



The Trails are Open as of April 7th

Please remember that a huge rain or a few days of steady rain can turn the trails into quagmires. If a trail you are riding is so wet that you leave mark of more than an inch turn back and ride somewhere else. If you wouldn't ride on your own lawn, it is too wet to use other people's land. Think before you ride. If you are undecided ask your barn representative or call Gael (609) 466-9472 or Trish (908) 782-7238.

SAVE THE DATE MAY 12TH World Series of Birding with the Amwell Valley Trail Feathers



Since about 1995 the Amwell Valley Trail Feathers have been going out in East Amwell and surrounding areas to count bird species. We have, with the wonderful help of Cliff Miller, been keeping records since 1999. In East Amwell alone we have seen 109 species and in all the areas we try to go to each year we have spotted 172 species. Our best birding year was 2000 with 124. Last year we almost got there with 122 species. This is a link to Cliff's site if you are interested <http://www.nightcoder.com/birds/ws/>

We like to encourage those who walk with us to donate something per bird that they see to any of the NJ Audubon associations.

This year we will leave 46 North Hill Road, the property of the Gardner's, at 8:00 and walk up the road. Where we have open fields, old woods, brushy woods and streams and a small lake. It usually takes about 2 hours to do this, but if you have to leave early we can direct you back to the road easily. Then we go to the Higginsville bridge in Three Bridges, sometimes the grassland park on Clover hill road and then to the marsh on River Road. Our last destination is Brigantine Nature center. You are all invited to do as much as you want to. We are delighted to add new birders and new members to our group. Please call Gael Gardner 609 466 9472 just to let us know you are coming.

ATTENTION DOG OWNERS

Cocoa Mulch, which is sold by Home Depot, Forman's Garden Supply and other garden supply stores, contains a lethal ingredient called "Theobromine". It is lethal to dogs and cats. It smells like chocolate and it really attracts dogs. They will ingest this stuff and die. Several deaths have occurred. Just a word of caution—check what you are using in your gardens and be aware of what your gardeners are using in your gardens. Theobromine is the ingredient that is used to make all chocolate, especially dark or baker's chocolate, which is toxic to dogs. Cacao bean shells contain potentially toxic quantities of theobromine, a xanthine compound similar in effects to caffeine and theophylline. A dog that ingested a lethal quantity of garden mulch made from cacao bean shells developed severe convulsions and died 17 hours later. Analysis of the stomach contents and the ingested cacao bean shells revealed the presence of lethal amounts of theobromine.



More Trails

At the last board meeting, AVTA member, Tom Ebeling reported on trails over in Mercer County, which are appropriate for hiking and riding this time of year.

One of the places in Mercer County with wonderful hiking and horse trails is Baldpate Mountain. Most of the trails are old dirt roads, so that they are hard-packed and well-drained, and can be used in the winter months. Baldpate Mountain is the highest point in Mercer County, and riding on the top of the Mountain affords spectacular views of the Delaware River valley below. Baldpate can be reached by parking your trailer near the soccer fields at the Route 279 entrance to Wash. Crossing State Park, and following the horse trails to Church Road, then going down Fiddler's Creek Road until you reach the gate that leads up the Mountain. Another way is to drive your trailer all the way to the top of the Mountain. In this case, travel up Route 29 to Fiddler's Creek Road, and go up the hill until you see the iron gate on the left that is the entrance to Baldpate. Be careful...it's a narrow, rough and steep road.

Another area to ride is the Mercer County Park- Northwest, which can be accessed from the parking lot on Blackwell Road, near Rosedale Park in Mercer County. Across Blackwell Rd. from the parking lot is a trail that leads into the Mercer County Park-West, where you will find dirt roads and old asphalt roads to ride on. There are wet spots that you must avoid, also signs designating certain environmentally sensitive areas, but the packed roads are fine for riding even in the conditions we have this warm winter. A second way to access Mercer County Park-West is to look for the sign at the entrance on Cold Soil Road, out toward Keefe Road. At this point there is a big barn on the right of Cold Soil Road, and a big sign for the park.



