



News Letter

AMWELL VALLEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION

MAY 2011



The sunny weather this week has everyone champing at the bit to get out and ride the trails. This past winter seemed to go on forever; combined with a wet spring the trails are still very wet in places. The trails were closed because of one person not using common sense and rode on a land owner's field. Just for your information our local weather man has given me this information. In March we had 12 days of precipitation with a 6" of rain and in April we had 17 days of rain (so far) with 8". The average over the last three years has been 11 days of rain and only 4". This is a large increase and the reason the trails are so late in opening

*All riders must be respectful of land owner's property. Remember there is NO OPEN LAND in New Jersey. Where ever you ride, the land belongs to someone regardless of what the land looks like. Farmers at this time of year are planting their fields-**STAY TO THE EDGE OF ALL FIELDS.***

Be kind to your horse a pulled shoe or even worse a pulled tendon could stop your riding for the whole season. Mud causes many problems for both the landowner and the riders alike. Please be patient. The trails are open but can be closed again if the privileges' are broken. This is an all volunteer organization so everyone is expected to do their part. Your annual dues cover insurance for damages only to the land owner, tractor maintenance and the web site. Please be ready to help with the trail clearing when someone calls. Remember our fund raiser the first weekend in October and be ready to help or ride.

Happy trails this summer — Trish Buckwalter

WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING AMWELL VALLEY TRAIL FEATHERS

Save the Date: Saturday, May 7th

We will meet at the Hummel's at the entrance to the Sourland Preserve on Rileyville Road at 8:00. Coffee and snack will be available. We have decided to try to actually be a registered competitive team this year. Call Juanita for more information **609-466-2907**.

Many great birders have raised glasses in this event over the years. It first began at midnight on May 19, 1984, when 13 teams set out on a treasure hunt. Their mission was to tally as many species of birds by sight or sound in a 24-hour period within the state of New Jersey. Their objective was to raise money for their favorite environmental cause, and to focus attention upon the habitat needs of migratory birds. They succeeded beyond anyone's dreams.

The Amwell Trailfeathers have been doing a very much shortened version of this for the past decade. We are very relaxed and try to make sure that even first time birders get to see most of the birds we count. Our numbers range from a high of 91 species and a low of 64. Sometimes we have really nice surprises. Come and join us!

HORSEBACK RIDING IN HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP

There are three very nice public park areas in Hopewell Township that are open to horseback riding. The trails are all multiuse trails, so you may encounter hikers and bikes on these trails. Most people you meet will not be aware of the trail courtesy policy by which hikers and bikes yield to horses. Directions to all of these trails (and many more hiking trails on which horses are not permitted) can be found at www.njtrails.org. Select Mercer County and the name of the park on the menu on the left side of the screen. Trail descriptions and maps are available at this site.

PLANT SALE *Saturday May 14th*

9:00 to noon Rain or Shine

At the East Amwell Township Building

1070 Rt 202

Bring as many plants as you wish and Swap 1 for 1

Plants will also be sold for \$1 each

A great way to meet your neighbors and increase the beauty of your property. Proceeds will be donated to East Amwell Township



THE AVTA WOULD LIKE TO GO GREEN!!

We would like to send the newsletter by snail mail only to people who would prefer it that way.

So if you do please email Gael at gael@thegardners.org so that she can put you on her mail to list.



WHEN HORSES WENT TO WAR

Most people are aware that The Great War, the “War to End All Wars”, and which only became known as WWI when a second, and greater war broke out, claimed the lives of over ten million men, in the last conflict where hand-to-hand fighting with bayonets was the norm. We have all read of the unimaginable horror of the trenches; mud, mustard gas, rats, disease and the ever present threat of “the enemy” on whichever side of No-Mans-Land. A lesser known fact is that more horses than men died in that conflict, often in conditions that were just as unspeakable. Horses were the lifeline of the armies and their troops, carrying officers into battle, transporting soldiers to fight on the front line and bringing the wounded back, pulling supply carts, ambulances and of course the heavy artillery. Most never returned to their own countries.

