



## **BLUE RIDGE TRAIL RIDERS – newsletter #165, April 2009**

*NOW is the time to renew your membership! Dues are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families.*

*The next newsletter in April will just go to paid members. Send to Linda Bettner.*

### **The officers and directors are as follows (A-appointed; E-elected):**

Mary Sonner, President...865-573-1544...Knoxville. Judy Mitchell, Vice Pres...865- 475-6475, Jefferson City

Linda Bettner, Treasurer...475-4300... New Market... [lostcreekautoworks@charter.net](mailto:lostcreekautoworks@charter.net)

Lucy Scanlon, Secretary...494-7654...Norris...[merrymountlps@earthlink.net](mailto:merrymountlps@earthlink.net)

Terri Marie Carnes, Director...865-579-9955..Seymour..(E-12/09)

Sandy Maloy, Director...865-932-0229..Straw.Plains..(E-12/09) [msandramaloy@aol.com](mailto:msandramaloy@aol.com)

Lezle Jenkins, Director...865-988-4928... Lenoir City. (A-12/10) [jenkinsl@k12tn.net](mailto:jenkinsl@k12tn.net)

Kerry Dunaway, Director...865-964-5417..Seymour (E-12/09)

**Check out our website!** [www.blueridgetrailriders.com](http://www.blueridgetrailriders.com). We finally have found someone to work on the web-site: Harriet Spiegel who has a degree in web-site design. She works with Lucy at the UT Gardens. As soon as her current classes are finished, she will work on updating the site and learning how to maintain it and will then teach Betsy Blackstock how to add documents and later pictures to the site. The site hasn't been updated since 2002.

**Next Meeting** will be on the first Tuesday of June, June 2 at 7:30 pm. We will meet at Copper Pointe Apartment Homes Office at 401 S. Gallaher Rd. We will have six meetings this year: Tues Jan 6, Tues April 7, Tues Jun 2, Tues Aug 4, Sat Oct 10, Fri Dec 4. Please bring friends, visitors, potential new members! This is a cozy place to meet and snacks and sodas are a great addition.

Directions: From I-40, take the Gallaher View Exit #379 and drive south crossing over Kingston Pike at the light. Buddy's Barbecue is on the southwest corner. Go past Bearden High School on your left, and Copper Pointe will be past that on your right. Look for the sign out front and the 6 flags. Drive in and bear left. The leasing office is just to the left past the tennis courts. You can park on either side of the street. The office phone number is 865-690-7940.

**Last Meeting** 23 members showed up early and stayed late to conduct the Club's business. Our thanks to President Mary Sonner who did lots of telephoning to encourage members to show up. Steve Landers has submitted his resignation, so Kerry Dunaway could take his place as an elected director.

To fulfill our charter as an educational club, we will ask members to put together a short program for each meeting; Judy Mitchell agreed to coordinate this activity. Judy and Marilyn Spoon are coordinating the food for the October Trail Ride and wanted advice on what to do. Should we buy our own grill or can we find a new caterer? We will need volunteer cooking and clean-up crews for each meal and need to have a covered truck to store all our supplies. At the June meeting we will make the final decisions on all these issues.

Since Meriwether has left we need to find leaders for the rides she had planned to lead. Judy Mitchell volunteered to do the April Ride to Abrams Creek with assistance from Janice Butt. Betsy Blackstock will host the Meadow Creek Resort ride in November. We still need someone to volunteer to serve as an Appointed Director for membership; the biggest part of this job is welcoming new members and answering their questions. If we can quickly get a membership list to these folks they can look for members in their area to share transportation to a meeting or a ride.

Mary has now had a chance to have a phone conversation with most members and has learned that many want to ride but don't feel they have any skills to help the Club. BUT if we each do one small thing for BRTR, the Club will grow and prosper. Several members have volunteered to give a very short presentation at a Club meeting on a subject they know well and that would be interesting to the members. *Where do we want this Club to go?* There is still interest in working on trails (especially at Big South Fork

where we ride the most) but many feel they don't get enough notice of upcoming projects to participate; with fewer newsletters this becomes even more of a problem. An emergency email reaches only 1/3 of our members; Cindi Zurhellen said she could call those on the hard-copy list (marked as TRUE on the membership list).

