



# SIS-Q-TRAILS

Backcountry Horsemen of California  
Top of the State Unit

Volume 29

Issue 1

First Quarter, 2025

<https://tos-bchc.com/>

[https://www.facebook.com/bchc\\_topofthestate/](https://www.facebook.com/bchc_topofthestate/)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 2024 Annual Report will be submitted to the Backcountry Horsemen of California in January 2025. This was a memorable year for our Unit as we developed even better working relationships with our North State BCHC colleagues and the Klamath National Forest recreation staff to organize and complete some important trail and campground cleanup and maintenance work in our area forests.

**BCHC Top of the State Unit 2024 Annual Report:** January and February didn't feature any Unit events besides our monthly Board of Directors meetings. Unit Volunteer Hours chairperson, Kelly York, sent in our 2023 Volunteer Hours on January 7.

Robert Robustellini, Michael Stapleton and I met with Klamath National Forest recreation and trail work partners in Yreka on January 29 to discuss work plans for 2024, including campground and trail work in the Carter Meadows area and a stock corral build and Pacific Crest Trail log-out work at Grider Creek. On February 8, we signed our 2024 Volunteer Service Agreement with the Klamath National Forest.

Unit Treasurer, Caralee Scala, reported at our February Board of Directors meeting that she sent in our 2023 financial report to BCHC as required. Also at our February BOD meeting, we reviewed and voted to approve our Unit 2024 budget.

Due to a busy work schedule, I, as your Unit President, did not attend the Backcountry Horsemen of California Spring State Board meeting on February 10 in Bakersfield, but I sent our Unit proxy with Larry Shuman, State Director for the Shasta-Trinity Unit.

On March 7, we had our first of two Membership meetings for the year. At that meeting, Dr. Scott Essex, DVM, did an informal Q&A with our members and leadership in attendance. Questions included what is the Shasta River crud and what are the symptoms; when a young horse should have its first dental exam, and whether older horses in late 20s and early 30s need dentals; why is Coggins required to enter some states and not others; and what diseases can people get from horses (rabies).

Dinners have long been one of our Unit's most popular events



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2025 Unit Leadership Page 2
- 2025 Calendar Page 3
- Year in Review, cont. Pages 4-6
- English Peak Lookout Work Page 7
- TrailMeister at Rendezvous Page 8

## WHOLE NEW LOOK!

We're introducing a new look and design for our newsletter for 2025, starting with this First Quarter edition that looks back at our great events and accomplishments in 2024. I plan to showcase an action shot on the cover each quarter to highlight our work and events. The cover photo for this edition features Alan Woods cutting open the Pacific Crest Trail near Grider Creek in May, 2024.

and our St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef and Cabbage potluck dinner on March 16 was no exception. More than 60 members and guests gathered at the Fort Jones City Hall and Community Center and the food and visiting did not disappoint. We also had more than a dozen donated desserts and cookies that we auctioned off, a few for more than \$80. Likewise, our members were very generous in donating about a dozen items or getting donations from local businesses for a very popular raffle. We also had one silent auction item, an old tool trailer. With the dessert auction, silent auction and raffle, our Unit earned enough money to cover our \$1000 scholarship awarded to an area high school student.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

# SIS-Q-TRAILS

**A publication of the Backcountry Horsemen  
of California Top of the State Unit**

**Editor:** Michele Machado Woods

**Editor email:** [meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

**Publisher email:** [topofthestate-bch@outlook.com](mailto:topofthestate-bch@outlook.com)

Publication Information: The SIS-Q-TRAILS Top of the State Unit newsletter is published quarterly. It is an independent publication with news and information of interest to Unit members.

**DISCLAIMER:** Articles and advertisements that appear in SIS-Q-TRAILS do not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the BCHC, TOS Unit or its officers and members. Nor does publication of said articles and advertisements constitute an endorsement of views or of the goods or services offered therein that they may express. Accuracy of all material is the sole responsibility of the authors. BCHC TOS is not responsible for unsolicited material of any kind.

**SUBMISSIONS AND DEADLINES:** The Top of the State Unit welcomes new member contributions, club news, events, calendar dates, and items of interest that you wish to have submitted in the next issue of the newsletter. These need to be submitted by the 15th of the month and will be printed as space is available. This newsletter is edited and published four times per year.

