



Newsletter

AMWELL VALLEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

FALL 2013

HUNTING SEASON WILL START SEPT 14TH

Please review our rules and regulations during hunting season.

Deer Hunting Season 2013 - 2014

- Fall Bow - starts Saturday Sept 14 to Oct 25 Sundays too
- Winter Bow Jan 1st to Feb 15th - Sundays too
- Youth day shotgun Nov 23rd
- Shotgun seasons start - Dec 2 to Feb 8 except Sundays

6 DAY SHOTGUN SEASON
DEC 9th to Dec 14th
DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PROPERTY!

Rules and Regulations When Riding or Hiking During Deer Hunting Season:

1. Always wear blaze orange.
2. Riders may ONLY be on the trails between 10 AM and 3PM until Day light savings time ends then 10 to 2PM.
3. Be aware, in areas that are posted semi wild, that hunters can hunt small game on Sundays.
4. The trails are closed during firearms week, Dec 9 - Dec 14. Most dangerous days of the year. Do not leave your own property.

Airpark Rules

- The Airpark is open to riders and hikers week days and Sundays only between 10 AM and 3 PM during Daylight saving time then until 2 after that.
- Airpark closes Saturdays to all from Dec 1 to Feb 15th*
- Stay on the defined trails and roads, and please keep your voices down.

Be aware that the hunters in the airpark may be using the rifle range, so avoid this area. If you are riding on the upper airfield, and you should hear shooting by the range take another trail and not ride behind the mound of the range.

If you have a question call (609) 466-9472

AVTA NEW IMPROVE PACE RIDE

After a few years with either bad weather or low attendance Di Huns and her new right hand woman, Kristin Santana, are thinking about some new ideas.

Remember that these are ideas, there is still lots to be worked out.

We would like to offer multiple classes open, junior, western, family, and hunt (with the AVH hounds blessing and support) along with a few fun classes for the tallest, shortest, fastest, and slowest teams. We would like to offer a start of 9 to 12 but must be in by 2 to qualify for placing and to present awards by 2:30.

We would like to offer a bagel and coffee breakfast, carrots or apples (depending on who has an orchard) granola bars and water.

I (Kristin) would like to encourage a group like MAGDRL (Great Dane rescue league) to have a meet and greet (it is not an adoption just an opportunity for friends who like large pets) and my son would like to sell and take orders for horse cookies for REACH (for underprivileged children with disabilities).

If anyone has any other suggestions you can call Kristin at (908) 782-7143 or Di Huns at (609) 466-7473



YEAR OF RIDING MISTAKES

As trail manager, I get calls frequently about riders (presumably members) riding in the wrong places or at the wrong time of the year or when the trails are not suitable. It started in January, when the trails were closed, with a call from Carol Blackman at Toy Box Farm. She had a woman on a grey Arab riding on her property. (I would suspect an endurance or competitive trail rider would be most likely type of person to be out at that time of year, but that is only my thought.) This incident nearly made her close her trails for good.

In the spring we had a group of riders going through Bob Holcombe's fields, not on the trails. One, they shouldn't have been riding in the first place and second, they should not have been on the trails at that time. The Holcombe's trails are NOT officially on the AVTA trail system they are marked on the maps as "by permission". If you want to ride on their trails go to the Holcombes and ask them if it is all right for you to use their trails. Throughout the year there have been riders on the Holcombe property doing circles in his hay fields and riding on areas where there are no trails. People who ride our trails should know the difference between a deer trail and one of the AVTA trails. The Holcombes have put up signs saying "THIS IS NOT A TRAIL. I have faith that our members can read, as every one of you has filled out and signed a renewal application.

One of our trails which has connected the trails on Manners Road to the trails on the Carter property has been permanently closed and large signs have been posted there. Because of that, riders from the north side of Wertsville Road have to either cross at Wertsville road near Rileyville Road, ride on Welisewitz Road to the Driveway to Zion Farm or use the road from Center Ridge to Lindbergh Road and then go up Lindbergh to Thompson's driveway to get on the trails to North Hill road.

Another rule that has also been ignored is the 'NO DOGS ON THE TRAILS EXCEPT WHEN LEASHED AND ONLY WITH HIKERS'. Dogs on their home territory take exception to strange dogs crossing their property. Also dogs get lost. Last year I spent a good part of a day trying to find out where a dog belonged.

If you are unsure of trail availability please call before you ride the trails. There are several people who would be able to help you navigate the trail system. Remember that trails openings can vary from time to time do to closings or bad conditions. Ask before you ride. You may call Trish Buckwalter at (908) 782-7238, Gael Gardner (609) 466-9472 or Mary Murrin (609) 895-1040 if you have questions about any trails.

