



MHC UPDATE

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April Trails and Greenways Meeting

What did over 100 equestrians do on the evening of April 5?

They attended the first annual Maryland Horse Council's Trails and Greenways networking meeting at the League of Maryland Horsemen (LOMH) in Marriottsville.

The Red Hat Riders provided a demonstration of equestrian camping and gave tours of their living quarters and horse trailers as the crowd braved chilly weather in the campground. Following the demonstration, members of Trail Riders of Today (TROT), Tuckahoe Equestrian Center (TEC), Southern Maryland Trail Riders (SMTR), Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horses (CPWH), Plantation Walking Horses of MD (PWH), and the Volunteer Mounted Patrol (VMP) joined League members in the clubhouse.

LOMH Vice President Maureen Boskin opened the meeting by explaining the importance of all the trail riding clubs working together, and encouraged everyone to participate in the upcoming "Invitational Weekend" at the League as a great way of making new friends and getting connected with other trail riders.

Peggy Bree explained that the Maryland Horse Council formed the Trails and Greenways committee to create a statewide network for the preservation of equestrian trails. The committee fosters communication between various horse groups, and the April 5 networking meeting was an important part of building that communication. Peggy stressed that every trail rider and every trail riding club is part of the Trails and Greenways committee. She added that the committee works when we help each other by sharing information about trail problems and solutions. To facilitate this exchange of information, there is an online Trails and Greenways group for clubs and trail activists, and a second online group sponsored by TROT for individual trail riders interested in sharing information about trails and trail rides. *The Equiery* also publishes news and information about committee activities; you can pick up a free copy in tack shops.

Mary Dakis of the LOMH Membership gave a brief report on the LOMH's history and activities. The LOMH currently has 1,700 members in 12 states, and 24 new members joined during the meeting.

TROT President Priscilla Huffman introduced TROT board members, discussed TROT's origins and dedication to trail preservation, and provided a list of TROT rides and membership applications. Sponsored rides are for members; however, new members can join before a trail ride.

Gail Brodt-Clark from the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center in Ridgely spoke next. The Center sponsors various fundraising events: jousting, barrel racing, trail rides, hayrides and Outlaw Days. Camping is for members and event participants, and the nominal fee goes exclusively to trail maintenance. Gail also mentioned that other trail groups, especially mountain bikers, have trail workdays in which equestrians are encouraged to participate. IMBA (International Mountain Biking As-

sociation) is helping with the plans to repair several badly eroded trails in Tuckahoe State Park.

Jacque Cowan from the Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club spoke on that club's various activities. Members work on trail preservation, sanctioned shows, mounted patrol, trail rides, and parades. The club is open to all breeds and offers help transitioning from "straight" to gaited riding.

Sandy McCann from the Plantation Walking Horses of Maryland explained how that club started in the early '80s to help gaited horse owners share information and riding skills.

Pat Oliva reported that the American Endurance Riding Conference sent her to a four-day seminar on trail planning for sustainable trails. The seminar covered trail layout, construction, maintenance, and crew direction. She reiterated that the best thing to do is to maintain existing trails, as new trails require impact studies, precision mapping, and excessive planning.

Ken Wolfskill spoke on his Horse Comforter Camp in Appomattox, Virginia. It opens June 23-24 and the sites will have electric, water, and pens. The camp will have monthly weekend campouts.

Janet Breeding from Carroll County Equestrian Center, a part of Carroll County government, explained that the Center is strictly for county trail preservation and fund raising events. The county website has maps of all county trails.

Lee Moser, a volunteer with the Trails and Greenways committee, mentioned the need to circulate petitions to support the Maryland Horse Park.

Peggy thanked everyone for attending and making the meeting a huge success.

MHC Trails & Greenways Committee Meeting

Wednesday, July 12 at 7 p.m.

All are welcome

Equestrians & DNR Wildlife Management Areas:
Compatible or Conflicting Uses?

Tuckahoe State Park
Adkins Arboretum (with A.C.)

FROM WESTERN SHORE/

ROUTE 50:

- east on Route 50
- cross Bay Bridge
- left on Route 404
- 2nd traffic light, right onto Route 480
- immediate left onto Eveland Road
- arboretum is 2.4 miles on left

FROM POINTS NORTH/

ROUTE 301

- south on Route 301
- left on Route 304
- 4 miles, right on Route 481
- 1st left on Crouse Mill Road
- keep to the left
- right on Eveland Road
- arboretum is .8 miles on right

Disclaimer: This column is sponsored by the Maryland Horse Council. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of The Equiery's publisher or staff.