

THE SUMMER 2012 RESOURCE

ELCR advances the conservation of land for horse-related activity.

Just Say "WHOOA" to Park Closures

By Jennifer M. Keeler for ELCR



During the fall of 2011, local equestrians in Wildwood, Missouri steeled themselves for the possibility of a dramatic loss of riding land. In what St. Louis County, MO administrators claimed was a "fiscal crisis", County Executive Charlie A. Dooley presented a budget proposal which would require the Parks Department to slash \$4.3 million from its budget, close 23 of its 38 parks, and eliminate 133 jobs. Of the seven parks which feature public equestrian amenities such as stables, competition rings, cross-country courses, and extensive trail systems, five were on the chopping block. Amidst public outrage, the organized and efficient mobilization of a local horseman's group would play a vital role in preserving the recreational areas all local citizens treasured.

The Wildwood Horse Owners and Acreage Association (WHOOA) was organized in 2005 with a mission to preserve the agricultural lifestyle in Wildwood, a city located on the western edge of St. Louis County, Missouri, through public education and land conservation. With an area



Youngster at the WHOOA booth at St. Louis County Fair.

(Continued on next page)

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(*Just Say Whoaa,* continued)

of about 66 square miles (2nd largest city in Missouri by land area) and a population of close to 35,000 people, Wildwood has traditionally been an area for horse lovers and was originally established with an eye towards preserving farms and green space as city sprawl approached. But since 1980, agricultural land has been disappearing in Wildwood at the rate of four acres a day, and WHOAA's vision is for Wildwood to remain a haven for equestrians and those with a love of the land.

Amid the ensuing uproar over the budget proposal, a high-stakes political chess match unfolded. Initially, officials indicated the parks were to be sold to raise funds; later, the plan was modified to "land bank" the parks by closing the gates and allowing the grass to grow until money was found to reopen them. The County also explored the possibility of transferring park land and the responsibility for their upkeep to other municipalities or even the state government. Meanwhile, many officials believed the county administration had exaggerated the budget problems, questioned whether there was a revenue shortfall at all, and were confident that alternatives could be found to keep the parks open.

when they talk money, you have to be prepared to talk money

It was time for WHOAA leaders to become involved and take action. Sending a constant stream of information through its digital network, flyers were created for equestrians to distribute, petitions were started, coordination with national equestrian groups was initiated, and attendance by horsemen to council meetings, rallies, and protests was organized. While attending the volatile council meetings, Paula Sewell, President of WHOAA, relied upon her favorite advice: keep sentimentality out of the argument. "When you have something like a serious budget crisis, talking about the emotions is not effective," she explained. "When they talk money, you have to be prepared to talk money." Sewell pointed out how closing



WHOAA at St. Louis County Fair.



WHOAA's annual vaccination clinic.

the parks would actually make the county's economic problem worse and further erode the tax base by diminishing the value of surrounding homes as residents moved away to other areas. With Missouri being the third-largest producer of horses in the country, Sewell reminded county officials about the financial impact of local equestrian activity. By closing park facilities, horsemen would be forced to leave the county and possibly the state in order to pursue their sport.

Not only was the Council receptive to WHOAA's arguments, it also seemed to resonate with the public and the press, culminating on November 15, 2011 when hundreds of protesters (including WHOAA members) rallied in support of the parks. Demonstrations were held both outside and inside county government headquarters, overflowing the council chambers. After listening to arguments, six of the seven council members vowed to block Dooley's budget from passing. Then, in early December, after a month of public outrage, Dooley withdrew the proposal to shutter the parks, claiming a compromise had been reached with members of the County Council to seek alternative cuts to balance the budget, and publicly admitted making a mistake.

