

Marin Horse Council

2009-10 WINTER EQUINOX NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 101

Marin Horse Council | 171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd. | Novato, CA 94949 | 415.259.5783 | www.MarinHorseCouncil.org

From the Saddle

Seasons Greetings to you all, and Happy New Year! We hope you and your horses are healthy and thriving especially in a challenging economy. The Board of Directors of the MHC has been busy and focused on a number of important issues, and we want to share these with you.

Annual Horse Course. Please mark your calendars for February 27, 2010, for this annual teaching and networking event held at the Marin Humane Society. The topic this year "Why does my horse do that?" will present vital insights into equine behavior that is puzzling to humans! Diana Thompson will be our keynote speaker.

Back By Popular Demand At 2010 Horse Course: Ongoing Presentations — Bandaging and Wrapping, First Aid, Bits, Nutrition, and Hoof Care.

Fund raising to support trail safety. This summer, and in an on-going process, the Marin Conservation League (MCL) led an important legal effort to push back against State Parks' decision to open Bill's Trail to bike traffic. As mentioned in the fall newsletter, the MHC made a contribution to support the MCL's efforts, and authorized Delos Putz to form a committee to reach out to the equestrian community for additional contributions. Thank you to Delos, for this successful leadership, and to all of you who helped and contributed. We are pleased that the equine community stepped up to meet this challenge.

Fall Ride a Success! Our Fall Ride, out of the Presidio Riding Stables, was a success with over 60 people attending! Gorgeous weather, great food, and some good trails all combined to create a memorable experience. Thanks to Kathy Risso for all her help.

Parks and Open Space Board of Supervisors Workshop. This was a key workshop and well attended by many hikers and equestrians. The MHC spoke at the meeting, as did equestrians who reported serious injuries from encounters with mountain bikes. The MHC, along with other equestrian, hiking, and environmental organizations, is meeting with Supervisors, and monitoring this process carefully.

Board member transitions. A heartfelt thanks goes out to Kathy Risso, long time board member and Treasurer, as she transitions from the Board. Her contributions to MHC over a period of many years have made a positive difference. Thankfully, Kathy will continue to serve as our bookkeeper, and an important volunteer. We also thank Gisela Wentworth for her service to the Board – her sage wisdom was valued. With these transitions, come opportunities: we welcome Curt Kruger to the Board, and are excited about the fresh perspective and energy he brings. If you are interested in serving on the board, or know someone who is a good candidate, please call either of us!

Lastly, we want to highlight the role of the horse. We were reminded of this after witnessing Gary Sello's magnificent team pulling a carriage with WWII veterans in the Petaluma Veteran's Day Parade. While horses still serve the military, as in the US patrols in Afghanistan's mountainous regions, they can also be found working with our handicapped, cancer survivors, and troubled youth. The MHC dedicates itself to the ever-changing service role of horses in our lives. As you interact with your horse, remember all the history that has brought us to this moment. And, as we understand Tom Dorrance to have said, "Pet them with your heart."

Happiest of trails this holiday season,
Ann Burke and Joel Bartlett
Co-Presidents, MHC

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE SADDLE

President's message 1

OUT ON THE TRAIL

From Polo to Trails 2

MHC Fall Ride 2

Come Rain or Shine 3

NEWS AND UPDATES

Bikes Acces 4-5

Save our State Parks . . . 5-6

Edie Lehman 5

AT THE BARN

What Happened? 6

Learn to Joust 6-7

PLUS...

miscellaneous nickers & neighs!

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SAVE THE DATE
THE MHC HORSE COURSE FEB 27, 2010
AT THE MARIN HUMANE SOCIETY

25th Annual MHC Horse Course

WHY DOES MY HORSE DO THAT?
February 27, 2010 at the Marin Humane Society

Guest speakers include Diana Thompson, Grant Miller, D.V.M., Jim McDermott and more!