**Submission deadline dates:** March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15

**Publication dates:** January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1

Send all information (text, photos and/or images) to newsletter editor/publisher mailing or email addresses listed above.

## PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

This newsletter is a document of communication that disseminates information of the Top of the State Unit of the BCHC covering schedules, information, philosophy and historical materials pertinent to the participants of the back country of Northern California.

1. Perpetuate the common sense use and enjoyment of horses in America's back country and wilderness.
2. Assist the various government and private agencies in their maintenance and management of said resources.
3. Educate, encourage and solicit active participation in wise and sustaining use of the back country by horsemen and the general public.
4. Work to ensure that the public lands remain open to recreational stock use.
5. Foster and encourage the formation of new state backcountry horsemen organizations.

**Unit bylaws, membership form and more:**  
<https://tos-bchc.com/forms>

# 2025 LEADERSHIP

## PRESIDENT

**Michele Machado Woods**  
(817) 308-0258  
[meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

## VICE PRESIDENT

**Debbie Bacigalupi**  
(650) 417-1674  
[dbacigalupi@gmail.com](mailto:dbacigalupi@gmail.com)

## SECRETARY

**Alan Woods**  
(530) 408-8809  
[rogue4444@yahoo.com](mailto:rogue4444@yahoo.com)

## TREASURER

**Caralee Scala**  
(530) 459-5788

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Kyle Adkins**  
(541) 621-1254  
[roguegreasetraps@gmail.com](mailto:roguegreasetraps@gmail.com)

