



CouncilLetter

November / December 2025



WWW.WISCONSINHORSECOUNCIL.ORG

INFO@WISCONSINHORSECOUNCIL.ORG

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WHC Free Youth Member Photo Contest!

Hello, Everyone!

We hope you all had a great summer and are settling into the new school year. Our first Zoom presentation will be in November, date and presenter to be determined. Watch your emails for more information.

In the meantime, do you have any great horse photos from this last spring or summer? Do you have time to take advantage of the great fall colors for horse photos? We are holding a Photo Contest open only to WHC Free Youth members. The top 3 photos chosen by a small contingent of directors, will win cash prizes and Midwest Horse Fair passes; and may be considered to have their photo used in the WHC ad that appears in the Midwest Horse Fair program.

Top photos may be displayed in the WHC Public Relations booth at the Midwest Horse Fair.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Photos must be in a landscape format
- Photos must be delivered digitally in high resolution. (any photos that are not high resolution will be eliminated)
- No people in the photos please, as that would require permission/waivers to use the image(s)
- Members can submit more than one photo, although they may not win more than once.
- Submitted photos must have been taken by the Free Youth Member who is submitting the photos.

DEADLINE:

Photos must be submitted by **December 15, 2025**.
Send your entries to info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

WISCONSIN HORSE COUNCIL, INC.
A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF HORSEMEN

Wisconsin Horse Council

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Teri Giannetti - Executive Director

teri@midwesthorsefair.com

131 S. Ludington Street

Columbus, WI 53925

Phone: 920-623-5515

WHC Mission Statement

To represent, protect and foster a unified equine industry in Wisconsin through leadership, education, service and communication.

WHC Vision Statement

To take a pro-active role in the future growth and development of the equine industry.

ATTENTION!

Tear out pages 25 & 26 to fold as a handy brochure to keep or to share!
This month's featured brochure is
"WHC Supports You With Sponsorships & Trail Grants".

Membership in the Wisconsin Horse Council is open to individuals, associations, businesses, societies, or other entities whose interests are in line with the WHC's purpose and Mission Statement. Our membership year follows the calendar year. Members will receive a free e-newsletter and the option to purchase a printed newsletter where FREE classified ads can be placed and business card, 1/4, 1/2 and full page ads can be purchased as well. The newsletter reaches 500+ horse enthusiasts.

The WHC currently sends out six issues per year.

The WHC employs a professional lobbyist who works with us on pending legislation as needed for the equine industry. We continue to work on adding new benefits for our members. Please feel free to contact us with your comments or suggestions. Thank you!



Every day the AHC works to ensure the equine voice is heard in Washington, DC

Help us continue to Put More HORSEpower in Congress...

Support the AHC today!

Visit www.horsecouncil.org for more information

1616 H Street NW
 7th Floor
 Washington, DC 20006
 202.296.4031





Welcome to the Wisconsin State Horse Council Equine Foundation

The bond between an equestrian and their equine is an experience worth cherishing; we are dedicated to strengthening this bond and enriching the equestrian experience in Wisconsin through education, research, charity, and scholarship.

Visit our website www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org – Go to the WSHCEF tab at the top of the page

What is the mission statement of the WSHC Equine Foundation?

The Wisconsin State Horse Council Equine Foundation was created to better serve Wisconsin's growing equestrian community and to help that community realize its fullest potential. The Foundation is a tax exempt, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization, and as such allows individuals to make tax-deductible contributions to support Wisconsin equine projects.

The mission of the Equine Foundation is to support Wisconsin's expanding equestrian community by funding:

- * Educational Initiatives
- * Trail Development
- * Equine Research
- * Youth Scholarship and Participation

What is our relationship with the Wisconsin Horse Council?

The Wisconsin Horse Council is our parent organization and the sole member of the WSHC Equine Foundation. WHC Board of Directors are elected to serve on the WSHC Equine Foundation Board of Directors, along with non-WHC individuals. The WHC was incorporated in 1972 as an advocate for the equine owners and industry in the State of Wisconsin. It has grown to become the focus of the equine industry in Wisconsin.

The Mission Statement of the Wisconsin Horse Council is: To represent, protect and foster a unified equine industry in Wisconsin through leadership, education, service and communication.

The WSHC Equine Foundation is a federally approved 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to the advancement of equine activities and the equine industry in general.

The Foundation's main objectives are to promote education, research and development, charity, and scholarship opportunities for equestrians in Wisconsin.

WSHCEF Officers, Board Members & Volunteer Committee Members

Officers

President: Katie Bachhuber
Vice President: Linda Ernsberger
Secretary: Diane Sackett
Treasurer: Nancy Young
Board Members: Lori Helmer, Jan Pieper,
 Jennifer Julison,
 Gail Seator- WHC Exec BOD Rep.

