

Rockbridge Hunt Newsletter – January 2003

Hunt Ball

To start with, please note that the DATE on the fixture card is incorrect at February 23rd. If you show up on that date you are doomed to be disappointed. That Saturday should be the 22nd of February. Our apologies for the typo.

The band this year is Donnie Cash and the Flames - a 5 piece ensemble who pride themselves on their versatility and claim to "play everything". So request away.

In any case, our hunt ball will be of similar format to previous years. There will be hors d'oeuvres and silent auction starting at 6pm, buffet dinner at 7:30pm, live band and of course dancing after dinner. The cost of the bar (open until 11 pm) is included in the subscription.

The silent auction helps cover the cost of putting on such an affair. Any of you who get out a bit will realize that our subscription price is about 1/2 that of other neighboring hunts which do not have a silent auction. The auction also gives you a chance to bid on some very interesting horse and non-horse items and services. Donations for the auction can be given to Jean Taylor in the Salem area (540-380-3409) and Nancy Conner (463-9547) in the Lexington area. Pam Moskal (540-989-3182) will also accept donations. No item is too large or too small! Just supply us with a photograph for those hard to move items. These hard working ladies need to make up bid sheets for each item, so the sooner you can get the items or a description of the item or service, the better. You may also slip anything in the truck with David Conner on a hunt day, too, if that is convenient.

Attire is formal, of course.

Rockbridge Hunt is offering a special deal for members of other hunts attending our hunt ball. See later in the newsletter for details and a form.

New Members

We have four more new members joined this late this year. Three of them have been spotted out in the hunt field.

Mr. Henry Papiano
Franklinville NJ 08322

Dr. Beverly Purswell
Mr. Charles McDonald Wall
Blacksburg VA 24060 e-mail Beverly: purswell@vt.edu

Ms Courtney Watson
Troutville VA 24175-3316
e-mail : frostedpumpkin@hotmail.com

Jt MFH -

David Bolen
463-5574

Jt MFH -

Cindy Morton
463-6025

President -

Carol Atwood

Treasurer -

Katharine Conner

Honorary Secretary -

Wilson Shepard

Stewards -

Fred Burks

Kathy Eichelberger

Paula Ursoy

Sandra Worthy

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

Thanks to Busy Hunt Members

We have had numerous social and fund raising events this fall. For the fall hunter pace and our day of hunt week both at Montafon Farm, we had the following donations. Ann Layman donated big, colorful pumpkins and apples. Beth Murphy, who is not a hunt member but is riding instructor to one of our members, also donated some great pumpkins recycled from the (fall horse part of the) Commonwealth Games. Judy Mundy provided many wonderful decorations, including beautiful flower boxes of impatiens, and yellow mums she nursed along through several hunt breakfasts along with Hunt Week and the hunter pace. Lois Farmer brought our mascot (a resin fox fellow) to grace the table, and he was handsome as ever! Sandy Anderson, who is not a hunt member, has generously allowed us to use her folding tables and chairs. Paula Ursoy brought them from Sandy's home to Montafon, where they are being stored in Fred's barn. Carol Atwood, Laura Jarvis and Lois Farmer worked on the planning and selecting of a caterer for the Hunt Week breakfast; many hours of careful deliberation there! Barbara Burks and Nancy Cuzzimano helped unload and set up Hunt Week decorations, and Barbara provided lovely baskets for the apples and ice for the beer cooler.

Good Hunting

We've been having an exceptionally good year of hunting. Late December and January are the mating season for fox and coyote. They tend to be more active and they tend to be traveling outside their home territories. That means we're more likely to find fox and coyote and they're more likely to run further. This isn't always good – when a coyote decides to head for home he tends to travel straight and fast right out of our territory, sometimes taking the hounds with him.

On December 28th we had a spectacular run on a red fox. Shortly after we started from Zollman's the fox trotted right past the field members giving a good viewing to those who were paying attention. When hounds were put on the line some of them started to run heel meaning the pack was split at the start. After a bit, all the hounds got onto the line but they were somewhat strung out for the entire run.

Nonetheless, we made a loop through Swink's, across Dubit's and Zollman's to Whiskey Hill on Tilson's, to Lick Run. There was a break at my pasture (Morton) and staff went across Plank Road and into Browning's. We collected a few of the pack's stragglers on the back side of Browning's property and hurried back to Plank Road and Joe Conner's hayfield. Most of the rest of the pack was picked up there.

A week later we did it again. Although no one saw the fox this time it's hard to believe it could have been anything but the same fox. Hounds picked up the line below Whiskey Hill and went off with a roar. This time the loop went farther west and south. The fox went to ground in the old barn on Fred Conner's property. Since it was such a perfect day and still fairly early, David Conner elected to hunt toward Short Hill.

