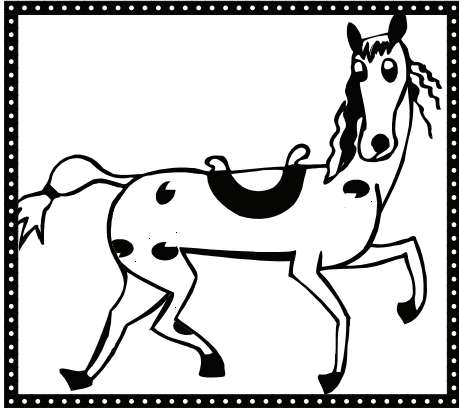




ALLEGAN COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & TOURISM

SILVER CREEK NEWSLETTER

Spring of 2009



Welcome To The Park!

It's finally here...SPRING! We say it every year! We are always so glad spring is here but this year, after the winter we had here in Michigan, it can be said with more feeling. The winter was so cold and we got snow...a LOT of snow! Now spring is bringing with it the things we so enjoy; warmer temperatures, sunshine, green and all the colors of blooming flowers and trees. Along with that of course, is camping and riding our horses. We hope you have a good spring and a great year!

The 35th Anniversary Benefit Ride

The Allegan County Pleasure Riders have put on this Benefit Ride for 35 years and have improved on it each year. They do a super job all the way around and do it graciously. Just saying thank you for all those years of hard work hardly seems adequate, but that is what we must do. Thank you for the ride...thank you for the planning...and thank you for the opportunity to come together with fellow riders and have fun. Thanks for giving everyone an easy way to help organizations with their yearly budgets. We hope you, the A.C. Pleasure Riders, get many thanks from those who attend this weekend.

The Walking Horse Association of Michigan—Judged Trail Ride

There will be free T-shirts for those who register for the ride before May 1, 2009. The ride will be held on May 16, 2009 here at Silver Creek County Park. The fee is \$30.00 per person which includes lunch, and for non-riders the lunch is \$5.00 per person. There will be 10 obstacles and registration is at 8:00 am, judging starts at 9:00 am and ends at 2:00 pm. Score cards must be in at 2:30 pm and awards will be handed out at 3:00 pm. For more info contact Joy at 269-751-8093 or e-mail justbigtime@yahoo.com

* Have a great time and enjoy the events! *

Inside this issue:

TRAIL SYSTEM UPDATE **PARKS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC WORKSHOP** **CAMP HOST WANTED**

The Designated Trail System in Allegan State Game Area

The 25 year lease between Allegan County Parks and the DNR is very close to being completed. A lot of time and effort has gone into this project. We would like to thank the individuals who were at the meetings with the DNR in 2004 as they put a lot of time in discussing the trail system. Kevin Ricco, the Park Director of Allegan County Parks, has kept the pressure on to complete this venture; thank you Kevin. Sara Schaefer, the Director of the DNR in Allegan County, along with Maria, have also worked very hard to see this project through to a positive end; thank you Sara and Maria. There are many who have worked on this project who have not been mentioned...you know who you are, and all the horsemen, the County employees, the people who care about horseback riding in the Allegan County State Game Area...thank you very much for all your work. In the future there will be many more volunteers and we thank you all in advance.

These trail systems are making it possible for horsemen to continue riding in this wonderful area. While the DNR and Allegan County Parks will be putting some time and money into the system to get it started, the bulk of the trail maintenance will fall to volunteers. The Friends of Allegan County Equestrian Trail

System (FACETS) have regrouped to help get the trails completed and marked. It is up to individuals and horse clubs under the direction of FACETS to keep these trails maintained. The development of the Equestrian Trail System will also open up additional equestrian camping opportunities at Pine Point and Ely Lake Campgrounds. It is anticipated that these additional camping opportunities will be available beginning in 2010. While having a designated trail system does not please everyone, it will ensure equestrian riding in the Game Area will be allowed to continue for many years to come. Let it be clear; the

designated trails in the Allegan County State Game Area will be the ONLY trails you will be able to ride on legally in the Game Area. Using the trails with respect, both in staying on them and not trashing them, is very important to the staying power of the trails. All county roads and private land with permission are and always have been legal to ride on. Happy Trails!

