

Vermont Horse Council Annual Meeting
Held at Abbey Restaurant in Enosburg Falls, VT
January 23, 2016

Attendance:

Terry Rose	Phyllis Civitello
Fay Ferris	Morris Lasell
Heidi Krantz	Brenda Lasell
Belinda Brown	Laurie Justis
Vickie Smith	Jessica S. Riley
Doug Smith	Robin Severy
Tim Stone	Jean Audet
Carmel Stone	Luanne Nickerson
Mary Gilman	Karen Rosemark
Mario Salcis	Jim Nickerson
Jesse Salcis	Mike Benoit
Ken Hoeppe	Martha Benoit
Suzanne Hoeppe	Ilene Douglas
Michael Civitello	

The meeting was called to order by President, Heidi Krantz at 12:10 pm. The 50/50 drawing was held and Mike Civitello won \$35 which was donated back to the Groton fund.

Introductions and Thank yous took place. Jessica Riley spoke. She is a new member who wants to get more involved with VHC and the horse community.

Secretary minutes as printed in the October newsletter were approved, motion made by Morris, seconded by Carmel. No discussion. So moved.

Treasurer's report was accepted as presented, motion made by Ken, seconded by Karen Rosemark. Groton Panel money was not broken down in this report. It will be in the 2016 reports from now on. The Worth noting: website upgrade was \$1500 in 2015. VHC needs to sell products and memberships. Call or email Martha with any questions and she will be happy to answer them. All in favor. So moved.

Membership: Doug reported that 32 have joined or renewed for 2016. There are about 100 names carried over for now.

Promotion Committee:

Safety: Carmel reported that this committee needs more volunteers. Currently we are selling horse pouch bags for \$20; Share the road stickers for 2/\$3. VHC participated in a Drivers' Ed Summit and a Road Safety Parade. Mane Stream, Face Book and American Horse Council was all maintained and doing

well. VHC sent Ilene to DC, The Vermont Safety Alliance Committee has invited VHC to participate. Groton is in the middle of fund raising as well as all of the scholarship funds. Some fund raising ideas are a raffle with reins and headstalls that were donated, clinics, and a paint party.

Equine Activities Committee:

In 2015 we held an Extreme Trail ride competition at the Champlain Valley Expo. That took lots of volunteers. We held an Extreme Trail play day in Bristol. There was a trail ride at Willoughby State Forest. Some of those trails have been marked and mapped and will be presented to the State by the Friends of Willoughby. The NEKET ride in September had over 60 riders. There are 2 loops marked out. Jim Nickerson will now be the lead person for the NEKET committee. The Tunbridge ride had 130 riders and made about \$2200. A Nutrena feed rep did hay testing for whoever wanted it done. Karen Rosemark will meet with the state to develop trails throughout the state (Groton, New Discovery, Peacham Pond).

Events to come: Equine Trail First Aid Workshop in early April. Orleans County Rescue Squad will be presenting it at Water Tower Farm. A competitive trail ride is planned for August 20th in the NEKET area. We need a lot of volunteers. If interested in helping or participating, contact Doug Smith.

Services Committees: Karen Rosemark and Belinda Brown spoke.

Safety: which is chaired by Carmel Stone. CHAMP purchased 12 safety vests and the profit went to the scholarship committee. Horses on the Road posters were distributed. Ilene Douglas attended the American Horse Council's annual national convention in Washington, DC. Among the 2015 accomplishments was the Recreation Trails grant which is available in Vermont and something VHC is looking into.

Scholarships: Karen reported that there will be a Painting Party at the Monitor Barn in Richmond. It will be \$30 per person and the profits will be split 50/50 with VHC for scholarship. There was a change in the scholarship program. Adults can apply as long as they are a VHC member. The goal of \$2,000 was set by June 1st and the deadline to get applications in is June 1st. Hannah Spence is a youth scholarship recipient with special needs. She spear headed the Painting Party as a way to give back to VHC and is the VHC's Youth Scholarship Ambassador.

Riding & Driving: several new teams have joined and seven teams received awards.

