



Alkali Creek Road, PO BOX 385 Billings, Montana 59103

January 2008

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

YOUR 2008 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE

2008 BOARD MEMBERS

President	Nancy Bjelland 860-8536	Nancy_Bjelland@blm.gov
Past President	Jim Sorlie 670-9870	
1 st Vice President (Membership)	Pat Cole 962-3002	
2 nd Vice President (Horse Activities)	Sue Malmstrom 373-6736	suem@tbems.com
Co-chair	Doris Gillespie 656-9977	dgillespie@dadco.com
3 rd Vice President (Social Activities)	Tara Hultgren 669-3817	
Co-chair	Lorie Trafford 259-5949	
Co-chair	Cindy Sundheim 254-0058	
Corresponding Secretary	Polly Namen 633-9400	barlazyp@earthlink.net
Recording Secretary	Teri Bakken 860-5380	tbakken@bresnan.net
Treasurer	Sue Schwend 670-8028	sueschwend@hotmail.com
3-Year Director	Larry Schwend 446-3940	
2 Year Director	Jimmie Jimison 373-5725	mykidcorral@msn.com
1 Year Director	Sandie Green 373-9029	sam7sell@yahoo.com
Stirrup Editor	Polly Namen 633-9400	barlazyp@earthlink.net
Club Website www.billingsaddleclub.org (for access to member restricted area, enter "member" and "1515")		

The next **Board meeting** is February 3, 2008 @ 3pm @ Teri Bakken's home (308 Van Bramer). Members are always welcome.

THANK YOU to Teri Davis for recently setting up our BSC blog. See it at www.billingssaddleclub.org

*****New *STIRRUP* editor needed! *****

Writing skills? Enjoy sharing information with other horse people?? Always dreamt of being “published”???? If **you** are interested in putting together this *monthly newsletter*, please contact any of your board members to express your interest as soon as possible.

NEW BSC logo on apparel Anyone interested in purchasing apparel with a terrific new (embroidered) BSC logo can go to *Creative Monogram* at 122 N 30th in Billings. Select whatever item(s) you want embroidered, and place your own order. Creative Monogram donated the set up fee, **so be sure to thank them!** Teri Bakken did a terrific job designing this logo for us.....make sure you thank her, too.

MEETING MINUTES – December Board Meeting

The Billings Saddle Club Board Meeting was called to order on by Pat Cole on December 2, 2007.

Present: Pat Cole, Sue Malmstrom, Sue Schwend, Doris Gillespie, Jimmie Jimison, Larry Schwend, Nancy Bjelland, and Teri Bakken.

Minutes: The November 1, 2007 board meeting and General Membership meeting minutes of November 2007 were read. Sue Schwend motioned to accept the minutes as corrected and Jimmie seconded. The board approved.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report was reviewed. The 2007 tax liability and possible year end purchases were discussed. A 100 cup coffee pot will be purchased in addition to general clubhouse supplies (Nancy is coordinating the purchase). Teri motioned to accept the report/purchases and Nancy seconded. The board approved.

The board approved Jimmie to look into purchasing a water meter for the fire hydrant.

Correspondence: Thank You notes were mailed for the donations to the Tom Malmstrom Memorial.

Stirrup: A writer/editor is still needed for the Stirrup.

Horse Activities: No report.

Membership: The board approved the membership application for Robert Honaker and Nicole Thompson (for 2008 membership). The statements for 2008 annual dues will be mailed in January.

Social Activities: The sales from the silent auction at the general membership meeting netted \$242. Thank you to everyone who contributed and purchased!

Rentals: The Rental Manager submitted an activity report for November 2007.

The board discussed a standard policy for refunding deposits. A flat fee of \$100 will be deducted for each infraction of the rental contract not met. Also, any monies retained from the deposit for cleaning purposes will be paid to the rental manager. Nancy motioned to approve and Sue Schwend seconded. The board approved. The standard policy will be included as an attachment with all future rental correspondence. The correspondence will also be modified to state the desired date will only be honored for 30 days from the date of the correspondence. This will enable the board to better manage calendar events.

Unfinished Business: The 2007 Circuit Awards for Horse shows will be finished tomorrow. Sue Malmstrom will get them to Lorie Trafford.

A board member will contact Mary O'Donnell regarding the Scholarship O-Mok-See to confirm the date in 2008 and also to verify what funds from the event are to be donated.

New Business: Resolutions need to be completed for the 2008 board members (for signature authority on legal/financial matters).