**Sandy Mason**  
(530) 598-9855  
[ixlady@sisqtel.net](mailto:ixlady@sisqtel.net)

**Laurie Robustellini**  
(530) 468-5636  
[muletrackstoo@gmail.com](mailto:muletrackstoo@gmail.com)

**Janice Rushton**  
(530) 598-8650  
[kjrushton49@yahoo.com](mailto:kjrushton49@yahoo.com)

## 1 VACANT BOARD SPOT

## ALTERNATE BOARD MEMBERS

**Gail Lyons**  
(530) 467-3137  
[jg Lyons@sisqtel.net](mailto:jg Lyons@sisqtel.net)

**Michael Stapleton**  
(530) 598-6164  
[frenchcreek@gmail.com](mailto:frenchcreek@gmail.com)

## ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

**Michael Stapleton**  
(530) 598-6164  
[frenchcreek@gmail.com](mailto:frenchcreek@gmail.com)

## EDUCATION

**Debbie Bacigalupi**  
(650) 417-1674  
[dbacigalupi@gmail.com](mailto:dbacigalupi@gmail.com)

## E-NOTICES

**Penny Wells-Thomas**  
(530) 468-2715  
[pwells@sisqtel.net](mailto:pwells@sisqtel.net)

## FISH PLANTS

**Don Menne**  
(530) 598-0290

## GRANTS

**Joe Croteau**  
(530) 643-9397  
[jennbull63@gmail.com](mailto:jennbull63@gmail.com)

## GROUP RIDES

**Michele Machado Woods**  
(817) 308-0258  
[meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

**Laurie Robustellini**  
(530) 468-5636  
[muletrackstoo@gmail.com](mailto:muletrackstoo@gmail.com)

## HISTORIAN

**Kathryn Matthews**  
(530) 842-5872  
[hereinyreka@gmail.com](mailto:hereinyreka@gmail.com)

## INSURANCE

**Michele Machado Woods**  
(817) 308-0258  
[meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

## MEMBERSHIP

**Jennifer Bull**  
(530) 643-9397  
[jennbull63@gmail.com](mailto:jennbull63@gmail.com)

## NEWSLETTER/SOCIAL MEDIA

**Michele Machado Woods**  
(817) 308-0258  
[meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

## PARADES

VACANT

## PARLIAMENTARIAN

**Robert Robustellini**  
(530) 468-5636  
[muletrackstoo@gmail.com](mailto:muletrackstoo@gmail.com)

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS

**Debbie Bacigalupi**  
(650) 417-1674  
[dbacigalupi@gmail.com](mailto:dbacigalupi@gmail.com)

## PUBLIC LANDS

**Mike Journey**  
(530) 468-2821  
[mikejourney@gmail.com](mailto:mikejourney@gmail.com)

**Michael Stapleton**  
(530) 598-6164  
[frenchcreek@gmail.com](mailto:frenchcreek@gmail.com)

## SCHOLARSHIP

**Penny Wells-Thomas**  
(530) 468-2715  
[pwells@sisqtel.net](mailto:pwells@sisqtel.net)

## SUNSHINE

**Sherry Glendenning**  
(530) 598-7466  
[sherhorse@sisqtel.net](mailto:sherhorse@sisqtel.net)

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

**Michele Machado Woods**  
(817) 308-0258  
[meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com)

## WEB MASTER

**Kathryn Matthews**  
(530) 842-5872  
[topofthestate-bch@gmail.com](mailto:topofthestate-bch@gmail.com)

## WORK PARTY TEAM LEADER

**Robert Robustellini**  
(530) 468-5636  
[muletrackstoo@gmail.com](mailto:muletrackstoo@gmail.com)



# TOP OF THE STATE UNIT 2025 ACTIVITIES

Please watch the Unit website, Facebook page and Unit emails for continued updates.

January 2	BOD Meeting cancelled	June-	Work Party projects in cooperation with the
January 9	Regional Trails Summit, Eureka, CA	September	Klamath National Forest and other partners
January 13	Planning meeting with KNF Recreation staff	July 10	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
February 6	BOD Meeting, Yreka, location TBD	August 7	BOD Meeting cancelled
February 7-8	BCHC Winter BOD Meeting, location TBD	August 6-10	Siskiyou Golden Fair, Yreka
March 6	Membership Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall	September 4	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
March 15	Corned Beef & Cabbage dinner, Fort Jones	September 20	Deer Mountain Group Ride, TBD
April 3	BOD Meeting, Yreka location TBD	October 2	BOD Meeting, Yreka, location TBD
April 11-13	BCHC Rendezvous, Corning CA	October 3-4	BCHC Fall BOD Meeting, location TBD
April/May	Grider Creek PCT log-out work, TBD	October 25	Halloween Obstacle event, Big Springs
May 1	BOD Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall	November 6	Membership Meeting, Fort Jones City Hall
June 5	BOD Meeting, Yreka, location TBD	December 4	BOD Meeting, Yreka, location TBD

Visit the Top of the State Unit website at <https://tos-bchc.com/>

Visit our Unit's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/bchctopofthestate/>

## Welcome new members!

Lorraine and Brian Joling  
Gleb Nikitenko

### BCHC membership dues increase

At the Fall 2024 Backcountry Horsemen of California Board of Directors meeting on October 5, BCHC Directors voted to increase membership dues to \$60 for Individuals and \$75 for Family memberships. Multi-year memberships for both of these types of membership will increase as well. All other types of membership are unchanged.

The increase will take effect on January 1, 2025. The increase was required because the Backcountry Horsemen of America approved a \$5 increase in all of their membership fees (Family, Individual and Youth). The BCHC membership increase reflects the \$5 BCHA increase plus one half the cost to insure each member each year. Units were previously paying for one half of members' insurance (BCHC pays the other half), but that cost is now being passed on to new and renewing members.

### Unit Board of Directors opening

We have one Director opening for the 2025-27 term that we need to fill ASAP. Board of Directors responsibilities and requirements:

- All Directors must be BCHC members in good standing
- Serve a two-year term
- Attend monthly meetings (first Thursday of each month)
- Help manage the affairs, property, business and control of policy of the organization
- Bring new, fresh ideas and fill open chairperson roles

Contact Unit President Michele Machado Woods at [meechele418@gmail.com](mailto:meechele418@gmail.com) or 817-308-0258 for more info.

Personal | Business | Commercial | Wealth Management



Proudly serving  
Yreka, Fort Jones, Happy Camp,  
Mt. Shasta and Redding

[www.MechanicsBank.com](http://www.MechanicsBank.com)



Planning a Trip? Use  
[www.ytbtravel.com/bchc](http://www.ytbtravel.com/bchc)

BCHC  
EARNS 60%  
OF THE  
COMMISSIONS!