While the St. Louis County Parks may be safe for now, economic belt-tightening will continue to plague local governments, and cities across the country will face unprecedented budget woes and difficult decisions as to how limited public funds will be spent. However, WHOAA has set an outstanding example of how equestrians can work together to solve local issues and help ensure survival of their sport and lifestyle. "Get organized!" said Sewell. "Don't wait until there's a major crisis. It doesn't necessarily take a lot of people; it just takes a few people who are willing to work to make their voices heard." ■

The Wildwood Horse Owners & Acreage Association (WHOAA) is a network of local people united in a love of the land and dedicated to saving land in Wildwood, Missouri for equestrian and agricultural activities. To learn more about WHOAA, visit www.whoaa.org.



Forum attendees working on a land use planning exercise

ELCR Shares Experts & Expertise with Atlanta Equestrians

When ELCR was looking for a well-located, horse-friendly yet development pressured southeast community to hold our first Regional One-Day Forum, we quickly settled on Alpharetta Georgia, well-known for its scenic beauty and numerous horse farms and facilities. Shannondale Farm, a dressage training facility located in Fulton County proved to be an ideal venue for the Forum. The USA Equestrian Trust and Bayer Animal Health generously sponsored the event.

This first of a series of one-day forums to be held in the eastern United States allowed us to convey expert information, our expanding education curriculum and remind area equestrians of the urgency of the land loss issue. Horse people need to know how to protect themselves from future losses – horse farms, hay fields and trails – and actively plan to maintain the equestrian community and lifestyle in their home town. ■

From the Saddle

A letter from ELCR's CEO, Deb Balliet

On June 1st, Jessi Jump and I from the KY office met ELCR founders Melanie Heacock, Rick Jorgensen, and Georgiana Hubbard McCabe; Susan Harding, current president and Larry Byers, immediate past president in Colonial Williamsburg (VA) for the American Horse Publications Ride Into History conference. We were there to accept the 2012 Equine Industry Vision Award sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and American Horse Publications. All of us at ELCR were honored to have our organization selected for this recognition.

The award presentation event was gratifying to me personally in many ways, but particularly because it offered the opportunity to gather our three living founders who truly had the vision. And, it was also significant in that it gave us all the opportunity to remember Anson Taylor, who may appear to be the fourth founder by the way I have written this, but rather, I think of him as the founder of founders. Furthermore, our selection was especially satisfying, knowing that there were several occasions when the founders almost gave up, because the organization was “not getting much traction.”

So, our moment in the spotlight was most rewarding. Now, we are back to work, converting that great publicity and visibility into a larger “cavalry” and an increased number of acres of conserved horse farms, hay fields and protected miles of trails. Every little bit helps, thanks to our friends at Pfizer Animal Health and America Horse Publications for giving us another wonderful opportunity to get the word out.

And finally, I would like to ask you to help us add a few more horse people to the cavalry. Will you please bring some friends into the cause? For together we stand; divided we fall. ■



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Munson Photography

Save the Dates: ELCR One Day Educational Forums

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Join us for this great informational
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November 10
Breyer Model Horses
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Conservation Partners Spotlight: Masters of Fox Hounds Association & Foundation Organize a Conservation Program

A long-time ELCR Conservation Partner, the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, through their educational foundation have organized a land conservation program congruent with their mission to Promote, Preserve & Protect – Helping to Save Foxhunting for Future Generations.

Dennis Foster, MFHA Executive Director notes, “Conservation is a top priority for the Masters of Fox Hounds. You can’t hunt without land. The benefits of conserving land for

In 2009, MFHA Foundation surveyed the member hunt clubs and found their hunts have conserved over one million acres through conservation easements or similar methods.

