



Florida Forever Back Country Horsemen, Inc.

Preserving our equine cultural heritage on public lands for today and tomorrow

FFBCH Newsletter January 2009

FFBCH's First Annual Trail Pace

Proceeds from this event will help fund FFBCH's volunteer work on equestrian trails, workday expenses, as well as help purchase equipment used for trail maintenance work.

We would love to have your help. We need volunteers to do the legwork to contact potential sponsors. We also need several volunteers to help with Pace day activities.

A big thanks to Southeast Endurance Riders Association (SERA) for sponsoring the Trail Pace.

Contact Kathy Thompson or Anke Matthiessen to volunteer.

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Special Notes of Interest

General Meeting
January 27, 2009
Golden Corral
Brooksville, Fl
Dinner 6 PM
Meeting 7 PM

Reminder
Members
Please vote and
return your
election ballots by
January 10, 2009

2009 Membership Drive

Hello everyone and Happy New Year. As you know from reading our FFBCH Presidents column that it is called "From the Saddle". I have decided that my column should be called "The Side Saddle".

Let me begin by saying that I hope all of you have recovered from the hectic Holiday Season. But now it's that time of year for new beginnings, new resolutions and most importantly to renew your membership with Florida Forever Back Country Horsemen.

A membership application is included on page 5 of the newsletter or you can print one from our website www.ffbch.org.

Just as a reminder, our local chapter dues are \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family to join. Of that money, \$10 for an individual and \$13 for a family goes to the national organization, Back Country Horsemen of America. The BCHA mission is an important one, as they have lobbyists in Washington, DC representing equestrian trail riders and

keeping an eye out for legislation that may affect us.

Your support is appreciated as well as needed to continue our efforts to give all of us a place to ride now and in the future. So please, join or rejoin today! If you have allowed your membership to lapse now is the time as we need all of your support. Remember more members equal more power to get more action accomplished!

Thank You,
June Brower, Secretary

THE FLORIDA FOREVER BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN, INC. INVITES
ALL EQUESTRIANS TO THEIR
FIRST ANNUAL

TRAIL PACE

Saturday, February 21st, 2009



JOIN US!

Location: Start/Finish: Smith Prairie Trail Head (Croom Rd/Forest Trail 7 intersection), CROOM TRACT OF WITHLACOOCHEE STATE FOREST, Brooksville, FL.

Start time:
First riders out at 8:30 AM
Last rider out for Leisure Pace and Endurance division by 9:00 AM
Last rider out for Medium Trail Pace and Cavalry by 9:30 AM

Cost per person \$25 (juniors \$15) - includes participation in trail pace, trail-snack, PLUS a chance to win one of many great prizes!
ALSO: "Special educational highlights" (optional) - Find out your horse's pulse rate -AND learn how to pace your horse's "mph".

Ride in the division of your choice:

1. "Leisure Pace" (3mph)
2. "Medium trail pace" (4.5mph)
3. "Cavalry" (6 mph)
4. "Endurance pace" (double distance- 7.5 mph)

-Trail distance is between 8 and 10 miles.



For more information and to sign up visit our website www.ffbch.org or call (352) 796-9272
Juniors (under 16) must wear helmets and be accompanied by an adult.
All participants must sign a release. Current coggins papers are required at ride. No refunds.

Proceeds from this event will be used to perpetuate the use and enjoyment of horses in America's backcountry and wilderness.

From the President's Saddle by Truman Prevatt

In December, FFBCH teamed with the American Endurance Ride Conference to sponsor the AERC Trail Masters Course. The AERC Trail Masters course was developed by and is taught



by Mike Riter, a professional trail designer and builder, to train AERC members in the science and engineering of designing, building and maintaining sustainable trails that have a small impact on the resource. The Florida course is one of six that was held in 2008 in the US for the AERC.

