



TATTLE TRAILS

The Newsletter of the Harding Township/Green Village Bridle Path Association

www.bridlepath.org

June 2012

From the President:

Well, summer is finally here – or is it?? The seasons seem to be constantly in flux, but hopefully by this time your horses have de-haired themselves and you've been able to get out and enjoy the sunshine with your favorite equine friend. My competitive season has started with mixed results finding us in need of some fine tuning. Fortunately, we've been able to practice our dressage moves in the **newly enlarged sand arena** at the show grounds and additional sand is coming shortly to improve the footing. The arena is now just shy of a large dressage arena (60m x 20m). Thanks to **Jamie Miller** for roto-tilling up some of the grass to expose the original footing. We'll continue to make improvements as the year progresses. We've done a lot so far this year with more activities and improvements to come. We've settled on a log to be revealed shortly, had a dressage clinic with another this weekend, done lots of prep work for the Bridle Path/Crewe Hill Horse Show, and got our summer picnic in the planning stages – see the calendar of events for these dates and others later in the year. We'd love to have help putting these events on, so please let me or the event organizer know if you can help out. The Spring Valley Hounds had their hunter pace this past weekend and got rave reviews. **Kathi Young** did a superb job wrangling the trails into a beautiful course of winding woods and mowed paths thru the fields. All had a good time and our own Katrina & Anthony Vitale won the family division! As always, I would love to hear your ideas about events to have, activities or accomplishments you've achieved or just a good story about an adventure or ride you've had. Until next time, ride on and hope to see you out and about!

Ingrid

HT/GVBPA Officers

President: Ingrid Johnston – 201/213-8287
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It's Membership time again. Do think about rejoining again this year – we really need all of you. Membership forms may be found on our website (www.bridlepath.org) or contact any of the officers for a hard copy.



Dear Friends and Members,

The last half of 2011, you might remember, was a time of confusion and 2012 snuck in an early spring. We saw April showers in March, May flowers in April; confusing birds, bees, and flora considerably. Our barn swallows arrived about 3 weeks early along with their buggy food supply. The pasture grass muscled out of the turf as if on steroids. Hay fields are standing tall, already ripe for harvesting.

The horses, though, seem to be on their regular shedding schedule. By now they've cast off all their heavy winter coats with or without the help of curry combs or shedding blades or clippers. Retired seniors who are on never-ending vacations emerged from winter with tubby middles and substantial hips (like some of the rest of us). Others who have been on some kind of exercise program or who have already started their show season are shinny and sleek and rippled with muscles.

The mosquitoes, gnats, and all their flying skin-picking, irritating friends & family arrived early too. A couple years ago we tried the latest fly deterrent: pennies in a water-filled baggie hung in the doorway. It was supposed to mimic the eyes of a ferociously hungry predator and thereby keep the flies out of the barn. Around here local flies weren't fooled at all and came right on in, undeterred. Fly strips hung to the ceiling did a better job. Next we tried the Epps Fly Trap. This is akin to a piece of modern sculpture to mimic a cow or horse, and, from the deer fly's and bomber fly's point-of-view, it does admirably well. This assemblage of metal struts, tubular legs, sheets of black and clear plastic, combined with two water-filled trays looks tantalizing to the hungry fly as it dive-bombs what it thinks is a horse. Then wackko!, it smacks into the transparent plastic and falls into the water-pan below from which it cannot escape. It is amazingly effective and provides a daily protein supplement for our backyard chickens.

This year we are going high-tech in our fight against the insects. We have a new fixture which looks like a small space heater consisting of a blue florescent light with a white sticky board behind and hung from the ceiling to attract and capture the flies inside the barn. This too is very effective, having already become black with bodies, however I suspect that if you had a fly strip the same size it would work just as well.

