deCapiteau	

AGENDA TOPICS

Call to order | Presenter Matt Rehani

Tonight's meeting began at 6:04 p.m.

Additions or changes to agenda | Presenter Matt Rehani

Cindi deCapiteau asked to add a discussion of a proposed equine facility at Ft. Bayard.

Approval of minutes | Presenter Matt Rehani

Minutes from the February meeting were approved as submitted.

Financial & membership report | Presenter Dave Imler

Receipts:

- \$100 dues
- \$49.01 anonymous donation thru Pay Pal

Expenses:

- Outslope Trails \$5,816 (For trail evaluation. These funds are passed through GBCH at the request of the Forest Service)
- Workers Comp insurance \$2,987
- Trail project \$11,030.98 (includes preparation, supplies, food)

Members 45

Agenda topic CDT Days | Presenter Matt Rehani

Every year, local movers and shakers organize a festival we call Continental Divide Trail Days. This year's event occurs on **Saturday, April 20, at Gough Park**. The Gila BCH chapter always staffs a booth and we need volunteers (as always) for this year. Contact Matt Rehani to sign up.

<https://continentaldividetrail.org/trail-days-2024/Give>

This year GBCH is sharing a booth with the Volunteers for the Outdoors organization. Those folks are coming down from Albuquerque. We will (as always) be holding crosscut saw demonstrations, which involve helping visitors use a saw to carve "cookies" (slabs of pine) off the end of a log, then branding the cookie with the GBCH logo or CDT logo). We will stock the booth with the cookie branding supplies (propane tank and burner, branding

irons), the coasters donated to us by Little Toad Brewery and Distillery (<https://www.littletoadcreek.com/>), chairs, etc. New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors will supply the booth's table.

Matt assures us that he knows who is bringing what and will send out information about the event and its various details. Volunteers will staff the booth, answer questions from the public, help visitors by manning one end of the crosscut saw (if certified to do so). Expect to receive emails from Matt requesting your participation. Matt will also distribute information about the time and location shortly.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Contact Matt Rehani to sign up for CDT Days, Saturday, April 20, Gough park.	All members	Right now

Give Grandly | Presenter Matt Rehani

Give Grandly (<https://www.givegrandly.org>) is a coalition that enjoys the support of the Grant County Community Foundation (<https://www.grantcountycommunityfoundation.org/>). The coalition helps is a fundraising entity that in the last 10 years has raised over \$1.6 million for local area nonprofits. Give Grandly conducts online operations for a week or so in May along with a public in-person event, which will be held this year on **Saturday, May 4, at the Silver City Makers Market, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Volunteers needed to staff the booth GBCH will set up there. The Makers Market is located in the Main Street Plaza, 704 N. Bullard Street, Silver City.

Volunteers are needed to perform the same roles as listed for CDT Days (see above). Setup and takedown require coordination because ingress and egress are complicated by the downtown location of the Makers Market. GBCH has volunteered to assist with that coordination. Matt Rehani will release information about the time we go in to set up.

The plan is to pull into our assigned space, unload, and drive out. Gerry Engel will acquire and deliver the logs needed for cookie branding. Pull in, unload, drive out. We can setup Gerry will acquire logs, and deliver them in his truck. At the end, GBCH will take down our booth and help other participants take down their booths and pack out. Rawlings Lemon has solicited volunteers and has had a nice response. Vickie Dowd will be staffing a booth for the artists organization of which she is a member, but volunteered to staff the GBCH booth so we can go to lunch.

Gila Centennial | Presenter Matt Rehani

The Gila Wilderness Areas turn 100 years of age in 2024. The Forest Service is planning several events to celebrate the centennial and GBCH has received an invitation to participate.

The centennial kick-off is on June 1, 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m. (location to be determined). The Forest Service approved GBCH to do our traditional cookie branding there. Paperwork needs to be completed and Gerry Engel will see to that. Gerry will complete the required application and coordinate with Matt.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Complete paperwork for the Gila Centennial	Gerry Engel, Matt Rehani	As required by USFS

Tommyknocker Bicycle Race | Presenter Laurie Wlosinski

The annual Tommyknocker cycling race will be held at Ft. Bayard on April 6. What this means for GBCH (if anything) remains to be seen.

