



2019 RFVHC YEAR END NEWS LETTER
Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council



This image of "The Great Winter Sleigh Race Final Stretch" is copyrighted and is being used with the permission of the artist Rozan Henning (Henning Art Gallery & Sleigh Museum) 715 286 2464

MERRY CHISTMAS

JOYEUX NOEL

FROHE WEIHNATCHTEN

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FELIZ NAVIDAD

BUON NATALE

WHAT HAS THE RFVHC DONE FOR YOU IN 2019?

EVENTS

In January of 2019, RFVHC hosted a New Year, "Great Expectations" members sit down, pot luck dinner with 60 members attending. What fun we had networking, socializing and trading tales. Social events are important to the RFVHC.



In April 2019, RFBVHC attended as an exhibitor the Western Colorado Outdoor & Sportsman Expo, at the Eagle County Fairgrounds, in Eagle, CO. We introduced our new impressive, free standing, 8' x 8' poster as our backdrop. Over the weekend we handed out information on our organization promoting trail riding with an emphasis on shared trail-safety. We spoke about preserving our Western Heritage by providing equestrian parking; "Keeping Horses on Trails"; and our forever initiative - preserving and protecting our dwindling wildlife and their fragile habitats. The Expo was well attended by recreationists across the state.



In April into May 2019, the RFVHC continued to work within the BLM process to ask that the SUTEY RANCH remain as is for horseback riding and hikers. In May, the BLM's decision first identified the land as a critical wildlife habitat area. Then, they designated this ranch for hikers and horseback riders with a single mountain bike trail on the far western boundary as a connection track to the Red Hill SRMA.

SUTEY RANCH



No mountain bikes are allowed on the main ranch lands.

The BLM "wildlife protection" states no human access during the winter wildlife closure Dec 1st through April 15th. Bravo! Then, in the fall in September and October, the RFVHC worked alongside the BLM for improved SUTEY RANCH parking for equestrians. The SUTEY RANCH is one of our premier equestrian riding areas and we are proud to stay involved.

In May 2019, Glenwood Veterinary Clinic held an Open House, celebrating Sam Johnson's new ownership of this facility. Dr. Johnson is a RFVHC Board Member and a well - qualified addition to our valley. Sam has a kind and gentle rapport with his equine patients. His medical expertise is excellent and the horses love him!

In June 2019, the new Crown Jewel Trail Project became a reality. The trail is a 12 mile, two track, hiker and horseback riding only trail that makes circular loops across the 9,100 acres of Crown Mountain, Carbondale, CO.



The Crown Jewel Trail is accessed from two different parking lots:

- **The BLM Divide Parking Lot between West Sopris Creek and Prince Creek**
- **The Pitkin-Glassier Parking area off of Hooks Spur Lane.**

The BLM and the RfVHC planned and mapped this trail in 2018. Implementation of clearing, restoring, placing signage and gates was done in 2019 with a work grant offered to the RfVHC by the Round-Up Riders of the Rockies and the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps.

Special thank you to: The BLM and especially Miles Gurtler. The Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers and Pitkin County Open Space Trails. Bob and Sue Pietrzak . Diana and Howard Vagneur and Western Adventures Inc.

In 2020, the Crown Jewel Trail, third phase restoration is scheduled. We are fundraising the financial assistance to complete this project. Please help us make this 12 mile, horses and hikers only trail safe and enjoyable. Thank You!

In August 2019, the Capital Creek – Hay Park Trail Project was begun. RfVHC members with John Howe of Capital Peak Outfitters and Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers met to reroute a portion of the high trail traversing East Sopris Creek basin from the Capitol Creek/Hay Park trailhead to Hay Park to avoid violating the Maroon Bells - Snowmass Wilderness boundary. The United States Forest Service (USFS) had their Aspen-Sopris Trail Crew on-site to add guidance, strength, knowledge to the actual trail work as well as great stories, campfire music and lots of laughs.

Wilderness Workshop and RFMBA were also partners promoting the project and helped gather volunteers, plus contributing a portion of the outfitter's expenses. About 25 participants worked in great weather and finished the beautiful new trail construction within a weekend time frame. RfVHC Trail Chair Susan Cuseo rode the trail with friends after completion and found it absolutely marvelous. She says "Try it, you'll like it whether hiking, biking or riding your horse! "



In September 2019, we orchestrated making a sizable gift of jumps to the City of Aspen's Cozy Point Ranch from local residents and RFBVC members, Willa and Sandy Falck. Their modern, light weight PVC jumps and accessories made for a good contribution to our only local public stable. PVC jumps are easy to carry for children and adults. We are grateful to be involved.