Joanne and Bobby Mitchell gave us some trail updates as the educational part of the meeting. Joanne serves on the TN Trails and Greenways Commission and shared with us the [TN State Recreation Plan](#) for 2003 -2008. There is little mention of horses in this report, but a new plan for [2010-2015](#) is being developed and we could really make a difference here by filling out the Survey that she distributed. We can only get help from the state if we ask for it! [See below for how to submit your survey](#) or how to get a form if you weren't at the meeting.

Bobby told us about [the Professional Trail-Builders meeting](#), and the new machinery that is available. There is a one-person, single track machine that can be operated remotely – very useful in steep or unstable ground. There is also a mini-blaster that will safely blow up a rock or two (not the whole hillside). He reminded us that –like it or not – [any time we're riding we represent "horse people"](#) and must observe good trail etiquette. Crossing streams is a hot topic for trail maintainers because horses cause silting of the stream and can disrupt the habitat of endangered species like mussels. Therefore, stay in the designated crossing area and don't stop there and play which will create more disturbance.

Joanne mentioned the different trail organizations that are active in our area. Back Country Horsemen of East TN operates mostly in the north Cherokee Forest area – around Elizabethton and Johnson City. Southern Appalachian BCH is centered in Cleveland and the South Cherokee Forest. A new group is forming under the leadership of Sharon Metz: Back Country Horsemen of Big South Fork. All of these will take part in [National Trails Day](#) on June 6. [Any BRTR members who wish to participate should be at Bandy Creek Visitor Center by 9:00 am on that Saturday.](#)

At the end of the meeting we enjoyed some yummy baked goods and looked over the used tack supplied by Lucy Scanlon, Cindi Zurhellen, and Holly Scarlett. Those participating found some real bargains and were quite generous in what they paid. [We raised \\$136 for Horse Haven](#). Lucy delivered the items that didn't sell (to be part of an HH sale in May) and the cash to the new Horse Haven barn at 2417 Reagan Road (off Hardin Valley Rd). If you want more info on Horse Haven (volunteer? Adoption?), call 865-609-4030 OR go to [www.horsehaven.net](http://www.horsehaven.net).

The easiest way to [get in touch with Mary Sonner](#) is while she is driving to and from work; call her cell, 865-607-2998 between 6:30am – 8:00am and between 5:30pm and 7:00 pm. No calls after 9 pm.

Letter from our President, Mary Sonner

**Dear members,**

**I would like to thank all that attended the meeting last month. It was a great opportunity to meet the new members and to have a few long established members come back to our meetings. Thank you to all for making my second meeting very successful. A thank you to Joanne and Bobby Mitchell for supplying the information on the local and national trails. It was interesting and provided some up-to-date information for all our members.**

**I explored Long Branch Lake area and Bledsoe Forest 2 weekends ago. The Grounds are beautiful and barn accommodations are top notch. Vanessa and Lamar, Barn Managers were very hospitable and gave us everything we needed. We will probably camp in the barn area for those who get stalls because there is plenty of water. Electricity is only available in the parking area of 4 sites. There are no trees in this area, but a wonderful large fire pit and benches for a few. Bring your chairs. If a big crowd shows up, we can move the camping to primitive with trees, but it is a distance from the barn and facilities. This is not the best camping sites for "back to nature"; however we will have a great time under the stars. Lamar will direct us through the forest and on wide 4 wheel drive trails, very gentle hills, a little stone road riding, and several overlooks to see. A few picturesque small lakes. The mileage will be approximately 12-18 miles on Saturday. About 4-5 hours with lunch breaks. Please arrive at 10 and ready to ride at 10:30 am eastern time. That is**

**9:30 central. We want to get back early enough for those who have a long drive home or for those planning to stay the evening and enjoy the company of everyone.**

