



Mechanicsville Riding Club

The Hitching Post

Issue 60

May 2008

2008 Officers

President	KAREN H
Vice President	DONNA H
Secretary	CINDY G
Treasurer	DEBBIE W

Club Editor- **Bunny H**
Web Editor- **Diane T**
Ways & Means – **Bethany M**
Historian – **Judee C**
Parliamentarian – **Nancy M**
Publicity – **Diane T**
Show – **Barbara H, Debbie M, Deb D**
Special Events – **Jim R & Bev C**
Activities – **Maria S**
Membership/Telephone Tree – **Joan B**
Parade- **Nancy M, Carolyn D**
Activities 17 & under – **Linda L**
Corporate Secretary- **Paula H**

CHUCK WAGON:

Determined by membership roster order.

MAY: Donna S & Annette S

JUNE: Alyson S & Christine S

Please let us know as soon as possible if you can't supply Chuck Wagon.

May Birthdays:

Bev C, Christy H, Donna J, Patsy M, Hannah N, Ginger R, James R, and Christine S

Next Club Meeting will be May 28th at the Mechanicsville Little League Bldg. Social will begin at 7:00 and our meeting will start at 7:30. Our speaker will be Dressage Expert Susan Remondini. Hope to see everyone there. We'll also be voting on new member applicants Patti Nash and Susan Ellis.

2008 Board Meeting Dates

(2nd Wednesday each month at 7pm)

June 11	Oct 8
July 9	Nov 12
Aug 13	Dec 10
Sept 10	

All members are welcome to attend board meetings. Locations to be determined, details will be e-mailed prior to meetings.

Message from Diane: Our upcoming MRC campout to JRSP June 12-15. Check in time is officially 4 PM but, if the site is not occupied by an earlier group, you can arrive earlier. No fee is due at the gate but the Park Service will check Coggins if the gate is staffed. Campers are also asked NOT to bring in their own wood as it might contain insects that are harmful to the area. As of today, there is one stall still available. Stall RSVP's can be made by emailing Diane at QHgal@verizon.net. Stalls are \$39.15 for the weekend. Payment for stalls is due by Sat June 7 or payment can also be made at the May club meeting.

If you have not been to JRSP before, please check the Trail Directory for directions. If you are new to camping with your horse and want some advice on what to pack or what to expect, please don't hesitate to contact an "old" MRC member or Board member.

Heads Up:

"Be sure to check for bee hives and wasps in your trailer before loading your horse". Remember to bring Southern States feed proof-of-purchases to the meetings. They help with our horse show.

ANY MEMBER OF MRC MAY SEEK APPROVAL TO ORGANIZE AND CO-ORDINATE A TRAINING CLINIC OPEN FOR THE FULL MRC MEMBERSHIP. GUIDELINES WILL BE DISCUSSED AT MEETING.

If anyone would like to share their bio please send me your info...especially new members. It'll help us get to know each other. MRC Membership bio guidelines:

- Name:
- What is your riding interest or discipline?
- How did you develop your connection with horses?
- Tell about your early experience with horses?
- What are your goals and interests for you and your horse?
- Tell about the greatest achievement for you and your horse.
- How has your riding experience enhanced your life?

FOR MRC PLANNED EVENTS

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.MECHANICSVILLERIDINGCLUB.NET



**PERSONAL ROUND-UP:
WE WANT TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE CLUB. THEY ARE:**

**Brenda Breeland, Phyllis & Jim Sisk
Elizabeth Stimson, and Mary Winslow**

Send your BIO to the editor and let us know more about you and your horse interests.

"HORSE QUOTES"

Poverty is another word for owning a horse...

When riding my horse I no longer have my heart in my chest, but between my knees.

It is not enough for a man to know how to ride; he must know how to fall. ~Mexican Proverb

It's a lot like nuts and bolts - if the rider's nuts, the horse bolts! ~Nicholas Evans

**A canter is a cure for every evil.
~Benjamin Disraeli**

When you're young and you fall off a horse, you may break something.
When you're my age, you splatter.
~Roy Rogers

In my opinion, a horse is the animal to have. Eleven-hundred pounds of raw muscle, power, grace, and sweat between your legs - it's something you just can't get from a pet hamster. ~Author Unknown

If your horse says no, you either asked the wrong question, or asked the question wrong. ~Pat Parelli

My horse's feet are as swift as rolling thunder
He carries me away from all my fears
And when the world threatens to fall asunder
His mane is there to wipe away my tears.
~Bonnie Lewis

The daughter who won't lift a finger in the house is the same child who cycles madly off in the pouring rain to spend all morning mucking out a stable. ~Samantha Armstrong

BARN HUMOR:

