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Hideout News

Spring 2015 Newsletter

Winter and Spring – A Race against Time

You might think that winter and spring at The Hideout Lodge & Guest Ranch are a vacation for the year round staff as there are no guests at the ranch. The reality is we are all working very hard to accomplish what needs to be ready for the coming guest season. The first thing we do in late fall is go through all the feedback and suggestions of the guests and staff of the past season. We also go through our own notes on things to improve, repair, adjust, etc. Adding all these items to our long term plans and projects makes for a very long and challenging list.



"Preparing the Pastures at The Hideout"

Our Staff

At The Hideout Lodge & Guest Ranch we believe our culture of Character, Conduct and Competence (The 3 C's) is one of the most important foundations to assure a great vacation for our guests.

All of our current and new staff will be trained in our 3 C Culture & Principles and everybody needs to watch The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni. If you are interested in teamwork or team building, you can find him and his presentations on You Tube. We are big fans.

Finding and hiring the right staff to match our culture is fundamental to our success. We have a great year round team and management that have been with us for many years. Some of our seasonal staff has been coming back for over 12 years.

Of course our guests are curious who will be on staff for this season.

Our Core Team of Year-Round Hideout Staff

Even though The Hideout is a seasonal business, it takes a team of year-round employees to work at The Hideout and make sure all the projects get done, the horses are taken care of and trained, and the office is staffed to help our guests book their stays and prepare for their visit during the season.

On our year-round maintenance team, we have Marco Chavez and his brother Ever Chavez in charge of maintenance, fields and upkeep. Hector Gallegos also works year-round and is responsible for irrigating and upkeep of The Trapper Creek Ranch. Hector has been part of Marco's team for four years and stays busy in the winter helping Marco with a wide variety of maintenance projects. Marco and Ever have worked here at The Hideout for 14 years.

Marco's wife, Yadira, works both in the housekeeping and maintenance department. She is a very skilled painter and helps us keep all the properties painted and stained.

In housekeeping, our head housekeeper, Guille Sosa is starting her 16th year at The Hideout. She has her sister Norma (wife of Hector) and other family members returning again this season to make sure everything is clean and shiny when you visit.

In the barn, Tom, who together with Marijn is in charge of horses, wranglers and riding, is starting his 5th season at The Hideout and his 3rd as head wrangler.

In the office Rebecca, our Office Manager is entering her 4th season working for The Hideout after being a Hideout guest 3 times with Tom and their boys.

Marijn is entering her 8th season at The Hideout and Peter his 10th season.



Ever's dog Lucas who thinks he is top-dog at The Hideout.



Hector, Marco, Don Pickens and Tom having a very important meeting!



Charlie and Gil patiently waiting for Peter and Marijn to take them for a ride.



New Hideout Chef Mary, Rebecca and Marijn saying goodbye to Monica, the first guest of our 2015 season.

Our 2015 Seasonal Hideout Staff

In the kitchen our new chef Mary joins us from Florida. She comes to us with many years of experience working at lodges, restaurants, hotels, private country clubs, small private yachts, etc. She has hired a great staff to help her in the kitchen, but more on that in the next newsletter.

We are also pleased to have hired an experienced pastry chef to help Mary this season. Prior to coming to The Hideout our new Pastry Chef Samantha is flying to Lyon – France to attend a two week pastry course at a well-known French Culinary Institute.

Rebecca has hired a new Office Assistant for the season and she comes on board in April. Like the kitchen staff, you will meet the new office assistant in the next newsletter.

Tom and Marijn have also hired their entire team for the season. We have several wranglers from last year to include Mel, Daniel, and Trece who are returning for their third season and Christina and Carly who are returning for their second season. The three new wranglers are all seasoned horse people with horse training and guest ranch experience. Two of them are currently working overseas with horses, but will be back in time for the season.

Our Hideout Horses

All our horses wintered well. Much less snow on the ground and warmer temperatures made it possible that our horse friends did not have too challenging of a winter. In addition to our own horses we will add 20 lease horses to our guest string.



Tom and Rebecca's boys, Augustus and Seamus helping dad feed this spring

Marijn and Tom have been attending more private clinics on horsemanship and will have new things to share with you. In addition to becoming more skilled at groundwork and training, they are currently working on their Freestyle Horsemanship Skills. Freestyle translates to bridleless riding. It takes them a great deal of work with their horses to ride using leg and body cues rather than using the bit, bridle and reins. It is really fun to watch too!



Tom working on bridleless riding with Tiger.



