

Rockbridge Hunt Newsletter – April 2003

Annual Meeting

The annual membership meeting will be held at the Tex Tilson Lodge on May 14th (the second Wednesday of May) at 7:00 pm. Although there is no official agenda available at this time, members will be voting on the following positions on the executive committee: MFH, president, secretary, treasurer and two stewards. The steward's positions currently held by Fred Burks and Paula Ursoy and are up for election. Stewards Kathy Eichelburger and Sandra Worthy have 2 more years in their terms. The nominating committee is Kathy Eichelberger, Judy Mundy and Lauren Keating. If you have someone you wish to nominate for any of these positions, please contact Kathy at 540-947-2966. Nominations will be accepted from the floor during the meeting. Remember, family members only have one vote per family.

If you are unable to attend the meeting you are encouraged to submit a proxy to any (voting) member of your choice, or you may mail your proxy to current secretary Wilson Shepard.

Proxy from _____

I wish to assign my vote to

at the general Rockbridge Hunt 2003 (annual) membership meeting.

Date _____

Signature _____

Mail to:
Wilson Shepard
75 Deer Drive
Lexington VA 24550

Jt MFH -

David Bolen
463-5574

Jt MFH –

Cindy Morton
463-6025

President -

Carol Atwood
463-1000

Treasurer –

Katharine Conner
467816

Honorary Secretary -

Wilson Shepard
463-6466

Stewards -

Fred Burks
258-2828
Kathy Eichelberger
947-2966
Paula Ursoy
966-1001
Sandra Worthy
343-2713

Newsletter:

Blair Jones
(Abjones@vt.edu)
Erica Jones
(Emjones@vt.edu)
Cindy Morton
(cmorton@wlu.edu)

Web site:

[Http://home.wlu.edu/~mortonc/archive/index.html](http://home.wlu.edu/~mortonc/archive/index.html)

Hunt-mail listserve:

Contact cmorton@wlu.edu

SPRING HUNTER PACE

Mark your calendar now and plan to come and ride or help for our spring hunter pace on May 17th. Rain date is Sunday May 18th. If the weather looks iffy, call the hunt line for confirmation. If you are not riding we could use volunteer help for:

- Timekeeping - 2 starters and 2 finishers.
- Road and parking directors (2)
- Checkpoint (halfway usually; you hand out fluids).
- Gatekeepers for gates along the course
- Lunch servers – noon to 3 pm.

Please give Laura Jarvis 540-291-3186 or Brenda Simmons 540-885-4725 a call if you can volunteer. We can find a job for anyone wishing to ride AND help, too. Blair and Erica Jones are heading up lunch. Please give them a call 540-544-7359 (after dark) if you can lend kitchen help that day or prepare something beforehand.

Thank you in advance for your help. See you at the pace!

Signed, the hunter pace committee – Laura Jarvis, Brenda Simmons, Joanne VanSiclen and Sara Wood.

Spring Hunter Show June 7th Needs SPONSORS

Rockbridge hunt has been sponsoring a spring hunter show for as long as I can remember. I think back in the 80's it happened right at the ring at Hunt Inc., and over the years has moved to various places. This year it will be at Hollins College again (as it was last year). The schedule is one day only. Sponsors for classes and divisions are very welcome! You can sponsor a single class for \$20, or a whole division (usually 2 over fences classes and one "flat" class) for \$50. Please contact Joan Alberti 540-992-1069 for more information or jwalberti@msm.com.

Joan tells me that she will be out of town for the show but has placed the management in capable hands of folks who do this professionally. She has also hired out the food concession.

Unfortunately at press time I could not get my mitts on a prize list. For sure there will be an over fences class restricted to horses that have actually been out in the hunt field; the height will be 2' 6". Entries are \$12 a class.

Donors for the Silent Auction

Rockbridge hunt would like to thank the following people- members and some non-members, who donated items to be auctioned off in the silent auction. A good number of items were hand made.

