



News Letter

AMWELL VALLEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

November 2009

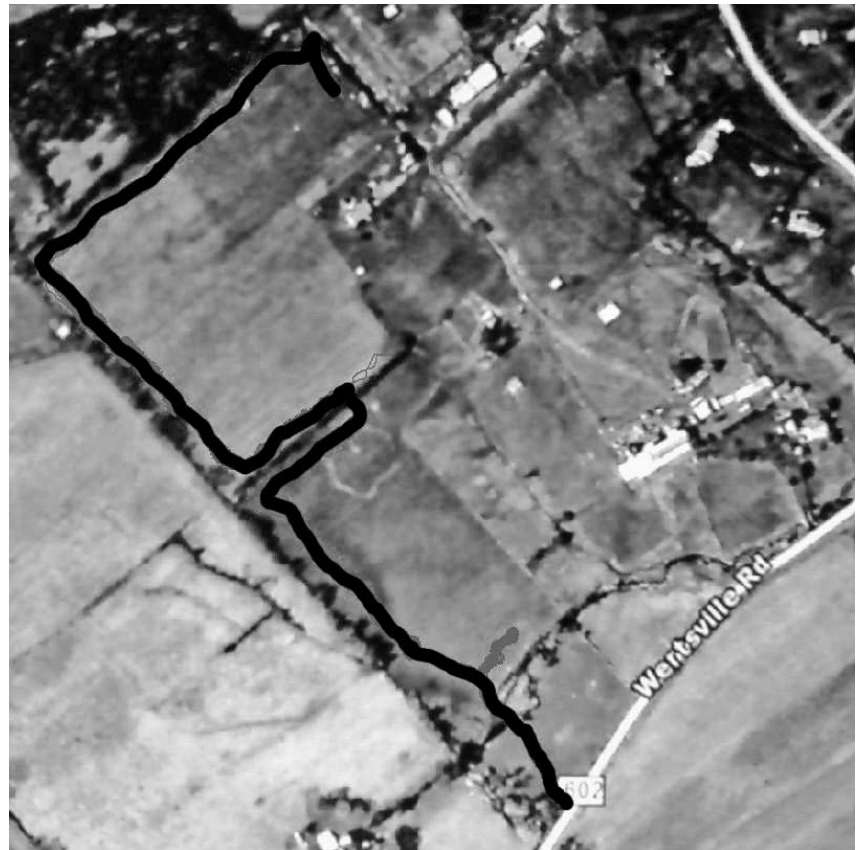
Trail Update

For the first time ever, the two sides of the center of the Valley will be safely joined together ! You can cross Wertsville road from the Garrett's property to the open fields next to the lower barn at Centre Ridge and from there get to the Back Brook trails.

You no longer have to put your life and your horse's life in jeopardy by riding a long distance on Wertsville Road.

(Do exercise caution when crossing Wertsville Road or Manners Road due to the blind spots and speed of traffic.)

We can all thank Anne Marie and Guy, the new owners who acquired this property and are allowing us access. We would also like to thank Mark and the Kurtz Family from Centre Ridge for maintaining the additional trails there and allowing us continued access. A big thanks goes to Joan Sank and Trish Buckwalter for coordinating the effort allowing this to happen. And a special thanks to Gael Gardner for doing such a great job of mowing all the new paths. Happy trails everyone



Thank you
From Mary Murrin

We organized three trail clearing days in September to prepare for the fall Hunter Pace. This year's route took riders to Pine Twig, across Wertsville Road and around Unionville vineyards so new areas demanded attention. Trish Buckwalter and Christean Mirabeto mowed the trails for the new route. Work parties followed on September 5, 9, and 16, and diligently chopped, chain sawed, lopped and clipped along Back Brook and across Wertsville and into the vineyard and beyond. Happily, the weather cooperated, and the work parties did an excellent job clearing the new trail, and got plenty of exercise walking from site to site. Listed below are the names of the mowers and AVTA members who joined the September work parties. If I've missed anyone, please contact me at mrmurrin1@verizon.net and let me know. Thanks to everyone who helped clear trails this year; we had a fine response at our scheduled work days. We'll be looking for help again next year, so we hope you'll join us, and bring along a friend or two. This effort is not only for the hunter pace, but also to keep the trails nice for general riding. We hope that you are enjoying the trails, and also that you are being careful to adhere to the rules, especially the rules about when it is safe to ride during hunting season. Kudos to all!