Hounds opened between the White Gate and Lick Run (on the Tilson family's property, Broadview). Since hounds started running in two different directions we assume they came upon a pair of coyote. The huntsman followed the bigger part of the pack along a logging road toward the Peach Orchard. When all the riders stopped the coyote came sneaking along in the brush right beside us, with hounds pressing him all the way.

Footing was terrible and from there we simply slid down the hill to slosh across Lick Run and scramble up onto the next ridge. The coyote circled back and made straight for Short Hill, taking most of the pack up into the rocks past any trails. We spent a lot of time trying to get hounds in and did get most of them. David Conner made several trips in his truck looking for hounds and picked up the last couple Sunday morning.

Just for variety, or so it seemed, on the very next Wednesday we had a good chase on a gray fox, viewed by whipper-in Katharine Conner. Once again the hounds seemed to start on a pair of fox but it took no time at all for them to get together on one line. This fox was also found in the vicinity of the White Gate on Broadview. This is clearly a major thruway for wildlife.

This fox started east along Lick Run but quickly turned back to the west and Short Hill. It was a very windy day and gray foxes twist and turn and favor the thickest brush so the chase was relatively slow with the fox gaining ground the whole time. At the foot of Short Hill there was a check where the fox turned through a covert that's all but impenetrable. The wind blew, the hounds struggled, the field coffee-housed and got chastised, and finally (finally!) one hound, invisible in the brush, saved the day. The entire pack rushed to help and they pushed on along the power line and across the hill to Harris's and back, putting the fox to ground at the old quarry on Broadview.

Hound aficionados enjoy seeing hounds puzzle out a line but most of us foxhunt to follow a screaming pack of hounds on a hot scent. This year the hunting's been FUN. And it's not just fun for the riders, it's a wonderful education for our young hounds. They've really come along well.

To successfully hunt such a variety of game (bear, red fox, gray fox, and coyote) and do it well is amazing. As our huntsman said, just the other day, "It might make you think you've got a good pack of hounds." We've got the pack and the man who made 'em – three cheers for David Conner!

Virginia Hunt Week Statements:

	VHW 2000	VHW 2001	WHW 2002
Expenses			
Food	348	505	1529 (catered)
Staff	120		
Misc		25	98
Income			
	913	1355	1250
Total	445	825	<377>

Hunter Pace Statements:

	Fall 2000	Spring 2001	Fall 2001	Spring 2002	Mid Summer 2002	Fall 2002	Totals for the 6 paces
Donations	0	250	0	0	35	0	285
Entries	1,170	2,653	3,025	1,129	1,475	2,760	12,212
Total Income	1,170	2,903	3,025	1,129	1,510	2,760	12,497
Awards *****	122	227	0	206	21	67	643
Facilities*****	0	37	0	55	55	55	202
Food ***	0	749	697	194	172	162	1,974
Postage	12	35	68	127	119	26	387
Printing	30	82	44	30	171	16	373
Staff	0	160	200	0	0		360
Supplies **	44	101	72	0	48	42	307
Insurance*	75	75	75	75	75	75	75
Total Expenses	283	1466	1156	687	661	401	4696
Net	\$962	\$1,512	\$1,944	\$517	\$924	\$2,434	\$8,252

*We pay an insurance fee for every event we host but varies with the number of events per year. For simplicity sake, this was rounded off to \$75 per event.

**The primary item under the Supplies category is ribbon for marking the trail. At times this has been shared with, and borrowed from, the Endurance Ride supply. We also acquired some signs and some posts for marking trail.

*** Some of the food was donated; some was purchased 'premade'.

****The primary item under the Facilities expense is Portajohns.

****Awards include ribbons and trophies for our own hunter pace, plus a contribution toward the Series ribbons and trophies when Rockbridge Hunt participates in the series.

Bits and Pieces:

The latest mailing of the fixture card was underwritten by Lucy Turner. Our fixture goes out to hunting members, all landowners, and a selection of staff at other hunts close by, so the mailing requires a goodly number of stamps and sheets of paper - approximately 250. Many thanks to Lucy!

Pace Committee Retires

Most of the hunter pace committee has announced their retirement after the November pace: Fred and Barbara Burks, Lee and Laura Jarvis, and Cindy Morton. It is past time for some other people to step forward.

It would be good for the club for the hunter paces to continue. Historically they have been good fund-raisers for the club. It gives us a chance to make some income from nonmembers. It provides a fun activity for members and gives them a chance to learn the territory. It's the perfect intermediate step for nonmembers who are interested in hunting but have had little or no experience riding across country. It is also an opportunity for nonmembers to ride across some property they would otherwise never ever get a chance to see. And it's one more opportunity to meet and get to know foxhunters from around the region.