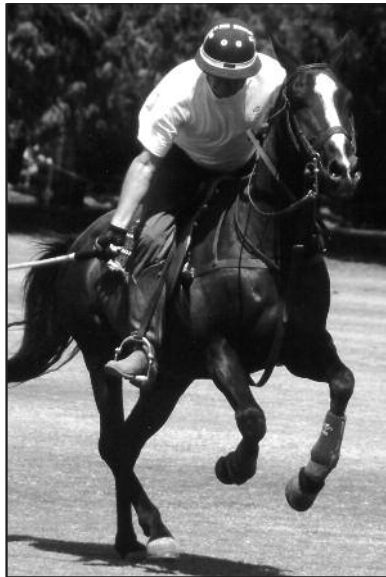
MHC's Fall Ride

Marin Horse Council's Fall Ride and Barbeque was a great time for all 62 participants. The ride was hosted by The Presidio Riding Club which is situated within the beautiful GGNRA. Riders were awed by spectacular views of the California coastline while meandering down trails showered with sunshine.

We had riders from Sonoma, the Peninsula and, of course, many riders from Marin County. Our youngest rider was 10 years old. Unfortunately, no rider wanted to own up to being the oldest rider! Lunch served as a time to rekindle old friendships and make new ones while dining on a meal prepared by Marin Horse Council's Master barbeque Chef Bob Weems. Big thank you to Bob for his hard work and to Kathy Risso who served as Co-Chair with me. Director Pat Duffy showed up with her husband to organize the parking of the trailers and to help with sign-in. Several Marin Horse Council members volunteered to hold horses during sign in and help with sign in. It takes many hands to make light work so we can all have fun and fun was had by all!

The proceeds of this ride will be put back into the General Fund of the Marin Horse Council. Thank you to all who participated enabling Marin Horse Council to continue to work for and support equestrians in every discipline and their well-loved horses.

- Ann Burke, Co-President MHC



Joel riding Pelham

KGO Channel 7 because of an opportunity to also do environmental reporting as well as weather. I retired in December 2006 after 31 years in Bay Area TV.

I have always liked horses. Sometime around the mid 90's I had the opportunity to get on a polo pony at a practice game. (Keep in mind that 'polo ponies' are actually full-sized horses). The horse was very responsive with quick bursts of speed and agility. You ride polo ponies western style, holding the reins with the left hand and controlling the horse with your reins, legs and body position. This horse was very responsive with quick bursts of speed and agility. I joined the Wine Country Polo Club in Santa Rosa and started taking lessons. I think polo is one of the most exciting things you can do on a horse. I did not play at a high level, but I sure had a good time. I might add that more and more women are taking up polo.

Most local tournaments consists of four periods called chukkas with each chukka being 7 minutes long. During most of that time the horses are running hard with lots of quick stops, starts and turns. More than one pony per player is needed in order to allow tired mounts to be changed for fresh mounts between chukkas. At one time I had three horses and would "double" the first horse, that is, play him again during the fourth chukka.

I reluctantly dropped out of polo a couple of years ago. The time required to maintain any kind of proficiency just got to be too much. I donated one of my ponies to the UC Davis Polo Team, retired another to a ranch in Santa Rosa, and another is making someone a great trail horse at Creekside Equestrian Center.

The horse I have now is a Percheron/ Andalusian cross. He is a good jumper and makes a great trail horse, but is much too big - and not nimble enough - to be a polo horse. Right now there is nothing I enjoy doing more in the great out-of-doors than trail riding. That is how I beat out the cobwebs and restore my soul.

- Joel Bartlett

From Polo to Trails

After graduating from Virginia Tech, I served as a weather officer in the Air Force. My primary responsibility was briefing pilots on the weather they could expect on their flights. After the Air Force, I worked as a meteorologist at PG&E in San Francisco. It was just an accident that I got into doing the weather on TV. A friend asked me if I would give a talk at the Tiburon Yacht Club about Bay Area weather, especially the micro climates and winds and how they affect sailing. After my talk, a gentleman from KPIX Channel 5 introduced himself and asked me if I would like to audition for a weather position that was opening up. TV stations were just starting to hire meteorologist to do the job of presenting the weather. I did an audition and ended up getting the job. That was in 1975. In 1989 I moved to

MEET THE MARIN HORSE COUNCIL OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS!
Marin Horse Council meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month, 7:00 PM, in the 'Boro' conference room at 750 Lindaro Street in San Rafael. All members are invited.