Many years ago we began eliciting the help of miniature predator wasps to control the flies possibly breeding in the manure bin. Like the CIA, they work secretly to neutralize the enemy. About 15,000 arrive periodically in the mail (don't tell the postman) in about-to-be hatchling form, from whence they are embedded in the pile, ready to feast on any eggs and larvae the flies may offer. Because it's hard to measure this clandestine activity, I'm often tempted to suspend the operation for a while to see what effect may ensue. Would we be overwhelmed by flies?

Well now, enough editorial musing. Here is the "News that you can use":



At the Showgrounds:

The Dressage Ring has recently been enlarged to official dimensions, which fortunately was just a little beyond its original design. The hard pack was fluffed and smoothed, and now additional material will soon be added to make the footing consistent and resilient. You should try it out next time you are at the showgrounds.

Many Fence Rails were replaced in the small ring and posts were delivered for subsequent installation as part of the continuing improvements. You can be a part of this too if you like to pull up the old and place in the new posts. A great use for the tractor or a chance to flex the muscles. Just let us know! – Call Mare Olsen (973/765-0337) if you can help out.

Township Field Mowing is under contract for us again this year, with the mowing to occur every couple of weeks or as conditions indicate. We will look sharp all summer long and especially nice for the shows and other activities.

Periodic cleanup is a responsibility of Bridle Path, which usually means Spring and Fall trimming and picking up, but of course seeing that everything is taken care of after our sponsored events. As a result of the devastating storm last October resulting and an extraordinary effort thereafter, not much was necessary this Spring. We still need to trim some dead limbs from the trees along Sand Spring Lane, but this can wait until the Fall. Please call Mare Olsen (973/765-0337) if you can help out.

A hedge on the hedge places high hopes that the pruning done last Fall will bring about a revitalization, and indeed some greening has taken place. Not all this green is intended, however, so selective pruning and nurturing of this landmark feature will continue.

Trail Report

Trail clearing was completed just in time for the June 3rd Hunter Pace. The accelerated growth of vegetation and the unanticipated late rainfall made this year a particular challenge. There are still many paths that need work, and the log removal from last year's storm is not yet fully complete. The trail crew could certainly use some extra hands to get us caught up, so if you like working in the wilderness but don't want to travel far, give us a call! Kathi Young (973/ 464-8738) or klnyoung@hotmail.com.



Easements

Bridle Path Easements, as you know, are always an item when land comes under redevelopment. In a recent case, we didn't get the easement exactly as we hoped for at the Fawn Hill development, but we do have a license to establish a trail adjacent to the perimeter of the property joining the existing path along the common driveway to Spring Valley Road and across to Kitchell Road. It will take a little time to get it ready to ride, but will give the possibility to ride to Seaton Hackney and into Loantaka Park. Thanks to Mare Olsen for her efforts representing the Bridle Path to the town with respect to easements.



Recent and Upcoming Events:

The Memorial Day Parade included our trail maintenance vehicle and four horses. The horses and riders were: Presto, a grey Arabian, ridden by Anna Hirtes; Moose, a chestnut quarter horse ridden by Katrina Vitale; Miss Heidi, a paint, ridden by Whitey Vitale; and "Mo", an appaloosa, ridden by Anthony Vitale. The utility vehicle was piloted by Mare Olsen and Anne Quinn. We all felt a renewed sense of connection with our town neighbors as the presence of horses seemed to make a bridge between strangers along the parade route. Though the horses had to return to their stables and could not stay for the ceremonies, the rest of us gathered at Memorial Park. The program that followed indeed fostered a sense of common oneness with the history that binds us together, the gratitude for the service of others, the promise and joy in the enthusiasm and accomplishments of our young people, and empathy for all of us in the various struggles of life.



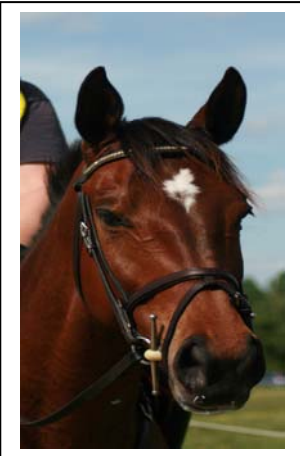
A Dressage Clinic for all Disciplines is planned for June 9th (this Saturday). It has been very popular and useful for those who are interested in developing a properly balanced horse who can easily and comfortably carry its rider. Although it takes place in a ring, it is suitable for any discipline and is not necessarily geared to competitive riding. Come by and watch what takes place. An awful lot about riding can be learned from the ground by watching.