Elayne Alpert
Eileen Bird
John Buckwalter
Trish Buckwalter
Nancy Cunningham
Jack Derrico
Nancy Derrico
Michelle Doherty
Lynn Ebeling
Tom Ebeling
Jen Fisher
Buzzy Foley
Rebecca Hazlett
Dave Henderson
Carol Johnson
Kathy Kupper
Maddy Mastellone
Jon Maurer
Mary Murrin
Bonnie O'Boyle
Joan Sank
Trish Buckwalter – Western
End of Amwell Valley

Steve Buxton –
Riding Mill
Jay Carter –
Maple Run Farm area
Gael Gardner – Eastern
end of Amwell Valley
Earl Hartman – Back Brook
Bev Hoffman – Welisewitz
Rd. Creek area
Tory Januik, Cindy Smith,
and Tony Alimecco –
Centre Ridge area
Dan and Christian Miribito –
Back Brook and golf course
area
Kate McGreevy –
North Hill Rd to Air Park
Bob Petrolino –
Pine Twig area
Barbara Wolfe – Pine Twig
The gang at Gael's – Airpark
area, Denton's and stuff in
between



TIPS ON WINTER WEATHER HORSE CARE, HUMANS TOO.

"Winter is a comin' in" and we'd better get ready for it. Horses need their blankets when it is wet and cold and sometimes just plain windy. Horses that are out 24/7 also need to be allowed to get a good growth of winter coat. That doesn't mean that you can't do a judicious amount of clipping which will allow you to exercise them and still have them cool off quickly. I have my horse that I use all winter out all the time, but I do clip her chest and neck at this time of year. Clipping now allows her to grow a little coat by the really nasty months of Jan and Feb, but she does not get dripping wet during my dressage lessons.

A good choice instead of a full body clip is a modified 'trace' clip, a clip which was originally used for carriage horses. Another thing I have discovered is that putting too many blankets or too heavy blankets on your horse ain't necessarily a good thing. I usually end up having a waterproof sheet and a mid weight blanket on all my horses in those bitter winter days when the sun never seems to get above the horizon and the wind really whips through the Amwell Valley. They allow the horse's natural insulation to come into play. That is, the lighter blankets allow their hair to raise and lock in additional heat under the blankets.

Now about us, crazy riders. I go out to the barn at 7am on a cold day wearing just about everything I can get on, long johns, flannel pants, Insulated coveralls, turtleneck, sweater, down vest, two layered wind resistant jacket, a wool hat and sometimes a wool scarf to pull over my nose. By the time I have walked the dogs, measured the feed, hayed and fed my first pasture I am starting to strip. Off comes the scarf, then the vest, which of course necessitates taking off the jacket first, and then by the time I have finished the second pasture I unzip the jacket and take off the hat and walk back to breakfast feeling that I am a puddle of sweat and have done a full day's work.

This year I am going to try a little less clothing and maybe by the end of winter I can get just the right combination of not hot and not cold. I have to mention the part of me that is always just right, my feet. Last year I bought a pair of tall insulated 'Muck' boots and with a pair of wool socks have never had cold or wet feet. That is until I put on my tall riding boots for my dressage lesson. Then my feet seem to be blocks of ice and there is nothing I can do about it. Ah well!! I ride all winter anyway.

The Eclectic Equestrian

By Susan Lax

"Our Bit of Heaven"

Over hill, over dale, riding in the Amwell Valley is a treasure chest of gems for riders and horse lovers of every kind.

When I moved here from Virginia five years ago, people were incredulous. They thought the ideal for the equestrian would be the opposite move. Not so.

Virginia has its pockets of horse "heaven," but nothing that compares to the state of New Jersey, home of more international riders, competitors and trainers than anywhere else in the country. Second only to Monmouth County in terms of the revenues that come into New Jersey via we horse enthusiasts, Hunterdon County is first in the number of horse facilities in the state.