Twenty-Three Years Ago...

Mary Weeden had the idea of a trail association in East Amwell. When I moved here in 1983 she made me promise to help her start one. Shortly thereafter we had a meeting at Bryce Thompson's Sourland Farm with about 10 landowners. The whole thing began to take shape. Rules and regulations were formulated. The first maps were drawn and members were recruited from boarding barns and residents of East Amwell. It didn't take many years before a real difference was noticed by landowners as to how the trails were maintained and used. Previously riders went wherever they pleased. Many not recognizing the fact that fields that looked like they were covered with weeds were in fact hay fields or were no-till fields. Landowners and farmers were obviously pleased with the change. So were the board members..

Years passed and the number of trails expanded. Mary and her husband, Chuck, worked on AVTA trails as well as trails on their farm for many years. On weekends you could always find Chuck out in some area of Meadowberry Farm with his truck with the radio on NPR and raking, pruning or picking up piles of brush Mary had pulled out of the woods during the week. One tragic day Chuck had a heart attack as he was starting out on a run with Mary and he died in their driveway. As a tribute to Chuck we established the CFWMSF in his honor. It is dedicated to helping children and young adults who live in East Amwell or are members or children of members of the Trail Association who are going into agricultural pursuits either in college or in trade school.

We hold a hunter pace on the first weekend in October as our only fundraiser for the Scholarship Fund as well as for two other non profit organizations, the Amwell Valley Rescue Squad and one of the local handicapped rider organizations. In the winter we have a silent auction at our Winter Doldrums Party at Hillbilly Hall.

The applicants may come from East Amwell, be a child of a member of the AVTA or either of the local pony clubs, the Hunterdon Hills Pony Club or the Amwell Valley Hounds Pony club. who are going into agricultural pursuits either in college or in trade school.

Applications are available on our web site www.avta.net . The deadline of March 1st has passed for this year, but I wanted to alert people who might be interested in the future. I am hoping to have a profile of this year's recipient in the next newsletter.

Gael Gardner

ADOPT A TRAIL

Everyone has a favorite trail that they like to hike or ride on. You now have the chance to make the trail more personal. Take charge of cutting back the multiflora rose, trimming the grass and may be even planting some attractive shrubs. You may even name your trail.

There are many trails that we cannot get down with the tractors these are the ones we need you to adopt. We have markers for identification. This does not cost anything but your time. Some of you may like to get a group of your friends together and make it more fun. The trail will only need trimming a couple of times a year, but will enhance the pleasure of all who use it. This idea lets you clear the trail at times when it is most convenient to you. If you do not have a special trail we will be happy to assign you one.

Please help us with this project. East Amwell is proud of one of the largest trail systems.

Call Trish (908) 782-7238 or e-mail tbuckwalter@earthlink.net

Thank you
Trish Buckwalter,
President

BOARD MEMBERS

President
TRISH BUCKWALTER
(908) 782-7238

Secretary
LYNN EBELING
(609) 466-0695

STEPHEN BUSTON
(609) 466-1966

Gael Gardner
(609) 466-9472

DI HUNS
(609) 466-7473

AUDREY MEAGHER
(908) 526-7213

JENNIFER FISHER
(609) 915-4994

Newsletter
Gael Gardner
Heidi Jensen

Vice President
JOAN SANK
(908) 788-7423

Treasurer
JEN EDWARDS
(908) 237-0204

GAIL CAHILL
(609) 466-4210

EARL HARTMAN
(908) 782-6566

PHIL JACOBY
(609) 466-0933

MARY MURRIN
(609) 895-1040

Barn Rep
GAIL CAHILL

Trail Mangers
TRISH BUCKWALTER
Gael Gardner

BLAINE HUMMEL
(609) 466-2907

BRYCE THOMPSON
(609) 466-2649

Landowner Relations
JOAN SANK

There's A New Kid In Town

There's a new farmer in the area – and he's producing top quality hay and straw. **Kit Crisafulli** and his father Peter, otherwise known as **Deer Run Hay Company**, recently purchased the preserved Baron Farm, located on Amwell Road, through the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and are putting it back into production in a big way.

