



NEWSLETTER

2009 Alexandria Equestrian Association Officers:

<i>President:</i>	<i>Judy Tucker</i>
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<i>Secretary:</i>	<i>Becky Nicoletti</i>
<i>Membership:</i>	<i>Maxine Lally- Alexis</i>
<i>Food Coordinator:</i>	<i>Sandy Howell</i>
<i>Trustee</i>	<i>Tom Aversa</i>
<i>Trustee</i>	<i>Bill Daniels</i>

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.aeanj.com

THE NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE AEA WILL BE:

*Monday September 28, 2009 7:30pm at the
Alexandria Twp Park Barn*

A letter from the President... September Changes

September brings many changes, one of the most important being the start of hunting season Saturday September 12, 2009. Please be respectful and stay off the trails or else we could lose riding privileges for all members. We know there are lots of questions regarding the new Sunday hunting law. We don't have all the answers, but a summary from the DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife web site states:

Sunday bowhunting for deer is now allowed only on wildlife management areas and private property.

For more information regarding dates and rules, visit www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/pdf/2009. AEA

is in discussion with some landowners and hunters on a possible arrangement that would allow riding during hunting season at specific hours. We will keep you posted when details become available.

We have other changes to tell you about regarding AEA winter events. We won't be having team sorting events this winter. The reasons are many including new competition that has pulled many riders away from our event and the downturn in the economy that has impacted attendance. We thank all those wonderful volunteers that worked the penning and sorting events over the years. Take a year off, and perhaps things will change next season.

On another front, starting November 14th, we will host gymkhana events, one a month through April. We will partner with our friends at Readington Trail Association, as we did last year, for fun and games. Read more about this further on in the newsletter. We are also going to have our first "tack sale" on Saturday November 14th, along with the first gymkhana of the season. Beth Goldberg has volunteered to organize the tack sale. We will create a flyer with details and post it on the web site. Please contact Beth at 908-692-4639 or tackswap09@gmail.com for additional information.

Also, did you ever wonder what so-and-so does on her/his farm? Did you ever wonder if you had anything in common, horse related or not, with some other member of AEA? Well, now you might just find out when you read the new column we are adding to the newsletter - Member



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Profiles. Anyone can be profiled as long as you are willing to provide the basic information about yourself. One of the editors of the newsletter will take it from there and create your profile. This issue we are featuring Katie Wigness and Rachel Kimsey, but next time it could be you. So don't be shy next time you see an email for the newsletter deadline. Step right up, and send your profile to Pete Tucker at tuckawaypete@earthlink.net.

The AEA Board has picked Saturday January 16, 2010 for our annual landowner appreciation/cocktail party. Please save the date and more details will be forthcoming, as they are finalized.

- Judy

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2009 Workbond Receipts and 2010 Membership Drive

Just a reminder that the AEA's year-end of November 30th is fast approaching. If you have put in your 5 hours' of volunteer time, please remember to contact our Treasurer, Dick Kimsey, to get your \$50 workbond back - every dollar counts these days! Also, Maxine Alexis, our Membership Secretary, will start accepting membership applications for the 2010 year at the beginning of November (to coincide with the United States Equestrian Federation 2010 membership drive, for those of you who rely on USEF membership for your insurance coverage). Please use the 2010 Membership Form that will be posted on the website - it includes some additional questions so that we can get to know our growing membership better (we are now back up to 60 individuals/ families!).

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If a Tree Falls in the Woods....

Take it from an old newspaper guy. It's always disconcerting when a reporter gets 'scooped' on a story by a competing publication. I thought when I retired that that wouldn't happen anymore.

But the other day when I called AEA's Suzanne Stidworthy re: a horseback incident worth writing about, Suzanne informed me that she had just been called by the Horse News on the same subject. Doh!! How did that happen? Well, so what, I reasoned. I'll write about this better than they will anyway! Who cares if it hits the street three weeks after they hit with it!!?

When will we learn? When we're riding a horse, it's really a partnership. You, the rider, don't always know best. That horse may be aware of something that you are not; something that might even save your life! Ask Suzanne Stidworthy.

Suzanne was recently 'up' on Luke, a Rochelle- owned horse. Luke and Suzanne had just started up a trail there at Triple Creek Farm when Luke let his rider know that he wasn't taking another step forward on that trail. Luke tends to get a bit contentious now and then, but this time he was dead-serious! He wasn't forward on that trail another inch!

There were a few moments of indecision, but Suzanne decided not to argue with her mount. Horse and rider turned and headed the other way. Just as they did, Suzanne could hear the sound of straining wood fiber, then the thunderous crash of a huge



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tree exactly where they were about to pass on the trail!! Seems this was a case where it was smart for the rider to listen to the horse!