Come Rain or Shine

WINTERTIME TRAIL RIDING TIPS

"Should I bring along my sweater or windbreaker?" Haven't we all asked ourselves this question before a trail ride? It's a good idea to layer so you can add or remove clothing as the weather dictates. With our varied Bay Area topography, the weather can change considerably not only over time but also over short distances. During the winter, rain comes into the picture. Here are a few tips that can make your winter trail ride safer and more enjoyable.

Keep in mind that if the air is crisp, your horse will likely be more spirited than on one of those warm days of summer. Lunging him to "take out the bucks" can make your ride much more pleasant. Before setting off, plan your route and the approximate time it will take, keeping in mind the shorter winter days and cooler temperatures as evening approaches. None of us wants an unexpected after-dark-ride, but areas of mud and slippery footing you might encounter will make your ride slower than it would be during the dry summer months.

Rain-drenched soils are more unstable, especially along creek and stream banks. Avoid riding near drop-offs and steep embankments. That easily crossed creek that flows only a trickle in the summer can turn into a fast-flowing and dangerous torrent after a period of heavy rain. Know what you are getting into before you ask your horse to cross water. Take routes that are less likely to be affected by standing or running water. Pastures and fields can turn into bogs in the winter – best to avoid these. If you do feel your horse starting to get mired down in a bog, turn him around and get out of it. If necessary, get off your horse to help both of you escape deep mud.

Your horse should be "slicker trained." Otherwise, if the rain begins while you are out on the trail, especially when windy, you may unintentionally be participating in a rodeo.

Stay on the trail. Shortcuts cause erosion. Honor trail closures to protect the trail.

- Joel Bartlett



FROM THE EDITOR: By the time you receive this newsletter, the holidays will have waned and your horse is eagerly waiting for your attention. As editor, I have made some changes, one of them is to enlarge the font size so us older riders can read it easily! Please email me at pr@marinhorsecouncil.org with ideas or events you would like to see in the newsletter. ~ MARINA EISENZIMMER



Happy riders, happy horses, and happy BBQ eaters at the Fall Ride. Join the fun and come to the Spring Marin Horse Council Ride and BBQ!

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

~ PAT PARELLI

Trails Conflict Workshop

On November 3, 2009 the Board of Supervisors held a special Trails Workshop to obtain public input on trail issues and trail conflict. The Parks and Open Space Department has embarked on a comprehensive Road and Trails Management Plan, which is scheduled to begin early in 2010. It would encompass policies on trail use such as assignment of certain trails for multi-use and correction of high priority road and trail erosion problems. Implementation of conflict resolutions policies would be part of the plan rather than as a separate process.

After hearing testimony from the public, the Board of Supervisors formed a subcommittee (Susan Adams and Steve Kinsey) to work with county staff, review solutions for trail -conflicts and advise the entire Board. MHC has been meeting with Supervisors, collaborating with other organizations such as MCL and monitoring this process closely. To review background materials on this workshop, the County's Strategic Plan or find links to contact the Parks and Open Space Commission or the Supervisors, visit the website:

www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/PK/main/

Your continued support by reporting on trail safety incidents is needed at this critical time of policy creation. You may wish to take a moment to write to your supervisor about the need for additional trail enforcement to maintain safe and legal use for visitors to our public lands. The future of our trails depends on your involvement now. - Ann Barath

Bikes Access and Marin Trails

SHOULD MOUNTAIN BIKES HAVE MORE ACCESS TO MARIN COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT TRAILS??

On November 3, 2009, the Board of Supervisors held a well-publicized workshop seeking ways to resolve trail access and user conflict issues on the Marin County Open Space District's (MCOSD) 16,000 acres of Open Space Preserves (OSP). The workshop at Marin Center was convened at the request of Supervisors Charles McGlashan and Steve Kinsey and attracted a crowd of more than 100. McGlashan has stated publicly that more single-track trails, currently limited to hikers and equestrians, should be opened to the sizeable community of mountain bikers, who feel excluded under current MCOSD restrictions. (For additional information on the workshop, go to www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/PK/main/).