War Horse, based on a children’s book by British author Michael Malpurgo, is a production by the Handspring Theatre Company playing to packed audiences at the Lincoln Center, NYC, is the tale of one such horse, Joey, and the boy who is determined to find him among the carnage. Heart-rending, emotional, non-judgmental in terms of “them and us” (Joey meets good and bad on both sides of the front line) with deceptively simple but emotive staging, the production would always appeal to horse people – we all enjoy a “good cry” over a horse story! What makes War Horse so special is that the horses are life size, and sometimes have riders on their backs. What makes it so much more than just “special” is that the horses are puppets!

Each horse is operated by three people, two inside the body and one operating the head. What makes this production so extraordinary is that you simply don’t see the puppeteers, but you see only horse! These horses are real, from their movements at every gait to the way they graze; from the way they spook and rear to the way they fall and die. They are so real that a woman near me in the audience was so involved that she shouted “NO” out loud. They are so real that, despite being made of metal frames and leather strips, you see only shining coats and rippling muscles, or protruding ribs and matted muddy coats.

So if you never go to the theater, make an exception. If you hate the city, force yourself, because this spectacular and moving production is only playing until the end of October 2011.

A last word: by all means read the book but wait until after you have seen the stage version. The book is equally wonderful but has been adapted considerably! —*Di Huns*

Box Fan Recall Could Affect Horse Owners

Lasko Products Inc., manufacturer of home appliances such as fans and heaters, is recalling approximately 4.8 million box fans (similar to those frequently used in barns by horse owners) after an electrical problem in the fan’s motor has caused some of these fans to catch fire, reportedly causing several house fires and a barn fire.

SUNFLOWER GLASS STUDIO

“A Pot of Gold” might be overstating it a bit, but it was a shared love of rainbows that inspired Karen and Geoff Caldwell to open Sunflower Glass Studio in 1978 and turn their fascination with beveled and colored glass into a successful artistic business. Karen is the designer and Geoff is the craftsman, and together they create beautiful windows and panels for houses and churches, as well as unique beveled boxes, picture frames, and decorative hangings, among other designs.



Both Karen and Geoff have been fascinated with prisms and the way light is refracted through them since childhood. The hand beveled glass they create is the studio’s signature. Thick plate glass is hand beveled, refined and polished. This results in a myriad of refracting surfaces that split natural and artificial light into sparkling rainbows, creating designs with an ever changing fascination. Geoff is self taught in the craft of flat leaded glass, hand beveling and stone wheel engraving. An English major and graduate of Rutgers University, Geoff is also a master blues guitarist, host of a classical jazz and blues radio show, and soccer coach. Karen Caldwell, also a graduate from Rutgers University, brings a background in horticulture, photography and design, landscape architecture and environmental planning to her role as designer.

Karen and Geoff have kept a century old tradition alive. It is reminiscent of pre-industrial America when artisans worked in small family centered businesses. They have retained a closeness to their work that is increasingly hard to find in today’s world. The Caldwell’s studio shows that a cottage industry can be alive and well in the 20th century. In a world increasingly dominated by large, impersonal work places, small businesses like Sunflower Glass Studio serve as an important reminder that there are alternatives.

They have been called a “little bit of heaven” and are located just outside of Stockton, New Jersey, Sunflower Glass Studio is well worth a visit. Together, Karen and Geoff Caldwell have maintained a tradition of enduring elegance that remains unsurpassed. Take a step inside and it is likely you will discover a pot of gold.

Located on Route 523, south of Sergeantsville. Open Daily! (hours are by chance or appointment.) Call 609-397-1535 for more information. www.sunflowerglasstudio.com

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The Eclectic Equestrian

Spring has Sprung...and so has sciatica, slipped discs and other soreness!

By Susan R.G. Lax

We waited and waited now, instead of shoveling snow and spreading ice melter, we are compounding our winter aches and pains with getting out the shedding blades, fixing fences and seeding pastures.

I am the recipient of a compressed nerve as a result of carrying hot water buckets out to my pastures this winter. That shouldn't happen any more now that I have solar troughs in every pasture but this year it laid me up for some time. Two epidurals later, physical therapy and still in pain, I decided to try the non-conventional methods to fix my issues.