Now let's pare it down from county to township. East Amwell: you ride from one farm to another, traveling cross country as though you are in the heart of Charlottesville. Yet the scenery is ever changing: wooded trails, fields and roadsides where motorists know, without a doubt, they are in horse country.

When I was first told by my husband, Howard, we were moving to New Jersey I thought "he's got to be kidding." While growing up learning about riding from the books and articles of George Morris, I was well aware of Hunterdon, Inc. and the home of the USET, but for some reason never equated it with New Jersey. Who knew, until faced with the challenge of bringing my horses to what often is defined as Trenton and Newark, that the state animal is a horse. Chris Kappler, Anne Kursinski, Betsy Steiner...suddenly I was traveling toward the Mecca of the equestrian community.

That would have been enough, but buying a farm here in East Amwell was definitely the piece de resistance. The pastoral scene just traveling from my farm on Van Lieus around the corner to Wertsville and onto Peacock's General Store, where one horse farm after another exceeds the beauty of a Currier and Ives postcard would have been enough. But it's not just about the horses.

The people here are committed to our fine steeds. People like Gael Gardner, who came running to my farm to help me pull a bent shoe from one of my horses, or Joan Sank, who goes out of her way to recommend boarding facilities like mine if people come calling at hers. Let's not forget the many AVTA members who keep the trails maintained because they appreciate what a fine trail system it is. The Township, too, is committed to open space for all and honors horse farmers and their right-of-way, whether the novice or the professional.

In October, the township held an informational meeting for farmers and the equestrian community, focusing on farm buildings and equine law. Karen Kritz from the state Department of Agriculture, spoke about permits required for farm buildings. She brought applause when she said, after seven years of her efforts, the state finally rescinded the need for permits for certain-sized run-in sheds, definitely a plus for horse farms.

Trishka Waterbury, attorney-at-law and an East Amwell horse farm owner, talked about equine and landowner liability, with a focus on the "Equestrian Activities Act." Waterbury said those of us who own horse farms do not incur risk if we become part of the trail system or allow people to come onto our land for recreational purposes. She said the EAA does not require that we post signs or warnings about the inherent risk of being around horses but the more we warn of any inherent danger, the better protected we will be should someone try to sue.

To be afforded this kind of assistance because your township recognizes the importance of the equine industry in its midst is an invaluable asset to horse operations, whether backyard or commercial. You can have beautiful riding opportunities, but without the support of neighbors, community and government, the continued existence of our horses and the equestrian in this beautiful valley could be tenuous at best.

When relatives with the stereotypical notion of New Jersey come and visit, I drive them through our valley, showing off one farm after the other. Every so often they invariably say, "so, are we in Pennsylvania now?"

"Nope, still right here in New Jersey," I proudly say.

Next issue: "Training (and Taming) the Non-Rider Spouse"



Classifieds

RINGOES HORSE BARN TO RENT OR SHARE

6 stall center aisle Barn on a private farm w/direct Amwell Valley trail access. Large



box stalls open to 18+ acres of fenced pasture. Tack room, storage area, inside water, electricity. We maintain fencing/pastures; you manage horse/barn care--\$1,350. per mo.+ utilities. Very Quiet and Peaceful Setting. Must See! ONE BED-ROOM CARRIAGE HOUSE APT. AVAILABLE STEPS AWAY FROM BARN. Call Joanie at 908-284-4944.

NOW AVAILABLE - Stalls \$450 or Pasture Board \$350. Large outdoor ring and round pen with exceptional footing. Vinyl fencing. 24/7 quality feed and care. Owner run. Late night check and hay. Friendly atmosphere and on AVTA Trails. Lessons and leases available. Call Patty at Rose Ridge LLC 609-333-1146 or cell 908-763-1538.

FOR SALE: HORSE TRAILER

96 Circle J Custom II Asking \$1,650 Call (908) 806-8663 or E-Mail GEMD274@Yahoo.Com



SELLER MOTIVATED ... OFFERING NEW PRICE.