Ten Ways To Get In Shape To Own A Horse

1. Drop a heavy steel object on your foot. Don't pick it up right away. Shout "Get off, stupid! Get off!"
2. Leap out of a moving vehicle and practice "Relaxing into the fall". Roll lithely into a ball, and spring to your feet!
3. Learn to grab your checkbook out of your purse/pocket and write out a \$200. check without even looking down.
4. Jog long distances carrying a halter and holding out a carrot. Go ahead and tell the neighbors what you're doing. They might as well know now.
5. Affix a pair of reins to a moving freight train and practice pulling it to a halt. And smile as if you are really having fun.
6. Hone your fibbing skills. "See Hon, moving hay bales is fun!" and " I'm glad your lucky performance and multi-million dollar horse won you first place - I'm just thankful that my hard work and actual ability won me second place".
7. Practice dialing your chiropractor's number with both arms paralyzed to the shoulder, and one foot anchoring the lead rope of a frisky horse.
8. Borrow the US Army slogan; "Be all that you can be'... (add) bitten, thrown, kicked, slimed, trampled."
9. Lie face down in the mud in your most expensive riding clothes and repeat to yourself: "This is a learning experience, this is a learning experience,..."
10. Marry Money!

Member Contributions:

Contributed by Donna Hines

IN THE HEART OF A HORSE

When your day seems out of balance and so many things go wrong....

When people fight around you and the day drags on so long....

When parents act like children,
In-laws make you think "Divorce"...
Go out into your pasture....
and wrap your arms around your horse.

His gentle breath enfolds you,
and he watches with those eyes
He may not have a PHD,
but he is, oh so wise!

His head rests on your shoulder.
You embrace him oh so tight.
He puts your world in balance,
and makes it seem all right.

Your tears they soon stop flowing.
the tension is now eased.
The garbage has been lifted,
and you're quiet and at peace.

So when you need the balance
from circumstances in your day...
The best therapy that you can seek...
is out there eating hay!!

Author Unknown

[Bev has introduced me to Kathleen Dill by e-mail who will be contributing some articles to the newsletter. I would like to share her letter and articles which I think everyone can appreciate. So in her own words....](#)

A brief background: I am a teacher by trade, but retired now. I have been addicted to horses since I can remember, and learned to ride as a kid by sneaking under the barbed

wire fence and jumping on the farmer's horses that lived next door, clothesline rope in hand to use as a makeshift halter.

I owned my first horse at twenty, had horses for twelve years, and then took a break to have kids. Got back in horses fifteen years later. I have worn a few different equestrian "hats" -- instructor, boarding barn manager, YMCA Riding Program director/manager, trainer, breeder, raiser of babies, fixer of riders and horses. I particularly enjoy exploring classical riding and dressage with gaited horses now. My favorite equestrian disciplines: any which create partnership through respect and communication between rider and horse. My horses have always been my best teachers. I think all people who have horses should learn to hear what the horse has to say in order to know what to say back. I find the relationship just works better that way.

The Game of Monopoly, or how not to get stuck with Baltic Avenue when you really want Park Place.

We all laugh about the horse whose name is Whoa Dammit, but I bet each of us has had a conversation with our horse that went something like, "Why? Because I said so. Cut it out, right now. I mean it, now, cut that out. Will you please quit? Quit, now quit, or else. Why in the world are you acting like this?"

The answer is actually pretty simple, though you may not realize it. You and your horse are engaged in the ever present, always popular game of *Monopoly*, a game that has been going on since horses were first invented. This is the equine version of Monopoly, and is equally challenging and, sometimes, equally frustrating.

We all know that in Monopoly, the goal is to control the other guy by "owning" more space than he does, so you can determine how to limit his influence and control the board. The goal in Monopoly is exactly the same: to "own" more space than the other guy

(who happens to be you) and thereby to be the one who makes all the decisions about who does what.

When you and your horse have a disagreement about what is going to happen next, you are engaged in playing Monopoly. He is trying to determine your next move by offering up one of his own and seeing if you will accept it, accede to his demands, and let him score some points. You can view this as disobedience, but I prefer to see it as a negotiation, something like, "If you give me Park Place and Boardwalk, I will give you Marvin Gardens and Baltic Avenue. How about it?"

Obviously, to win at Monopoly, you have to understand the rules of the game, and you have to make good choices. To win at Monopoly, you need to do the same thing. How? By understanding how your horse thinks and why he reacts as he does. Then you can have the upper hand in the process of negotiation.

Every horse, in every moment of interaction, is looking to clarify who is in charge so that he knows who will keep the bad guys away. Thousands of years of being hunted for dinner have caused him to be very aware of who controls his space. He doesn't give up that control easily; being on the dinner plate has taught him that not having this control can be very disadvantageous. If he is to allow someone else to control his space, he will not do so willingly until he is certain that whoever owns that space is strong enough to protect him from the bad guys. This is because by giving up his control of motion and being confined in the space you choose for him, he is limiting his escape options should the bad guys suddenly appear. He needs to know that you are perceptive enough and determined enough to

anticipate the bad stuff and protect him from it, if he is going to become comfortable in accepting your control. Safety is a big issue to him, and the things he considers to be dangerous are not always the things we think he will be bothered by. He can't help looking at the world this way; he is a horse, with a horse brain and horse instincts. We are humans, with human brains and human instincts, and we frequently don't understand his perspective.