Taking Care of the Right People

An important ingredient in supporting our culture is to respect our staff and part of that respect is assuring they have clean and well maintained staff housing.

The Bunkhouse

This winter we took on our main staff quarters called The Bunkhouse. It is a two story home with 6 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 kitchens and 2 living rooms on two separate floors. Last season our staff made a list of all the items to be upgraded, repaired, replaced, cleaned, painted, etc. We matched this to our own observations and are in the process of finalizing this project.

We ripped out the old carpets and installed a new sub-floor and high quality vinyl floor. It looks so nice that everyone thinks we laid a new hardwood floor! We also repainted the entire interior, replaced ceiling tiles, doors, storm doors, gutters and repaired holes and cracks in the walls. Malfunctioning faucets, lights, switches and toilets were all replaced or repaired. A brand new washing machine was also installed. We have also replaced any “tired” or worn out furniture and upcycled some high quality curtains that we had in storage along with really nice wooden curtain rods. The new floors will be much easier to keep clean with all the busy youngsters coming in and out. The whole home feels warmer, cleaner and much more welcoming to our staff.

Next year we will tackle the roof and outside siding.

Mel, one of our loyal wranglers who returns for his third year will arrive in early April. We cannot wait to hear his comments on The Bunkhouse revival.

We are also refurbishing The Trapper Guest House, but that is news for the next newsletter.



Bunkhouse Living Room



Bunkhouse Kitchen



Refurbishing the Loft

Earlier this winter, Marco and Junior, with the help of Hector, ripped up the carpet in the loft and installed new hard wood floors. Guille is so happy to have a new hardwood floor as she spent many hours each season using her machine to clean the carpet. The new floor looks bright and beautiful and is much easier to maintain. While they were replacing the floor, Marco and Junior also installed a new bar top made from a single log and covered the sides of the bar in reclaimed barn wood. The bar itself was also moved and the back counter enlarged to give our hosts a bit more work space to serve our guests at cocktail hour.



New Bar and Wood Floors in the Loft.

Other Upgrades

This winter, we noticed our dining room tables needed a refresher and Yadira took on the task of sanding and staining all four dining room tables. They look shiny and gorgeous. It is like having brand new tables.

Out at Trapper, you may have seen a big building that was painted red and not the most attractive building at the ranch. This winter our local friend Don Pickens refurbished the old building to a much more attractive barn wood structure. Right now we use it for vehicle storage in the winter and for storing a whole host of other items we seem to collect, but Peter and Marijn have some future plans for this nice building.



Shiny Refinished Dining Room Tables.

In an effort to keep our hay dryer and to store it more efficiently, last fall Marco and Ever built a huge hay storage building out at the end of the Trapper hay fields. This will save Marco, Ever and Tom hours and hours of time that they have all spent securing and covering the hay with huge tarps to keep it dry. Not to mention uncovering it and clearing the snow and ice from the tops of the tarps. It makes feeding and moving the hay a much less demanding task on cold winter days.

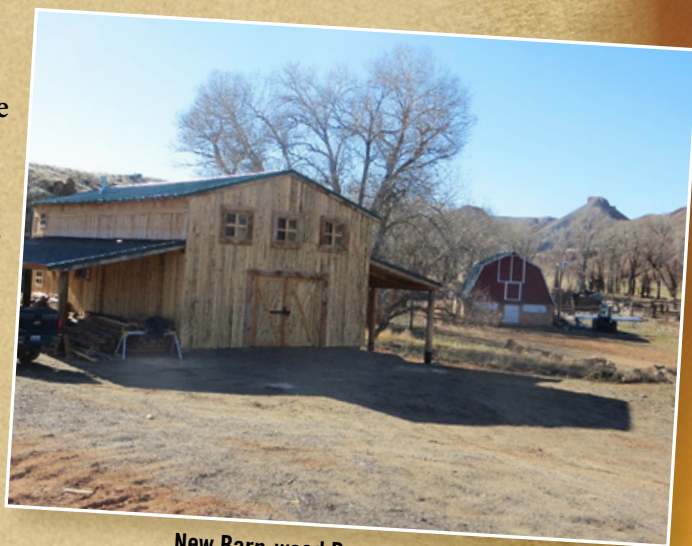
In the cabins, you will notice that we have upgraded all the ceiling fans to a more modern and user friendly fan.