- You will find the same airlines, hotels, rental cars and cruises as on other travel websites!
- You'll get great travel prices!
- Each time you book travel a portion of the travel commissions will go to support BCHC!

*It's that simple!*



# 2024 *In Review*

Thanks to the hard work of Unit members Robert Robustellini, Alan Woods, Michael Stapleton and Kyle Adkins, and our dedicated Klamath National Forest partners, there is again a stock corral at Grider Creek Campground. The crew completed the build, with strong metal panels provided by KNF, on March 20-21. Grider Creek campground is where northbound Pacific Crest Trail hikers emerge from a long trek through the Marble Mountain Wilderness and head for "civilization" and restocking in the small town of the Seiad Valley. It also, in the past, featured wooden stock corrals that were used by area packers and equestrians, but the corrals were destroyed by blowdown trees and creek flooding. We hope to install more corrals there in the future.

Our Highway cleanup crew of Michael Stapleton, Penny Wells-Thomas, Sandy Mason, John and Gail Lyons and Penny's friend, Gina, picked up 10 bags of trash on Highway 3 on April 7 in Etna to earn \$250 from CalTrans. Our cleanup crew got out for a second event on October 6.

On April 11, BCHC honored long-time Top of the State Unit member, Virgil Hardy, for his many years of service in Public Lands. Virgil was our Fish Plant coordinator and an essential Unit leader until his passing in 2021. Cindy McMurry presented the award to Virgil's widow, Linda Hardy. Robert Robustellini earned our Unit's Top Hand Award for 2023.

I met with Ian Nelson, PCTA Regional Representative for Northern California and Southern Oregon, on April 2 in Yreka, to discuss our planned work on the PCT for 2024. After each work day on the PCT, I sent a report to both Ian and our KNF partners to document our work hours and miles driven, and discuss any additional work needed.

According to many Seiad Valley locals and Pacific Crest Trail hikers, the 8-mile portion of the PCT from the Marble Mountains Wilderness boundary to the Grider Creek trailhead was a mess of blowdown trees that made it unsafe for hikers and equestrians/packers. On March 20, April 19 and May 24, I joined fellow Unit members Alan Woods, Jeff McCabe, and Seiad locals Brian and Mike, to clear more than 70 trees, large and small, from about six miles of that stretch of trail. Most of these trees fell after being burned or damaged in the Happy Camp Complex Fire in 2014. We hope to continue work on this segment in 2025 and beyond.

The weather was great for our Spring riding tune-up at Kim and Lloyd Potts' Mill Creek Ranch on May 11 in Quartz Valley! We had 16 friendly faces enjoying everything from obstacles to the creek trail to a splash in the pond!



Photos courtesy of Michael Stapleton and Michele Machado Woods.





# 2024 *In Review*

The Top of the State Unit announced in early May that our 2024 Memorial Scholarship winner is Etna High School graduate McKenzie Bacon. McKenzie stood out, in part, because of her love of horses and her time volunteering with equine therapy program Stable Hands in Yreka. She trained two Mustangs for her senior project this year. McKenzie is using her \$1000 scholarship to attend BYU Idaho in Rexburg, Idaho, where she is studying animal science in hopes of becoming a Veterinary Technician. Thank you to our Scholarship Committee, Caralee Scala and Penny Wells-Thomas, for your work in evaluating our applicants this year. We had six total applicants.

Our Unit members love educating youth about packing and equines. The annual Siskiyou Agriculture Awareness Day on May 16 gave us the opportunity to teach and challenge area fourth graders with adding items to packing panniers and weighing them to see which group could get closest to a balanced load. Thank you, Debbie Bacigalupi, Caralee Scala, Robert Robustellini, Kathryn Matthews, and Kyle and Ashley Adkins for volunteering your time for this event.

Our Unit participated in two area parades in the late Spring and Summer. Six riders represented our Unit in the Etna Rodeo Parade on May 5, and two members rode on our behalf in the July 4 Freedom Festival Parade in Montague.