Bob Kaartie, President of FACETS, will have a table at the Benefit Ride and would be happy to answer any questions you may have. He will also take anyone's name who would be willing to volunteer to help mark and maintain the trails. He is looking forward to speaking with you.



Silver Creek County Park

When people who use Silver Creek go to other areas in the United States to horseback ride, they often run into other riders who know about our park. They like the park because of the riding in the State Game Area. They like the park because it is clean and they feel a sense of safety here. The new people who come and experience Silver Creek are very impressed by it and will come again. The reputation that Silver Creek has established is something most of you can be proud of because you have helped by respecting the rules and keeping the park and picket pole areas clean. We are privileged to have such a wonderful place to enjoy the woods and our horses.

Last year there were two complaints that came up when folks did not respect the rules nor their fellow park users. The first concerned dogs that were not tied up or were constantly barking. County Ordinance #1010 Park Rules and Regulations, Article V—Animals and Pets, c) states, “Pets shall be kept on a leash no greater than 6 feet in length, under the immediate and continuous control of a competent person, and shall not be allowed to disturb or annoy park users.” The Ordinance continues in more detail but is self-explanatory...dogs are never allowed to run loose or left unattended, and barking should be kept to a mini-

mum as to not disturb fellow park users.

The second issue was in regards to the picket areas not cared for properly. In the future we will have manure pits, but having them will not solve the problem completely. There will still be those people who will not clean up after their horses’ hay and manure. A few letters were sent to people last year who did not care for the picket line areas very well. Your fellow campers and riders do not want to see manure in the sites and not

“Silver Creek’s reputation is something to be proud of thanks to those who respect the rules and keep the park and picket pole areas clean.”

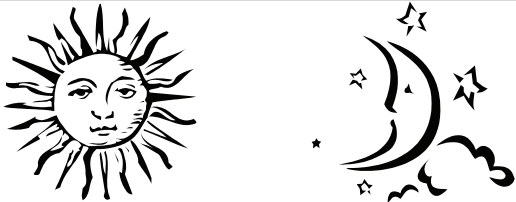
broadcast properly into the woods. Too many riders are still not picking up after their horses; you should be cleaning up anything which comes out of the trailer and/or hay, and manure dropped when standing in the site or on the picket line.

It’s really very simple, although not without effort. Those who are caring for the areas properly are thinking ahead about how and when they feed and how to keep the line as clean as possible. They are great, responsible and respectful, and everyone who comes after them is very appreciative of their efforts.



Boy Scouts

For the past two years the Boy Scouts have used the park in the winter for their Lake Shore District Klondike Derby. This year there were around 300 people who attended the event and some of the boys made snow shelters in which to sleep in. This spring the Boy Scouts are volunteering at Silver Creek and other County parks to help with spring clean up and are doing a good job!



Camp Host Wanted

Are you interested in being a camp host at Silver Creek? The job description is camping in the camp host site (49) on the weekends cost free, being available to take information from campers or day riders, and answering simple camping questions. Any question you do not feel comfortable answering would be brought to the park manager's attention. Any problems or concerns would also be directed to the park manager. You will be the eyes and ears of the manager when he/she is not available, but enforcing park rules would not be something you would be expected to do. Please see Kris if you are interested. Thank you!

Allegan County Parks 5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan

The 5-Year Comprehensive Parks Master Plan is a State of Michigan requirement for any local unit of government that would like to be eligible for state grant funds. This includes our biggest grant funding source, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The current 5-year plan for Allegan County Parks is set to expire in February of 2010 and we are currently in the process of working on the next version. As a part of this process we are required to conduct a public workshop to gather input on future goals, objectives and action items for our park system. This public workshop has been scheduled for July 7th at 6:00pm and will be held in the Zimmerman Room of the Human Services Building at Dumont Lake.

Picket Line Areas

We are hoping to organize a work day this summer to put fresh material on some of the picket line areas. If you are interested and have a tractor with a bucket that you would be willing to use, please let Kris know. Thank you!

Allegan County Parks Recreation and Tourism

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