Round-up at Silver City Food Co-op | Presenter Matt Rehani

The Silver City Food Co-op conducts a cleverly named Round-Up—a community donation program where customers “round up” the balance of their purchases to the nearest dollar. The Co-op donates that amount to a local nonprofit. The Gila chapter is the recipient of rounded-up donations in April 2024, so be sure to shop at the Co-op in April and encourage your friends to do the same.

Action items

Person responsible

Buy groceries, etc. at the Silver City Food Co-op in April and round-up your total purchase to the nearest dollar.

All members

Public Service | Presenter Gerry Engel, Melissa Green

Melissa Green, the GBCH trail boss, is out now with a trail project from Highway 35 up toward Apache Creek. The project will be finished by the time you read this, but details are available on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/336342146820957/permalink/1876996916088798/?mibextid=oFDknk&rdid=Ap1N2cVIL9NmVtYB>

According to the trail schedule posted at <https://www.gilabch.org/trail-projects>, the next project (April 10-16) is on the Cassidy and Greenfly trails north of the Gila Cliff Dwellings. The project has a full complement of workers and workers are waitlisted to pitch in as needed, but you can brag to your friends that GBCH is the coolest trail worker organization in New Mexico and use this project as an example.

Melissa organized a project with WILL (Western Institute for Lifelong Learning) in the Burrows. Work would be performed on Forest Road 136 (a.k.a. Tyrone-Thompson Canyon Road) (where the Continental Divide Trail (at Deadman Canyon) crosses that road southwest of the Tyrone Mine). Adverse weather, however, resulted in cancellation of the project.

Grant County SAR update | Presenter Russ Imler, Laurie Wlosinski

Laurie Wlosinski reported that search and rescue has been inactive, but she expects that to change as spring flows into summer.

State BCH Update | Presenter Joan Bacon, Cheryl Roth

National dues increase. At a recent gathering of BCHNM chapter representatives, the state authorities announced two items: 1) the national BCHA meeting is coming up in April 2024, and 2) national dues are increasing for family memberships—from \$20/year to \$23/year.

Merchandise for fundraisers. As the state meeting was ending, a participant suggested that chapters planning fundraisers might want to take advantage of customized merchandise (t-shirts, hats, coffee mugs, tote bags, etc.) from Café Press (<https://www.cafepress.com/>).

2024 BCHNM Rendezvous, Ft. Bayard, September 19-22. The state office has approved the Gila chapter’s proposal to host the 2024 Rendezvous at Ft. Bayard. Planning and organizing the event has begun, with the capable and thorough Cheryl Roth in charge. At the request of the Santa Clara administrator (Shiela Hudman) (Santa Clara controls the portion of Ft. Bayard that GBCH will use for the Rendezvous), Dave Imler has provided a certificate of liability insurance. Dave will ensure that the insurance includes coverage for personal injury. He will also make sure that the GBCH policy will cover Give Grandly and CDT Trail Days, as well as the Gila Centennial kickoff scheduled for June 1.

Cheryl noted that although Santa Clara has authorized several activities at Ft. Bayard, these have been of short duration and relatively limited participants. The Rendezvous will be the first multiple overnight event under Santa

Clara's auspices. Santa Clara wants to hold activities at FB and they want the state government in Santa Fe to know what's going on.

BCHNM supports the rendezvous by paying for fees, trash removal, water delivery, etc. The state needs to know ASAP what our needs will be and how much they will cost. Cheryl will track this information down.

BCHNM also wants to know what the site looks like, so Cheryl will take photos and send them in. She is collecting more concrete information to review with BCHNM, such as how horses will be contained, whether horseshoes or boots will be needed, how water for stock will be provided, and the availability of shelter and restrooms, etc. Cheryl advised that equines will have to be contained in portable pens provided by Rendezvous participants or tied to their trailers since Ft. Bayard has no stock pens.