The field of professional

trail design is relatively new and arose because the way trails were laid out in the past was not holding up to the growing demand. IMBA and the BCHA were instrumental in developing new and better methods of trail design that would support the growth in use with minimal impact on the land. Proper trail design concepts are common sense but were not followed in the past. There are also psychological differences in what different user groups want in trails that need to be factored in.

Mike showed us how to use precision instruments such as a Clinometer and a digital level, to design and build trails that will provide both challenge and satisfy the users. At the same time, these trails will have minimal impact on the land

and require minimal maintenance in the future.



By running a trail that flows with the contours of the land – avoiding climbs that are too steep with frequent gentle dips water will sheet across the trail instead of running down it. Any water that does get on the trail will run off at a dip.

This will minimize any natural impact due to erosion – the number one problem faced by recreational trails.

The course ran for four days and consisted of six

horsemen and two land managers from the WSF. It covered both classroom and field work. All graduated and received certification as a Trail Master.

The Trail Master certification was one developed by the professional trail builders association to identify people trained in the proper techniques for trail design, building, maintenance and the leading of trail work crews. The AERC funds these courses for their members in exchange for a commitment from the participants that they will provide support to the land managers in their areas.

Look for the concepts and techniques taught in the class to show up in the trails near you.

We congratulate the following newly Certified Trail Masters:

- Johnnie Arquette
- Leslie Feroglia
- Craig Fletcher
- George Hammond
- Truman Prevatt
- Doug Shearer
- Cookie Thatcher
- Kathy Thompson



FFBCH Trail Pace - February 21, 2009

Trail Pace

Our Trail Pace is designed to help you and your horse get the maximum enjoyment from your ride.

Similar to a hunter pace, but without jumps. In a hunter pace you ride to the "ideal" hunter pace. In our trail pace, you will choose your "ideal" pace based on what is most comfortable for you and your horse to ride.

We have various divisions that are based on the average pace you prefer to ride the trail.

Trail Length

Trail will be **8 to 10 miles** in length. The exact distance of the trail will be a well kept "secret" to all riders.

Pace

Pace is an average--the distance you travel from Point A to Point B divided by the difference between start and arrival time.

Courtesy Pulse
Learn what your horse's pulse is before you start and at end of your ride.

Prizes

The riders coming closest to the pace time for their division for the trail distance will be the winner of their division. We will award prizes in each division for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

Divisions are:

1. "Leisure Pace" (3 mph)
2. "Medium trail pace" (4.5 mph)
3. "Cavalry" (6 mph)
4. "Endurance pace" (you will do double the distance at 7.5 mph)

Riding Styles

Riders of all ages and riding styles are encouraged to participate. You will participate as an individual, but we suggest that you ride with other participants.

Riders 16 years and under must wear helmets and be accompanied by an adult.

Forest Rules
You must carry a current coggins with you on the trail

What division should I ride?

Does your horse have a nice ground covering walk and that is the gait you prefer? If so, then the Leisure Pace would be the division you might enjoy. If the trail is 9 miles long, then you would expect to be on the trail for three hours.

If you like some walk, some trot/gait, and maybe some canter then the Medium trail pace would be the division you might enjoy. If the trail is 9 miles long, then you would expect to be on the trail for two hours.

If you like more trot/gait with some canter and some walk, then you might enjoy Cavalry division. If the trail is 9 miles long, then you would expect to be on the trail for one hour and 30 minutes.

If you and your horse are fit enough to go 16 to 20 miles at a moving along pace, then try the endurance division. If the loop is 9 miles long and you are doing it twice, then you would expect to be on the trail for two hours and 24 minutes.

Entry fee

\$25 per rider and **\$15** for juniors, 16 years and under. This includes participation in trail pace, trail-snack, PLUS a chance to win one of many great prizes!

Pre-registration is suggested to minimize delays on the day of the event. You may pay the morning of the ride.

The ride will be held Rain or Shine. Sorry, there will be no refunds.

Registration

Check-in and registration opens at 8:00 AM. Starting times will be assigned according to check-in order.