Trail conflicts are not new, nor are they unique to Marin – they are part of the business of managing public open space. Marin may be unusual in its extent and variety of public lands, however. After all, it was hikers from around the Bay who flocked to Mt. Tamalpais every weekend and initiated the first state park in the early years of the last century. The equestrian community also has deep roots, especially in West Marin. Furthermore, Marin (Mt. Tam) is considered the “Mother” of mountain biking, and, as such, attracts mountain bikers from all over the country. Its popularity (mountain bikers are now the second-largest trail user group in the country, after hikers, according to the Outdoor Industry Council) has been promoted, in part, by an industry that also finances a vigorous lobby. Active organizations like International Mountain Bike Association and Access4Bikes, among others, employ full-time lobbyists who are in constant contact with federal, state, and county public land managers, pushing for more access to single-tracks. With cross country recreational biking have come freeriding, technical and downhill challenges that are totally un-suited for fragile narrow trails or for the safety of those on foot or horseback. To complicate the issue, illegal bike use of single-track trails and construction of illegal trails are chronic and typically unenforced.

The November workshop was a departure from the usual governance of the Parks and Open Space Department. That the Supervisors would call a special meeting, in effect bypassing the Commission process, was unusual in itself. Although Supervisors do also sit as the Board of the OSD, it is the Parks and Open Space District Commission, working with a large, competent department staff, who are responsible for overseeing and implementing the District's Strategic Plan and other programs. Among the projects laid out in the Strategic Plan and scheduled to begin in early 2010 is a 12-to-18 month “Road and Trail Management Plan.” Long overdue, this process will require a comprehensive and systematic trails review, inventory, approaches to resolve conflicts, public outreach, and environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It will be coordinated with the District's Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan, which is currently under way.

The explanation given by the Supervisors for the special workshop was that the incidents of conflict were too numerous and the needs of the mountain bike community too pressing to wait another year or more. Those who turned out represented a wide range of views – mountain bikers, hikers, equestrians, participants in all three recreational activities, native plant and wildlife advocates, bike shop owners, and so on. Bikers spoke about the benefits of the exercise and the need to accommodate their growing numbers. Many people shared stories of actual or near accidents, most of them encounters between either equestrians or hikers and mountain bikes, or they reported illegal activity by bikers. Cross accusations about

NEWS AND UPDATES

environmental impacts came from all sides, with no agreement as to which recreational mode causes the most damage to trails. (At China Camp State Park, which is now used almost exclusively by mountain bikers, the erosion damage to trails and vegetation is extensive). The workshop concluded somewhat ambiguously, with Board President Hal Brown directing the District staff to proceed with the trail management plan as scheduled, but at the same time appointing a committee of the Board, consisting of Supervisors Steve Kinsey and Susan Adams, to work with staff in the coming months to explore interim approaches to conflict resolution and report back to the full Board early in 2010.

And that is where things stand at this writing (late December, 2009): out of public view except to those who are requesting to meet privately with either of the two Supervisors, which Marin Conservation League, in collaboration with others has done. The committee has also received a "mail-bag full" of e-mails from mountain bikers from all over the country, but few from hikers, who simply aren't organized in that way. Following the November workshop, MCL addressed a letter to the Board reminding them of their obligations under CEQA: i.e., any "interim" policy recommendation that suggests a change in use or operational shift involving a trail could be interpreted as a de facto "project" as defined by CEQA and therefore subject to environmental review. Supervisors Kinsey and Adams have assured their listeners that no new trails are contemplated on OSPs by any members of the Board. At the same time, if the committee's discussions turn to specific trails or areas of particular conflict or opportunity, as they likely will, they must be fully disclosed to the public in the context of the Road and Trail Management Plan as it develops.