A horse friend of mine, with similar problems and just about as many riding accidents, suggested reflexology. She warned me it was unconventional but that she has great relief from her back pain as a result.

According to Wikipedia (my kids source for everything):

"The Reflexology Association of Canada defines reflexology as:

'A natural healing art based on the principle that there are reflexes in the feet, hands and ears and their referral areas within zone related areas, which correspond to every part, gland and organ of the body. Through application of pressure on these reflexes without the use of tools, crèmes or lotions, the feet being the primary area of application, reflexology relieves tension, improves circulation and helps promote the natural function of the related areas of the body.'"[3]

So I researched and researched and researched. I googled and read about reflexology, massage and acupuncture. I googled my "condition" to see what people out there in cyberspace are doing.

Then I called all the massage centers in our area and spoke with their reflexologist and the masseuse. Came to find out that I am behind a long list of equestrians right here in the valley that regularly take part in such treatments. Well, they are bending, lifting, shoveling, shifting, lunging, riding, tacking and untacking same as I, I thought. And, unfortunately, probably share the same resume of accidents incurred while pursuing our passion for riding. What a recommendation!

So there I found myself on the reflexolo-

gist's bed for the first time, feet exposed – ugh, the result of a long winter and no pedicure – and feeling just a tad uptight. My friend had told me that the points the reflexologist "touched" may hurt as she increased circulation and, hopefully, reduced pain. I prepared myself for that but was pleasantly surprised. I love deep intrusive massages so I may not be a good indication of how uncomfortable it is.

She pressed here, flicked there and wiggled. I so wanted this to work and release my pain, I was trying to concentrate on each movement to see if it miraculously traveled up my body to release the evil demons wrecking havoc on my body.

All I know, I was lying there listening to that weird blend of relaxing sounds that include the occasional bird chirping, looking up at the glow of the dimmed lamp on the ceiling and then...

She woke me up.

"Did you fall asleep?" she asked

"Uh, I guess so," I answered, trying to remember at which point on my foot she had surrendered me to such a slumber. The soft mattress and pillow certainly helped the cloud-like experience I was having. I rose and sat at the edge of the bed. I felt totally drained.

When I had my socks and shoes back on, I left in an almost trance-like state of relaxation that I had never experienced before. I stopped at the grocery store on the way home and my feet felt like they were walking on air. Everywhere I walked that day my feet felt like there was no hard ground beneath them, just a cushioned surface.

Did it help my problem? I can't say definitively as the pain still comes and goes. I know I was so relaxed that it certainly helped me walk upright and not twisted. I did go back. Of course they say you can't fix your issues with just a couple of visits, so we'll see. Effective or not, the full hour of pure relaxation was ecstasy to me.

Whether I stay with reflexology or try something different, I am committed to this: I spend so much on my horse – she gets chiropractic help and other lovely "treatments" to feel good - it's now MY turn!



THE SEVEN STAGES OF AGING ON HORSEBACK

Stage 1: Fall off pony. Bounce. Laugh. Climb back on. Repeat.

Stage 2: Fall off horse. Run after horse, cussing. Climb back on by shimmying up horse's neck. Ride until sundown.

Stage 3: Fall off horse. Use sleeve of shirt to staunch bleeding. Have friend help you get back on horse. Take two Advil and apply ice packs when you get home. Ride next day.

Stage 4: Fall off horse. Refuse advice to call ambulance; drive self to urgent care clinic. Entertain nursing staff with tales of previous daredevil stunts on horseback. Back to riding before cast comes off.

Stage 5: Fall off horse. Temporarily forget name of horse and name of husband. Flirt shamelessly with paramedics when they arrive. Spend week in hospital while titanium pins are screwed in place. Start riding again before doctor gives official okay.

Stage 6: Fall off horse. Fail to see any humor when hunky paramedic says, "You again?" Gain firsthand knowledge of advances in medical technology thanks to stint in ICU. Convince self that permanent limp isn't that noticeable. Promise husband you'll give up riding. One week later purchase older, slower, shorter horse.