During the Spring, our Fish Plant coordinator, Don Menne, worked with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to schedule fish plants. We had four lakes on our schedule, but in mid-June, Don was notified that all fish plants were cancelled in 2024 because of concerns about the threatened Cascades Frog. We'll continue work with CDFW to hopefully schedule fish plants in 2025.

Our annual Carter Meadows work weekend event was very successful as our crew grew to more than 15 adults and four youth from three BCHC Units (Top of the State, Redwood and Shasta-Trinity). On June 5-9, campers and day volunteers used chainsaws, nippers and other hand tools to clean up the equestrian campgrounds and clear all trails that connect the campgrounds to the trailheads. We also cleared dozens of blowdown trees on the Trail Gulch and Long Gulch trails, using chainsaws in the non-Wilderness areas and crosscut saws and hand saws in the Trinity Alps Wilderness. Lastly, we headed up on the Pacific Crest Trail and cleared more than 20 blowdown trees on about 4 miles of the northbound trail. All of this work was in cooperation with the Klamath National Forest and helped greatly in allowing the KNF to open the campgrounds in late June.



Photos  
courtesy of  
Debbie  
Bacigalupi  
and Michele  
Machado  
Woods.



# 2024 *In Review*

Each year our Unit creates a feature booth at the Siskiyou Golden Fair to teach attendees about the BCHC mission and goals. Education chairperson, Debbie Bacigalupi, did a great job leading the decoration of our 2024 booth that was perfect for the "County Fair with a Golden Flare" theme.

On September 21, 14 riders gathered at Deer Mountain for a 4-mile loop ride that featured a fun card game where riders collected six cards at two stations. Thank you to Alan Woods, Robert Robustellini and John Machado for volunteering to hand out cards. When we completed the ride, we gathered for a potluck lunch. We gained three new members during the ride, including Gleb from McCloud, who was the lucky winner of the card game.

On September 28, Alan Woods and I helped Sam Burrows and Paul Archer from the BCHC Shasta-Trinity Unit pack in supplies and tools for a Bigfoot Trail Alliance and Ascend Wilderness trail crew to Long Gulch Lake in the Trinity Alps Wilderness. I gave a "tailgate safety" talk to the hikers about safety around equines. This is a fantastic example of our BCHC Units cooperating with trail crews in the north state.

Teri Arrwood from Etna Ambulance gave us a tutorial on our Unit's two new Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machines at our October 3 BOD meeting. We'll have these AEDs on hand at all work and meal events in the future.

I attended the BCHC Fall BOD meeting in Corning on October 5 and reported on our Unit's work for the year.

We had the unique opportunity to learn about equine osteopathy from Fenja Konigsmann, EDO, during her demonstration on November 3 at the Machado Ranch. About 15 attendees braved some cold temperatures to learn how osteopathy can benefit our equines.

At our November Membership meeting, we discussed one soon to be vacant Board of Directors spot. We are still looking to fill this spot and will continue the search in 2025 among our younger members.

We sure enjoyed visiting with good friends at our Christmas potluck dinner on December 7! It was a great way to celebrate the holidays and an outstanding year of work by our Unit. Thank you to everyone who helped cook and decorate. Also big thanks to everyone who donated a raffle item or dessert for auction. We couldn't put on such a nice event without this collaboration.

Thank you, Kelly York, Judy York, Erica Fruiht, Shirley Tickner and Lauren Sweezey for presenting the colors on behalf of our Unit at the 56th Annual Fort Jones Christmas parade on December 14.

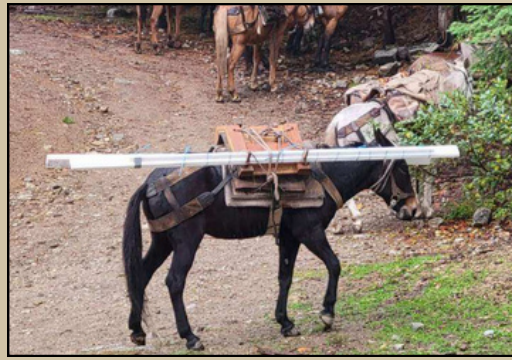
**Happy trails & Happy New Year! Michele Machado Woods, Unit President**



Photos  
courtesy of  
Debbie  
Bacigalupi,  
Alan Woods,  
Kelly York, and  
Michele  
Machado  
Woods.