All of the former committee members would be happy to offer advice and assistance. A pace can be run in many different ways and a lot of the details could be changed if the organizers desire. If you're interested, please contact someone on the Executive Committee soon. If Rockbridge Hunt is to take part in the Spring Hunter Pace Series planning will have to begin soon.

Rockbridge Hunt Fall Hunter Pace

The Fall Hunter Pace on Sunday, November 17 was a great success. The weather turned out to be fine. This was also the first pace in the local fall 2002 series and the first time Bedford County Hunt was part of the series. Attendance was wonderful with 94 entries. We'd like to thank everyone who rode OR helped that day.

We'd also like to thank the landowners who made it possible, as well as the army of volunteers. Terry and Cynthia Secker watched a gate, as did the local chapter of the Future Farmers of America (which included Rebecca Tilson). Jake Burks and Bev Burks ran the checkpoint. Blair Jones was the official starter in his ultra violet ray repellent hat. Carter Drake took the entries, aided by Carol Atwood, when she wasn't helping with the food. Jean Taylor did the primary setup at Montafon Farm. Lee and Laura Jarvis were in charge of the food. Kay Morton donated the soup. Cindy Morton helped with entries and did the finish timing. Barbara Burks figured the scores. David Bolen and Lauren Keating rode the course to set the optimum time. And then Fred Burks did all the rest of the work: setting the course and marking it, organizing the gate-keepers, and donating the trophies. We also must thank Ed Moran, a member of Glenmore Hunt. Ed printed and donated over 1,000 copies of the flyer for the series. This is absolutely a huge savings for the hunt clubs participating in the series. Next time you see Ed, please thank him for his generous donation.

Several other things went on behind the scenes for the November hunter pace. Katharine Conner took a competitor off to the emergency room for treatment of a dislocated tendon and Beverly Burks took charge the mount of another competitor who elected not to continue. And Laura Jarvis, who has been known to hold tornadoes at bay while riders completed the course (there were, actually, tornado warnings in southwest counties later on that evening), was again in charge of weather and successfully abated the rain on pace day.

Summary of Unapproved Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting January 7, 2003

Carol Atwood, David Bolen, Fred Burks, Katharine Conner, Cindy Morton, Wilson Shepherd, Paula Ursoy, and Sandra Worthy attended. Those not in attendance were Kathy Eichelberger and Viola Wise.

Briefly, highlights of the meeting were:

Diana Bunting sent us a \$100 donation.

A railing for the hunt lodge steps have been made and progress is underway to get them installed.

Paula has in hand 200 hunt pins and is willing to sell them to interested parties. **[Pins are available for purchase for \$10 each. Please contact Paula Ursoy if you are interested 966-1001].**

Dick Ford has been doing a lot of trail clearing.

There will be 'side rooms' available at the hunt ball for those folks who want to sit somewhere a tad less noisy.

The huntsman's house is scheduled for some refurbishing after David and Nancy finish their new house and will be rented at that point. Any repairs to the hunt lodge will not be considered until refurbishing costs are confirmed.

Landowners luncheon is scheduled for March 23, 2003.

Summer trail rides were also discussed but was commented that they can not be 'official' activities without incurring insurance costs.

Wilson E.D. Shepherd, Secretary 1/17/03

Join us for the annual
Rockbridge Hunt Ball
February 22, 2003
and cap for free!

- **Only regular members of any MFHA-recognized hunt, in good standing, are eligible.**
 - **Eligible foxhunters may redeem this offer between Saturday, February 22 and Saturday, March 30, 2003 (our last hunt for the spring).**
 - **Valid only once payment for the ball has been received.**
 - **This offer is nontransferable – only the foxhunter meeting this description and who attends the ball may cap without fee.**
 - **To take advantage of this offer please contact:
Cindy Morton, telephone (540) 463-6025 or email mortonc@wlu.edu
or
Pam Moskal, email swert22@cox.net**
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2003 Calendar:

February 22nd – Rockbridge Hunt hunt ball campus W&L 6pm.

March 22nd – Glenmore Hunt hunt ball

April 5 Glenmore Hunt hunter pace

April 6 Foxfield races (Charlottesville)

May 3rd – Derby day hound show

May 14th – Rockbridge Hunt annual meeting – Tilson Lodge, time to be announced

May 25th – Virginia hound show, sponsored by the Foxhound Club of North America (FCNA). No location stated on their web site.

Anybody who would like to put anything on this calendar, please let me know and it will happen for the next newsletter which should happen in April.

Rockbridge Hunt News
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