



NEWSLETTER

The Granite State Carriage Association

<http://www.GraniteStateCarriage.org>

October 2013

HANCOCK DRIVE/RIDE WEEKEND COMING OCTOBER 11-13

Once again we are being offered the opportunity to drive and ride on the historic back roads of Hancock, NH. in the height of the fall foliage season. Overnight camping is available and there will be a porta potty on site. Come for a day or the weekend but don't miss this always great drive. Please call ahead to let Cresca and Karen know when you plan on joining them. All the details have already been sent via e-mail but the flyer is attached here also.



THE PLANNING MEETING IS COMING ON NOVEMBER 2ND!!!

This is the most important meeting of the year because it is at this meeting we decide on ALL the activities for next year. So be sure to attend! The meeting at The Weathervane Resturant in Bedford will be followed by dinner and socialization. So come and bring your ideas for what you would like to do in 2013. The flyer with all the information is attached. DON'T MISS IT!!

BRANCH HILL DRIVE SABOTAGED BY RAIN **A Host's Perspective**

Thankful to be in the company of good horses and great people, I am blessed to live in New England and to belong to GSCA. Cognizant of recently proposed legislation concerning limiting equestrian use of the trails in NH, it becomes most important to covet the places we all can share. "As the crow flies" it is just around the corner from my home to a most magical place to escape via horse-power, meandering down trails through sandy footing, pine needle carpet, or lush green moss growing beneath a canopy of tall timber. It is Branch Hill Farm, preserved through the conservation efforts of the owner whose passion is the desire to share, in a Land Trust forever, this precious gem of open space skirted by rivers. If you haven't taken advantage of the opportunity to visit, you must. I hope you enjoy the following account of a GSCA Drive from a host's perspective.

The end of summer marks the trying season to get that last bit of second cut hay in the barn battling with the setting sun, falling evening temperatures, and increased precipitation. Remarkably, I reflect on what details all drive hosts can appreciate. With the tractor near-by a two hour final pass around the edge of the hay fields with the bush hog prepares clear footing for carriage drivers. Consideration is given for drivers who prefer the smoothness of the field (apprx. 2 miles if you skirt every corner) to the 8 mile cross country hazards and river side drive. I enjoy a mix of both. Should anyone wish to turn for home, there are numerous options to shorten or lengthen routes have been provided. Groups of students from MapleStone School have spent 3 weeks, 240 man-hours, clearing, trimming, and repairing washed out footing over 8 miles of trails. Disappointment prevailed; the bridge we had repaired 2 years earlier did not pass inspection. This meant a mile less for field drivers. Fifteen hours were spent marking trails and corresponding with the appropriate parties to secure the route. Maps were prepared and re-checked for accuracy. I had plenty of help, everything was going according to plan, and things were ahead of schedule.

Then the rains came; torrential downpours for three days. We would have 15 feet if rain happened to be snow! Bent-over paper plate markers posted on tree trunks were discovered upon re-inspection. Whole sections of repaired footing washed out trail exposing more root and rocks in many places. The tractor and dump cart we used for moving sand from the gravel pit had been moved home leaving little chance for footing recovery. Time for the scheduled drive was fast approaching and much had to be reclaimed if all would go smoothly. There are now more roots than before popping up due to wash outs on the trail. I had to be confident partaking in the thought; a good navigator pointing out a better path can help avoid problems for a skilled driver. On this day of fixing all markers, we even made it out of the woods before dark!



Weather for the day of the drive doesn't look promising and four members have called to say they will attend "if" the weather isn't too bad which is not likely according to the current forecast. In spite of the rain we venture out to the field with cider donuts for the expected small attendance 2 hours in advance. As the cancellation calls come in I eagerly watch a Bob Cat bound across the road. While waiting for possible members who had not reserved, three young deer lit across the open field. Well past the scheduled time for drive departure while it was still threatening to rain we left the empty field.

At home now I put the paperwork and maps away for safe keeping and climbed onto

the tractor to move some haying implements. I missed a phone call. While the weather was improving by the minute little did I know Becky (Greene? Cerenson?) and Carolyn Townsend were delayed in a "racing-

day" traffic jamb. The phone message explained they were in the field and wanted to know where everyone was. I exclaimed "Yes! YES! I have TWO!!!!!!!" (This is easy. We don't have to worry about one way routes with riders only.)

Riders Becky on her Morgan and Carolyn on her Fresian "notice the astonishing change in the weather"

We were happy to see each other and all were smiling. Had they had brought the exceptional riding weather with them? When I complimented about her nice trailer Carolyn remarked "it even goes down trails nicely too" having missed the proposed parking area in the big field. Becky and Carolyn enjoyed the ride having one decoy encounter with unauthorized geese in the field. The real geese were spotted safely hanging out near the farm cemetery next to the main road. :)



Trot-On, Pat Pearson

KEEPING OUR DRIVE HOSTS HAPPY

How to keep your Hosts from burnout! What would happen to GSCA without our Hosts? We'd have no outings! Remember the Hosts are GIVING their time to all of us.