Our thanks to: Carol Atwood, Susan & Jim Bailey, Christopher Bowring, Barbara & Fred Burks, Mary Lynn Camper, Mary & Gene Clapsaddle, Joe Allen Conner, Victoria Correll (Feet, Inc.), Lois & Frank Farmer, Dr. Judy Gustafson, Kathleen Haugen, Marsha Heatwole, Bernard Hylton, Laura and Lee Jarvis, Jeanne Jeffer, Blair Jones, Ann Layman, Diane Long, Nina Marshall, Teresa McDonald, Millie & Company, Cindy Morton, Pam & Joe Moskal, Sally Nunley (Grandma's Attic), Michael Orrison, Terry Poff, Beverly Purswell, RHPC, Beverly Russell, Beverly, Paula Ursoy, Cynthia & Terry Secker, Lola & Wilson Shepherd, Brenda Simmons, Kimerly Smith, Bill Streaker, Cameron York, Jan Sweet, Doreen Tansey, Jean Taylor, Bobbie Van Ness, Joanne Van Siclen, Joy and Andy Watkins, Terry Whitmore, Katie Wick, Viola Wise, Janet Wynot.

And a huge THANK YOU for these business supporters of our Hunt Ball Silent Auction:

Bit 'n Bridle – Staunton VA tack and riding apparel

Countryside Classics – Main Street – Salem, VA

Fabricare Center – 2502 Franklin Road, SW – Roanoke, VA 540-982-0324 Experts in horse blanket cleaning and repair

The Farm Store – Troutville, VA

Fitzgerald Lumber – Fairfield, VA 540-348-5199 for sawdust delivered
Grandma's Attic – Main Street – Salem VA
Jan Sweet Tack Repair – quality repair of tack & blankets. Call her at 540-929-4313
Millie S Company – Main Street – Salem, VA
Orrison Tree Service – Natural Bridge VA 540-254-2385
The Pink Cadillac – serving breakfast, lunch and dinner
Ralph Smith, Inc. Roanoke, VA 540-982-7000 - Trailer hitch specialists
Roanoke Valley Equine Clinic – Dr. Darnton & Dr. Trimpi Veterinarian equine specialists.
Rockbridge Farmers Co-op – Lexington, VA- More than just horse feed – see them for all your horse supplies
Saddles 'n Stuff – Pam Milliron – Daleville, VA - Tack and riding apparel
The Southern Inn – Lexington, VA - Fine dining
The Tack Room – Roanoke, VA - Tack and riding apparel
Virginia Born and Bred – Washington Street - Lexington, VA - Unique gifts made in Virginia

Some Season Statistics

All of the bad weather and cancellations have sparked some interest in the statistics for this past hunting season (2002-2003). The Masters of Fox Hounds Association (MFHA) requires that each club compile and report most of this information so we make an effort to keep accurate records.

- Our hunting season is about six months long so the maximum number of meets scheduled is usually around 52. Away joint meets cut into that number as do weather-related cancellations.
- Our hounds went out hunting 39 times, total. Attendance averaged 23 riders for all meets.
- We only hosted four joint meets this year: Virginia Hunt Week, Opening Meet, the infamous “Quad Meet” in early December, and a joint meet with Oak Ridge Fox Hunt Club and Bedford County Hunt in January.
- When we submit these statistics to the MFHA they require us to exclude all joint meets. Excluding all joint meets, hounds went out 35 times and attendance averaged 22 riders.
- We canceled 10 meets.
- The biggest field we hosted was at our meet during Virginia Hunt week – 40 members and 42 nonmembers rode that day. The next biggest meet was the Opening Meet of the season with 45 riders. And the third biggest turnout was for the Junior Meet in September with 39 riders.