Photos courtesy of Kathryn Matthews

## The Continued Adventure - English Peak Lookout

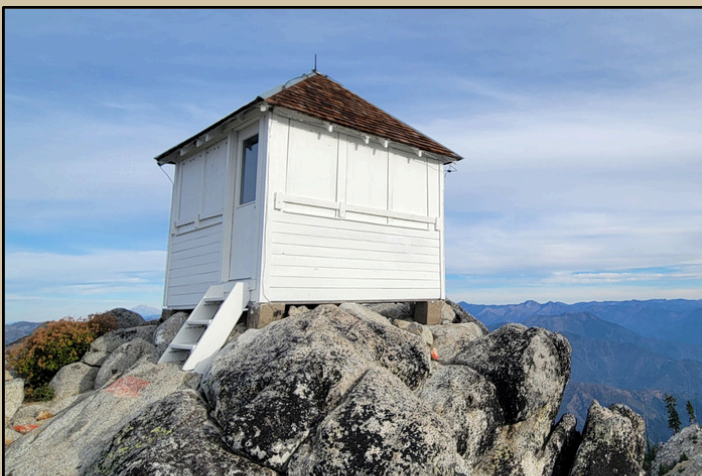
Written by "Matt" and Kathryn Matthews

After our painting and repair work during the summer of 2023 (see 2023 - 4th Quarter Newsletter, page 5) the work continued in September with Ed and Matt constructing new shutters for the winters at the lookout. To last longer, they were made out of tongue and groove Western Red Cedar. Each shutter is made the same size so that they can be more easily placed and rotated around the lookout as they weather over time because the South and West faces receive the most abuse. The dimensions are based upon the field measurements that my son, Clayton, and I made before we left the lookout last summer.

The plan was to have U.S. Forest Service pack the shutters and gear up to the lookout and perform the onsite work the following 3 days. After getting the team and animals packed, we hit the trail in the mid-afternoon to spend the night at Hamilton Camp. As we climbed in elevation it became colder and drizzle continued off and on throughout the day and evening. The heavy rain started at night and turned to snow before morning. The conditions were not improving the following day and the mules' hooves would build up several inches of ice and dirt making travel further up in elevation and across steep and rocky trails hazardous.

The shutters were delivered and stored in the lookout the following week as they performed meadow monitoring data collection. We look forward to next years opportunity to finish the work started at English Peak lookout and spend time in the Marble Mountain Wilderness. . .

Finally, in October 2024, our trip was rescheduled to install the shutters. We went in Wednesday and since the USFS trail crew opened the switch back trail to English Peak, it knocked a couple hours off our travel time. We arrived at the lookout around 3 p.m. and with the help of Ellen and Kira, we were able to finish assembling and installing the shutters around 6 p.m. The Forest Service crew and stock camped at Pine Lake while we found a safe flat spot among the small trees in the meadow at Tom Taylor cabin site. Heading home the next morning, we reflected on the challenges of the completed project and of the past 56 years our family has spent in this portion of the Marble Mountain Wilderness with the Andrews family (Ellen's parents were stationed there in the early 70's).





BCHC 2025 Rendezvous

# TRAILMEISTER CLINICS

Backcountry Horsemen of California is thrilled to welcome TrailMeister, Robert Eversole, as a featured clinician at our 2025 Rendezvous!

## PAID CLINIC

### Cinch making

- April 11 and April 12 (two-day clinic, 4 to 4.5 hours each day)
- \$350 per participant (\$100 deposit required to book your spot)
- Participants leave class with a functional mohair cinch and all of the tools and knowledge to build more
- Clinic limited to 16 participants
- Pre-registration is required:  
<https://www.trailmeister.com/shop/>

## FREE SEMINARS

### Educational sessions

- Horse Camping 101
- Lightweight Horse Camping
- When the Shot Hits the Fan
- Steps That Can Save Your Life if the Worst Happens During a Ride



### MORE INFO

<https://www.trailmeister.com>

<https://www.bchcalifornia.org>



Photos courtesy of TrailMeister

APRIL  
11-13

ROLLING HILLS  
CASINO  
EQUESTRIAN  
CENTER  
CORNING, CA