Do you consider the efforts our Outing Hosts go to when organizing a ride/drive? Dates must be planned for our November Planning Meeting. Land-owners are contacted, permissions to use private lands are secured. The Outing Flyer is prepared in advance, including driving directions and reservations. Hosts prepare the Fact Sheet on their event for our website. The Outing is publicized to the club members.

Camping sites are located for weekend outings, a water source and porta-potties may be arranged. The state or park services may have to be contacted to unlock gated trails, and gates often are opened in advance by the Host. Maps are usually prepared, mileage is calculated; local amenities might be listed for convenience. Trails and roads usually are marked, plus additional signage is placed. Campsite area and trails are scouted in advance when needed. Campsite layout may be planned to allow both longer-term camping and day use.

Reservations are taken for overnights; liability releases are collected, and possibly fees and/or membership dues at check-in; often check-in snacks are set up. Briefings are given on trail conditions. Equipment safety checks may be offered. And sometimes the Host doesn't spend much time joining the fun, due to ongoing management of the details.

Then after the Outing, all the campsite area equipment and signage is taken down again. Liability releases are passed on to the club VP, for insurance purposes. And fees and new Memberships are passed on to the Treasurer.

If after all this work only one or two people turn up it's very discouraging. Support your drive hosts. Go to the drives!!

SHELBURNE DREW A FULL HOUSE OF HAPPY DRIVERS

This year's mid-week drive at Shelburne Farms drew people and horses from near and far. Four turnouts made the trek up the Hudson Valley from eastern New York State. The barn was full, the weather was perfect and the actual driving went very well for all. Special thanks go to Rick Vanderploeg who not only



The Moses' with Julie Wick



The Gerellis



Sandra Sensel and Eunice

managed everything at Shelburne Farms but also put together for the second year a bonus drive in nearby Charlotte. The atmosphere of the four days was best captured in Boo Martin's comments:

"The drive at Shelburne Farms, including the special day driving in Charlotte, VT make the word Magnificent come to life. With the backdrop of the majestic mountains, the glorious lake, the foliage, the pristine grounds of the Farm and terrific driving folk, the time was simply unbeatable. Connie and Rick led the way with safety, common sense, a beautifully trained pair and a solid, lovely vehicle. Other members whom I had never met came from Connecticut and New York State.

Picnics were shared, stories told and friendships were made. Each and every horse was well behaved and all typical rules of safety and polite driving etiquette were in evidence at each turn. Fat, fit and happy

horses pulled lovely vehicles under clear skies the entire time. I was most grateful for the staff of Shelburne Farms, GSCA membership, Rick Vanderploeg's special drive, and the camaraderie and good cheer that marked this event. It was the highlight of my driving year. Thank you one and all, not the least of which are our darling, willing and enthusiastic equine partners!"



(above left) Jean Harvey & Pixie

Susan & Herb Greinacher (above)

Dawn & Keith Fortier (left)



The Picnic Drive



Dinner at The Lakeview Inn

CHARLOTTE VT BONUS DRIVE ENJOYED BY SHELburne FARM ATTENDEES

Picture a gorgeous, sunny, early fall day in western Vermont. Picture lovely, mostly-level dirt roads near Lake Champlain, with the Adirondack Mountains of New York showing blue in the distance. Then, picture carriages drawn by driving horse pairs trotting along, experiencing nature at her best during an equine social occasion.

This describes GSCA's outing in Charlotte, Vermont, which was enjoyed by several of the Shelburne Farms Mid-Week Drive attendees on September 25. Thanks to Rick



Vanderploeg's hosting, three rigs trailered 10 miles to nearby Charlotte, where we staged at a local riding stable for a 14 mile driveout. Rick had maps and signs in place. Boo Martin and her party of Amy, John and Joan followed Rick and Connie Moses; Boo was driving her matched black pair of Welsh Cobs, and the Moses' drove their bay and black-bay Arabian/Percheron pair.



Boo leaving the covered bridge

Joan Vanderploeg joined her husband Rick, who drove their pair of bay Morgans at a lively pace. Rick left last, caught and passed everyone else, drove further than the others and still returned in the lead! A covered bridge crossing and a short stretch of unmaintained dirt road gave extra interest to the beautiful farmland and horse properties along the way. We even posed for photographs by a Charlotte News photographer!

The Charlotte "Bonus" drive serves well as an add-on to Shelburne Farms, for those who want to do more mileage and different environs than what is available on the Farm grounds. This, in addition to the picnic drive on private property near the Farm, makes the Shelburne drive a fine venue for a lot of reasons!



