

**Big Sky Fox Trotter Association**  
Minutes for the January 13, 2007 meeting,  
12:00 p.m., First Christian Church, Whitehall, MT

**Call to order:** President Ross Damrow called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m. Attending the meeting were the following 2006 officers and directors: president Ross Damrow, vice-president Bob Womack, secretary Karen Philips, central director Mary Greene and director-at-large Jerry Christison. Officers and directors for 2007 are president Bob Womack, vice-president Mary Auger, treasurer Donna Goss, secretary Karen Philips, western director Kristina Tracer, central director Mary Greene, eastern director Vaughn Clutter (absent) and directors-at-large Bill Free and Rick Padgett. Other members attending were Ann Damrow, Bobbi Dyrud, trail rides chair Thea Faas-Gervais, clinics chair Mark Goss, Michael Hummert, Gerd Michaelis, newsletter editor Annette Padgett, Neil Peterson, new member Jolene Robins, Mariann Wheat, and Jack Womack. Twenty-one members were present.

**Minutes:** Jerry Christison moved and Mark Goss seconded that the September 23, 2006 minutes be approved as printed in the last newsletter. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's report:** Ross reported for treasurer Marie Clutter. The current checking account balance as of 1/12/07 is \$3,802.27. This includes \$690 in dues received so far for 2007. Our biggest expenses for the year were the July show and the November banquet. The show's final balance was a \$2,076 profit and the banquet's was a \$690 loss. The total income for the year, not including the dues received for 2007, was \$14,740 and the total expenses were \$13,616. This gave us a profit of \$1,124 in 2006. Subtracting the show profit of \$2,076 from this amount shows we were in the hole \$952 for operating expenses. Ross noted that this \$952 deficit needs to be considered when preparing the 2007 budget. Marie will mail all the treasurer's materials to Donna Goss. Ross will ask Candace Erickson and Joyce Johnson to audit the 2006 records, which will hopefully be completed by the end of February at the latest. Bill Free moved and Mark Goss seconded that the treasurer's report be approved. Motion passed.

**Committee Reports:**

**Clinics:** Mark Goss, clinics chair, reported that there is a clinic scheduled on March 4 at the Womack's indoor arena at Bearmouth, MT. Chris Brown will teach showmanship skills and she is a very successful trainer in the area of showmanship. Cost is \$30 for five or more participants.

He has had several requests for more cow classes. He will also contact Shelley Scott, a versatility trainer who works at the Natural Horse Arena in Florence, MT.

He has tentatively scheduled a clinic in May with Alma DeMille, a Utah foxtrotter gait clinician recommended by Catherine Hanson. He's a farrier and foxtrotter/gaited trainer. His specialty is getting the best gait out of your horse, whatever that gait is. This will take place at Hanson's outdoor arena in Corvallis, MT.

Thea reported that Suzanne Nebeker is willing to host a one day clinic or a clinic series in Salmon, Idaho on versatility, trail, cow work, colt starting, gait identification, or working in the show ring,.

Jerry Christison built a new 60 x 120 indoor arena with lights and made that available for clinics also.

Contact Mark at 406-961-3119 or mrg1947m@netscape.net if you have clinic ideas or you want to register for a clinic. He is especially interested in setting up clinics in central and eastern Montana.

**Trail Rides:** Thea Gervais, trail rides chair, reported that Gary Becker is busy organizing the 2007 co-hosted National Trail Ride in the Sunlight Basin area of Wyoming. We have traditionally co-hosted this Fall Gather Trail Ride with the Big Horn Basin Fox Trotter Association, and it is the Big Horn Basin club's turn to host in 2007. Gary has submitted the necessary forms for the club to be an affiliate and for national trail ride approval. It will take place August 17-19, with the possibility of more rides planned in the days following for interested riders.

Thea is looking into the Indian Meadows Campground area for our second National Trail Ride. This area is in the Scapegoat area, about five miles north of Lincoln. It has 12 and 20 mile loop rides.

Thea and Mark will contact Gary about possibly organizing a third National Trail Ride using Big Horn Basin Fox Trotter Association's allocated ride.

Members have requested monthly informal day rides, and western director Kristina Tracer volunteered to lead a ride this summer in the Lost Horse area south of Hamilton, MT. Bob and Jack Womack will investigate the Garnet area for possible trail rides. Central director Mary Greene volunteered to lead rides along the Eastern Front of the Bob Marshall Wilderness in July or August. Thea wants other members to step up and lead rides in their areas too. We can get the word out via e-mail, the newsletter and the web site.

Contact Thea Gervais at 406-642-6546 or mtgervais@hotmail.com if you have questions or other trail ride ideas.