Following knee surgery I am sadly selling Sid, my 6 year-old chestnut Quarter Horse. Great trail horse, goes first, last or alone. Wonderful on Hunter Paces. Lives in or out. Loves to jump, has been used in child and adult lessons. For sale through no fault of his own -- I need something really smooth to save me from further surgery!! \$4,000 negotiable. Call Di on (609) 466-7473 (H), (609) 558-1074 (C) or plantersro@aol.com

GREAT HORSE FOR SALE OR LEASE:

Charlie is an attractive paint gelding, 11 yrs. old, 15.1, well mannered, seasoned trail horse, trailers, clips, no vices. (Price is negotiable to a good home.) Half lease is \$250/month. On the Amwell Valley Trail System. Contact Sally (908)797-3104 tallyho5us@yahoo.com

BOARDING: Perfect set up for Retired or Rehab Horses Horse Boarding on private farm, all-day turnout, 12 X 12 stalls, excellent, personalized care, on the Amwell Valley Trails. \$350/month. Contact Sally (908)797-3104 or tallyho5us@yahoo.com.

HORSE LEASING:

Full or half lease available on this 11 year old thoroughbred gelding, 16.2 hands. This horse has a sweet disposition and is SAFE, SAFE, SAFE. He will give an experienced rider a fun ride and will be sure a walk/trot beginner has a careful steady ride. He is great on trails alone and gives other horses confidence by leading the way. Trailers with ease.

Full Lease: \$400/month **Half Lease:** \$200/month. Call Sue at (609) 397-2113

HALF LEASE AVAILABLE

Are you interested in riding a couple of days a week, but don't have time for your own horse? 15 hand black Morgan available for half lease in Ringoes (SonBob Farm).

Lark is a sweet tempered mare who does lower level dressage, pleasure and hunter paces (no jumping). Lessons may be considered, let's talk! Experienced rider only please, no beginners. \$250/month Call Linda (908) 581-3947 or email littlelark98@yahoo.com

NEED YOUR HORSE EXERCISED

Experienced rider, involved with horses for 35 years will help keep your horse conditioned, and keep you and him happy. Also available to hunt your horse. Call Patty Pagano (732) 266-6042

STALL AVAILABLE FOR HORSE BOARDING

Oct 1, 2009 \$475/per month 12' x 12' stalls - Rubber mats with 12" quarry dust base. Post and rail fence. All day turn-out or in/out option. Free choice hay. Excellent custom feed. Free blanketing/worming. Large all weather ring. Round pen. Direct access to AVTA trails. 155 Backbrook Road Ringoes, NJ Contact: Joan Sank (908) 788-7423

HORSE FOR HALF LEASE

Buddy is a dark bay Tennessee Walking Horse, very young 19 yrs old, 16+ hands. He is naturally gaited and good on trails. He does not care where in the lineup he is, and will go up, down, over and thru almost anything. He is familiar with our section of the AVTA trails by Sonbob. Buddy will get on/off any type trailer with no problem. You are more than welcome to use my saddle, since it was made for him and is designed for a Tennessee Walking Horse. Of course, that goes for the bridle as well. For questions/concerns or more details: For questions/concerns or more details: Please call Maddy at (H) (908) 782-3603 or (c) (908) 420-7719

FREE LEASE (TWO TRAIL HORSES)

I have two nice trail horses available for free lease, preferably to someone who lives on the Amwell trail system. One is an Icelandic with wonderfully smooth gaits. One is a Quarterhorse mare, very seasoned. Both barefoot, easy keepers with excellent manners. Work and family currently prevent me from riding them both, but I would love to see them stay on the trail system.

Anyone interested, please give me a call. Cyndi (609) 575-0819

NEED WORK DONE AROUND THE FARM OR HOUSE?

Local licensed contractor - willing to do all sorts of work including: Yard clean up, leaf removal, barn maintenance/repairs, fencing, fence repairs, building stalls, and all phases of construction (e.g. kitchen and bathroom renovation). I have all kinds of tools, tractor, backhoe, dump truck, etc and great references for all the above. (References include AVTA members.)

Plus, I'm a horse owner and have experience working with all aspects of farm maintenance.