I would encourage each of you who foxhunts to keep some kind of record of your own. I don't have time to record a lengthy analysis of each day's hunting but I do keep track of my riding, both hunting and nonhunting. A record of how often I rode, which horse I rode, and what kind of riding I did, as well as recording injuries, lameness, shoeing appointments, and veterinary visits is invaluable. I make a brief comment in my appointment calendar (Tuesday – jumping lesson on Willow, trouble with right lead; Wednesday – hunted Stuart from Broadview; Thursday – HOT day, trail ride on Willow; etc).

This kind of record keeping takes no time at all. Progress in riding and training can be slow and irregular and keeping notes is the best way to really be sure of improvement. If you start having trouble with your horse, having an objective record helps to evaluate whether it's a matter of lack of fitness or insufficient practice of a particular set of skills or something else entirely.

I rode a relatively young horse most of this past season and it's great to look back and know how long it took to get her fit, how she responded to various weather and ground conditions, what month (or year!) she was sick, etc. With notes you are absolutely sure of when things happened. My young horse hunted 40 times last season – I know it.

Cindy Morton, jt MFH

Work Sessions

Please reserve some weekend days in August to attend work sessions. Yes, that's almost the hottest time of the year but it makes sense to put off most of the work until just before hunting season starts. And right now many of our most reliable workers are building and repairing their own fences and getting ready for hay-making and trying to catch up on all the regular life chores that get put off when you life has been overrun with fox hunting.

Recently there's been an effort to compile additional historical information about the club and during that process some surprising correspondence between masters was discovered. This dates back to twenty-five or thirty years ago. Some interesting points were made.

“The dates for work days are as important as any date on the fixture card.”

“If someone can find the time to get himself and his horse ready to hunt and travel to the hunt on a regular basis, surely each one of those people can find the time to attend one work day.”

Isn't it interesting to note that attendance at work sessions is not a new problem? We had forty members ride at our meet during Virginia Hunt Week. We had almost that number ride at our Opening Meet. But during the past two years fewer than 20 different members, total, have attended any work sessions (or called to arrange alternate times to work).

We need to do better. Please plan to attend a scheduled work session in August. If you'd prefer to work on trails at another time, contact one of the Masters. Small groups can get a lot done.

Foxhunting 101

We're planning to have another educational program, this time aimed at beginning foxhunters and those who might be interested in trying the sport. We'll probably do two sessions, as we did in 2000, but the discussion portion will be shorter.

Having the introductory discussion without horses enables virtually anyone to attend. If you know people who are simply interested in hunting, even if they don't ride, they are welcome to attend. It's the perfect opportunity for people to meet some of the membership and to see the facilities.

Dates have not been set but probably the discussion part of the program will take place on a weekend in August and the riding part on a weekend in September. If you'd like to suggest a date, talk to Carol Atwood or Cindy Morton. If you know of a group who'd like to hear this sort of presentation, mounted or unmounted, notify Carol or Cindy.

Volunteers Helping to Organize the Hunt Ball

No, the hunt ball just does not happen by itself - some things just need some organizing in order to happen. Pam Moskal this year was head of a fine group of member who did the following: Fred Burks and Lucy Turner- reserved the band; Buster Lewis- floral arranging; Nancy Conner, Laura Jarvis, Jean Taylor- auction acquisitions; Lorna and Beverly Bowring- running of the silent auction; Cindy Morton- auction checkout; Sandra Worthy- facilities and menu; and Terry Whitmore- violinist.

Poker Run

The Albemarle county Search & Rescue Team is holding a Poker Run on June 7 as a fundraiser. For you folks that don't get out much, a poker run is similar to a Hunter Pace. The course is about 7 miles. Sometimes there are jumps (they always have "go-arounds") and sometimes not. Riders can go at their own pace. Along the course, there are 5 stations where each rider picks one playing card. At the end of the ride, each rider turns in their "hand". The rider with the highest hand wins. It's a fun twist to an ordinary trail ride.