**Secondly, I would like to ask if anyone that is considering the trip to Long Branch Lake to call me and let me know as soon as possible. Long Branch has put in 5 more stall for us to use. Thick mats and sawdust are supplied for us. I would like to plan a Saturday night dinner and get together at the fire pit, but I need to know who is coming.**

**I am planning on going up on Friday morning, May 8, if anyone would like to follow me. I will be exploring the Bledsoe Forest because last time the large creek was too high and running too swift to cross even with the best horse.**

**Let's make this a great Spring outing for everyone.**

**Mary**

NEXT MONTH'S TRAIL RIDE will be on the second Saturday, May 9 at **Long Branch Lakes Equestrian Center** near Spencer, TN. This is a new area across the street from Fall Creek Falls State Park. There are new barns and stalls and a small area to camp with your horse and your rig with electricity and water. Then there is a primitive area where a group can camp for free but will be quite far from the facilities. So far the Center has 19 miles of trail which connects with the Bledsoe State Forest which has many miles to ride; signs aren't up yet on the trails (Apr 09) so it's important to ride with the leader. Since this is about two hours from Knoxville, it is a super place to go camping for the weekend and enjoy several days of riding. If you're just coming for the day, be sure to be there by 10 am and ready to ride by 10:30 EDT (That's 9:30 CDT). Please call the leader, Mary Sonner at 865-573-1544 OR 865-607-2998 to let her know you are coming. Check out the website, [longbranchlakes.com](http://longbranchlakes.com), to read about all they have to offer. Call 931-598-0830 to reserve a stall or parking spot.

Directions: **The better road is coming out of Crossville.**

**From Knoxville** (1 hour, 45 minutes from west Knoxville)

I-40 West to Exit 322. Turn left and go approximately ¼ mile; go through 4-way stop to 2nd traffic light. Turn left on 101 South for about 30 miles to Hwy 30. There will be a fork in the road of Hwy 101 and Hwy 285, turn a sharp left and stay on Hwy 101. Take Hwy 30 West towards Fall Creek Falls State Park for about 5 miles. Pass the Park on the left and stay on Hwy 30 W to Hwy 285 East. Go right on Hwy 285 E for about 2 miles to Long Branch Lakes "construction" entrance on right. Go about 6 miles on this main stone road lined with log lamp posts. You will go under two beautiful log covered bridges, and will come to an open field. There will be 2 log barns up and to the right. Follow the road to the Equestrian Center.

**From Chattanooga** (1 hour, 30 minutes from downtown)

US 27 North toward Soddy-Daisy, TN. Bear left on Hwy 111 North and drive about 20 miles to the Dunlap/Pikeville Exit, then bear right onto US 127 North. Take US 127 N toward Pikeville for about 20 miles to Hwy 30 West on left (McDonalds on right). Take Hwy 30W towards Fall Creek Falls State Park for about 15 miles. Pass the Park on the left and stay on Hwy 30W to Hwy 285 East. Go right on Hwy 285 E for about 2 miles to Long Branch Lakes "construction" entrance on right. Go about 6 miles on this main stone road lined with log lamp posts. You will go under two beautiful log covered bridges, and will come to an open field. There will be 2 log barns up and to the right. Follow the road to the Equestrian Center.

**PREVIOUS 2009 TRAIL RIDES:** January was bitter cold. February was cool and threatening but two rode on Saturday and two more rode on Sunday. In March it was pouring down rain. In April six riders went to Top of the World and rode toward Cades Cove until they were stopped by a big blow-down and turned around. Since no one had done much riding this winter, they all felt they had had a good ride.

## **MEMBER NEWS**

Former member Renee Roissier Miller of Madisonville died tragically on March 4, 2009. She and her husband Jamie settled in east TN in 1994 after ten years in Alaska. She was always interested in sports and fitness and supported her children in these pursuits. She and her older children often rode with us and we thrilled at the horseback drill team, the Rarity Bay Rangers, that she formed and coached. Renee was known for her love of children and animals, her cheerful personality, and her great sense of fun. She is survived by her husband Jamie and their nine children. Donations for the Miller Children Fund can be sent to Regions Bank, 101 Tellico St., S. Madisonville, TN 37354

## **REGIONAL NEWS**

### **Smoky Mountains National Park**

George Minnigh, Backcountry Management Specialist for the Smokies, has retired from the NPS, but will probably spend some of his time as a volunteer in the Park. Hiking in the forest is one of his greatest pleasures. Babette Calavo, Volunteer Coordinator, has also retired and the Park doesn't plan to replace her. It will be harder for volunteers to know what needs to be done and to get together with other volunteers without her help.