Trail Maintenance Fund: Peacham Pond bridge was funded, built, installed and then christened by Morris Lasell and his horse Kit in October 2015.

Farm Bureau: Bev McMullin reported that The Farm Bureau's mission is "to serve and advance Vermont Agricultural Practices". The Water quality bill was lobbied and testified on behalf of farmers by the Farm Bureau. It actively engaged in Passage of Accepted Agricultural Practices- Act 64 which may affect equine businesses. They were a sponsor of Horsin' Around Show at the Champlain Valley Expo. Benefits of joining VFB include discounts in insurance, LP gas and home heating oil.

Vickie Smith spoke about the required Agricultural Practices at the State Department. It was her understanding that GMHA is the organization representing horses at the State level. She thinks horses should be represented in the agricultural industry by having a presence at the Farm Show. She thinks we need to make a big effort to get involved again. Heidi explained that VHC has been sending out notices to

members to help bring education to the group and County fairs is another way to get through to the Ag industry.

Mike Benoit spoke. He thought the State Forest Parks and Recreation would allow VHC to be the clearing house for trails state wide, after the success we've had with NEKET and Groton.

Heidi read thank a thank you from Stephanie Lockhardt for our contribution of \$100 towards their well water situation. And Stephanie will host a meeting in June.

The American horse Council has a program that has been present for 3 years called the "Time to Ride Program". This allows people who have never ridden before try out our horses. Should VHC get involved? No motion/no vote

Ryan Patch from the Agency of Agriculture was our guest speaker.

He presented to use revised Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) (act 64)
Vermont's clean Water Act and Farming

He spoke about Buffer Widths, Livestock Exclusion, Soil Health Management and Cover cropping, nutrient management planning, manure stacking, manure application standards and winter spreading bans.

The first draft was released October 20th. About 500-600 people attended meetings throughout the state to explain the rules and have some question and answer time.

There are classifications of Small Farm and Small Farm Certification Programs.

The second draft's target date is February and in March work to finalize the draft to submit to Legislative rule process will take place.

This is relevant to horses in that since 1995 enforceable water quality rules have applied.

Farm Size Definitions:

Small farm = abide by local municipality rules and not subject to RAP's.

Less than 4 acres

Less than 4 horses

Less than \$2,000 gross income per year

If more than 4 acres and between 4 and 14 horses then you do follow RAPs but do not have to certify,

The second draft of RAP is taking a hard look at the number of horses and the animal unit is in question.
The categories will be simplified

One rule to be tweaked is: 4 stacking sites for manure, 180 days per time. Because that would prevent composting and encourage stacking on improper land.

Soil Samples every 5 years has been changed to every 3 years but will go back to every 5 years in the 2nd draft.

There will be a press release going out the second week in February and the draft will be available to everyone February 1st. July 1, 2016 is the final draft deadline.

Check out their website for hand outs, recorded public meetings and email information.

Terry Rose has a copy all of the Changes to Accepted Ag Practices on file.

Doug Smith asked about the certification process. You can self certify with an application. There will be an inspection on the first visit for educational purposes.

The penalties for non-compliance can be up to \$50,000 per violation and starts with complaints from the public.

Call Ryan if you have any questions (Ryan Patch, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets 802-272-0323, Ryan.Patch@vermont.gov)

After the speaker, Heidi presented thank yous and certificates of appreciation

Horse Persons of the Year, 2016 goes to Mike and Martha Benoit

Election of officers was presented by Martha

Board members elected were: 1 year to finish Patricia Branon's term and 2 more members to take on 3 year positions

Heidi Krantz, President

Morris Lasell, Vice President

Terry Rose, Secretary

Gloria Bruce, Treasurer

Jeannette Cole, Board

Jessica Stewart Riley, Board

Lucinda Newman, Board

Morris made the motion to have the Secretary cast one ballot for the above executive board, seconded by Ken Hoepfner, all in favor, so moved.

Guest speaker Mary Wilmut of Champlain Adaptive Mounted Program (CHAMP) showed slides and spoke about her therapeutic riding program