**Show:** Bob Womack asked for a volunteer to be show chair. Jack Womack moved and it was seconded that Rick Padgett be chosen as the 2007 show chair. Motion passed. Thank you, Rick, for taking on this important job! Ross gave the show manual he developed to Bob, and it includes a flow chart developed by Pete Peterson.

Discussion followed on a show site and date. Ravalli County Fairgrounds is holding the July 20-21 date for us, and Sapphire Event Center has July 7-8 and July 27-28 available. July 27-28 is the same weekend as the Utah Grand show in Farmington (July 26-28). The Pacific Northwest Fox Trotter's show is May 25-27, and the Great Western Celebration show is June 21-23 in Salt Lake City.

Pete Peterson moved that we keep the show at the Ravalli County Fairgrounds on July 20-21. Ross suggested that this topic be discussed under new business. Pete withdrew his motion.

**National Versatility Committee:** Mark Goss reported that the new circuit rules were published on page 15 of the December 2006 issue of the Journal, and there are substantial changes from last year. Competitors don't go to the Ava show to determine regional championships, but the top four in youth, amateur, and open from each region are eligible to compete at Ava for the national versatility championships. Regions choose their own awards, and the MFTHBA's versatility committee selects their own national awards. Currently there are three regional circuits organizing, and there may be more later.

Mark stated that at the last MFTHBA board workshop (held before the official board meeting), vice-president Gene Donley and president Brian Oglesby suggested that the versatility competition move to the week before the Ava Celebration, which was not acceptable to the versatility committee. Thea asked Mark to draft a letter to Brian Oglesby expressing that we are not in favor of moving the versatility competition dates.

Members congratulated Jack Womack, Thea Gervais and Mary Auger for making the cover of the January 2007 Journal based on their first, second, and third places in amateur versatility. These three and Suzanne Nebeker, in open division, dominated the versatility competition--quite an accomplishment!

### **Old Business:**

**2006 Affiliate of the Year Competition:** Annette Padgett is working on the 2006 scrapbook but she needs photos, so send pictures to her (5150 Hill Drive, Florence, MT 59833 or padgettboys4@msn.com).

**2006 Banquet:** Annette asked for feedback from members regarding the dinner and slide show. Members said the dinner was excellent and Annette's Power Point slide show was very well done. It added a nice personal touch to the event, so she will try to do another one for 2007. Again, she needs pictures of all events. Thank you, Annette, for your many hours of hard work pulling that together--not an easy task!

**2006 President's Report:** Ross listed many highlights of the past two years. He thanked Annette for her work on the newsletter, the banquet and the 2005 scrapbook, which were all big positives for the club. These efforts show we are an active and committed affiliate. Restarting the web site has been a huge step forward. It has added pizzazz to our club's image, and we have gained new members through it too. He thanked Lauren Johansson for her hard work in setting up and maintaining the site--an important job well done. He thanked all of our members who competed in Ava and did so well--they were astoundingly successful and represented us so well! We had lots of clinics thanks to Mark Goss, clinics chair, who worked hard to schedule them. The club did not have that position before, and it has been a huge benefit to members. He thanked Mark for representing us on the national versatility committee as well. He thanked Thea, trail rides

chair, for the many rides she organized and lead; they were very popular and well-attended, even by riders from other states. All of these contributions by members put our club out front for all in the national organization to see. He said there was “trauma and drama” this year but this happens in organizations and we have survived it. His hope is that we can all get by this and look to the future. We also had a record voting response from members for 2007 officers and directors, with 60 ballots returned on time. Ross said those elected for 2007 are well-qualified and committed to BSFTA’s success. The membership has spoken well and put the club in a good position to move forward. Ross listed the 2007 officers and directors and then turned the meeting over to new president Bob Womack. Bob thanked Ross for all his work as president and show chair and proceeded with the meeting.

### **New Business:**

**2006 Audit:** Bob stated that Donna will take over as treasurer when the audit has been completed.

**Show date and site:** Jerry Christison said we should consider Rea’s Arena in Helena (where the May clinic was held) for a show site. It has large outdoor and indoor arenas, nice outdoor and indoor stalls, wash racks, electrical hookups, water, and reasonable charges. Mary Greene said the price was \$150-\$200 per day last year. Jerry agreed to research this facility for the 2008 show and bring that information back to the club.

Mary Auger suggested that we pull the Ranch Horse classes from our Hamilton show and have a ranch horse show at Rea’s Arena, possibly during Mother’s Day weekend. We could offer a clinic on Friday followed by a BBQ/potluck with the show on Saturday. Removing Ranch Horse classes from the Hamilton show would help greatly with scheduling all the classes needed for that show.