On June 17th (Father's Day Sunday) our annual **Bridle Path/Crew Hill Horse Show** occurs. Forget the traditional tie or box of handkerchiefs, give him the priceless gift of watching you compete while enjoying a lunch at ringside. Our show is like the opera, only better. It has movement, it has color, there's excitement, moments of disappointment and heartbreaks, happiness, triumphs, and a grand love affair between a horse and its rider. So bring a chair, park yourself in the shade, and watch this spectacle unfold before your eyes. Food will be available from our famous New Vernon Deli. New this year are trail classes starting at 10 AM! Also, VOLUNTEERS are needed to put on this all-day show; please offer your time (2-4 hours is all that is needed); jobs include gatekeepers, runner for judges, jump crew, traffic direction, registration helpers. All volunteers get a free lunch and no experience is necessary! For more information, contact Jessica Jones at Crew Hill at 973-267-2060 or, for volunteering, Joanna Bligh at joannabligh@hotmail.com.

Our **Summer Picnic and General Membership Meeting** is planned for July 14th at the Showgrounds at 4pm. Come join your Bridle Path friends as we share an afternoon of horse talk, good food, good conversation, some laughs, and maybe some more horse talk. This is also our 3Q membership meeting, so be sure to bring your ideas and input! Main dishes and drinks will be provided. RSVP not required; just bring a dessert or appetizer! For questions, call Ingrid Johnston at 201-213-8287.



In Summary, the woods and fields are particularly beautiful this year. The decimation of the deer herds by the hemorrhagic diseases has allowed vegetation to grow more lushly than usual. Ferns carpet large areas of open woods. Flowers have mostly finished their blooming, but spots of yellow or purple still dot the fields. Haying has not yet begun so paths mowed along hayfields let you imagine you are riding through the tall grass of the prairies, although our grass is only 3' tall, not 6' or 8' like the real prairie's "tall grass". If you didn't ride in the Hunter Pace, do get out soon. Though the markers will be gone, you can easily follow the footprints and mowed areas, perhaps finding some new favorite trails to enjoy with your horse. Keep in mind that our organization is only as successful as we make it and will only survive as long as we continue to breathe life into it. It does take a village, and we need each and every one of you to help keep our trails and our organization alive. The entire Board welcomes ideas and suggestions on how we can continue to move forward. We want to hear from all of you. Please feel free to contact any of use (our contact information is on the 1st page) with any thoughts, comments, concerns, or suggestions you have.



Dear Allie

Dear Allie, I question the fashionableness and, quite frankly, the public acceptance of these hats my person insists I wear in the summer. Truth be told, they do keep those pesky no-see-ums and flies out of my ears and eyes, but let's be honest – isn't it better to look good than to feel good? I mean, a man has to be a man and can't be running around with a foo-foo bonnet on one's head – it just, well, it just doesn't seem right.

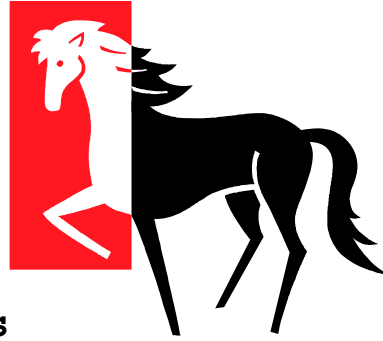
Signed, *Bugged on Brookside (north or south)*