The details of this ride are as follows. The ride will be held on June 7th with riders leaving between 9 am until 1 pm. It'll be held at Christmas Tree Farm in Keene, VA. Cost is \$25 per hand and includes lunch.. There will be many different awards: best hand (no cash prize, but prizes will be valued in excess of \$500), worst hand, youngest rider, best groomed horse/rider, biggest horse, oldest horse/rider, and horse & rider who look most alike. For information and directions call: Beth Marcinko 434-979-1307 joebethm@iqworks.net.

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Remember – this is the same day as our hunter show.

Classified:

Hoofbeats Therapeutic Riding Center is looking for a medium pony (around 13 hands) to ease the load on the elderly one they currently have. Must have excellent ground manners (stand on crossties, long grooming sessions, leading by frail clients) and tolerate small children & large groups of people. Pony needs to be very quiet for independent beginners and reasonably sound. Unacceptable soundness issues include heaves, stifle or suspensory problems and blindness. Pony will also be asked to walk quietly around the farm, play stationary games and go to frequent shows for the disabled. Hoofbeats is a 501C3 organization and donations are tax deductible. We would also

consider leasing options. Pony will be given excellent care and a long-term home. Contact Carol Branscome work 540-291-4663 home 540-463-5710 website www.hoof-beats.com

Hoofbeats is located in Natural Bridge near the Rockbridge Hunt. Carol Branscome is the instructor there and also generously volunteers her time to coach the Rockbridge Hunt Pony Club Drill Team.

For sale: dressage saddle, brown, comfortable. Good first dressage saddle. 540-544-7359.

Hunt Pins for Sale

The pin colors are red and beige for the fox in the traditional RH fox shape, and ruffled border of green. The pins were designed and by me and colors chosen by Jean Taylor, they are a cut out die cast design, the overall motif was taken from our hunt stationary.

Hunt pins should be available at all Rockbridge functions & at the Hunt Lodge the price is \$10.00. On hunt days either see me or Cindy Morton and if none are on hand we can ship, just payment & an address is all we need ! If you own one please wear it with pride so we can sell, sell, sell !

Any questions on the pins please e-mail me or call . . . Paula Ursoy 540-966-1001 office, or millcreekfarm@rbnet.com

Frank Hartis

The first time I met Frank Hartis (and the first time I went to any sort of Rockbridge Hunt function) was during one of the 8 or so competitive trail rides he ably helped organized and served as trail master in the early 1980's. I remember being very impressed that one person could seemingly take charge of so many people, horses, meals and even a few dogs that were scattered around on hunt property.

Frank served in various capacities on the executive committee for quite a few years from 1986 through 1998. During this time he was treasurer and, more frequently, president. When Frank finally 'retired' from such duties in 1998 he was elected as an honorary member. After 1998 he would often show up at the start of a hunt meet and review the troops.

According to neighbor Pete Whitlock, Frank was born in Kannapolis NC and raised in Collinsville, Va; growing up with a passion for baseball. He reported to a Yankee farm team but got drafted into the Navy during WWII. During the war he was attached to the Naval Air Service and did ordinance work on airplanes in Guadalcanal and the South Pacific and went behind Japanese lines as part of his service. He also saw service as shore patrol in San Francisco.

Frank pursued further education in Industrial Arts and Education and mathematics and ended up on the faculty at VMI from 1951 through retirement.

Frank joined the Rockbridge Hunt in 1960. Carol Atwood told me she could remember Frank out hunting when she was just a young girl. In later years he capably served as field master for the Hilltoppers. During one hunt he viewed the fox three times when no one else in the field saw the quarry once.

The memorial service was held on February 26th, 2003.

Frank certainly will be missed.

Erica Jones

Calendar:

May 3rd – Derby day hound show is still 'on' but Rockbridge Hunt is not participating.

May 14th – Annual membership meeting

May 17st – Rockbridge Hunt hunter pace. (Rain date Sunday 18th)

June 7th – Rockbridge Hunt hunter show- Hollins College.

Rockbridge Hunt News
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Newport VA 24128