



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A new beginning for Cordillera's Bearcat Stables

*Newly restored Bearden homestead enhances
the Vail Valley horseback riding experience*

CORDILLERA, Colo. (March 19, 2009) — One of the Vail Valley's most nostalgic horse outfitters sees the upcoming summer riding season as a new beginning.

Cordillera-based Bearcat Stables, which offers a variety of horseback and horse-drawn recreational activities throughout the year, is looking forward to operating out of its newly restored facilities at the historic Bearden family homestead, in the scenic Squaw Creek Valley.

Restoration work on the Bearden Cabin, built in 1915, was completed last year; and preservation of Bearcat's Cabin, home to Ellis "Bearcat" Bearden until his death in 1993, is scheduled for completion this summer.

"We promised the Bearden family we'd restore the property," says Gavin Selway, owner of Bearcat Stables, which performed much of the preservation work, in conjunction with the Cordillera Preservation Foundation. "That was our goal, to keep the ranch the way it was."

Teams of horses from Bearcat Stables hit the trail year-round with rides for people of all ages — from those with limited experience with horses to expert riders — who would like to enjoy a horseback ride amid the majestic scenery of the Colorado High Country.

Within the boundaries of Cordillera, the Vail Valley's premiere residential mountain community, Bearcat Stables offers one-, one and a half- and two-hour rides through wide-open meadows and immense groves of aspen trees with breathtaking views of Bellyache Ridge and glimpses of the New York and Gore Mountain Ranges. For the more adventurous, backcountry rides of three and six hours in length allow guests to experience a part of the Rocky Mountains that few people see — with a gourmet lunch along the way.

“For people who are used to the hustle and bustle, these rides are very relaxing,” says Leeds Butcher, managing partner of Bearcat Stables. “A hundred years ago, horses did all the work. This gives a real sense of heritage.”

The outfitter also offers spectacular, multi-day horseback trips. Its marquee excursion is the Vail to Aspen Ride, a four-day journey from Bearcat Stables to the historic mining town of Aspen. The four-day, three-night ride traverses some of the most spectacular wilderness in the Rocky Mountains, with nights spent at 10th Mountain Division Huts and private guest ranches.

Each ride begins and ends at Bearcat Stables, on the Bearden family’s historic Squaw Creek Valley homestead, with transportation available from and to anywhere in the Vail Valley. Backcountry rides are customized to match the guest’s idea of the perfect horseback adventure. The number of guests is limited to ensure a quality horseback ride experience. Larger group rides are available only by special request.

Another multi-day excursion is the Monument Valley Utah Trip, a four-night, three-day ride conducted on private land that only a horse will be able to travel, offering one of the most spectacular experiences available in the Utah backcountry, with base camp near Monument Valley.

Also available are winter sleigh rides through Cordillera’s Ranch golf course — best enjoyed with a gourmet dinner at the Timber Hearth Grille — and private, romantic horse-drawn carriage rides for weddings and other special occasions.

“With the Bearcat Stables widely utilized by Cordillera residents and visitors, trail rides and tours of the area are a regular pastime,” says John Rainey, director of the Cordillera Preservation Foundation, which has raised money for and conducted the restoration. “The newly restored Bearden homesteads — Bearden Cabin and Bearcat’s Cabin — enhance the Vail Valley horseback riding experience.”

For more information about Bearcat Stables, visit www.bearcatstables.com, call Gavin Selway or Leeds Butcher at 970-926-1578 or e-mail them at insummer@vail.net. Other useful links include www.cordillerapreservation.com, www.cordilleracolorado.com and www.cordillerametro.org.

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Note: Hi-resolution photos available by request — SLW.