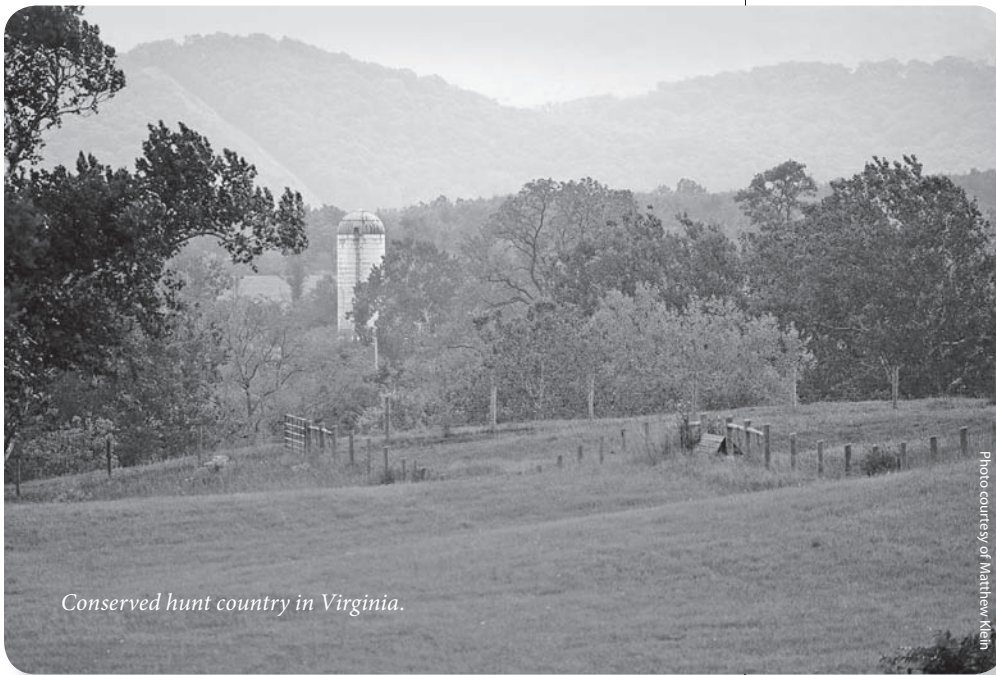
country sports and curbing urban sprawl are enormous not only to fox hunters, but to all the other country sports and pastimes that require open land to exist. Horseback riding,

that is bestowed annually to recognize “fox hunting clubs, individuals and organizations that have made a significant and enduring contribution towards the preservation of rural countryside and its flora and fauna.” The award committee is chaired by J.W.Y. “Duck” Martin of Glyndon, MD. Martin is an enthusiastic promoter of the award and has helped develop its reputation and prestige so that it is highly-coveted in the fox hunting community. According to Martin, “The national award has made major contributions to conserving land and perpetuating wildlife habitat.”

Started by James “Jimmy” Young of the Orange County Hunt during his term as President of MFHA from 1993-1996, the Hunting Habitat Conservation Award is paying large dividends. In 2009, MFHA Foundation surveyed the member hunt clubs and found their hunts have conserved over one million acres through conservation easements or similar methods.

The success of the national award led Dr. Jack van Nagell, MFHA 1st Vice President and Conservation Committee Chairman, to institute a district level conservation award during his tenure as Chairman of the Conservation Committee. The district level award provided the opportunity to recognize individuals on a more local level, who perhaps did not qualify for the national award, but were making a substantial contribution to conservation and protecting open land in their district. Dr. Van Nagell notes an interesting fact that, “Some hunts still hunt the same country that they did in colonial times.”

The efforts of Martin, van Nagell and the many others who care deeply about the sport and the land needed to sustain it are to be commended for developing a conservation program and fully engaging its members in conservation activity. It is a model ELCR encourages for other equine-related sport and recreation organizations. ■



Conserved hunt country in Virginia.

Photo courtesy of Matthew Klein

hiking, hunting and wildlife preservation are just a few of the many benefits when land is preserved.” And, it is evident that the group backs up their words with action.

