



**CT Horse Council
TRAIL NEWS
Volunteer Horse Patrol
January 2008**



Hello Everyone

Thank you for all your help and support these past years and for the upcoming year of 2008.

The VHP has come a long way from its small start in 2003 of 5 patrol areas to 26 areas around the state, including town parks, open spaces and land trusts. As we continue to grow, we are expanding our riding opportunities and helping to create long distance connecting trails. Congratulations to you all, because each of your patrol logs, no matter how many hours you patrol and maintain trails adds to the grander total of statewide hours. This service provides CHC and DEP with information on how the equestrian community is continuing its effort to maintain trails for multiple use, while promoting and educating the community and other equestrians of our volunteer efforts.

HAPPY TRAILS

Diane Ciano

Meg Sautter

SAVE THESE DATES . . .

CHC-VHP Annual Meeting

Sunday February 24th

11:00 a.m.

Location TBA (central CT)

The Connecticut Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol meets once a year. It is important for all members to attend. At this meeting, we discuss our past year's patrol logs, discuss ways for improvement to the program, and set our goals for 2008.

This meeting is also especially important for volunteers wanting to become part of the patrol unit or others who may want more information. It's an opportunity to meet others and be able to have a first hand look at how the program operates.

All interested people, please RSVP to Diane Ciano

Spirit76@snet.net or 203-757-1904 for location & directions.

The Silvermine Horse Camp Workday

Natchaug State Forest, Eastford

Saturday, March 15th

Meeting & Coffee and...

9:30 AM

Start Time: 10:00 -1:00

Lunch follows

Please RSVP

See article on the Camp Project below

CHC-VHP Demonstration & Trails Class

at UConn Horse Symposium, Storrs, CT

Saturday, March 29th

The CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol will be providing a demonstration of the members and horses of the VHP. We will include in our demonstration some of the obstacles a horse & rider go through for evaluation into the program, as well as the narrating what the program is all about and how one can join in on this state-wide patrol. We will need volunteers to bring their horses and others to be available to answer questions.

Anyone interested in participating, please contact Diane Ciano

"The Friends of Silvermine Horse Camp"

The Connecticut Horse Council (CHC) and the New England Arabian Trail Organization (NEATO) organized two brush clearing work days during 2007 and have recorded 221 hours to date toward the 20% match for the Recreational Trails Program Grant (RTP). **CHC needs to raise \$10,000** for the match of Phase 1 of this project that will bring new eco toilets, picnic tables, a Kiosk for information, directional signs and to gps the trail system to clear and mark trail loops approved by DEP. The match for the funding will also include additional **"volunteer labor"** clearing and work days at the camp.

Improving the campground is a major undertaking in which everyone, both in and out of CT, will benefit greatly from. The project is still just the beginning stages of a large scale renovation of the camp.

Please join us in this project.

We need volunteers and organizations to come forward to help with additional clearing of the campground to prepare for the installing and building projects and to help secure Fund Raising projects for the 20% match.

***Our first clearing date for 2008 is Saturday, March 15th.
(See time & RSVP information above)***

We need you to help in any way you can, by volunteer hours and by helping to solicit organizations, businesses and individuals to help raise the funds for this project through donations, organizing and hosting Benefit Events around the state.

The second phase of the project will be for greater improvements to the campsites which will include bulldozers moving boulders, some large tree removals, enlarging and leveling the campsites for larger rigs, building a pavilion and improving the condition of the trails in the forest as well as creating maps and marking specific mileage trails. Other projects would be to create a larger day use parking area, provide a mounting ramp, install piped corrals on some of the sites and any other amenities needed to enhance the campground.

Please join CHC's "Friends of Silvermine Horse Camp" group, so that when work days or Fund Raising Events are held, we can notify you and keep you in the news regarding the funding and updates to the project. Volunteers can also work on some fund raising projects, such as a benefit trail ride or camp out to help with the federal match and get other work done (re-grading of the campsites, removal of boulders and trees, fill, etc. We will also need people to help build the eco toilet houses, kiosk and various signs.

