



From left: Malcolm Peterson, Dayton Stewart and Jon Peterson.

Jump for Joy

We got service!

Words & photo by Cynthia Baldauf.

Every May for more than 40 years the Peterson family of Big Hole Valley, Mont., has been moving cattle 16 miles from the home ranch to their Saginaw Mountain forest permit. Four months later, in September, they have a three-day gather in the remote area and begin moving cows and calves back to their cow camp and eventually home again.

Everyone rides like crazy, making trip after trip up and down the mountain. If you are old enough to ride, you are old enough to gather. Even friends

and cousins from as far away as Minnesota come to help.

Three days in the backcountry can be tough on teenagers used to a cell signal or WiFi 24/7. When they arrive at the Davis Cow Camp, the very first thing they do after caring for their horses and mules is climb the roof of the ancient barn and check out signal availability. I was lucky enough to catch their jump for joy. I couldn't help but feel blessed that I didn't have to pick up the pieces. ■

For more great Cynthia Baldauf images, go to www.cynthiabaldaufimages.com