One component of the Conservation Committee’s work is the Hunting Habitat Conservation Award, a national award

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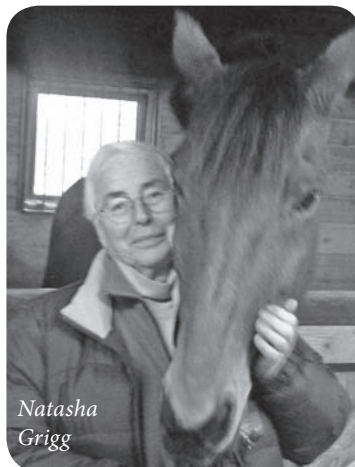


Bayer

Natasha Grigg & Joe Samuels Elected to ELCR Board of Directors

By Yellow Horse Marketing

ELCR welcomed Natasha Grigg and Joe Samuels to its Board of Directors at the April, 2012 meeting. Natasha Grigg of Boxford, MA is active in land conservation as President of the Boxford Trails Association/Boxford Open Land Trust (BTA/BOLT, Inc.), as well as serving on the town of Boxford's Conservation Commission, Land Acquisition Committee and Community Preservation Committee. Grigg sets a positive example for other landowners by allowing BTA/BOLT shared-use trails to traverse her property which is under a perpetual agricultural easement. Grigg was recently invited to be on the Land Trust Alliance's National Council. A leader in the driving world, Grigg is a past president of the American Driving Society (ADS); currently is an Honorary Director and Chair of the Nominating Committee; and is a retired Licensed Official of both the USEF and the ADS. She also served on the Board of Directors for the former AHSA and USET, as well as the US Equestrian Federation. A former rider and driver, Grigg has also enjoyed success in combined driving as a horse owner and sponsor of international driver Larry Poulin.



Natasha Grigg

Joining Grigg as a new addition to the ELCR Board of Directors is Joe Samuels of Charlottesville, VA. After graduation from Hampden-Sydney College, Samuels joined his father in the real estate business started by his grandfather in 1913. As a founding member and former Vice-Chair of the Albemarle County Acquisition of Conservation Easements Program, Samuels helped provide local farmers with an avenue to protect their farms and families' livelihoods. Samuels also serves on the Board of the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation. Samuels and his wife have protected in perpetuity their own Long Ridge Farm through a conservation easement. Daughter Kate Samuels is a rising star in eventing, competing at the Advanced level with her horse Nyls du Terroir. ■



Joe Samuels

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Cheers to Breyer Animal Creations!

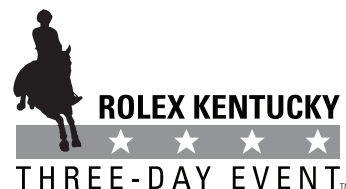
It is just fab that Breyer Animal Creations chose ELCR as one of the 2012 Breyerfest British Invasion Live Auction beneficiaries. Breyer has been a long-time supporter of ELCR and our mission to conserve land and trails for horses, forage and equestrian activities. Breyer CEO, Anthony Fleischman serves on ELCR's Advisory Council. Cheers and thank you to the whole Breyer team and their many collectors! ■



Thanks to the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event Organizers

ELCR is pleased to have the support of Equestrian Events, Inc., the producer of the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event. Last fall, ELCR was named an official charitable beneficiary for the 2012 competition. As a charitable beneficiary, ELCR received cash, and in-kind donations of an array of advertising at the event.

The Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event is the only four star, three-day event held in the United States. The 2013 Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event will be held on April 25th-28, 2013. For more information about the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day event, visit <http://rk3de.org>. ■



ELCR Receives National Recognition for Innovation and Service to Equestrians & Industry

Pfizer Animal Health and American Horse Publications (AHP) recognized the Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) as the eleventh annual Equine Industry Vision Award recipient. A truly unique honor, the Equine Industry Vision Award showcases innovation across the entire equine market, as well as recognizing ingenuity and service. This award was presented to the Immediate Past President Larry Byers and founder Georgiana Hubbard McCabe, representing ELCR and its four original founders, during a ceremony held on Friday, June 1 at the AHP Ride into History Seminar in Colonial Williamsburg, VA.

ELCR was selected to receive this honor because of the organization's dedication to help preserve land for the future of equestrian sports, recreation and industry. "It's an honor to recognize the ELCR for their vision and dedication to help preserve and protect U.S. land for the future of equestrian sports," said Kate Russo a Manager at Pfizer Animal Health. "ELCR has made exemplary strides in educating horse owners and organizations on the issues that losing open land can have on the equestrian industry. The work of this organization is imperative to the industry as a whole."