Kit is a dedicated and determined young man who has wanted to be a farmer since he was 2 years old. He started his hay and straw business on his parents' horse farm in Freehold when he was a freshman in High School, and since that time he has earned his degree in Agronomy with a specialty in Crop Production from Delaware Valley College in Doylestown. He moved to this area about four years ago when he began leasing the 400 acre Kanach Farm on Rainbow Hill Road that had previously been purchased and preserved by Somerset County. It was there that he began producing his excellent quality timothy, alfalfa and orchard grass hay, as well as rye straw.

This past Fall they closed the deal on the Baron Farm, and Kit set to work turning every possible square inch into top producing fields that will make many a local horse salivate for his bales. He offers delivery at no extra charge, as well as unloading and stacking, and prides himself on keeping his customers satisfied year round. Kit has also indicated that, once his fields are firmly established, he would happily allow AVTA members to ride – or hike – the field perimeters and tractor lanes of his scenic farm.

And as if that weren't enough, Kit is also a volunteer fireman with the Neshanic Fire Company, and keeps fit by playing hockey in the Senior League at the local Aspen Ice Rink. He recently became engaged to Miss Lindsey Amb's of Branchburg, and a 2008 wedding is planned. Both Kit and Lindsey are working hard to bring the farm back to life and refurbish the homestead for their future here in the Amwell Valley.

You can stop by to pick up a load of hay from Deer Run Hay Company, which is located at 110 Amwell Road, East Amwell, or you can call Kit at 732-904-5137 for a delivery of his top quality local hay.



Events

**AEA Events at
Alexandria Township Park
www.aeanj.com**

Saturday April 14:
Gymkhana
contact Rachel Kimsey (908) 894-8571
or million_dollar_cowgirl@hotmail.com.

Sunday April 15:
Spring Jumping Clinic
contact Dawn Cecere 303-1743 or
risingstarfarm@earthlink.net.

Saturday April 21:
Team sorting
contact Phil Rochelle
391-1633 or philrochelle@earthlink.net.

Unclassified

FOR SALE OR RENT

Amwell Valley – 6 acre horse farm, charming Colonial Williamsburg reproduction, 3 BR, 1 1/2 bath, 3 stall barn, 80x120 ring, level pastures, run-ins. horseholidays@verizon.net (609) 397-2113.

FOR RENT

Stockton - carriage house on private farm. \$1,500/month. Open floor plan, new kitchen, study, large bathroom. Overlooks horses/pasture. Boarding available. (609) 397-2113

FARM MANAGER.

Full or Part time. Requires work with animals, knowledge of equipment used in building renovations, landscaping and pasture management. (609) 397-2113.

FOR SALE.

Stockton, NJ – 27 acre farm, 1700s stone/wood house, carriage house, 5 stall barn, wash stall, ring, pool & pool house, new 11-br septic & paint. horseholidays@verizon.net 609-397-2113.

TOP QUALITY HAY & STRAW FOR SALE.

ALL TYPES. CALL KIT FOR PRICING – (732) 904-5137.
DEER RUN HAY COMPANY, EAST AMWELL

BOARD

Full board available for gelding on private farm with riding ring. Turn out available 24/7, individualized care, quality feed, well maintained pastures. \$400/month, worming included. horseholidays@verizon.net

HELP WANTED

Looking for morning help at our barn located in Hillsborough NJ, monday thru friday. Duties would include feeding, turn out, mucking stalls, etc. Looking for someone who is reliable & has knowledge of horses. Please call the barn directly at (908) 369-5884 or m.sabba@yahoo.com

**TO PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD
PLEASE CONTACT GAEL GARDER AT
GAEL@THEGARDNERS.ORG**

FOR LEASE AS OF APRIL, 2007: READINGTON, aka RED. Red is a 12 year old, 16 hand Thoroughbred gelding suitable for an experienced rider or a confident intermediate rider. English only please. He is a very sweet boy with no vices who loves attention and loves to work. He is located on a farm in Hillsborough NJ. The stable has direct access to trails and an outdoor ring.