MCL has reason to be concerned about the Board's process. Beginning in the late 1960s, MCL initiated negotiations for acquisition of North Ridge properties that eventually involved three communities, the county and hundreds of individuals, and led directly to the formation of the Open Space District in 1973. Cascade Canyon OSP was the first completed acquisition, setting a high standard for subsequent additions to the District. The core policy of the District has always been that "... MCOSD shall steward its lands in a sustainable manner, and primarily for resource protection..." Any consideration of recreational use, including biking as well as hiking and equestrian, must remain consistent with this policy. - Linda Novy

Save Our State Parks

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED. California's state parks are falling apart because of chronic underfunding. Nearly 60 state parks will be shut down part-time or their hours of operation reduced because of this year's budget cuts, and more park closure proposals and budget cuts are expected next year.

Marin Horse Council has joined a state-wide coalition to gather voter signatures for a November 2010 ballot measure that would establish an \$18 annual vehicle license fee to fund state parks, and your help is needed. (Note: MHC does not take a position on the measure. This is to get signatures for qualifying the ballot measure. The voters will say "yea" or "nay.").

I invite all our members to commit to staffing at least one three-hour shift each month, January through March, to collect signatures at locations near to where they live.

Collection begins the weekend of January 9th and 10th, and Marin County groups working on the drive will have tables that weekend at major {continued on page 6}

EDIE LEHMAN



Equestrians were saddened to hear of the untimely death last August of one of the finest horsewomen ever to come out of Marin: Edrice (Edie) H. Lehman.

From her earliest years, Edie showed talent and amazing skill with horses. In the early 1970's Edie would lead the members of Tamalpais Trail Riders on many a group ride and invariably won the annual Trail Test. She progressed easily to become a nationally known and respected show judge, teacher, trainer, and breeder. For many years before her death she owned and operated Loomis Basin Equestrian Center, a full service training barn, with her partner, Shirley Koch. Not only did Edie exhibit successfully, winning multiple national championships in several disciplines over many years, she had the ability to coach and train amateur competitors to do the same on their own horses. Edie was generous with her time, expertise, and facilities and took great pride in the adults and children with whom she worked.

She was a strong supporter and contributor mostly on Arabian horses, but also competed successfully in the Morgan horse show world. She was noted for her quiet voice, good humor, hard work, and dedication to her horses. She is sadly missed.

- Connie Berto

What Happened?

Sometimes it just happens... you're in the arena, going over what you learned in your last lesson, or just exercising a pattern you've done a million times, and your smart horse is not on the same page. In fact, he seems to have forgotten everything! He is ignoring your cues or doing the opposite. And if you are like me, you are wondering if it is YOU or the HORSE. Or is it, as one trainer says, the full moon? Everyone (and every horse) can have an off day.

Take a deep breath, and remember – the best thing is to end your session on a good note! Do something simple (even just walking and trotting around a couple circles), and when he does that the way you ask, praise him, and get off quick! Call it a day! Pushing your horse, or using the crop will just raise your frustration level, and make it worse the next time you ride.

Remember, what happens in the arena stays in the arena... just like Vegas!

- Marina Eisenzimmer

Mystery of the Lost Horse

Does anyone know anything about a horse, lost in the northerly section of Taylor Park in or around the 1970's?

The remains of the horse have been discovered complete with what is left of a Western saddle with silver conchas, Oxbow stirrups, bridle, bit and reins, etc. The horse was shod.

Many stories are circulating but none have yet been proven. Maybe the details are stored back in your memory bank. If you have an idea, contact Sandy at 415/307-3351 or email to marintrailguide@comcast.net

- Sandy Greenblat

Note: For related articles with photos, go to: www.pressdemocrat.com and enter "more clues in horse mystery" or "horse with no name" in the search bar.

locations such as the Mill Valley Plaza, Civic Center Farmers Market, and some markets. We are only asking for two or three hours of your time on Saturday or Sunday, January 9 or 10, to help kick off the drive to Save Our Parks.

Volunteers work in pairs or even with two or three others in a busy location, and petitions, clipboards and signs are provided. You just need to show up.