Stage 7: Slip off horse. Relieved when artificial joints and implanted medical devices seem unaffected. Tell husband that scrapes and bruises are due to gardening accident. Pretend you don't see husband roll his eyes and mutter as he walks away. Give apple to horse. Trust me. Despite a lack of bounce-ability, aging on horseback isn't so bad, as long as you know what lies ahead. And as long as you keep your sense of humor.

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Classifieds

TO SEE MORE CLASSIFIEDS GO TO WWW.AVTA.NET

A CAREGIVER IS NEEDED FOR 86 YEAR OLD LADY

Details: Full Time – 24 hours a day Live-In – house located in East Brunswick – separate bedroom. MUST have excellent English and experience in Companion Care Cooking, laundry, cleaning Help with all aspects of personal care including bathing and toileting Mom speaks English, Slovakian and Polish Mom is 86 years old. Walks with assistance of walker. She has some memory loss and confusion but overall is mentally stable. Her physical health is fair to good. Mom prefers simple things such as talking to friends on phone, working on puzzle books, watching TV. Enjoys attending church. Caregiver needs to possess patience under all conditions and be attentive to detail. Please respond to cathy@cathygreek.com

HORSES FOR SALE

Koh-I-Noor Imported KWPN 16.2h Gelding, 1989. This exquisite, all-round gentleman is in need of a loving home. Trained upto 4th level dressage in Germany and always in the ribbons at A-rated Hunter/Jumper Shows (WEF and HITS). Last shown in summer of 2010 at Virginia Horse Park. This schoolmaster has the most loving disposition and is the easiest keeper in the barn. He is wonderful on trails, both in groups and when



hacked alone. CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: Winner of HITS \$5,000 Wildcard Challenge. 4th place in NJHJA Child/Adult Jumper Year-End Awards. WEF Level 5 and Level 3 Champion. LOCATION: Bucks County (Wrightstown, PA) Owner sadly selling due to relocation. Please call or email Emily at (609)915-9959 esgarrett@aol.com.

HORSES FOR SALE: Candidas Flasher 15.2H Appaloosa Gelding (25 yrs. old). In-



telligent, easy keeper looking for a loving home. Candidas Flasher (Mischief) was my first horse and has done it all, from Pony Club to fox hunting this bomb-proof guy would make a wonderful trail horse or beginner's mount. No health problems and 100% sound. Owner sadly selling due to relocation. For more information, please contact Emily at (609) 915-9959 or esgarrett@aol.com

HORSE LEASES: Two horse leases available on a farm in Ringoes area. Both are retired horses looking for some light exercise a few times a week. Please contact Barb at (609) 397-6598 or info@keona-farm.com

HORSE NEEDS A GOOD HOME

Here is some information about my mother's horse who is staying at Toy Box Farm right now. We are no longer able to take care of her the way my mother could have, but she still has a lot of run in her, so we're hoping to find someone that can take her and give her a good home.

She is a healthy 10 year old thoroughbred mare. She is rideable - no bucking, no rearing, though does have a hot temperament sometimes. Loves to jump, still very agile and athletic, needs someone to ride her. E-mail mikwid@gmail.com or call Nick Widlicki 609-651-3201

BOARDING AVAILABLE for 2 horses at small Private Farm 12' x 12' stalls - Rubber mats with 12" quarry dust base. Post and rail fence. All day turn-out or in/out option. Free choice hay. Excellent custom feed. Large all weather ring. Round pen. Free blanketing/worming. Heated warm water wash stall. Heated Tack Room. Direct access to AVTA trails off of Backbrook Road. Contact: Joan (908) 788-7423 or email webperson@avta.net

BOARDING AVAILABLE

Horse Boarding on small private farm in East Amwell. Personalized care includes blanketing and worming. Turn out 24/7 with access to 12x12 stall or in/out option. A perfect set up for retired horse. Access to trails. For more info call Denise 973-650-1975 or email denise@equineathleteusa.com

SELF CARE BOARDING AVAILABLE

Horse Boarding on small private farm in East Amwell, Includes entire barn (3) 12 X 12 matted stalls, turnout onto grass pastures, on the Amwell Valley Trails. \$500/month. For more details, contact Sally (908) 797-3104 tallyho5us@yahoo.com



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