

HOLIDAY LESSONS FROM THE BARN

Kaiti Saunders, Area Chair

(With apologies to Clement Moore)

'Twas the end of the season,
 competition all done.

The riders still telling tales of the
 prior year's fun.

The horses were bundled, all
 snug in their coats,

Bedded in sweet straw, and
 chewing their oats.

And I, in the tack room, the
 bridles all hung,

Was transfixed by the Omni,
 spring entries
 undone.

When from
 out in the
 aisle, I heard
 a great
 clatter,

I ran out
 the door, to
 see what was
 the matter.

The moon
 through the
 window shone

light on all around,

I peered in at each pony, to
 see what caused the sound.

But what to my wondering
 eyes did appear,

Not some little old man or his
 tiny reindeer.

No, 'twas the barn cat, with
 my old XC vest.

He'd chewed up the lining,
 and shredded the rest!

My cross-country bat had
 become a cat toy,

My favorite bell boots a
 source of great joy.

That critter was wily – he
 swarmed up the wall.

Clutching the pieces, he
 perched high in the stalls.

I raged down below, I

stomped, and
 I stomped,

'Til the
 horses on stall
 rest all started
 to prance.

And from
 the stall on
 the left, my TB
 just snorted,

His wise
 eye amused,
 his face
 slightly

contorted.

Bending my ear near his well-
 worn black mane,

I struggled to hear his
 whispered refrain:

"You don't need that bat, nor
 that vest, nor those boots.



Even barn cats like the holidays!

SAVE THE DATE!

The Area II Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony will take place on January 18, 2014, in Frederick, MD. Watch your email and the Area II website for more information :

<http://www.usea2.net>

"To be an eventer, just go
 back to your roots.

"Let's go for a trail ride, we'll
 run through the snow,

"We'll leap over fences, I'm
 happy to go.

"Go forward, let go, kick on,
 and let fly,

"We'll conquer the obstacles,
 reach for the sky.

"Eventing's a feeling you hold
 in your heart,

"The gallop and boldness that
 sets us apart.

"So don't sweat the small stuff,
 just maintain your stride,

"You'll have a great season,
 and we'll have a great ride!"

Humbling that the horses
 always know best! I hope you all
 have a wonderful holiday and a
 great start to your 2015! -Kaiti

YOUNG RIDERS

By Meg Kepferle

As we draw to a close this year, I would like to commend everyone for a fabulous year for Area II Young Riders. Everyone supported this program above and beyond and we were able to come back with a gold medal, and full of momentum for 2015!

We have begun our fundraising efforts for next season already, thank you to those who have been ahead of the curve this season. Hopeful Young Riders have a Jan 1 deadline for \$250. Please fill out and send back your 2015 questionnaire if you have not done so already!

We will be sending out the spring calendar/mandatory outings soon. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us with questions!

Happy Holidays!

Meg&Rich

YRAP

By Chris Donovan

We ended 2014 with 190 YRAP specific Members. 2014 was a great year, we tried our first cross-border challenges first at Southern 8th 3-Day and then again at the Millbrook HT. We will do these cross-border challenges again in 2015, adding a third challenge against Area 8 riders as well.

As with previous years we hosted a number of "behind the scenes" activities at the early spring events. I would encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to see an event from a different perspective. Riders who participate in the offerings have kept more rails up in Show Jumping, and shaved points off their dressage based on what they learned in a single "behind the scenes" session. This year the program will again include time with the XC course builder and control at various spring events.

"WoW Camp" 2014 tried a few new things. Some worked and some didn't. Please feel free to send me feedback still as we are already starting to make up the schedules, and want to ensure the camp meets your specific needs. For 2015 we are adding back in the extra session of riding, and increasing the number of instructors to be similar to what we had in 2012. WoW Camp will still start the day after the NJHP event and non-competitors will still move in on Monday afternoon, but everyone should be ready to ride on Monday too this year!

Details of which events will host YRAP Activities will be announced at the Area 2 Annual Meeting held in Fredrick MD in early January. Please come attend our session and learn about Area 2 YRs and specifically YRAP.

In 2014, Lynn Symansky and Skyeler Voss continued with the

pilot program clinics with 4 people winning grants for the Waredaca 3-day, supported by the incredibly generous Morningside Training Center in VA. Tik Maynard also provided clinics for riders in NJ area.