Every game of Monopoly is an attempt by your horse to determine who is better at controlling space, and thereby, who will decide the what, where, when and how of movement. He doesn't necessarily want to win the game, but he is unwilling to lose if it makes him feel less secure in his interactions with you. His choice is clear and unalterable: he would rather win the game than become dinner. It's quite simple for him, really; it's how horses have survived forever. It's just hard for us to comprehend, being at the top of the food chain. We generally don't perceive the world in the same way as he does.

But in our interactions with our horse, disagreements can only be avoided when someone clearly controls the board, and really, to be safe and happy in this relationship, that someone should be you. Only when your horse is focused on your leadership can he put his instinctive insecurities away and work with you in a positive way, creating that wonderful partnership we horse lovers all desire. So how do we play the Monopoly game well enough that our buddy Whoa can have a new name?

Check back next month for some more ideas.

Kathleen Dill,
May, 2008

[From Wanda C.](#)

Responsible Riding: Horse Manure Disposal

By Larry Wheat

My horse defecates once or twice each hour when we are trail riding. And no worthy horse would ride in a trailer without leaving a gift of 'horse apples.'" So this begs the question "How or where should a responsible equestrian dispose of equine manure deposited in trailers, on the trail, or at camping and other outdoor areas?"

Equine manure is primarily processed grass and contributes minimal ecological impact, unlike improperly disposed waste from humans and carnivores. Equine manure decomposes relatively quickly. It also crumbles easily when physically disturbed, such as by kicking or sweeping with a broom. Various research articles provided on the Internet website <<http://www.californiastatehorsemen.com/enviro>>

www.californiastatehorsemen.com/enviro support the claim that equine urine and manure has only minor environmental impact in our forests and outdoors.

This article does not attempt to prove such minimal ecological impact, but instead addresses the public relations or "Yuk factor" of equine manure, as often expressed by non-equestrians and by some equestrians. Yuk, don't step in that manure on the trail! Yuk, who dumped manure from their trailer here in the parking lot! Or Yuk, look at all that manure left where the campers tied their horses!

The popular "Leave No Trace" program contains seven principles designed to reduce damage caused by recreational activities. Three of those principles related to manure disposal are:

- * Plan ahead and prepare
- * Dispose of waste properly
- * Be considerate of other visitors

It is important to educate ourselves and future trail riders about proper trail etiquette and waste disposal. Sound ecological protection and positive public relations are and will remain critical to us if we want to trail ride on public lands.

Trailheads and parking lots: Perhaps the most upsetting behavior in the view of many is leaving manure at trailheads and parking lots. Some riders sweep or shovel manure from their trailer out onto the parking area. This practice is especially distasteful to land managers and many other recreationists. An entire trail system may be closed to equestrians if continued improper disposal of manure becomes a chronic and significant annoyance to the land manager.

One can plan ahead and bring along a muck bucket and a shovel or tool to pick up manure and place it in either the trailer or muck bucket for later disposal. Please - never sweep manure out of the trailer onto the parking lot. In some situations it may be acceptable to scatter manure into brush adjoining a parking area, if humans would not be expected to enter such brushy areas. Sawdust or straw floor coverings used in trailers should never be dumped at a parking lot or trailhead, including never in adjoining brush.

Camping and rest breaks: Horses confined during camping or tied during lunch or rest breaks may deposit manure. Again, as responsible equestrians we need to remove these piles of manure from the area. For popular campgrounds that have manure dumping locations or bins, one can scoop all manure into muck buckets and then dump the manure into the bin for eventual disposal. Most camping areas do not have manure bins, so one must choose whether to carry the waste back to a stable for disposal, or to scatter it in brushy areas away from frequent human use. For remote camping or lunch stop/rest areas, two commonly accepted disposal methods are used. The preferred method is to use a small shovel (perhaps a small dustpan) and scatter the waste in out-of-the-way brushy areas. A second method commonly used at seldom visited locations is to scatter the manure pile by kicking it, thus making it less obvious and aiding rapid decomposition.

On the trail: As responsible equestrians we can control disposal of manure in our trailers and at places we tie or confine our equines. However, short of using poop catch bags tied on our horses, it seems impractical to eliminate manure on trails. Often a rider does not know when his or her horse poops as they move down a trail. And to be honest, unless under great duress most of us would not stop, dismount, pick

up and scatter the manure, and remount even if we were aware of the event.

Horse urine on the trails and elsewhere is not much of a Yuk or environmental concern. Urine does contain some salt and chemical elements that may increase water pollution. A horse stops and goes into an awkward position when they urinate, and that can be controlled enough by the rider to prevent urination directly into streams and lakes.

As our world becomes more crowded and ecologically sensitive, it is important for each and every equestrian to manage their equestrian waste disposal so that they protect the environment and are considerate of other trail and campground users.

[I have to share these photos of my friend Janet Anderson's new baby who is not only handsome but sensitive, he appears to be saying his prayers.](#)