Red goes willingly at all three gaits in the ring, and loves to trail ride. He is not spooky out on the trails, crosses water, and is fine in large or small groups.

Red is sound on joint supplements for mild arthritic changes, but that means no jumping and no showing. His owner enjoys going to hunter paces and organized trail rides and would be happy to trailer Red and her other horse to these events. Red has his own tack and grooming supplies. Lessee is welcome to bring their own saddle- provided it fits Red comfortably. Owner has 2 spare english saddles that the lessee could also use.

Red wears front shoes only, and the lessee would need pay for his shoes every seven weeks. A half lease is \$225, and would allow three days of riding per week, a full lease is \$450 and would permit unlimited riding. Prices are negotiable for the right person and I welcome anyone interested to come to the barn and try him out. (Any rider would need to sign a release for the barn owners)

Red is a very sweet boy with no vices, he loves attention and loves to work. For more information e-mail hansa@sl.rr.com or call Lee at (732) 261-2383.

Recruiting volunteers for Bird Surveys

The New Jersey Audubon Society (NJAS) is currently recruiting volunteers for bird surveys coordinated through the Citizen Science Program. Participants must have prior experience in bird identification and be willing to commit one weekend day in April for training and 2-4 days for surveys.

Citizen Science Associates will be required to visit their assigned sites to determine avian abundance and distribution. During the surveys, volunteers will use standard fixed-radius point count methodology to count birds from road-side or on-site points. Depending on road conditions, some points may only be accessible on foot. NJAS staff will provide training to volunteers in point count survey methodology, and a detailed refresher on bird identification, prior to the start of the field season.

Grassland Associates are required to visit their site 2 times to count birds, once between May 15-May 31 and once between June 1-June 15. In addition, the Grassland Associates must also commit at least 2 days for habitat surveys (once in late April-early May and once in August). If you are interested in participating in the Grasslands Project or for more information on this project, contact Mike Bisignano, New Jersey Audubon Society, 11 Hardscrabble Road, PO Box 693, Bernardsville, NJ 07924, tel. (908) 766-5787 ext. 20 / fax (908) 766-7775, mike.bisignano@njudubon.org. Most of the available sites for this project are on managed private lands in South Jersey and will require some walking to access the points.

Piedmont Bird Survey Associates are required to visit their site and count birds once between May 26th and June 24th. We welcome volunteers willing to take on more than one site and survey on multiple days. If you are interested in participating in the Piedmont Surveys or for more information on this project, contact Nellie Tsioura, New Jersey Audubon Society, 1327 Canal Road, Princeton, NJ 08540; Phone: (908) 837-9063, Fax: (908) 837-9569, E-mail: nellie.tsioura@njudubon.org. Most of the points in the Piedmont survey will be on secondary roads and accessible by vehicle. Points in urban and suburban areas will be included in this survey, contact us to find out if your specific area of interest is covered.

This project is a collaborative effort of NJAS, the NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) Data collected will further our knowledge of bird distribution and abundance in New Jersey.



NJQHA Charity Trail Ride Cowtown Rodeo June 1 & 2, 2007

This ride can fit your schedule. Come for 2 nights, 1 night, come for the day or come for the rodeo! Included in each registration fee is a ticket to the Saturday night Cowtown Rodeo performance which starts at 6 PM.

Participants can arrive starting Friday afternoon with dinner on your own. There is optional entertainment at the Fairgrounds Friday night. Saturday morning registration and breakfast 8:30-11 AM. The ride will leave at 11:30 am and return 2:30 PM. The Cowtown Flea Market is open from 9-4 PM for non-riders to enjoy. Return from the ride for snacks, drinks, awards and a silent auction. Rodeo starts 6 PM.

For more information contact
Chris Felcetto at (732) 672-0840
cfcfcelcetto@msn.com
Susan Auer (732) 418-5923
susra@verizon.net