First riders out may start at 8:30 AM. A timer will record your start time and your end of ride time. The last rider out for Leisure Pace and Endurance division must start by 9:00 AM. The last rider out for Medium Trail Pace and Cavalry must start by 9:30 AM.

Miscellaneous

Endurance Pace riders will have a 20 minute hold between loops. Hold is not counted in your trail time.

We will have some water for horses at the trail head and out on the trail. Please help out by bringing your own water.

Location

Staging area will be the **Smith Prairie Trail Head** at the intersection of Croom Road and Forest Road 7. There is easy access from Croom Road and plenty of easy access parking for your trailers. Day use only.

Entry forms with specific directions are available on our website Look under www.ffbch.org **Trail Pace**
Or Contact Kathy Thompson (352) 796-9272
kathomps@gate.net

Croom Trail Reconnaissance Program

A few weeks ago John Arquette, who manages all trails for DOF in our area, asked for help to monitor the horse trails. DOF has given a directive to him that all trails must be inspected once a month, so he asked for help from FFBCH to monitor the equestrian trails. I volunteered to chair the project.

The purpose of the Trail Reconnaissance Program is to provide trail maintainers and land managers a way to analyze trail building, maintenance, and land-management needs and to assess priorities and problems

Trail inventories provide the manager with information on conditions of the trail, what problems are occurring, and what maintenance issues are likely to occur in the future. Lack of proper trail maintenance can quickly lead to deterioration of the quality of the trail. The inventory helps in the planning of the immediate maintenance needs and also future scheduling needs.

Trail maintenance is essential to assuring the safety and enjoyment of the trail user as well as extending the useful life of the trail.

Trails must be inspected on a routine basis, once a month or as soon as possible after a severe wind or storm. User safety should always be primary consideration of any inspection. Potential safety problems should always take precedence. Vandalism left unattended encourages more of the same and should likewise be a high priority for maintenance.

On Monday, December 26, the Trail Reconnaissance Program was approved and as the New Year begins, so does the Trail Reconnaissance Program. I have divided the forest into 7 sections with one person assigned to head the monitoring of that section. The response to this program well received and within a couple days all 7 sections have a monitor. They are: Devany Neff, Denise Chamberlain, Kathy Thompson, Kathy Lent, Becky Swerdloff, Debbie Shaughnessy, and myself.

Trail Evaluation includes:

Safety Issues: These come in various forms such as a branch protruding, at head height, into the trail area. A log that cannot be stepped over. A hole that has appeared on the trail. Litter that has appeared such as broken glass or barbed wire. Limited sight line on trail.

Trail Erosion: After especially heavy rains.

Unauthorized motor vehicle trail use (vehicle, ATV, motorbike or motorcycles).

Blowdowns: Note the extent of the blowdown and the approximate diameter of the tree limbs or trunks blocking the trail. Can a cross saw be used or is a chain saw required.

Trash: Note type and amount.

Trail Markings: Missing and incorrect markings. Pretend this is the first time you have ridden the trails in your section, would you know where to go with current markings?

Now, if you are out there riding and you see something that you feel needs attention, please call me at 352-428-3666 (leave message) or email me at mamma_lu@yahoo.com

So friends, keep in mind that the more we volunteer for any land managers, the

better our relationship will be with them, and the more they are willing to give us in return. This is a fact as I have seen this work in state parks, state forests, and national forests.

Happy Trails,
Mary Lou Patton

RTT is Mowed

David Mackenzie recently mowed Rails to Trails (RTT) from Nobleton to Rock Lodge Road. He is happy to report that there are lots of hoof prints on the trail from just north of the I-75 overpass to Nobleton. The connector trails from Croom equestrian trails to RTTs are now open and marked.

Croom Trail Map Available

As Mary Lou has been setting up the Trail Reconnaissance Program, she has been creating and up-dating a map with the current Croom equestrian trail system. The map is still in draft form, but she is willing to email copies to people who would like to use it.