For 2015 the YRAP Pilot is no longer a "pilot program". We are so lucky to continue working with Morningside Training Center, who will be sponsoring clinics specifically for YRAP riders with the capstone event being the Waredaca 3-Day. Riders who attend clinics at MTC with Lynn and Skyeler and support the YRAP fundraising activities may qualify for one of the MTC grants that covers the entry fee to the Waredaca 3-Day.

This year, we will be looking to continue to expand relationships with trainers and their facilities to consider doing something similar in other communities within Area 2, as we work to grow this program that supports providing

education, volunteerism, and grants to a capstone event near you. In turn, the participants are likely to be future NAJYRC team members.

YRAP will continue to be a clearinghouse for information regarding clinics, scholarships, and awards for which you have to apply. If you are not on our YR mailing list and want to be, please ask. We send mail at least

once a week, so if you are not getting our emails - please reach out to Chris Donovan so she can get you on the list. You don't have to be a member to be on the list.

At the USEA Annual Meeting in Fort Worth, there was lots of discussion with other areas about how we support our non-NAJYRC riders focused riders. We are truly fortunate in what we can offer to

our Young Riders in Area 2. The cross-border challenges are direct result of other areas wanting to get involved at the BN-Training levels too.

I personally look forward to supporting your 2015 goals, so drop me a note, tell me how we can help you, no matter what your level. As a coordinator, I am here to help you meet your own personal eventing goals.

WHEN 1\$ MAKES AN ENORMOUS DIFFERENCE

By Katherine Cooper

Starting last year, USEA began providing funding to Equine Medical Research studies, funded by a one dollar fee on each event entry. Working with the Morris Animal Foundation, the USEA Equine Medical Research grants have funded four separate grants for researchers looking directly into issues that affect sport horses. Interestingly, though not a factor in the grant selection, all four of this year's grant recipient teams are led by women.

Below is a brief summary of the research funded this past year. Your one dollar contribution has a huge impact!

University of Bern, Switzerland: Professor Eliane Marti, DCR, VPH, is studying the mechanisms of allergic diseases in horses with the prospect of developing adequate therapy options. As in humans, the major organs affected by allergy in horses are the skin and the respiratory tract.

Severe itching or recurrent airway obstruction and coughing are very wearing for the horses as well as their owners and are inhibitors to athletic performance. This study is evaluating the effects of a dendritic cell-targeting peptide on the antigen-uptake by equine dendritic cells. They have obtained very promising results thus far and have also received a poster prize for their

initial work at the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) Congress 2014 in Copenhagen.

Michigan State: Dr. Jill McCutcheon, DVM, PhD, is conducting research to improve the ability of horse owners and veterinarians to evaluate and manage Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS), a common disorder of horses and ponies that



Researchers at the University of Bern and one of their study participants

is characterized by obesity, insulin resistance and predisposition to laminitis. The study is attempting to determine whether a relatively simple test that could be done by vets in the field can provide more reliable information about the insulin dynamics in these animals when compared to what is currently available from a single resting blood sample. This would allow better and cheaper assessment of metabolic conditions and consequently earlier and easier detection of potentially dangerous metabolic conditions.

University of Kentucky: Dr. Emma Adam, BVetMed, MRCVS, DACVIM, DACVS is conducting research focusing on the development, maturation and repair of articular cartilage. The goal is to make progress learning about what is required to recapitulate robust joint surface repair in horses. They have obtained and isolated RNA from all experimental samples, and are now analyzing that data with the Department of Computer Science and Statistics.

Royal Veterinary College, University of London: Dr. Charlotte

Maile, BVetMed, BSc, PhD, MRCVS is evaluating mitochondrial function in both PSSM1 and recurrent exertional rhabdomyolysis (RER), a common exertional myopathy affecting predominantly Thoroughbred horses, often known as 'tying up,' using sophisticated microscope-based techniques. Any findings may help develop a new therapeutic approach for these diseases, as currently there are few effective treatments other than via manipulation of management and diet.

Scenes From Around Area II



Area II eventer Dana Voorhees shared this beautiful photo of the Virginia winter countryside.

Check out more of Dana's recent work on the Landfill Dogs series at:

<http://www.ulive.com/search/?q=Landfill+Dogs>

What is Optimum Times? News from USEA's Area II – updates on Area events and programs, and stories about our members. Let us know what you think, submit articles, or send pictures for our Scenes feature.