On October 22, 2019, the RFBVC held an open membership meeting. Roaring Fork Cycling, empowering youth through cycling presented to our members about teaching young cyclists about respecting all trail partners, especially when meeting horses on the trails. Tom Cardamone of the Roaring Fork Watershed Biodiversity & Connectivity Initiative presented an important review of his scientific data gathering project. Twenty eight members shared a pot luck, sit down dinner and learned how this study will support a plan to protect and preserve our valley's dwindling wildlife.



The Roaring Fork Watershed Biodiversity Initiative is collecting scientific data for a million-acres (923,640 acres: Frying Pan, Roaring Fork & Crystal drainages) science-based strategy to protect and restore the natural biodiversity and habitat connectivity on a landscape scale. Data is being collected and is on-going now.



“We are the voice for our wildlife.”

In November 2019, we learned that Pitkin County BOCC & Pitkin Road and Bridge is closing Prince Creek Road with gates for winter access to vehicles, preventing easy motorized human access into the 9,100 acres of “critical winter wildlife range” on “The Crown.” Prince Creek Road gates will be closed Dec 1st through April 15th, protecting one of the most critical winter wildlife ranges in the Roaring Fork Valley. In 2017, the RFBVHC wrote a letter requesting this closure for the benefit of the wildlife. We collected letters of support from every neighbor, rancher, and water right holder along Prince Creek Road. Thank you Pitkin County for protecting our wildlife and their critical winter habitat. Bravo!

OUR PARTNERS

During 2019 the RFBVHC has supported local non-profits:

- **Smiling Goat Ranch**
- **Acendigo Autism Services**
- **Colorado Horse Council**
- **Equine Land Conservation Resource, Lexington, KY**
- **Equitarian Initiative – “Veterinarians Without Borders”** deliver health care to working horses, mules and donkeys in the developing world. They focus on community education to sustainably improve animal welfare.
- **Rocky Mountain Youth Corps**
- **Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers**
- **Roundup Riders of the Rockies**
- **The Back-Country Horsemen of America**
- **The Roaring Fork Hounds Pony Club – A 50 year partner for children in the Roaring Fork Valley.**
- **Colorado West Hunter Jumper Ass - Horse shows**
- **Rocky Mountain Dressage Society - events**

- **BLM – Colorado River Valley Filed Office – Working to keep our public open space lands clean, safe and available for the people of our country to enjoy. They manage their BLM lands to maintain biological health for the wildlife, while allowing human recreation.**

We support the following organizations in our valley:

- **Wilderness Workshop, AVLTT, Future Forest Roundtable, Nature Conservancy, Pitkin County Open Space and Trails, Carbondale Wild West Rodeo, Roaring Fork Cycling, Aspen Historical Society, Carbondale & Basalt Historical Societies, United States Forest Service,**
- **The RFBHC has been working with Diana Vagneur to coordinate support for the RFBHC down-valley membership voices.**
- **Our FEATURED Partner: WindWalkers Therapeutic Riding Center**



WindWalkers has been serving our valley for 15 years. This equine therapy service for children and adults provides important and necessary physical and emotional support for the most vulnerable members of our society. The volunteers are dedicated and loving and the gentle horses heal the souls who go to that magical place.

For 8 years, WindWalkers has rented the ranch they operate on, and they have been living under the threat of not being able to control their own future.

Recently, that changed. Gabrielle Greeves, Executive Director, and a very active Windwalkers board, has put the land under contract and arranged for financing to purchase, WindWalkers Ranch, a long-time Dream!

With the hard work of the WindWalkers board, a relationship fostered by Greeves with the property owner, and the generous early contributions of a magnificent few...they are so close to being able to purchase the ranch.

Since November, WindWalkers has received in excess of \$300,000 in donations to secure the bank loan.

WindWalkers must now raise another \$200,000, which is due by January 3rd, 2020 so they need our immediate help.

We are asking all RFBVHC members and friends to think about what our valley would be without this iconic institution? Please, find it in your heart to give generously to secure WindWalkers' future.



Donations can be gifted by checks, cash, or appreciated stocks and equities that can be transferred without paying capital gains.

WindWalkers is part of what makes our valley work. It has been the beating heart that gives hope, healing, and happiness to so many people and a second life and chance for our dear retired horses.