To get a copy of the map contact her at:

mamma_lu@yahoo.com

Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference

GAINESVILLE, FL
July 9-12, 2009

www.southeasternequestriantrails.com

General Meeting

Tuesday
January 27, 2009
Golden Corral
Brooksville, FL.
Dinner 6 PM
Meeting 7PM

Conner Preserve

Pasco County



January 16, 2009
10:00 A.M.

Tour the Preserve (no horses)

Lunch Provided

Please bring chairs and Blankets

RSVP by Jan 9 to

Susan Kessel 1-800-423-1476 ext 4760

Susan.kessel@watermatters.org

From US 41: East at SR 52 1.5 miles: gate on south side

Join us and show that equestrians appreciate
their cooperation!

Grand Opening Friday

Healing with Horses! Spiritual Retreat



For centuries horses have exuded a mystical quality.
Spend an afternoon understanding how they can help you
become emotionally empowered, gain heightened spiritual
awareness, and rejuvenate your life purpose.

No horse experience is necessary.

A one day spiritual retreat conducted by
Dr. Tricia Wilmoth, Licensed Psychologist, Reiki Master
and Equine Experiential Therapist

Saturday 1/17, 2/7, 3/7 2009

12:00 PM to 7:00 PM

White Light Ranch, Brooksville, FL.

Enjoy dinner and a bonfire at the end of the day

Rain date: Sunday, the next day

Group size is limited to 10 people.

Advance registration is required

Fee: \$125.00 (each)

For information and registration call 352-428-4480

www.whitelightranch.com

FFBCH Membership Application

Renewal ()

Individual Membership -- \$20 ()

Family Membership -- \$25 ()

For Organization Membership please
contact us for more details.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State ___ Zip _____

EMAIL _____

Phone _____

*Members will receive quarterly newsletter
from Back Country Horsemen of America

If Family -- list additional family member
(spouse or partner)

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

*Family membership gets two votes at general
meeting

Make checks payable to

FFBCH

PO Box 815

Brooksville, FL 34605

Phone: (342) 796-9272

Email: ffbch@earthlink.net

Web Site: <http://www.ffbch.org>

We Thank You for
Your Support!

FFBCH

**The FFBCH Newsletter is Published
for Members and Friends of
Forever Florida Back Country Horsemen, Inc.**

Newsletter Editor
Kathryn Thompson

Officers

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Board of Directors

Louise Bower
Open seat
Mary Lou Patton
Gail Thomas Pridgen

[Email: ffbch@earthlink.net](mailto:ffbch@earthlink.net)

**P.O. Box 815
Brooksville, Fl. 34605
(352) 796-9272**

**We are on the web!
www.ffbch.org**

An equine trail advocacy group representing the interests of equestrians who depend on Florida's public lands for their recreation opportunities.

We address current and future issues that face equestrians in their access to and the use of their equines on Florida's public lands.

Our mission is:

- ① To perpetuate the common sense use of and enjoyment of our cultural heritage of using horses on public lands.
- ① To work to insure that public lands remain open to recreational equestrian activity.
- ① To assist the various Federal, State and private agencies in their development, maintenance, and management of said resources.
- ① To educate, encourage, and solicit active participation in the use of the public land resources for equestrian users and the general public commensurate with our cultural heritage.

Why join FFBCH?

FFBCH is an affiliate of the Back Country Horsemen of America, a national organization established in 1973 and active in 25 states. By joining, you will add your voice to those of more than 15,000 of your fellow American horsemen and horsewomen who are interested in improving our equine recreational opportunities on public lands. The number of FFBCH members is all-important as we work to maintain the privilege of using and enjoying our equines on Florida's public lands.

What does FFBCH do?

We are primarily a service organization. We work with public land managers to enhance the equine recreational opportunities in the state of Florida. We do this by providing suggestions for possible trails and assisting with the physical work of maintaining trails.

How can I help?

Volunteers make trails happen. FFBCH members from across Florida volunteer their time to do trail work in their local public lands. Contact us for more information on how you may volunteer your time and skills.