The board discussed switching banks beginning in January 2008, from Western Security to Stockman's Bank. Stockman's Bank has been a sponsor of BSC events for several years. Teri motioned to accept and Sue Schwend seconded. The board approved. Nancy put a proposal before the board to hold a BLM Wild Horse and Burro adoption event at the Saddle Club, August 7-10. The BLM will rent the facility at the regular rental rate.

Director Reports:

3-Year Director – No report.

2-Year Director – No report.

1-Year Director – No report.

Announcements: The next monthly board meeting will be at Teri Bakken's on January 6 at 2 pm.

Sue Schwend motioned to adjourn and Jimmie seconded. The board approved.
Respectfully submitted,
Teri Bakken

~~~~~YOUR 2008 DUES ARE DUE~~~~~

Our condolences go out to Curt Schwend, who recently lost his mother. Our prayers of comfort go out to you and your family, Curt.

**GET WELL WISHES** go out to Dorothy Vail and Nancy Bjelland. Ladies, we wish you a successful outcome and the speediest of recoveries.



**Classified Advertisements**



If you have (or someone you know has) horses, tack, trucks, trailers or any other horse related equipment **for sale** (or **wanted** items) that would interest our membership, contact the STIRRUP editor (Polly Namen 633-9400) with your ad information.

**FOR SALE:** 6 year old barrel, pole, or Omoksee mare. This horse is very versatile. Great horse for any level of rider. 406-690-1076

**FOR SALE:** 3 year old and yearling DashForCash pretty brown fillies. Good temperaments. Will be faaasssst and really nice horses to ride. 3yo is \$3,000. Yearling is \$2,500. Call Polly 633-9400.

**WANTED:** Several of our members are looking for good kids horses. Please call Polly at 633-9400 if you know of any that are available.

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Your Board of Directors is attempting to put together the **2008 calendar of horse activities**. If you have any suggestions, connections, or input, please contact a board member **TODAY!**

Tentative plans are being made to again have a **family dance** and **silent auction** in May....are you interested???

MSCA State Convention will be in Libby February 15 and 16. Contact Sue Malmstrom or Doris Gillespie if you wish to attend.



**"THERE IS A WAY TO TRAIN A HORSE WHERE
WHEN YOU GET DONE YOU'VE GOT THE HORSE.
ON HIS OWN GROUND. A GOOD HORSE WILL
FIGURE THINGS OUT ON HIS OWN. YOU CAN SEE
WHAT'S IN HIS HEART."** *- Cormac McCarthy*

Being Mindful in and out of the Saddle

Written by Jec Ballou

Sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with Zen monks for a week last fall made me believe that a rider's ultimate responsibility is to give up her ego.

Human beings carry so much around—stress, thoughts, emotional pain, responsibilities—that we lose clarity in moment-to-moment living. This blocks our ability to genuinely “let go” in our lives, and on horseback, because we are accustomed to clinging to that load.

The key, according to Zen practice, is a vigilant study of the self in order to release our attachments. As we begin to study the self, we see that creativity is about forgetting the ego, getting out of our own way. So, a dance then dances itself through our bodies, or a painting paints itself through a paintbrush. In other words, you're not getting in the way with your judgments or interpretations. When you find this intimacy on horseback, the effortless harmonious expression comes through you. The intent will be just to do what you're doing, rather than becoming or achieving something.

At first, the students at Zen Mountain Monastery in the Catskill Mountains thought it was a little strange when I showed up, having no background in Zen training. But I told them I wanted to stay there for a week with them because their teachings had insights to share with the equestrian world.

They took me in and let me watch their mastery of stillness, mental precision, and awareness. The tradition they studied easily could have been the same that has been handed down through generations of dressage masters.

Such diligent training of the mind made me remember the words of dressage great Franz Mairinger in his book *Horses are Made to Be Horses*: “To sit still, we must develop near perfect body control, as must the ballet dancer or the ice skater. This control is developed only through a relaxed and supple mind. The psychological approach must be correct ... Be firm, still, and balanced in order to give consistent aids. Prepare yourself and be calm in mind and body.”

And then as it echoing the monks with their meditation, Mairinger writes: “It will take a long time before your body will submit easily to the commands from the brain to sit straight and still.”

The cornerstone of study at Zen Mountain Monastery (ZMM) is the practice of zazen. This is best described as doing nothing but holding yourself in absolute stillness for a set period of time. If your nose runs, let it run. If your knee hurts, let go of the pain. It's about turning yourself off, so you can make your mind and body quiet. Every time a thought arises, let it go immediately. Interestingly, the sitting posture is much the same as a dressage seat (except for being cross-legged)—waist pulled toward your hands, straight spine and open upper body, chin tucked in, and symmetrical weight distribution through your legs and knees.