### **Big South Fork NRR**

National Trails Day is Saturday June 6. Trails Supervisor Wally Linder has asked volunteers to meet at Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 9 am. Although you can just show up, it helps his planning if you call 423-569-2404, ext. 321, and let them know you are coming.

The Park continues to implement its General Management Plan, adopted in 2008. Remember all the road work to widen and improve Fork Ridge Road and Terry Cemetery Road? I never missed the huge mud-holes when in my truck, but my horse misses those long sandy stretches where you could stretch out and make time. For a short time you could take a trailer all the way to Terry Cemetery. Now these roads are to become multi-use trails and have been drastically narrowed; both horses and trucks are still allowed but on a smaller track. In time this will make a pleasanter riding trail and emergency vehicles can still get through.

Work has also been done on some of the stream crossings to make them safer for horses and to reduce disturbance of the stream. Large rocks mark the route at Big Island and Station Camp and the tread has been hardened with Tri-Loc blocks. At Zenith on North White Oak Creek, the Park has recently installed concrete planks to harden the crossing; these are held in place with a buried steel cable. Hopefully these improvements will survive the frequent flooding events on these streams.

The 2009 Visitor Guide to the Park lists all of the events for the year and phone numbers for everything. There are several articles on what is going on in the Park. Pick up a copy next time you're there.

**Tennessee State Recreation Plan Survey** for 2010-2015 will be the plan for how TN spends money to enhance recreation in the state. One concern is that we must encourage our children to be more active and provide more playgrounds and soccer fields; this is great, but what about horseback riding? If only soccer moms fill out the Survey, we'll only get more soccer fields! Horse people: send this in! get your friends to send it in! WE NEED MORE HORSE TRAILS!! If you have questions about how to word your request (and how to find five different ways to say we want more trails), give Joanne Mitchell a call: 865-250-1645. You can get more copies of the Survey or complete your copy online; go to [www.tennessee.gov/environment/recreation/plan](http://www.tennessee.gov/environment/recreation/plan). If you want to mail in a hard copy, send it to Brenda Humphrey at Byrge, Waggoner, Sumner, and Cannon Inc., 10133 Sherrill Boulevard, Suite 200, Knoxville, TN 37932. If you want a hard copy and didn't get one, give Lucy a call (865-494-7654) and I'll mail you one.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

The poor economy has added to the issue of unwanted horses and what to do with them. The American Horse Council and the Unwanted Horse Coalition have been conducting a survey to determine the scope of the problem and to look for solutions. Unfortunately, this has encouraged interest in reopening horse slaughterhouses. Many states consider that they have the "right" to butcher horses without federal interference. Five states, including Tennessee, are writing legislation to open new horse slaughter plants. If you know more about this than I do, let me know who we should contact and especially what other options are there for the horse that no one wants.

## Clinics

May 9, Saturday: Horsin'Around Clinic at UT Vet School. 8:00 am-4:30 pm. Cost(includes handouts and lunch)\$25 for first family member,\$10 for each additional. Learn about everything from acupuncture to vaccinations – reproduction, wound care, colic, dental issues, worming etc! PRE-register at 865-974-5703 or email [chance1@utk.edu](mailto:chance1@utk.edu).

NOW thru May, Tuesday nights from 5-10 pm at Roane State Expo Center at Harriman- Open Arena! Barrel racers, pleasure riders, etc. both inside and outdoor arena; activities can be alternated by the hour. Cost: \$5 per nose, equine or human. FMI Stan at 865-310-7169.

