



**CT Horse Council
TRAIL NEWS
Volunteer Horse Patrol
Summer 2010**



Submitted by Diane Ciano

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Welcome New Volunteer Horse Patrol Members:

Gail Miller & Tiffany - Franklin, CT
Loree Osowski – Dottie & Tequilla Sunrise “Tiki” - Baltic, CT
Both Gail and Lorre will be patrolling the Sprague Preserve

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY EVENTS

CONNECTICUT GREENWAYS COUNCIL

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

National Trails Day Events

Lost Silvermine Horse Camp Renovation Project, Natchaug State Forest

Members of the Volunteer Horse Patrol held a camp out, trail ride, camp and trail maintenance work days in celebration of National Trails Day, along with starting the first project of a 50,000 renovation to the camp by installing a kiosk. The kiosk holds information on the camp rules, trail map, educational brochures, DEP notices and acknowledgements to those individual and organizations that have made donations to date for the match needed in the grant funding program. It is double sided – allowing one side for groups to post their flyers for events happening at the campsite.

Donations either monetary or in-kind are needed to continue the project of removing boulders from the campsites and placing them around the common area, purchasing and installing camp posts, picnic tables, gates, signs and trail markers. If you or your organization can help through donations or in kind services please contact Diane Ciano.

*Remember. . . it's one of only 2 horse camps in CT
And it's for everyone's enjoyment !*

A BIG THANK YOU TO BRUCE WILDER FOR BUILDING THE KIOSK!



Bruce made this at his home and it was assembled by the Patrol Members at our annual campout.



Bruce Wilder, Cat Wilder, Meg Sautter, Denise Ciano, Linda Wenner, Diane Ciano



Diane cleaning the out house at camp

Goodwin State Forest, Hampton:

The newly formed group, Friends of Goodwin State Forest also held a National Trails Day event on Saturday June 5th to introduce the public to the forest and educational center.

CHC-VHP member, Jan Collins was there on hand with her horse Fable to meet and greet the visitors to the forest.

Cockaponset State Forest:

Members of the **Lower Connecticut River Valley Horsemen's Club and Bridle Lands Conservancy** held a trail maintenance day for their National Trails Day Event joining with members of the New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA), several CFPA volunteers, and a Hartford area hiking group among others rerouted a trail in the forest.

VHP members in that group were Melissa Evarts, President of LCRVHC and Gina McManus VHP Coordinator.



Volunteer Horse Patrol Receives 2010 Connecticut Greenways Award

Submitted by Jan Collins

The 11th Annual Connecticut Greenways Awards Day was held Friday June 4th at the Rotary Park Bandstand in Putnam, Connecticut. There were several awards presented as well as 11 new Greenway designations added to the State's official Greenways Trail map.

For a complete list and additional information, go to the DEP website:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323852&depNav_GID=1704&depNav=|

The Horse Council's **Volunteer Horse Patrol** was selected for the **Volunteer of the Year Group Award**. Many members were present to receive the award recognizing the many volunteer hours the Patrol members have accrued helping the DEP in the State's many forests, parks, and wildlife management areas.



From Left

Jan Collins - CHC Trails Committee, VHP Coordinator, CT Equine Advisory Council & CT Greenways Council member

Laurie Giannotti - CT DEP Recreational Trails & Greenways Program, DEP liaison for Equine Advisory Council

Susan Jackson -VHP, Pomfret Horse & Trail Association

Diane Ciano - CHC Trails Committee Chair, VHP Supervisor, CT Equine Advisory Council

Meg Sautter - CHC Trails Committee, VHP Supervisor, CT Equine Advisory Council member

Penny Foisey -VHP Coordinator, Pomfret Horse & Trail Association President

Gail Miller - VHP member

Bob Viens - Mayor of Putnam - **Susan Frechette** - Deputy Commissioner of DEP - **Bill O'Neill** - CT Greenways Council Chair.



Diane Ciano, Laurie Giannotti (DEP) and Jan Collins CT Greenways Council member representing CHC

The Volunteer Horse Patrol is a Connecticut Horse Council sub-committee of the Trails founded in 2003 and partnered with the Department of Environmental Protection's volunteer program to help monitor and patrol the State's forests, parks, and wildlife management areas, offering directions, information, and even medical help if needed to the many recreational users of our public and private lands. They are also involved with trail marking and maintenance, and educating all trail users on "Sharing the Trail" by distributing pamphlets with multi-use information. They have increased their patrols from just 600 man hours in 2003 to almost 4700 man hours including 700 maintenance hours this past year. They and their equine partners must pass a Horse/Rider assessment to qualify for the Patrol and also keep their CPR certification up to date. Approximately 120 riders and horses from all around the state have qualified and now patrol some 60 parks, forests, wildlife management areas, town parks, and several Land Trust properties. Their logs are turned into DEP and other land agencies each year and the Patrol calculates that with their 16,000 patrol hours and 3000 trail maintenance hours over the past 6 years they have saved the taxpayers of CT approximately \$312,655!

Other Connecticut Greenways Awards Given to CHC members and Council:

1999 – **Jan Collins**, Somers – Lifetime Achievement Award

2000 - **Bunny Joseph**, Colchester – "Unsung Hero" (Volunteer Recognition)

2004 - **Connecticut Horse Council** – *Non Profit Award*

In legislative news, the Greenway license plate fund has been restored so those wishing to purchase Greenway plates can be assured their dollars will go towards Greenways.

The Council is also keeping close contact with DOT on proposed Greenway corridors along highways, in particular the Merritt Parkway, which is undergoing renovation.