Bob reported that the Pacific Northwest Fox Trotter club wants to be in the circuit this year. One idea was to co-sponsor a third circuit show with them but members felt that would be too complicated. Bob said we don’t have to decide how many shows or where they are going to be at this point but we do have to decide if we want to have a circuit. After further discussion, Jerry Christison moved and Thea seconded that we have a versatility circuit in 2007. Motion passed.

Bob said now that we have voted to have a circuit, we need three shows minimum and five shows maximum. Regional circuits require a circuit manager and a points keeper. The points keeper cannot be a competitor or related to a competitor.

Discussion began on the idea of possibly organizing a third circuit show in Montana. Jerry Christison moved and Michael Hummert seconded that we remove the ranch horse classes from our July show in Hamilton and add them to a separate ranch horse and versatility circuit show in Helena. The Hamilton show would remain the same except there would be no ranch horse classes. It would still be a circuit show. The proposed show in Helena would have ribbons, but no trophies. Pete and Thea discussed the difficulty for competitors to travel to so many shows if we don’t have the ranch horse

classes at the Hamilton show. Also, this show would have to be low budget, with class and other fees high enough to cover costs if we don't get sponsors. Mark agreed to chair this second Montana show if the motion was approved. Rick Padgett offered to pay the arena fee. Motion passed.

**Communication with MFTHBA:** Bob said the board wants to work hard to serve the membership, but he reminded members that it is the board that represents members and speaks for the organization. An individual member should not communicate with MFTHBA as an official representative of BSFTA unless the board has given that member permission to do so.

**Youth Ambassador Program:** Pete moved and Jack seconded that BSFTA and Pacific Northwest Fox Trotter Association co-sponsor a Youth Ambassador for 2007. Bob asked what the program entails. MFTHBA can provide more information through Terri Griffith. Pete agreed to table his motion until the next meeting when Jack will provide more details.

**Letter to MFTHBA Regarding Canter Rule:** Bob asked Ross if he had received a response from MFTHBA regarding the letter we sent to the MFTHBA Board of Directors requesting that they enforce the rule which prevents excessive pumping of horses in the canter. The rule is III. Standards of the Fox Trotting Horse, Section 4. Canter (page 8 in the Revised 2006 rule book) "... Excessive pumping of the horse will be penalized, by lowering the horse's placing, when being judged." Ross had not received a response and wasn't hopeful he would get one any time soon.

**Newsletter:** Mary Auger suggested we make the newsletter available to members on the web site for those who want it that way and not mail them a printed copy. This would save money on printing and postage.

**Fundraising Ideas:** Mary Auger said it is possible to have the BSFTA logo digitized for a fee of \$50 and embroidered on to a piece of clothing for an additional fee of \$5. Mark moved that we allow Mary to explore the idea of ordering clothing with the BSFTA logo to sell to members. Motion passed.

Mary is also working on producing a club calendar that would cost about \$10 (for 100 copies) and would sell for about \$13. Annette moved and Kristina seconded that Mark and Annette select photos for an 18 month calendar for 2007-2008 to sell as a fundraiser at the July show. Motion passed.

**Payment for meeting space:** Mark Goss moved and Jerry Christison seconded that the club pay the \$50 fee for the room rental. Motion passed.

### Announcements:

**Member News:** Get well cards were circulated for Gary Hanson and Shirley Netteberg. Gary, who provided trail obstacles at the show, is recuperating from heart surgery.

Shirley has struggled with lung problems and is in the hospital with an infection. Thank you cards were also circulated for our 2006 officers and directors.

**New Member:** Mariann Wheat introduced her guest Jolene Robins who, along with her husband Drew, is a new member. Jolene and Drew live in Helena.

**Show Attire:** Annette is making show shirts and pants. Contact her at 406-777-0577 or padgettboys4@msn.com if you are interested in custom made show clothing.

**Show Ribbons:** Thea is still making show ribbons so if you need ribbons, contact her at 406-642-6546 or mtgervais@hotmail.com. She also donated ribbons for winners of classes.

**Vendor Display:** Jack is working on getting Foxtrot USA to set up a booth at our 2007 Hamilton show. They have lots of hard-to-find foxtrotter tack, and they donated a beautiful performance head stall, ribbons and blanket for the 2006 show.

**Next Meeting:** Bob reminded members that the board can meet separately from the general meeting, and non-board members can attend board meetings but cannot vote. The next general meeting is February 17, 2007, 12:00 p.m., in Helena, MT, at Jerry Christison's home. Directions and reminder notices will be sent out before the meeting. For more information, contact Bob at 406-549-4344 or lwomack@mtedcu.org.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45.

Karen Philips, Secretary