Henry David Thoreau, the remarkable American philosopher, once posed a question regarding a tree falling in the woods. If no one was even within earshot of the tree, did it actually make a noise? Of course it did, Mr. Thoreau. Humans aren't the only critters in the woods, you know!

-Pete Tucker

Friday Night Gymkhanas Take On A Life of Their Own

Anyone looking for a lively place to let off some end-of-week steam on a Friday evening would be well advised to take a trip down to the Alexandria Township Barn during the AEA's Friday Night Gymkhana season where riders of all ages, abilities and disciplines join together for a fun-packed series of timed games on horseback. For an hour before the games begin, participants and spectators tailgate, sharing take-out dinners and good conversation in the car park outside the barn. Then Master of Ceremony Tommy Aversa calls the participants together in the indoor arena and the games begin. The games vary each week, with suggestions for new games coming from participants beforehand. Each week we have the traditional favorites (pole pending and barrel configurations) along with various team or precision games. For those of us getting on in years, the games involving jumping off and on again are something of a cruel reminder that we are not as young as we used to be....an AEA stimulus package for local chiropractors, I think.

The AEA has been trying to get a regular gymkhana off the ground for many years. Last year, we hosted a few during the day on select Saturdays but participation was bumpy. The idea of an evening gymkhana came from Tommy and Skip Aversa who have fond memories of the Friday evening gymkhanas they used to attend while growing up in Staten Island. Friday evenings have the advantage of generally not conflicting with many of the other equestrian events going on in the area. Psychologically, it also encourages more adult participation. The result has been many of us adults turning up and getting a good education from the young 4-H and Pony-Clubbers riders who whiz around the courses on their mounts like circus acrobats!

In the UK where I grew up, gymkhanas seemed to be rather exclusive events for young girls of a certain social set. When some friends and I got into horse-riding in our late teens, we were way past all that. The AEA Friday Night Gymkhana was therefore my first taste, and when I mentioned the concept to my friends back in England, they were excitedly envious of the opportunity to enjoy something we missed out when we were growing up. But, while my horse Sonny is a sturdy trail horse he's not a big fan of ring work or arena events so I was delighted that he didn't protest and dump me during our first gymkhana last month. Ah, I spoke too soon - this past Friday, Sonny knew what was coming and decided to be pre-emptive. When we were called for our first event, he began to back-up and protest at the gate. I firmly tapped him on and as he begrudgingly side stepped towards the ring, I heard gentle words of



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encouragement from my husband, who was manning the gate....“You’re gonna get dusty on this one!” And within seconds, sure enough Sonny threw a few bucks and I was on the floor. Fortunately, I have worked hard to cultivate a well-padded butt, so I jumped up and back on and we went on to complete the course with no further surprises.

The most wonderful thing about the gymkhanas is that we have had new faces showing up each time, like my nieces Kalliopi and Alexia who just started riding lessons last year and have just bought their first horse, Jazz. I think they surprised themselves by how well they did on Friday – the looks of nervousness at the beginning of the evening were soon replaced by wide grinning smiles (especially at seeing Aunt Maxine’s unplanned dismount) and by the end of the evening, they and Jazz had built a little more trust in each other. As Tommy Aversa advises all participants at the beginning of every gymkhana, these events are not competitive; they’re just about having fun. A big round of applause for Therese Kimsey and Tommy for taking the reins with these events over the summer.

The Friday evening gymkhanas are now over for the season, but we can all look forward to the return of the Saturday gymkhanas organized by Becky Nicoletti starting November 14th 2009, and with the spread of gymkhana-fever amongst those of us who participated this Fall, the upcoming Saturday season looks set to be an even bigger success!

If anyone is interested in organizing a gymkhana or other horse event, the AEA always welcomes suggestions and can

provide advice on issues such as insurance and recruiting volunteers.

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AEA Dates to Remember

- Start of Hunting Season
Saturday September 12, 2009
- Tack Sale
Saturday November 14, 2009
- Gymkhana
Saturday November 14, 2009
Saturday December 5, 2009
Saturday January 9, 2010
Saturday February 6, 2010
Saturday March 6, 2010
Saturday April 3, 2010
- Landowner Appreciation/Cocktail Party
Saturday January 16, 2010



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Member Profiles

This column is a new feature of this and future issues of our newsletter. The goal is to better introduce new members or long-time members so that we all get to know each other better. So, as an AEA member, you may be asked in the future if we could profile you. It’s optional, of course, but an opportunity to put your ‘best foot forward’ to the membership. Emphasis will surely be given to whatever way you’re involved with horses.