Greenway Council meetings were suspended for the summer but will resume again in September. Since this is an election year and there will be a new Governor, Jan Collins' appointment will terminate with the end of Governor Rell's term. Jan is currently serving as secretary to the Council following the previous secretary's resignation. Either Jan (or any other interested horse person) will need to be appointed in early 2011 by the new governor to represent equestrians on the Council.

[Your CHC Representation around the state...](#)

NAUGATUCK RIVER GREENWAY

CHC-VHP members met several times over the summer months with the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley (COGCNV) to ensure that equestrian use was included in the Regional Greenway Routing Study for the towns of Thomaston, Watertown, Naugatuck and Beacon Falls.

The COGCNV staff was very cooperative and allowed CHC members to use their GPS systems to map four separate trail systems used by equestrians. This provided a means to address the study with the Planning and Design staff so that these systems could be included as possible alternate routes that could be utilized.

A BIG THANK YOU to **Glenda Prentiss**, GIS Coordinator (COGCNV) for her hours of help in creating the maps from our rides.

Some of the public lands that CHC addressed to be included in this Greenway Study were the connection to the Larkin State Bridle Trail (a 10.3 mile old railroad trail that connects the four towns of Middlebury, Naugatuck, Oxford and Southbury), Oxford Open Space, Naugatuck State Forest, Matthies Park (Beacon Falls), Whittemore Glen State Park, Hop Brook Lake (ACE), Mattatuck State Forest, Black Rock State Park and Black Rock Lake (ACE).

There are also other connections to be made on private lands that local CHC-VHP members will be working on with the Town of Oxford and private land owners. CHC members who worked on this project and will continue to work on the Oxford connection from the Larkin Bridle Trail to the Naugatuck State Forest are **Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Vevette Greenberg, Alesia DiFederico** and **Judy Beliveau**.

MERRITT PARKWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL

Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance: The Bike Walk Fairfield County Steering Committee (BWFC) met to continue their quest to advocate for the **Merritt Parkway Multi-Use Trail** along with other initiatives in Fairfield County area that include new Complete Streets and Safe Routes to Schools to be incorporated into the CT Dept. of Transportation's plans (ConnDOT) and the 24 towns/municipalities in the county for bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Officials from the South Western and Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency reviewed their current trail mapping data. Included of interest is the **Pequonnock/Housatonic Railed Greenway** that extends from Bridgeport through Trumbull and Monroe to the Newtown line. While some of this trail will be paved in the more congested areas, many sections will remain natural surface when on DEP land or in the more rural areas. There is also the **Housatonic River Trail** and **Norwalk River Parkway Trail**.

At this meeting, the equestrian community became stakeholders to support this initiative. The meeting was of utmost importance as the organization was finalizing its Mission Statement. With equestrian representation there, we were able to have equestrians use included in their statement. Equestrians present: CHC members **Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Judy Beliveau & Vevette Greenberg**. Fairfield Bridle Trails Association, Bonnie Krietler and Caroline Sicilian were in attendance. The **Fairfield Bridle Trail Association** will be taking on the initiative to attend future meetings to support the project that will include equestrian use and to encourage local equestrians and organizations to join in on the efforts. They have also joined the CHC as a supporting organization.

NORWALK RIVER VALLEY TRAIL - ROUTE 7

For a variety of reasons -- political, environmental, financial and cultural -- Super 7 -- a limited access multi-lane highway between Danbury and Norwalk was never built.

But now, Representatives from the five towns along the Super 7 corridor -- Danbury, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield and Wilton -- are planning a different future for the 890-acre corridor.

They want to build the Norwalk River Valley Trail, a Greenway with a walking/biking trail that would run the 15 miles between Danbury and Norwalk.

The Greenway skirts the Weir Farm property in Ridgefield -- now the state's only national historic site -- beautiful woods, limestone glens, and places like the pastel green meadow near the Norwalk River and Miller's Pond.

At its northern end, the Norwalk River Valley Trail could easily intersect with the Ives Trail -- the almost-complete 15-mile trail that will run from Redding to Danbury to Ridgefield.

To its south, it could cross the greenway trail planned to run along the Merritt Parkway.

The Merritt Parkway Trail, in turn, is included in plans for the 3,000-mile East Coast Greenway, which is envisioned to run from eastern Maine to the tip of Florida. A well-provisioned citizen could leave home and, by pedaling and walking, end up in Bangor or Key West.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DEP announced that Tom Tyler has been selected as the Director of the State Parks and Public Outreach Division. Tom has been serving as acting Parks Director since the retirement of Pam Adams last year. Prior to that he served a stint of more than 10 years as DEP's legislative liaison and then took on a new role in 2008 as the agency's Director of Constituent Affairs and Land Management.

Tom actually has a long standing connection to our state parks. He first worked for DEP in the early 1980s as what was then called a Senior Patrolman. In this role he had first-hand experience enforcing park rules and regulations at Penwood, Heublein Tower and Stratton Brook State Park.

As State Parks Director, Tom takes on responsibility for managing our outstanding network of 107 state parks and a staff of more than 100 dedicated professionals and 500 seasonal employees.. In his new role, Tom will focus on working with division staff to find ways to manage our parks even more effectively and to build them into even more attractive and compelling destinations for Connecticut's families. He will also work closely with Friends groups and other external constituents on collaborative efforts that benefit the system and the public.

DEP maps!

A new accurate map of the Larkin Bridle trail was made this year thanks to DEP Laurie Giannotti, Tom Nosal and an intern. DEP contacted CHC Trails Committee Chair Diane Ciano for our input. <http://www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/stateparks/maps/larkinstateparkmap.pdf>

THANK YOU DEP!

All DEP maps on line can be accessed on the website:
<http://www.depdata.ct.gov/maps/parksforests/parksmap.htm>