Call Mike 908-482-0921 or email katemcgreevy@hotmail.com

BOARDING

Woodcrest farms has stalls available. Ringoes area private farm. Great loving care, turnout, wash stall, outside sand ring, adjacent to AVTA trails plus many pastures to ride on property. Friendly atmosphere. \$375 per month. Call Janet at (908) 782-4308

HAY AND STRAW AVAILABILITY IN THE AMWELL VALLEY AREA

Everyone seems to agree that this has been a poor year for good hay. The amount seems to be sufficient but the quality poor because the rain prevented the hay to be harvested at the optimal time. Those farmers that cut early, the middle of May, and those that had a second cutting fared the best.

Janet Totten 908-782-4308 has a timothy mix for sale and she doesn't deliver.

John Nance 1-973-229-0669 has a pasture mix hay, straight orchard grass, wheat straw and mulch for sale. He will deliver.

Guy Russo 1-609-466-7592 and 908-246-4466 is all sold out this year.

Helen Rynearson 1-609-397-3677 has straw for sale but does not deliver.

Greg Manners 609-466-3207 has hay for his customers.

William du Fosse 908-782-8118 has timothy hay for sale and he will deliver.

Steve Zemek-908-369-4231 may have timothy hay available later in the year, depending on demand of his customers. He will deliver.

Bob Welisewitz 908-782-5304 has good quality hay for sale and he will deliver.

Fred Van Doren 908-782-5675 said to call for availability after the 1st of the year as he is too busy right now.

Kit Crisafulli 732-904-5137 has timothy, and orchard grass and some alfalfa. He also has rye straw. He will deliver.

Kris DuFosse

BOARD MEMBERS

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Bryce Thompson
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Jennifer Fisher
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Barn Rep
Gail Cahill

Landowner Relations
Joan Sank

Newsletter
Gael Gardner

Heidi Jensen

Web site
Tory Januik

Trail Managers
TRISH BUCKWALTER
Gael Gardner

Elmer and Grande Go Camping



This was a weekend to remember! Nancy and Trish decided to take us camping. It started on a very rainy wet Saturday morning. They loaded up the truck with all sorts of gear, then put us in the trailer and assured us it would be fun. My friend Grande and I were not so

sure. The two hour ride in the trailer with trucks splashing past and going up and down hills, we finally arrived at our destination; Lusscroft Farm way up in North NJ.

As luck would have it, the rain stopped and the sun came out, just in time to put us in our stalls. "This is pretty small accommodation", mumbled Grande. He lives out in a field most of the time. We found if we stuck our heads out over the doors it was quite acceptable. My eyes almost bugged out of my head. There are loads of other horses here and trailers with funny things sticking out of them, it turned out that is where the humans were sleeping. Nancy and Trish brought a tent a very weird looking blue thing.

We had only just got settled when Nancy said we have to get tacked up and ready to ride. What? We just got here and now we have to work! The other humans and their horses were also ready. The first thing we did was go down the road a piece. "This is easy", I thought. Then, the leader took a right turn and proceeded up this steep hill. Rocks, no problem there. I was

very proud of myself as I picked my way up. When we got to the top we were allowed to rest. Grande was ready to go; he does not like to be left behind. We both thought that was it, but no. For the next two, or seemed like ten hours, we went up and down hills through the brush, through the swamp and around trees that had fallen down.

We arrived back at the camp ground. I was very tired but happy that I was able to behave myself and Mom was pleased with me. Grande and I were brushed off and made comfortable in our stalls. Nancy and Trish went off to what they called a wine and cheese party. That night the humans had a great time around the camp fire talking and laughing.

The next morning, just when we thought we were headed home, we were tacked up and we did the trails all over again. This was a different route but much the same terrain. On top of one mountain we stopped by a fantastic looking barn with a tree cemented in the side. Our guide said it was a former 4-H meeting place. I have no idea how they got to it. The way back down the mountain was very steep. My legs were getting tired and Mom let me take my time. I think Grande was tired too.

Back at camp, Nancy and Trish packed up all the gear and hitched up the trailer. I was ready to go home. Grande, for some reason was not. Finally, I convinced him we needed to go home, so he came on with me. Our ride home was much shorter, thank goodness.

I was very glad to see my own house and my stable mate Writer. He wanted to know where I had been, so I told him every detail. Would I do it again? "Yes", I said very sleepily.



46 North Hill Rd.
Ringoos, NJ 08551