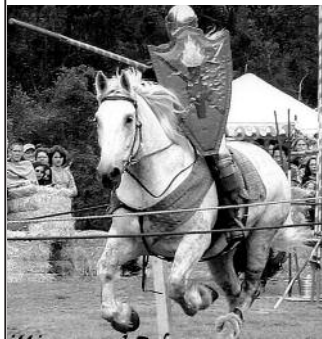
For those of you who are novices at petition drives or simply want more information about this initiative, we will have a volunteer workshop on Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at Marin Conservation League, 1623-A Fifth Avenue (corner of Fifth and F) in San Rafael. This will only be about an hour. State Staff will be there to provide a campaign update and a "how to" for collecting.

Please reply to this email and let Joel Bartlett know that you can help with this urgent effort to keep our parks open. Joel can be reached at joelbartlett@yahoo.com

The ballot measure, organized by State Parks Foundation, Nature Conservancy, and Save the Redwoods League, would establish the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund with dedicated revenue from vehicle fees. With stable funding, day use admission fees at the parks would be waived, allowing free day use for all Californians year round.

Thank you for your interest and help.

- Joel Bartlett



Learn to Joust and Play Horseback Games!

"If you can ride a horse you can learn skill-at-arms games and have lots of fun doing it" As someone who wants to experience as many different aspects of horseback riding as possible my interest was piqued right away when I saw this ad. The ad pictured a Knight in Shining Armor charging forward! Now I've never been a Renaissance Faire addict, but hey, that could just be fun.

Next day a few friends and I headed up to Full Tilt Farm in Sebastopol to meet Sir William and Rohan, his gorgeous white 18 H Percheron.

For historical background "skill-at-arms" games were part of training for knights in the Middle Ages as practice for warfare. Some of these games were ring-spearing, running the quintain, spear-throwing and archery. For ring-spearing a knight would ride toward small, metal rings hanging from poles and try to spear them using a thin lance. The quintain was a horizontal arm (that would spin when hit) having a target shield at one end, mounted on a post. Spear throws and archery were for accuracy and distance. All of these activities ultimately became parts of tournaments in which knights from different countries would come together to compete for prizes. The actual jousting or tilting was the highlight of tournaments. It was all very exciting!

We tried some spear throwing at targets and aiming a lance and it became quickly evident that these games are not something to learn in one day but require some ground training and exposing your horse to a variety of stimuli like flags, and

AT THE BARN

poles, and spears and arrows! It's hard enough to throw a spear accurately, but try it while cantering a horse! Sir William has a barrel to sit on which mimicks the movement of a horse. He also has all of the equipment and an arena built especially to accommodate the learning and practicing of the games. He has seen both riders and horses become more confident while learning these games as well as riders improving their seats, which makes their dressage instructors happy. School classes learning about the Medieval or Renaissance periods have come to Full Tilt Farm for an entertaining, hands-on experience learning about the history of weapons, armor, jousting and chivalry.

Sir William is an engaging, handsome fellow who is passionate about what he does and eager to share these medieval games. Full Tilt Farm is totally set up for learning with safety and fun in mind. Even for non-riders Sir William says you can still enjoy learning most of the skills on foot. Just watching Sir William and Rohan was like music!

If you are interested in learning more, lessons are available no matter your age or sex. Just call 707-827-3855 or email wskyhammer@comcast.net.

- Linda Albion

HOW MANY RIDERS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHT BULB?

WESTERN PLEASURE RIDERS: Oh, my God, someone fix that bulb, I have to have light so that my silver and spangles all glow to their best and so that all the highlighter on Old Peanut Head makes his nose look so smooth and sparkly. Oh, maybe you without all the silver on your saddle, obviously you can't ride, you can do it.

DRESSAGE QUEEN: Change a light bulb? Are you joking? I couldn't possibly be expected to subject myself to such a menial task. Change it yourself. Oh, and wash your hands when you are finished. The very thought!

EVENTER: Wuss! As soon as my arm is out of this sling broken after falling off at that stone wall while riding Hell Bent for Leather cross-country, I'll change it. Until then, deal with the dark. It'll put hair on your chest. Only dressage riders require lights, anyway.



The American Fondoukis charitable veterinary hospital offers free care to animals in Fez, Morocco. Stacey Singer, owner of Epona stopped by the vet hospital with lots of donations.