Rick Vanderpleog & Joan

REPORT ON DRED HEARING ON HORSE TRAIL USE IN PLYMOUTH

The DRED hearing in Plymouth had approx. 24 attendees; of 15 speakers, 13 spoke very well to the horse issues. Pretty much everyone felt they are discriminating against horse use and were politely outraged. Your Pres. raised the question of why were carriages not allowed, pointing out that 8-ft. roadways would be ideal for carriages (except for the "hardened" part which was not explained.) Also, the economic benefits to NH provided by the equine industry were emphasized. Others spoke to carriages as used by physically challenged (who perhaps are unable to ride) and to therapeutic driving being disallowed as well by their current restrictions. These first hearings were to listen to public input, not to answer questions. Phil Bryce, saying they had been surprised by the volume of responses, expressed that they had learned a LOT; their next steps are more meeting(s) with specific designees of the horse community and other groups to "hash out" the wording of the rules. Deb Briscoe of the NHHC is coordinating designees.

Connie Moses

SPECIAL Equine DRED Meeting Tonight Oct 7th, 2013 at 7:00 pm

LOCATION CHANGED to Fish and Game Headquarters conference room on Hazen Drive behind the Motor Vehicles building for 7pm. Doors open at 6:30. Please check <http://derrytrailriders.com/> website for any changes in location.

This meeting is open to the equestrian public.

The purpose of the meeting is for the agency and the equestrian community to talk through equestrian use on state lands in more detail than the formal public hearing on rules provided. FYI-- there are still 2 more Public Meetings, Oct. 8 in Lancaster and Oct. 10 in Hampton Beach. See <http://www.dred.state.nh.us/news-and-events/public-hearings.aspx> for details.

Although this Special Meeting tonite is not part of the formalities of the public hearings, it is an interactive meeting with dialog, questions, and answers not afforded by the public hearings. Phil Bryce, Parks and Recreation Director says notes will be taken and used as input. This meeting will help all involved to understand each other on a different level and hopefully provide changes to the rules.

THE CARRIAGE BARN NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL HORSEBACK & CARRIAGE DRIVING PROGRAMS AT NEW FACILITY

The Carriage Barn is now accepting applications for its Fall Horseback Riding and Carriage Driving Programs at its new facility with indoor arena in Kensington, NH. Programs include Therapeutic horseback riding and Therapeutic Carriage Driving, as well as independent Horseback riding and beginner Carriage Driving. For more information please contact The Carriage Barn at 603-378-0140, see our website at <http://www.carriage-barn.org> or email carriage-barn@comcast.net

The Carriage Barn programs seek to promote the health & well-being of individuals by enhancing their physical, psychological, cognitive & emotional healing & strengthening through equine activities. Program activities further this purpose by utilizing horses to provide opportunities for individuals to form unique relationships that nurture & empower them in a way that brings new insights, self-confidence, improved communication, & relaxation. In the context of a natural outdoor setting, these activities provide a serene learning environment.

The Carriage Barn is a 501c3 Not for Profit Organization and a member center of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International. Our instructors are specially trained and experienced equestrians. The easy drive to a wonderful country setting surrounded by knowledgeable and supportive staff and volunteers.



UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

- OCT.10-11,14 **CAA DRIVER PROFICIENCY TESTING** Touchstone Farm. Temple,NH. Contact: Boo Martin (603)654-6308 or bmartin@touchstone-farm.org.
- OCT.11-13 **FALL FESTIVAL OF DRIVING.U** Touchstone Farm, Temple, NH. Contact: Barbara Cochrane, Secretary (603)654-6308 or info@touchstone-farm.org.
- OCT. 11-13 **GSCA FALL FOLIAGE DRIVE/RIDE** Hancock, NH **Camping available. C**ontact: **Karen DesRoches (603) 525-3632 or Cresca Albright (603) 525-3314.**
- OCT. 15-19 **PATH INTL DRIVING WORKSHOP & CERTIFICATION.** Touchstone Farm, Temple, NH. Contact: bmartin@touchstone-farm.org
- NOV. 2 **GSCA PLANNING MEETING.** Weathervane Restaurant, Bedford,NH **Contact: Connie Moses (603) 528-1531.**

**THE GRANITE STATE CARRIAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.
A PLEASURE DRIVING CLUB
DRIVE WITH US JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT (Riders Welcome)
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!**

Name (include all family members): _____

Address: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Facebook username or e-mail _____ New Membership ____ Renewal _____

Add \$1.00 for Maine Driving Club Associate Membership? _____ TOTAL SENT _____

Any Changes from last listing? Yes No What? _____

Annual Membership Single or Family \$20.00.

Please make checks payable to: GSCA. For more info. call: Treasurer Eric Wilking (603) 731-0513
Mail to: Eric Wilking, 162 Pickpocket, Rd., Brentwood,NH 03833



Boo Martin driving in Vermont during the Shelburne drive

THE GRANITE STATE CARRIAGE ASSOCIATION

Virginia G. Laplante, Editor

137 Old Tilton Road

Canterbury, New Hampshire 03224

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS
1978 - 2008
*The Granite State
Carriage Association*