"The work of this organization is imperative to the industry as a whole." *-Kate Russo of Pfizer Animal Health*

Breed, recreation, horse councils and discipline organizations comprise the majority of ELCR's constituents including the US Equestrian Federation, US Hunter Jumper Association, US Eventing Association, Appaloosa Horse Club, Friesian Horse Association of North America, Virginia Horse Council, and US Polo Association to name a few. Other interested parties include recreational riding clubs, trail and conservation organizations, public agencies, and equine industry product and service providers. Don Treadway Jr., Executive Vice President of the American Quarter Horse Association said, "As a breed organization, we look to ELCR as the lead organization on land issues related to equine needs. ELCR is an innovator with a vision and the determination to raise awareness of the land loss issue and to promote the broad array of international



L-R: Founder Rick Jorgensen; Founder Georgiana Hubbard McCabe; Deb Balliet, CEO; Kate Russo of Pfizer; Founder Melanie Heacock; & Larry Byers, immediate past president

resources and experts necessary to ensure land is available for our industry to thrive."

"As a breed organization, we look to the ELCR as the lead organization on land issues related to equine needs." *-Don Treadway, Jr., EVP of the American Quarter Horse Association*

In addition to ELCR founders Georgiana Hubbard McCabe, Rick Jorgensen, and Melanie Heacock, also in attendance were current president Susan Harding, past president Larry Byers, CEO Deb Balliet and Administrative Coordinator Jessi Jump. Anson Taylor Jr., considered the "leader of leaders" amongst the founders, passed away in 2006. Founder and past president Georgiana Hubbard McCabe contributes this, "Receiving the Equine Industry Vision Award is an honor and a privilege. To be recognized by our peers for our mission and for the dedication of our friends, partners and supporters to conserve and protect horse lands and the equestrian lifestyle, means the world to us. And, this recognition gives us an opportunity to remember Anson, wonderful Anson. He would be pleased, not so much for the personal glory, but for the spotlight the award shines on the land loss issues and solutions. Land is our future and we need to actively protect our equestrian places and spaces." ■

2012 Conservation Partners Teleconference Calendar

FALL TRAILS SERIES

September 27, 2012
Teleconference #4

Topic: Building, Rebuilding and Maintaining Sustainable Horse Trails
Format: Conference call or Webinar
Presenter: TBA

October 25, 2012
Teleconference #5

Topic: Organizing to Increase Access to Public & Private Lands via Protection Acquisition & Consensus
Format: Conference call or Webinar
Presenter: TBA



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"Our competition sites and trails are **disappearing**. Join me and the **Equine Land Conservation Resource** in the fight to **conserve land** for equine activities."

—Karen O'Connor,
Olympian

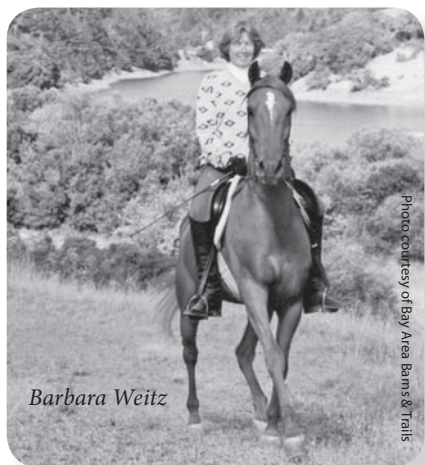


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Lisa Barry Photography (www.lisabarry.com)



Barbara Weitz

Photo courtesy of Bay Area Barns & Trails

ELCR Remembers Barbara Weitz, Trail Advocate Extraordinaire

Barbara Weitz's most cherished activity was trail riding and her life was dedicated to trail advocacy. Bay Area Barns and Trails founder, Barbara passed away on April 9, 2012. She received many accolades in her life including the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Trails & Greenways Conference, recognizing her more than 25 years of trail advocacy work. Her leadership and action was a shining example for all and she will be sorely missed. ■



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