

Kansas Chapter of BCHA Celebrates 10 Years!

What a fun weekend the Kansas Chapter of Back Country Horsemen of America had celebrating their 10-year anniversary at Eisenhower State Park, Melvern Lake! Campers and riders filled 38 camp spots for the April weekend, and more riders came in for day rides. BCHKS welcomed riders Friday evening with a hot dog roast and s'mores, and scavenger hunt sheets were distributed encouraging everyone to get acquainted. Saturday morning was chilly with hot coffee, donuts, and muffins to get everyone warmed up and ready to mount up. Riders had the option of joining guided rides or hitting the Eisenhower trails on their own. It was a beautiful day to be in the saddle! Bits of BCHA and BCHKS trivia were posted out on the trails helping riders learn as much as they could before the trivia competition later Saturday evening.

BCHKS was extremely fortunate to get a saddle donated by Marc Lindsay of Hyperl Saddles for our 10-year event, and raffle tickets were sold for several months as well as the weekend of the event. As riders gathered at the tent for Saturday evening activities, anticipation grew as the time for the saddle drawing neared. "And, the winner is . . . John Grauberger!" John was present at the ride and thrilled with his new saddle; he commented that it's the first thing he's ever won 'in his 80 years of living'. John became a BCHKS member that evening! A spaghetti dinner, prepared by BCHKS officers, was offered along with side dishes and desserts contributed by participants. Then, it was time for more fun! Four couples, who had been together 7 years to 56 years, participated in the Old Newlywed Game. Questions were presented, and each couple had to guess how their partner would answer. Everyone had a good time with all of the wild answers. The evening competition was only beginning; it was time to see how much trivia riders had picked up throughout the day. The group was divided into teams, and the competition was fierce! They all knew so many facts about BCHA and BCHKS, it was hard to pick a winner. It was then time to match names with fun facts on the scavenger hunt sheet. There were lots of laughs, and a good time was had by all. Sunday morning, riders were invited back to the tent for biscuits and gravy, provided by BCHKS officers. Following breakfast, a group of 40 riders headed out for a 3-hour ride on restricted-access land not usually open to equestrians that was allowed with a Special Use Permit. It was a beautiful ride with views of the lake and sightings of wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, and a bald eagle.

Over six months of planning went into this event, and BCHKS considered it a huge success. The BCHKS Facebook page was bursting with compliments following the event:

~Many thanks to each and every BCHA officer and to all others who worked to plan, prepare and produce a super memorable 10-year anniversary event! Everyone we came across was there to have a good time, while associating with other like-minded people (who love horses). Mission accomplished!

~Thanks for hosting a super fun weekend. The campground was beautiful. The trails were pristine! We recognize and thank all of you that keep them that way.

~Lots of hardworking folks helped to make the weekend a lot of fun. Really enjoyed the trail ride and had a really good time!!! Thanks all.

The Kansas chapter supported the mission of BCHA and promoted filling the campground and riding the beautiful trails at Eisenhower State Park. The BCHA trivia game educated participants about the organization and the work being done to assist public land managers in their

maintenance and management of public trails in Kansas. BCHKS gained several new members over the weekend and renewed memberships for others. It was a wonderful weekend with over 70 participants enjoying good food, fun times, new and old friends, horses, and riding some beautiful Kansas trails! BCHKS is off and running into their next 10 years!!