May 1-3: QuarterFest 09 at Miller Equestrian Center at MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN. Clinics with Curt and Tammy Pate, Jeff Griffith, Julie Goodnight; Performances each afternoon and Extravaganza Friday night. Be sure to check out the SABCH Bridge-Building Exhibit with BRTR members Bobby and Joanne Mitchell! Reservations: [www.aqha.com/quarterfest](http://www.aqha.com/quarterfest). Your horse is invited too!  
July 9-12 Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference (SETC), Gainesville, FL

## Homes wanted

Appaloosa mare,22 yr old, retired show horse. BRTR member Paula Lopata (865-607-8188) needs someone to provide a home for a treasured friend. The mare can't be ridden but is easy to care for.

18 Arabians need homes! Julie Hall forwarded a message from a Virginia horse person. A guy inherited 18 horses and doesn't know what to do with them! Call Leslie Gassmann, 770-597-0181 for more information. There might be a good trail horse or endurance horse in this bunch! (PLEASE make plans in your will for your horses as well as your children and grandchildren!).

## For sale or trade

TWH gelding, black and white, 8 yr old. A great trail horse; he's had all his shots and Coggins for this year. I would trade for an older horse that would be happy with occasional riding only. BRTR member Linda Lambert, 865-376-2355.

## Boarding available

\$200 per month with Lloyd and Pat Smith at 720 Fox Road. Call 865-966-8313. Ask BRTR members Suzie Campbell (865-693-8078)and Betsy Blackstock (865-671-3638) about this place!

## Dates to remember: Rides and Meetings of BRTR! *CUT OUT AND SAVE! Stick it on your frig!*

May 9: LongBranchLakesEquestrianCenter, Spencer, TN. Mary Sonner 865-573-1544, 865-607-2998. Reservations: 931-598-0830.

Jun 2: BRTR Meeting at Copper Pointe. 865-771-2797.

Jun 13: Station Camp at Big South Fork. Ann Hall 865-986-7409. Reservations: 423-569-3321.

Jul 11: Big Creek in the GSMNP. Marilyn Spoon 423-587-5924. Camping? I need a phone number!

Aug 4: BRTR Meeting at Copper Pointe. 865-771-2797.

Aug 8: Tremont in the GSMNP. Joanne and Bobby Mitchell 423-337-6194, 865-250-1645.

Sep 12: YoungBranch Horse Camp at Citico in S Cherokee NF. Janice Butt 423-884-2760. Reservations: 877-444-6777.

Oct 8-11: Fall Weekend at Bandy Creek, Big South Fork. Reservations made in advance; sign up in newsletter.

Oct 10: BRTR Meeting at Big South Fork in the Group Camp Pavilion.

Nov 14: MeadowCreekResort near Greeneville, TN. Meriwether Montgomery 865-671-1291, 865-771-2797. Reservations: 423-613-0748, 423-613-5675 OR [www.meadowcreekfarm.com](http://www.meadowcreekfarm.com)

Dec 4: BRTR Meeting and Christmas Party at Copper Pointe. 865-771-2797

Dec 12: Wilderness Road, Harrogate, TN. Judy Mitchell 865-475-6475, 865-254-1579.

Jan 5,2010: BRTR Meeting at Copper Pointe. 865-771-2797.

Jan 9: Norris Watershed, Norris, TN. Lucy Scanlon 865-494-7654, 865-254-1269.

**FMI on long-distance riding** go to: [www.aerc.org](http://www.aerc.org) or [www.natrc.org](http://www.natrc.org). **News?** Please send to Lucy Scanlon at address below - or call 865-494-7654 - or E-mail: [merrymountLPS@earthlink.net](mailto:merrymountLPS@earthlink.net)  
Try to get it to me by the 15th of the month. We accept free horse-related classifieds from members.  
**Dues:** \$15 per year. Make checks payable to BRTR or Blue Ridge Trail Riders and send to the  
TREASURER: Linda Bettner, 1165 West Hwy 11E, New Market, TN 37820. If you need to check on your  
status, call Linda at the office, 865-475-4300.

.....  
Blue Ridge Trail Riders Newsletter

Lucy Scanlon  
PO Box 7  
Norris, TN 37828