Gael Gardner

BEAR ALERT

Black bears have been spotted in the Valley on Manners Rd, Werstville Rd, Backbrook Rd, Rileyville Rd, Dutch Lane, and in the Sourlands. Here is the latest on 08/17/13

Do you know what to do if you encounter one?

Here are some bear facts:

- Do not feed or approach the bear!
- Remain calm and make the bear aware of your presence by speaking in a calm, assertive voice.
- Make sure the bear has an escape route.
- Yell, bang pots and pans or use an airhorn to scare away the bear. Make yourself look as big as possible by waving your arms. If you are with someone else, stand close together with your arms raised above your head.
- The bear may utter a series of huffs, make popping sounds by snapping its jaws and scraping or stamping the ground. These are warning signs that you are too close. Slowly backaway and avoid direct eye contact. Do not run.
- If a bear stands on its hind legs or moves closer, it may be trying to get a better view or detect scents in the air. It usually is not a threatening behavior.
- Black bears will sometimes bluff charge when cornered, threatened or attempting to steal food. Stand your ground, avoid direct eye contact and then slowly back away. Do not run.
- If the bear will not leave, head for nearby shelter. If a black bear does attack, fight back.



For more information contact" Hunterdon County Park Rangers at (908) 782-1158

There is little to worry about, if the bears are not being a nuisance. They usually stay well out of their way of humans.

However, do not feed them or get between a Mother and it's cubs.



2013 Dog Days of August Party

It was a lovely evening. Not too warm but warm enough for the pool to be in use until dinner. No mosquitoes and no flies, the latter because we have been using fly predators for several years. (Anyone wanting info on them call me.)

About 60 people came and brought a wonderful variety of appetizers, salads and desserts. They must have been really spectacular because when I was going through the trash the next morning there was almost no wasted food. Yes, I know that going through the garbage sounds gross, but I have to one - sort it for recyclables and two - pick out the plastic eating utensils to scrub, disinfect and store for next year. The chickens always come over first thing and clean up any dropped food in the yard. They seem to remember (even if some people say they have no brains) that they get all sorts of extra scraps from the garbage. When the chickens leave, there is nothing leftover.

Many thanks to Gail Cahill, who organizes the food and drinks and cleans up after it is all over. I wouldn't have it here if it wasn't for all the help from others that I get when ever I ask for it and sometimes even when I don't. Blaine Hummel did a wonderful job as our impromptu BBQ chef. My annual hotdog was perfect! He even toasted the bun for me. And Tory Januik who sends out all the e-mails to remind you to come.

Last year someone brought a covered green plastic salad bowl which has places to store salad spoon and fork on top. I have enjoyed using it this past year. I know she was here this year too because the salad fork appeared during the clean up. It is waiting for its owner to come and get it. There are also a pair of green folding chairs under one of the trees in back which will be eventually on the front porch for you to pick up. If you leave them I will store them and bring them out next summer for you to use then.

Thank you everyone for making the Dog Days Party fun for all of us. Come back next year!

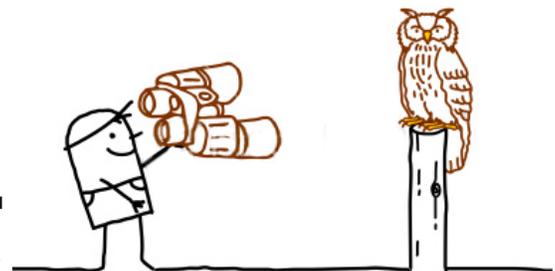
WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING

Each year the AVTA fields a birding team, the AVTA Trailfeathers to participate in the New Jersey Audubon's World Series of Birding fundraiser. This year the big day is MAY 11. The trailfeathers will bird from dawn to dusk to find as many different species of birds as they can. We welcome everyone to join us for all or any part of the day they choose. NO BIRDING SKILLS REQUIRED!

We will help you see what we see. You do need a pair of binoculars, but you will see a lot even without them. On the BIG DAY we meet at Amwell lake at 6 to 6:30 and spend a while there. Then we go by a circular route back to the Amwell preserve on

Rileyville Road to have coffee and refreshments at Blaine and Juanita Hummel's house in the woods. From there we walk into the woods at the preserve and then drive to North Hill Road parking at the Gardner's property (alas, I will not be here this year!) and walking to the pipeline for warblers of all sorts and circle by the lovely lake on the Higgins property. That usually ends around noon and after lunch at Peacock's we go to the Higginsville bridge, the South Branch preserve where we hope for grasshopper sparrows and maybe a blue grosbeak.

We ask that you pledge or donate something to the NJ Audubon in support of our team. Last year we raised \$1800 and saw 85 species!! This year we earned \$2100 but saw only 75 species due to bad weather the week before the big day.



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Contact: Carrie Mahoney, phone 908-268-7526



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