Coordination with USFS. Gerry Engel has contacted the USFS Silver City district ranger about requirements USFS has for this event, which will be held adjacent to Forest Service property and will likely use trails in the Forest north of Ft. Bayard. The Silver City District Ranger, Elizabeth Toney, wants to know how many people we expect to camp at Ft. Bayard (Cheryl estimates 20-25). Cheryl expects that Rendezvous workers (local people) will be going home after a day's activities are complete and so won't be camping at Ft. Bayard.

Sponsored rides. Gerry commented that if GBCH holds sponsored rides, the number of riders for each should be about 10 people, but notes that we can make that number anything we want. The number of riders, however, should be limited because Ft. Bayard will be open to the public during the time of the Rendezvous.

Chapter interactions. Mickey Lemon, who coordinated the last Rendezvous GBCH held, found that the chapters are cliquish and don't mix readily with other chapters. She recommends that this year's Rendezvous planners create some activities to bring the chapters into better interaction. Cheryl is already thinking along those lines and plans to hold a silent auction, sell off a painting or two, and set up contests such as an estimate of how many horse treats are in a big jar. However, Cheryl is waiting for insurance questions to be settled before she bulldozes forward.

Finances. Mickey also noted that last time GBCH paid for everything and charged only for participation (BCHNM didn't pay for anything).

Ft. Bayard equine services | Presenter Cindi deCapiteau

As the result of a notion that Ft. Bayard can be a destination for horse people who want to visit the Gila, Cindi deCapiteau has sent idea letters to various people in Grant County (see an example on page 5). She has received positive responses from two people, but nobody is committing to anything.

The next step will be contacting people in Santa Fe. The New Mexico state government owns Ft. Bayard, so any development initiatives have to receive the blessing of people in charge up there.

Tangentially, Gerry has contacted people at NM Game and Fish about building more stock pens at Woody's Corral. He noted that the looks promising, perhaps because GBCH can finance the construction with grant money. The plan is to build two more sets of corrals along the western edge of Woody's; the Forest Service is willing to supply water to the new corrals.

Announcements |

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 16, 6:00 p.m. Grant County Extension Office

Proposal for Ft. Bayard Equestrian Center

Cindi deCapiteau
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Arenas Valley, NM 88022 575-
519-0848
cdecapiteau@gmail.com

23 February 2024

Ms. Sheila Hudman, Administrator Village of
Santa Clara
P.O. Box 316
Santa Clara, NM 88026 Dear Ms.

Dear Ms. Hudman:

I'm drumming up support for an idea that finds favor among equestrians in the Gila Region, including the Gila Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico.

Local news reports that state funding has been made available for infrastructure improvement at Ft. Bayard and that a group is planning future development of recreational facilities there. This is good news. Ft. Bayard is an asset that has been neglected for too long. As renovation at Ft. Bayard proceeds, please use your influence to consider the needs of equestrian tourists to the planning process. Here's why:

Grant County has limited facilities for out-of-town equestrians to enjoy the Gila's forest and wilderness trails—as well as the excellent trails on Ft. Bayard itself.

Our major tourist attraction—the Catwalk—is not available to equestrians. In addition, Silver City and Grant County have limited equestrian boarding and camping facilities; the few that exist are tricky to find. We are also off the beaten track for visitors who would explore the region from horseback, so they go elsewhere to more convenient destinations. Equestrian development at Ft. Bayard can make travel to the Gila worth their efforts to get here.

Ft. Bayard has space and infrastructure to develop facilities needed by equestrians—water, horse pens, shelters, and travel trailer accommodations. Horseback tourists often travel with trailers equipped with living quarters; their modest additional requirements are overnight trailer parking with nearby horse boarding and access to shopping, especially for their equine needs. Ft. Bayard can provide a safe destination for their trailers and horses, as well as easy access to shopping and to the stellar trails on Ft. Bayard and in the Gila National Forest and wilderness areas.

Moreover, Silver City has special features that benefit equestrians and their families—nearby feed and tack stores, grocery stores, colorful shopping and restaurants in the Silver City historic district, and rich stories for history buffs.

Equestrian facilities do not now appear in the planning for Ft. Bayard's development, so your influence to include them in discussions that lead to the increased tourism and the associated economic opportunities for local businesses can make a difference.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

Cindi deCapiteau
Resident of Arenas Valley NM