Please help WindWalkers.

Thank You.

<http://www.windwalkerstrc.org/>

NEW WEB SITE

Our Aspen native, RfVHC President, Karin Reid Offield has updated our website and added a new directory that offers “everything horses” from valley businesses to equine services. You can find Tack and Saddle stores, Ranch Equipment, Hay & Feed, Boarding Stables, Trainers, beginner lessons, horse rescues and therapeutic riding facilities, animal artists and photographers and horses for sale. From trail riding to competition; from back yard to the “Big Time”, the RfVHC has sources for what you need. We are all about information and networking.

www.rfvhorsecouncil.org/directory



FACEBOOK

Our Facebook page is focused on keeping you informed about what is happening with horses in our valley, on a national level and with horse news impacting the larger world around us. We provide articles and updates on infectious diseases such as VSV, stories about human and horse successes, humorous and heartwarming anecdotes to raise your spirits and many beautiful photos and inspirational words of wisdom. Check out our Facebook platform to enjoy and elevate horses in your home and in our society.

www.facebook.com/keephorsesontrails/

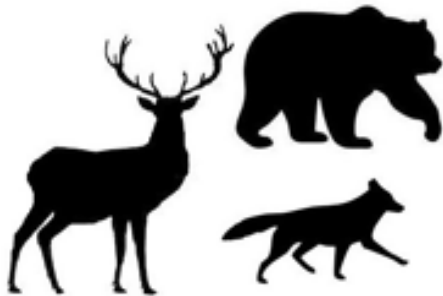


When friends try to help you at the stable!

WILDLIFE

Respect the Wildlife and Where They Live

All animals need their space - Stay at least 150' away from elk.



rfvhorsecouncil.org ©



Stay on the Trail - Prevent trampling nesting birds and small mammals.



We ride horses across our western landscapes, sharing these open spaces with wildlife creatures. Sustaining biodiverse environments keep our lands healthy and vibrant. Thomas Jefferson, Founding Father said - “If one link in nature's chain might be lost, another might be lost, until the whole of things will vanish by piecemeal.”

The RfVHC supports all initiatives to preserve our biodiverse natural environments and to protect all the creatures, great and small, that rely on those areas to survive and thrive.

As climate change creates weather chaos and overturns our expectations of natural balance, “we” humans must assume responsibility to protect certain pockets of our planet from human trespass and degradation. Winter wildlife closures and responsible recreational use of our lands will help preserve these areas for generations of children to come.



MERCHANDISE

In 2018 we hosted Anita Witt’s movie, “The Last Of The Cowboys In The Roaring Fork Valley” at the Basalt Library. We were gifted by Anita Witt’s Estate several book and DVDs. They will be available for sale on our web site soon.

- “They Came From Missouri” – A history of the early settlement of Missouri Heights, Carbondale, CO.
- “The Lady Godiva Book Of Horsemanship” – A slightly risqué coffee table edition of photos of local cowboys and cowgirls with their horses.
- DVDs – “The Last Of The Cowboys In the Roaring Fork Valley”

Call or email Holly McLain, if you want any of the above items now. 970 948 2151 – rumbleridge@gmail.com





WESTEREN HERITAGE

The RfVHC is committed to preserving our Western Heritage through educating our community about our western history for future generations.

Did you know there is “NO Western Heritage Museum” in the Roaring Fork Valley. Early homesteaders used horses and mules to settle our valley. Aspen was a silver mining town, and

our mid valley ranchers provided beef and potatoes for the miners and hay for their mules used to transport ore to the assay office. The Marolt property barn holds mining memorabilia, but they have no room for our historical cowboy artifacts. Anita Witt’s Estate gifted the RfVHC two of her saddles, a bridle, a guitar and a complete cowgirl outfit, which was her hallmark.

Many ranching families have volunteered their antique memorabilia for a museum. RfVHC’s wish is to establish a “Western Heritage Museum” in our valley.

“Achievements start with Dreams”!

Wishing you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a most abundant and joyful New Year.

RFVHC Board of directors



rfvhc.colorado@gmail.com

On Saturday, January 18th, 2020, the RFVHC Open Member Educational event will be held at Glenwood Veterinarian Clinic from 11:30 to 2:30 - Please join us. An invitation will follow.

*The Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council
is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization*

Become a member or renew at:

<https://www.rfvhorsecouncil.org/membership.html>