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Katie Wigness

Katie Wigness, an AEA member for four years, owns and manages Topline Farm on Goritz Road. She is a lifelong horsewoman, who began riding at age 10. Katie's first horse was a thoroughbred off the track, which she retrained and showed in the hunters while in high school. During high school, and later in the summers during college, Katie worked for the Essex Hunt Club in Peapack, NJ, exercising the club's hunters, fox-hunting the green horses, and riding out with the pack. Katie rode equitation in the IHSA college circuit on the intercollegiate team, qualifying for the Nationals in her junior year.

After a stint in law school, where she met her soon-to-be-husband Kris, Katie practiced law, specializing in commercial litigation in New Jersey, representing various small and medium-sized businesses in contract disputes, close corporation shareholder disputes and similar litigations. Later, she counseled various governmental entities such as the New Jersey Turnpike Authority in matters involving real estate, land condemnation, sexual harassment and federal racial profiling suits. She also returned to riding whenever the law firms would allow, and started showing two new thoroughbreds off the track in the jumpers. She competed on the "A" circuit in the adult amateur jumper classes, showing at horse shows in NJ, NY, PA and Wellington, FL.

Kris came to the horse shows and golfed while waiting interminably for Katie's classes to begin at each horse show.

After twelve years of practicing law, Katie now manages Topline Farm, a small farm with her own horses and a few boarders. She and Kris designed the barn and facilities and worked with King Construction to have it built. Katie teaches some of the boarders, as well as local riders with their own ponies or horses. A cute-as-a-button Shetland pony lives at Topline Farm and is available for lessons for little ones in the indoor ring. Katie continues her own riding education by lessoning with a local dressage trainer when she can, and is now working with an up-and-coming two year old dressage prospect, an Oldenburg filly named Suri Cruz. She still has her retired jumpers, and tries to participate in hunter paces and trail rides when she can.

When not running the farm, Katie acts as Chairperson of the Alexandria Township Farmland and Open Space Preservation Committee, working with farmers and landowners to help guide them through the preservation process. She also continues to play the flute, and occasionally can be persuaded to perform at functions with her sister, Barbara, who also plays the flute and Kris, who is an excellent cello performer and teacher.



Alexandria Equestrian Association

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Rachel Kimsey

Rachel Kimsey has been a member of AEA for the past 4 years. She has been riding since she was 8 years old and has worked very hard to acquire horses of her own. Many a night you can see her practicing at the indoor in the rain, sleet and snow. You may have seen her at one of the recent AEA gymkhanas. She competes through out New Jersey and Pennsylvania. She is looking to fill her permit and start on the pro rodeo circuit next year. Her life long dream is to become a world champion barrel racer.

Rachel has a contagious enthusiasm in her ability to help animals. Many times during her life she would come to an animal's need for human intervention. Whether it was a stray dog, an injured woodpecker or a lost fawn, Rachel would immediately come to their aid. She has unusual intuition and respect for an animals care and well-being.

Rachel is a certified professional equine sports massage therapist and canine massage therapist trained by the well known and respected school of Equissage one of the oldest schools in the country.

As an experienced barrel racer she realized the stress and wear and tear on a horse's body. She also realized her horse could be given an advantage over the competition by using different holistic modalities. Because of

that, her interest in becoming a sports massage therapist evolved. Rachel's love for man's best friend helped her decide to be certified in canine massage as well.

As the proud owner of barrel horses, Wrangler and Flame, and ever so clever Australian Shepherd, Jack, she understands the importance of maintaining an animal's health, and sees first-hand the impact that massage therapy has.

She started her own business called CompetitivEdge, after being certified. Her journey in this venture has been one of great reward. Rachel loves what she does and it shows! Her clients range from the equine or canine athlete to backyard pets and companions.

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Classifieds

Topline Farm – Boarding your horse, providing top-quality care. Facilities include indoor ring with dust-free footing, 12x14 matted stalls with dutch doors, hot/cold indoor wash stall, outdoor wash stall, heated/cooled tack room, on-site horse laundry, trail access, friendly atmosphere, lessons and training. Board \$750+tax. Offsite lessons and training also available. Please contact Katie at 479-4967 or Katie@toplinefarm.net for more information.

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One last thought till next time... ..

Before me peaceful, Behind me peaceful, Under me peaceful, All around me peaceful, peaceful voice when he neighs. I am everlasting and Peaceful. I stand for my horse.



Alexandria Equestrian Association
Navajo Song

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