Marin Horse Council Membership Application

- Adult \$25
 Junior/Senior \$15
 Family \$40
 Business \$50
 "Silver Buckle" \$50
 "Golden Horseshoe" \$100
 Life Member \$250
 Club/Organization \$40

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

email _____

Help MHC to better serve you -- tell us about yourself. The MHC never shares or sells its members' information.

Occupation _____ Affiliations _____

Own a horse? Yes No

Your interests: English Western Trail Riding Endurance Show Jumping Dressage
 Rodeo Eventing Driving Breeding Animal Welfare Other _____

MHC needs volunteers! Please indicate if you can help us with: Finance, Communication, Membership, Barn Liaisons, Government Affairs, Horse Course, Eq Evac, Events committee, Marin County Fair, Volunteer Co-coordinating

Your membership in the Marin Horse Council helps support the Council's many activities on behalf of Marin's equestrians and equines.

Donations are also welcome. Fees and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thanks for joining! Mail your check to Marin Horse Council | 171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd. | Novato, CA 94949-6183

12/09

Thank You!

The Marin Horse Council depends on the continued generous support of Marin's horse lovers. Thanks to all members, and in particular, thanks to those who join or renew at Lifetime, Golden Horseshoe, or Silver Buckle membership levels.

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MOON MEADOW RANCH
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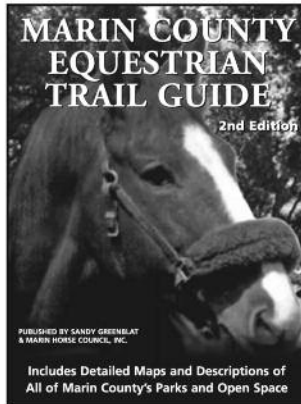
Updated April, 2009

This Equestrian Trail Guide covers all trails within approximately 200,000 acres located in the Point Reyes National Seashore, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) including the Marin Headlands, various California State Parks, the Mt. Tamalpais Watershed and lands of the Marin County Open Space District. It contains all the trail updates available as of the end of April, 2009.

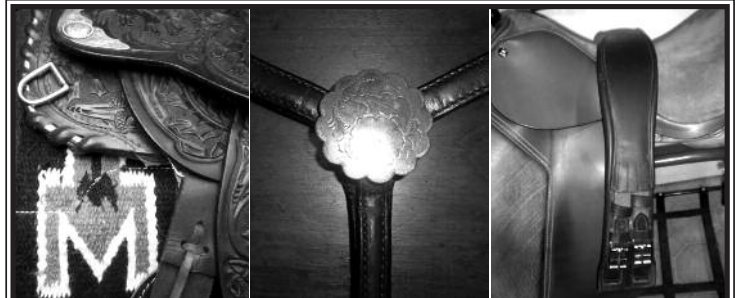
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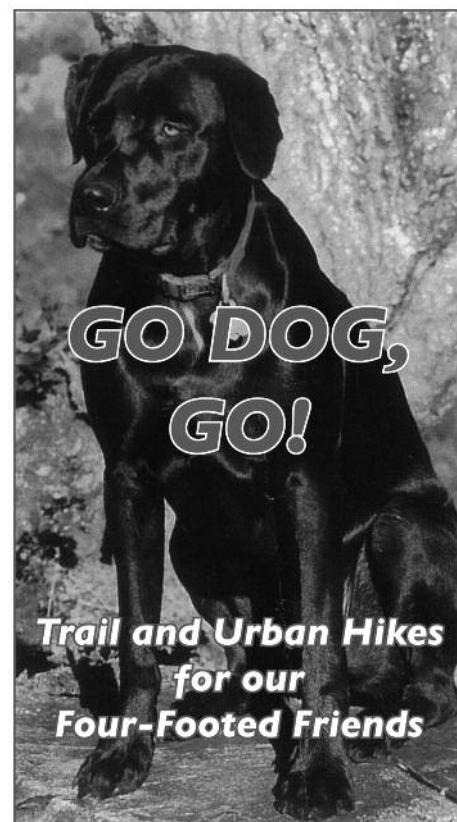
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