Dear Bugged,

Think Kentucky Derby – or the good ole' west. As far as fashion goes, all of the hobnobbers at the Sport of Kings sport fine fedora's and stunning headwear. It's the thing to do when one goes to one of the greatest races around. Your stablemates will find you a sophisticated, dashing gentleman should you proudly don your best "hat" as you say. Or, if more your speed, there's the Stetson, 10 gallon hat, and sou'wester, all which will suit the rugged cowboy type. The added benefit to all of these, which no one needs to know, it that they do a most impressive job at keeping the flying irritants at bay. Those without will be green with envy as you strut your headwear – be it a fedora for the europeans, Stetsons for the cowboys, panama hats for the laid back, easy types, sunhats for those conscientious about the sun, even some with eyes painted on. It is right to wear a hat – both from the practical and fashionable side. The trick is to push your person to provide the appropriate head wear that best suits you.

Allie.

If you have a question for Allie, please send it to bucky_oliver@yahoo.com



Interesting Horse Facts

- * James Watt, a Scottish engineer who lived from 1736 to 1819 chose the expression HORSEPOWER to describe the rate at which an engine works. In order to define the power of an engine he performed experiments using heavy dray horses. He discovered that a horse could lift a 100 pound weight at the rate of 220 feet per minute - this equals 22,000 foot-pounds per minute. He increased this figure by one half (33,000 foot-pounds per minute or 550 foot-pounds per second) and called it one Horsepower. 550 foot-pounds per second is equivalent to an imperial unit of power equal to 745.7 watts or the US standard equivalent of 746 watts.

- * The amount of BLOOD in a horse's body is equivalent to one eighteenth of its total weight. It's distributed approximately one quarter in the heart and larger blood vessels, one quarter in the liver and intestines, one quarter in the muscles and the rest divided amongst other parts of the body. The blood is carried around by arteries from the heart, which acts as a pump, to all parts and is returned to the heart through a system of veins.

- * According to the Guinness Book of Records Old Billy, believed to be a Cleveland Bay cross Eastern horse foaled in 1760, lived to the incredible age of 62. The OLDEST recorded pony is 54 although there is an unsubstantiated report that a Welsh Pony living on the Gower Peninsula in Wales was 66 years old.
The world's largest horse at 19.2 hands and 3,200 lbs. "Brookie" wore a 40-inch collar and boasted a girth measurement of 10 feet, 2 inches around. It took 30 inches of iron for each of his horseshoes. Foaled in 1928, he eventually became the property of C.G. Good of Iowa. Good's partner, Ralph Fogleman, exhibited the big horse around the country, charging spectators 10 cent apiece.
Brookie died in 1948.

- * The World's Largest Horse: Purebred Belgian stallion by the name of Brooklyn Supreme. He stood 19.2 hands (6'6") at his withers. He weighed over 3,200 pounds and is entered in the Guinness Book of World Records. He was foaled in 1928 and died in 1948. He lived in Iowa.

Are YOU looking for something or do YOU have a unique service or specialty that you'd like our members to know about? We're starting a WANT AD (for those of you who are looking for something or want something) and a SERVICES section for those of you who have services or items for sale. Please send your ad to Ingrid Johnston at bucky_oliver@yahoo.com and we'll get it in the next edition of the newsletter.

FOR SALE:

For sale: 2002 Hawk Elite 2 Horse Straight Load Gooseneck Trailer. Well maintained. Carpeted tack room with hack & coat rack, 3 saddle racks, interior lights, and 6 bridle hooks. Horse compartment has 2 interior lights, 2 roof vents, bus windows, windows in escape doors and rear doors. Maroon & grey. Ready for you and your horses! \$7,100. Call 908/981-3944 (6.12)

For sale: Equestrian enthusiasts take note! 24 Miller Road in Harding Twp is available for purchase. This 6 acre estate features a nicely updated & well maintained house plus 4 stall barn, 3 grazing pastures & 165x105 ft riding ring. See virtual tour at www.Skip-A-Step-Farm.com and call Jane Asdal, Weichert Realtors on 973-769-3119 for details. (6.12)

SERVICES:



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And leaving you with one overriding thought: *"There is nothing so good for the inside of man as the outside of a horse".*

