

Masters' Report

New Rockbridge Hunt Line number: 540-462-1113.

Hounds

The Rockbridge pack was tested for leishmaniasis and the results are good news. Only two hounds showed any indication of the disease and both of those were very low titers (1:16). There's a good possibility that these are false positives. The testing will be repeated after about three months and we'll know if we really have a disease-free pack.

Enclosed Forms

Please fill out and return the enclosed membership form and waiver as soon as possible. You do not need to send your dues payments immediately. The annual membership forms help to give the Treasurer, Katharine Conner, some idea of how much income can be expected from dues payments over the coming year. Thank you for your cooperation.

New Territory

Fred Burks has been working diligently on opening up the new territory on the east side of Interstate 81. He has built and installed several coops and gates. The staff has met to tour part of the property. More paneling needs to be done and the staff needs to learn the land better in order to hunt it safely and effectively. You will notice that a meet is scheduled there in December, to leave from the Burks' farm, Montafon.

Work Day

Plan on a work day on Sunday, September 10th. Meet at the Lodge at 2:00. We may work at Hunt, Inc, or at Brownsburg, or in the neighborhood of the new territory east of I-81.

Virginia Hunt Week

This year Rockbridge Hunt will participate in the start of a new tradition – Virginia Hunt Week. Nothing quite like this has ever been organized in the state of Virginia, and Rockbridge Hunt gets to take the lead. Please check the enclosed calendar for dates and locations.

This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to enjoy different styles of hunting with different kinds of packs over different kinds of country. It's also a golden opportunity to showcase Rockbridge Hunt. Rockbridge isn't the oldest or the newest hunt club in the group participating. It's not the biggest or the smallest, in either membership or pack size or size of territory. Rockbridge is one of the friendliest hunt clubs in the state, with some of the most challenging, and most scenic, territory.

It's likely that all of the meets for Virginia Hunt Week will take place in the early morning. The dates are October 14th through 21st and the weather is likely to be quite warm. In order to have a reasonable chance for good hunting, the meets must be scheduled early in the day.

A few of the meets are likely to start at ten o'clock. Bath County Hounds meet in the mountains where it's always cooler. Glenmore Hunt will want to allow their members time to braid and polish their turnout for their Opening Meet and hound blessing on the final Saturday of the week.

Most hunt clubs will wait until very close to the date to set a time. It's understandable that if the weather is cool we can start a little later in the day which is easier for those participants who have long distances to cover. If the weather is very hot and/or dry, starting time will be quite early, possibly as early as seven o'clock although seven-thirty or eight o'clock are more likely.

Every meet during Virginia Hunt Week will be followed by a breakfast or tailgate. It's important to allow time for everyone to meet and socialize. There will also be a casual dinner-dance on Saturday night following the final meet. Details on the location aren't available yet but it will be near Wintergreen.

All of the hunting and all of the social events are included in one price. Members in good standing of each of the eight participating hunts will be charged fifty dollars (\$50) per person. Participants who are not members of any of the participating hunts will be charged two hundred twenty-five dollars (\$225) per person. This is an incredible bargain; some of these hunts charge seventy-five dollars for one day of capping.

Because Virginia Hunt Week falls during cubhunting season, traditional ratcatcher attire has been requested. Generally, Rockbridge Hunt members have tried to adhere to these standards for joint meets during cubhunting season. Nothing new will be required for most members.

A traditional hacking jacket is preferred, in a conservative color of tweed, herringbone, check, or plaid. If you don't have one of those, a standard black hunt coat will do. Standard (hunter/jumper) horse show jackets are generally acceptable. Gentlemen usually wear a plain shirt and tie with a tweed coat. Ladies may wear the same or a ratcatcher with choker or a ratcatcher with stock. For a black hunt coat, a white shirt and stock should be worn.

Traditionally brown boots (field or dress boots) would be worn with hacking jackets. For Virginia Hunt Week, black boots are acceptable. Paddock boots and leggings or half-chaps are not appropriate.

Very few people will wear a vest because of the heat. However, jackets may be waived if the weather is extremely hot and you may wish to have your vest with you. It's always a good idea to have a raincoat with you.

Some participants will wear a traditional hunt derby but every club allows black hunt caps and helmets. Rockbridge Hunt encourages the use of a helmet or hunt cap.

Horses should be turned out as well as possible: groomed and polished and trimmed, just as they would be for any special meet. Plan ahead to find time to pull manes and do the needed trimming.

The Virginia Hunt Week information will not automatically be sent to all Rockbridge Hunt members. If you're interested in participating please ask Cindy Morton, David Bolen, or Katharine Conner to put you on the list.

Everyone who foxhunts is required by state law to have a hunting license on their person while hunting. In addition, state law requires that any time a group of horses is assembled, Coggins tests will be checked. This is true for every meet of the Rockbridge Hunt. Please carry a current negative Coggins test (the original, not a photocopy) with you and be ready to present it when asked. Please get and carry a hunting license. We will be checking Coggins tests at Rockbridge Hunt.

Help Needed!

Rockbridge Hunt has an ambitious calendar of events for the fall. The Endurance Rides are on Sept. 3rd. Hunting season starts shortly after that. Virginia Hunt Week takes place in October. Opening Meet and a Hunter Pace are both scheduled for early November. There will be good-sized crowds for several of these events. And since the meet at Rockbridge will kick off Virginia Hunt Week it's up to all of us to start with a good impression.

Trail-clearing needs to be done as soon as possible. The Lodge, the parking lots, the riding ring, and the kennel area are in great shape thanks to the hard work of the the Kitchen Committee and Grounds Committee. Outdoors, occasional trimming and mowing will have to be kept up well into the fall. Indoors, everyone who uses the facilities should see to it that they're left ready for the next event.

For the Rockbridge Hunt meet of Virginia Hunt Week on October 14th there will have to be extra help. Volunteers will be needed to direct traffic. It's possible there will be car followers who will need to be guided throughout the area during the meet. The breakfast following the meet will require some substantial planning and donations of time and food.

Volunteers will also be needed for the Endurance Rides on September 3rd (pulse-takers and gate-minders) and for the Hunter Pace on November 12th (secretary, timer, and parking). Food will be needed for both of those events as well. Please don't wait to be called, volunteer to help out!

Trails and Paneling – David Bolen (office 464-7492 or home 291-3336) or Cindy Morton

Endurance Rides – Kathy Eichelberger (office 343-0193 or home 947-2966)

Endurance Rides – Food – Erica Jones (office 231-4427 or home 544-7359)

Breakfasts – Carol Atwood (463-1000) or Lois Farmer (473-2525)

Virginia Hunt Week – David Bolen or Cindy Morton

Hunter Pace – Cindy Morton (office 463-8109 or home 463-6025)