In my introductory instruction to zazen, senior monks told me that I would discover how much the human mind fights against stillness.

During my first session, my brain flew in rapid fire through every thought but staying in the moment. It seemed impossible to turn it off, and yet I had never before realized how subtly cloudy it could be! The monks showed me that this drastically affects our communication with horses. We are always doing too much. After the second session of zazen, it was clear to me that horses have probably been trying to tell us for centuries that we are not focused, or enough in the moment. But our minds aren't clear enough to pick up those messages! I recalled a passage from one of Nuno Oliveira's texts that showed how perceptive horses are to our mental states: "I remember that after my father's funeral, I returned to school starting to work Corsario on the longe exactly as I always did. He stopped and put both ears forward, looking at me; an exceptionally sensitive horse, he felt that my state of mind was not as usual, although everything else was the same as it had always been." *Notes and Reminiscences of a Portuguese Dressage Rider*, 1982.

Senior monk Mn. Hojin Kimmel acknowledged that the training of "letting go" is like holding a giant mirror to yourself. Zazen forces you to do that.

"You see how your mind wants to fight. You meet that face to face in zazen," she said. Hojin explained that that is the reason for the posture of zazen. It was developed from ancient yoga practices and was determined to be the right way to arrange the body to come into complete stillness—and possibly enlightenment. By holding the posture in absolute immobility during zazen, the mind, too, will eventually become quiet.

My instincts trusted this wisdom and I let them pull me from bed at 4:30 a.m. every morning to meditate with 40 monks and students sitting on hard pillows until daylight arrived through the meditation hall windows.

I never imagined sitting motionless like this could seem so impossible. We sat in meditative silence for 90 minutes until dawn filled the sky outside and two bells finally rang out, signaling the end of the period. While slowly regaining sensation in my legs, I could feel in my heart and body that to be good riders, we must make our minds quiet. Otherwise, the pursuit of physical stillness and harmony is futile. The monastery stresses how committed you must be in training yourself to be still and have a quiet, clear mind. In this pursuit, everything becomes your practice and your ego cannot interfere with judgment or getting attached to outcomes.

At the monastery, periods of zazen meditation are punctuated by mornings and afternoons full of simple work to help people focus. My job was to assist in the kitchen. I rinsed, peeled, and chopped vegetables for hours and hours.

At first, I found myself lost in thoughts as I sliced through carrots. I thought about what I was learning, I thought about a newspaper article assignment I needed to start, I thought about writing this article. Then, I remembered that my daily practices should quiet my mind, not provoke thought tangents. So, I kept letting go of inner chatter and daydreams as they arose and stayed focused on the sound of my knife on the chopping block, the feel of the carrot, the sight of slices rolling away. After four hours, I felt completely relaxed and quiet in mind and body. When thoughts did arise, like when I engaged in conversation with other students, they arose with tremendous clarity and precision. When I spoke, I found myself able to make my point efficiently and vividly. With such non-muddled communication, I could only imagine that giving riding aids to

my horses would be tons more precise.

We went from these mindful work sessions (other students gardened, did housekeeping, light construction) to zazen sittings, which brought the body into stillness for 90 minutes at a time.

It amazed me how, even in this intensely focused and contemplative place, the human mind resists being completely quiet. I was instructed to count my breaths up to 10, then start over, and keep doing this during meditation. I thought it would be simple, but I found myself a few times counting my breaths 30,31,32 without realizing I'd passed 10! In one of his talks, the monastery's head teacher, Geoffrey Shugen Arnold Sensei, said that humans condition themselves to make simple acts more difficult.

"It's this great love we have to complicate what is so simple," he told the students in a talk encouraging them to consider how every single action reflected the state of their minds.

Watching him in his daily life, I could see that he applied his commitment to and training in stillness to everything he did. He didn't hurry when he walked, he didn't rush when he ate, he listened fully focused to people talking. And most inspiring to me, he demonstrated a sense of awareness that seemed like every cell of his body was alive with sensation.

His feet seemed to feel every stride, his hands seemed to become everything they touched—a mug, book, cloth. I imagined that he would be an excellent dressage rider if he ever got on a horse.

I ate lunch one day with Shugen and told him how I thought Zen and dressage mirrored each other. He knew of the Spanish Riding School, but did not know a lot else about dressage. My discussion interested him, especially from the standpoint of being a teacher. He said that "teaching" something like dressage should be a process of skillfully guiding students to arrive at their own lessons. The teacher's job is to take away everything the student holds on to.