In an effort to keep everything fresh and new, Marijn and Rebecca also made their annual trip to Billings this winter and filled the

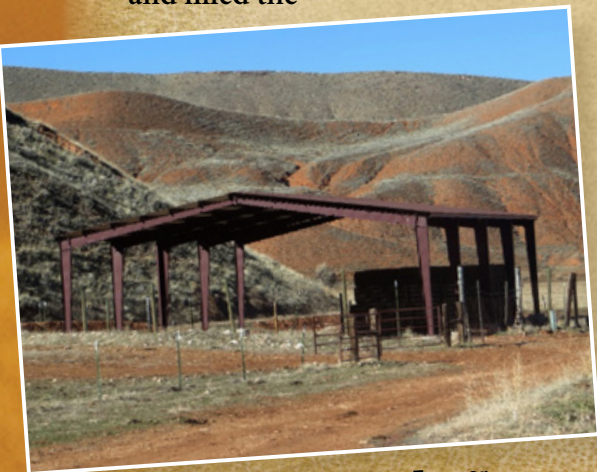
entire back of the Yukon with new towels and bed linens for the guest rooms.

Hector was kept busy indoors during the

coldest part of the winter repairing and staining all the rocking chairs and outdoor tables that take a beating each year in the Wyoming outdoors.



New Barn-wood Barn at Trapper.



New Hay Storage Building at Trapper.

Spring Cleaning

Each winter Guille and her team deep clean every one of the guest rooms, the entire lodge, and all the other Hideout properties. Now that the lodge and cabins are clean, Guille and Norma are in the process of deep cleaning every one of the staff housing quarters to make sure that when our staff arrive, they are greeted with clean, shiny homes.

Along the same lines of spring cleaning, now that there is moisture and the ground is a little wet, Marco, Junior and Hector are busy burning brush piles that have accumulated over the winter.



Getting Ready to prepare the fields for Spring.



Burning Brush Piles.



Peter's Happy Chickens!

Peter's Chickens

As many of you know, Peter maintains a healthy flock of laying hens and a few roosters out at Trapper. The entire staff (and Gil and Charlie) jealously guard this flock in hopes of being delivered a carton or two of farm fresh eggs each week. The chickens also wintered well and with the warmer February began laying earlier this year. Everyone looks forward to Peter coming in with baskets of brown, green, and even blueish free-range eggs.



The Welcome Hand of Paula

Usually Paula does not leave sunny Florida to travel to Wyoming in the winter. However this year she was curious and came in early February to see all the projects like the upgrading of the loft and Bunkhouse and the new hardwood floors Marco and Ever installed in her house.

It was fortuitous timing as it turned out we needed her help the week she was here. The temporary chef we hired to cook for the Winter Photography weeks could not make it for the second photo week which happened to be the same week Paula visited us. No worries! Marijn, Guille's team, Yadira, Lelsy, and Rebecca under the leadership of Chef Paula took on the cooking that week. The guests loved it. Paula is of course a great cook and she really got a kick out of being so involved. After returning to Florida, she said she loved this Wyoming Winter Cooking experience.

She and David will be departing this week on a nice long cruise to Asia.

The Hideout Steers

At the ranch the calving is going well with the warmer spring weather, so there will be a lot of cattle to move/check/herd this spring and summer. Last year for the first time, The Hideout team bought yearlings to graze on The Hideout and Trapper Ranch properties. We started with 29 head and this year we will have approximately 50 steers. These critters are not only eating grass but they are also here so our guests can learn how to work cattle and about the principles of stockmanship, prior to going out of the range to work cattle for the ranch. Of course we also use them for team penning and for the riders who are not able to participate in all-day cattle work on the range. This allows all levels of riders to get a taste of working livestock in the valley pastures.



The Hideout steers arrive!

A Hideout Team Co-operative

Like last year's 29 steers, the 2015 Hideout steers are a team initiative and team investment. Paula, Peter & Marijn, Tom & Rebecca, and Marco & Ever are all the owners of this small herd. We all make an equal investment and at the end of the season we share equally in the profits (or losses...).

Bookings for our 2015 Season

We are booking up fast and many weeks are already booked full. If you would like to come to The Hideout Lodge & Guest Ranch this season or even for our 2016 season, please call Rebecca at **307-765-2080** or e-mail **info@thehideout.com** to make your reservation.

Let us know your news. We really enjoy hearing what our friends and guests are up to. To keep up with our happening and pictures, please like our Facebook page at The Hideout Lodge & Guest Ranch. If you are a guest who has enjoyed your stay with us, we do encourage you to go to Trip Advisor and write a review for The Hideout Lodge & Guest Ranch.

ON BEHALF OF ALL HERE AT THE HIDEOUT:

Happy Trails!



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