Please contact Diane Ciano with your name, e-mail address and phone number to be added to CHC's "Friends of Silvermine Horse Camp" E-mail List of contacts.

Remember: It's a camp designated for horse people to camp that has wonderful equestrian accessible trails. It doesn't come "free handed". We all have to pitch in and work on this and the trail systems if we want it to be updated.

Thank you for your support.

***Diane Ciano
Spirit76@snet.net***

Cheshire Horse Council makes a donation to CT Horse Council for the "The Friends of Silvermine Horse Camp" Fund.



Christel Maturo, President of the Cheshire Horse Council along with members Daisy Gmitter and Lou Casabona (in blue shirts) presented CHC with a donation for the Silvermine Horse Camp Fund. This was the first organization to start the drive to raise \$10,000 needed to match funds to revamp the Silvermine Horse Camp in Natchaug State Forest. See article below for further information on how you or your organization can help. Also pictured is Diane Ciano and Meg Sautter. Cheshire Horse Council members above are also members of the CHC-Volunteer Horse Patrol for Sleeping Giant State Park & the Cheshire Open Space - DiDominicus Property. Christel is the CHC-VHP Coordinator.

CHC-VHP EVENTS:

DEP - No Child Left Inside Program - Gillette Castle



**CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol Members Suzie Francher
& Tom Biesiadecki with Tuffy and Carmello**

We had a great day on Sunday. The weather was perfect and that alone brought the crowds, and the kids. There was a steady stream of kids and adults coming to see the horses. We guess there were about 100 kids, give or take, that stopped by from 10:00 AM when the event opened to about 4:00 PM, even though the event was until 3:00PM. There were four VHP Members and their horses altogether; Ken Forcier and Red, Judy Beliveau & Kool Hand Luke, Suzie Francher and Tom Biesiadecki with Tuffy and Carmello. Everyone did an awesome job, especially the horses. Even after the large crowds of loud, fast moving kids, all the horses had all four feet on the ground and behaved beautifully. We had utilized one of the picnic tables which was set up with the kids activities, apples and carrots, a riding helmet, brushes and a bit and bridle. There were two volunteers Kate and Mackenzie, a mother-daughter team that took control of table along with the give-aways

we had purchased for the kids. So if any knows who they were, please forward a big THANK YOU from me for their helping hands, I really appreciated their efforts! **Submitted by Judy Beliveau, CHC-VHP**

Note: The "No Child Left Inside" program is a special initiative designed to encourage Connecticut families and visitors alike to enjoy all the recreational resources and outdoor activities that Connecticut's state parks and forests have to offer. To Learn more about the No Child Left Inside Program, the website is:
www.NoChildLeftInside.org

Babcock Pond Wildlife Management Area - Clean Up



On Sunday, October 21st, eight people from the Connecticut Horse Council (CHC), Volunteer Horse Patrol, (VHP) gathered to clean the trash and litter from Babcock Pond Wildlife Management Area in Colchester and East Haddam, CT. Babcock is a 1524 acre of beautiful woods, streams and ponds, laced with trails off Route 16. It is popular for fishing, hiking, cycling, trail riding, and unfortunately, dirt bikes, ATVs and late night partying.

Anne Albee, Jack Connors, Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Lauren Shevenski (friend of CHC), Hilery Slattery, Olivia Duksa and Mary Ann Smith spent 4 hours clearing aluminum siding, an old seat from a car, a broken picnic table, car speakers, a rug, a lawn chair, broken glass and 8-10 bags of trash and litter from the area. They also removed some broken branches and cleared trails.

"It's all about giving back to the areas where we love to spend time." states Albee. "I'm in here almost daily and can monitor the activity and condition of the area. I've witnessed the build-up of the litter and wanted to do something about it. We know the DEP doesn't have the staff or budget to do what we do on a daily basis."

Submitted by Anne Albee, CHC -VHP Coordinator for Babcock WMA