People never genuinely learn something until it comes from within them, he explained. This was particularly the case with stillness and quieting the mind, he went on to say. I asked him how on earth he "taught" students to become so calm and unattached to their egos. He replied that, first, a student must wholeheartedly want to learn that lesson and see that he or she needs it. Once that is accomplished, the person's ego will get out of the way and allow learning to take place.

Students must realize that their practice of dressage (or Zen) mirrors their entire lives. It is not an isolated activity, removed from the rest of someone's lifestyle. It calls on the state of a person's inner life, which in today's world is often far from stillness. There's job stress, family responsibilities, emotional scars, national tragedy, and the list goes on.

That is why Shugen puts so much importance on zazen and encourages people to apply that practice to their entire lives. If we learn to live moment to moment and do less with our thoughts and our bodies, we will express our horsemanship with less struggle and greater artistry. It will simply come through us from the horse, uninterrupted by our "great love" to complicate things.

Consider here the words of dressage legend Colonel Alois Podhajsky (*The Complete Training of Horse and Rider*): "But there is one principle that should never be abandoned, namely, that the rider must learn to control himself before he can control his horse. This is the basic, most important principle to be preserved in equitation." In the words of Rittmeister von Oeynhausen in 1845: "Man can only be master of his horse when he is master of his own deeds and actions."

This article originally appeared in [EH#8](#).

2008 DUES STATEMENT

Billings Saddle Club
PO Box 385
Billings, MT 59103

Member Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address: _____

(emailing our monthly newsletter saves the club a LOT of \$money\$ in copying costs and postage)

Children's (19 & under) names and birthdates: _____

Pursuant to Article III, Section 3 "Membership in this organization may be either for an individual or for family groups. Married individuals must join as a family group".

Individual annual dues\$50.00

Family annual dues\$100.00

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____

As stated in General Information, Membership Roster and By-Laws: "To be considered a member in good standing, each member is required to participate in at least one activity or committee assignment, and not having volunteered, will be assigned to an activity by the chairman of an activity. All members are strongly urged to participate on work-days. It is your club and you will only get out of it that which you put in."

Please refer to the 2008 Calendar of Events, then list your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice of date and activity.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Dues must be sent immediately to ensure that your name is included in the 2008 Roster. Annual dues shall start from January 1st of each year and shall be payable within 60 days thereafter. Any member who fails to pay dues on or before March 1st shall be automatically dropped from active membership unless the member complies with Article IV, Section 6. Any member dropped from membership for non-payment of dues will be assessed a late charge in the amount of \$25, in addition to the current dues, in order to be reinstated to membership for the current year. **If this deadline imposes an undue hardship, please contact the membership chairperson or any board member.**

MAIL BEFORE March 1st, 2008

THANK YOU!!!!

2008 BSC ACTIVITIES CALENDAR
TENTATIVE @ 1/17/08

BILLINGS SADDLE CLUB EVENTS:

January

6 2pm Board Meeting –
308 Van Bramer, Billings

February

3pm Board Meeting
308 Van Bramer, Billings

March

Board Meeting – TBA

April

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting – TBA
14 Clubhouse Re-Opened
19 10 am Work Day #1
20 2 pm Open O-Mok-See
23 6 pm Work Day
25-27 Shirlee Parini Barrel Clinic
30 6 pm Jackpot Barrels

May

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
3 Family Dance
3-4 11 am Barrel Race
7 6 pm Jackpot Barrels
18 2 pm O-Mok-See
21 6 pm Jackpot Barrels
25 9 am Horse Show #1
26 2 pm Open O-Mok-See

June

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
13 7 pm Intra Club O-Mok-See
22 9 am Horse Show #2
28-29 Scholarship O-Mok-See

July

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
11 7 pm Intra Club O-Mok-See
20 9 am Horse Show #3
20-25 National O-Mok-See – Craig, CO

August

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
1 7 pm Intra Club O-Mok-See
3 9 am Horse Show #4
15 7 pm Intra Club O-Mok-See
24 2 pm Intra Club O-Mok-See
30-31 State O-Mok-See – TBA

September

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
21 2 pm Memorial O-Mok-See

October

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC

November

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting BSC
16 5 pm Annual
Meeting, Election of Officers
& Awards

December

TBA 6 pm Board Meeting TBA
8 Clubhouse Winterized

**Non-BSC Events Scheduled at Club
Grounds @ 1/17/08:**

Clubhouse Rental: 7/5/08

BBRS: 528/08, 6/18/08, 7/30/08, 9/7/08

Wild Horse Adoption: August 7-9, 2008