Volunteer Committee Members

Karen Meekma	Dave Kluge
Sharon Hookstead	Roxanne Cromheecke-Kluge
Rich Ernsberger	James Harris



2026 WISCONSIN HORSE COUNCIL ANNUAL AWARD NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

These Awards are sponsored by the Wisconsin Horse Council, Inc. in cooperation with the Midwest Horse Fair®. Nominations may be submitted by clubs, associations, or individuals.

Horseperson of The Year Award is based on contributions to Wisconsin's equine industry as a whole, or in any specific area such as: youth activities, education, research, industry promotion, related legislation and regulation, trails, other equine events, or activities.

- ✦ Any person 18 years old or older can be nominated.
- ✦ Nominees must be a Wisconsin resident.
- ✦ Nominees need not be a member of the WHC.
- ✦ Include a paragraph explaining why your nominee should receive this award. Nominations received without an appropriate write up will not be accepted.

Special Achievement Award is based on a major accomplishment in the equine industry.

- ✦ Any person 18 years old or older can be nominated.
- ✦ Nominees must be a Wisconsin resident.
- ✦ Nominees need not be a member of the WHC.
- ✦ Include a paragraph explaining why your nominee should receive this award. Nominations received without an appropriate write up will not be accepted.

Lifetime Achievement Award is based on a lifetime of service to the equine industry.

- ✦ Preference given to any person who has devoted at least 25 years to the equine industry.
- ✦ Nominees must be a Wisconsin resident.
- ✦ Nominees need not be a member of the WHC.
- ✦ Include a paragraph explaining why your nominee should receive this award. Nominations received without an appropriate write up will not be accepted.

Show Judge of the Year is based on the integrity, diversity of knowledge, sportsmanship, willingness to accept and continually strive for greater knowledge of various breeds and disciplines at open shows.

Equine of the Year is to recognize the horses, ponies, donkeys, mules or any equine who have enriched the life of one or more humans or been cast into the spotlight because of outstanding acts, creating a positive image for equines and is awarded to the owner of the horse and is based on merit and voted on by the WHC Board of Directors which will decide the state Equine of the Year.

- ✦ Nominated equine must be a living resident of Wisconsin.
- ✦ Owner must be a resident of Wisconsin
- ✦ A completed WHC Equine of the Year Award Nomination Form, one (1) clear, color photo of the nominated equine (5x7 or 8x10), and an essay containing 250 words or less describing how the nominated equine has enriched the life of one or more people through outstanding training, contributions or accomplishments or been cast into the spotlight because of outstanding acts, creating a positive image for equines must be received on or before December 1, 2025.

Awards will be presented to the winners at the Wisconsin Horse Council Awards Ceremony on Sunday, April 19, 2026 during the Midwest Horse Fair®.

Nomination forms can be accessed at www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org under "Programs" & then "Annual Awards" or by contacting the WHC Office at info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org.

All Nominations are due by January 10, 2026 with the exception of Equine of the Year which is due by December 1, 2025.

NOTES OF THANKS...



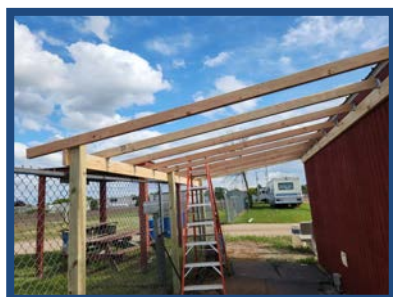
On behalf of the Manawa High School and Junior High Rodeo Committee, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Wisconsin Horse Council for supporting our nonprofit this year.

Your generous donation allowed us to make important upgrades to our concession stand for our annual rodeo. Because of these improvements, our food stand was more successful than ever - becoming the most profitable it has been in the history of our event!

As you know, hosting a rodeo comes with many expenses, and our concession stand is our greatest opportunity to raise funds that keep this tradition alive for our youth. Thanks to your support, we are better equipped to cover these costs and continue providing opportunities for young rodeo athletes to learn, grow, and compete.

We are truly grateful for your investment in the future of our rodeo and the young people it serves.

With appreciation - Monica Geiger



Thank you for sponsoring the Manawa Rodeo and Wisconsin High School Rodeo Association. We appreciate all you do for the sport of rodeo and the youth. It takes a lot of work and money to make these events happen. We love coming back year after year to compete for the great awards you give out. See you next year for another great rodeo! Jayda & Kashton Ristey



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Going into an Equine Profession?

We may be able to provide money for your continuing education with equine!

Apply for funds from the WSHCEF to help you reach your goals!



IS OUR SCHOLARSHIP RIGHT FOR YOU?

- ✓ Going to school after High School?
- ✓ Going back to further learning?
- ✓ Technical School?
- ✓ Other educational opportunities for Equine Professions?
- ✓ Pursuing Veterinary Medicine Degree with Equine Focus?

APPLICATION PROCESS

Go to www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org, click on the WSHCEF tab, and scroll down to find linked PDF's of the guidelines and application. The application must be completed by the applicant, be typed or word processed, and returned along with supporting documents by 1/1/26, to:

WSHCEF
Attn: Scholarship Program
121 S. Ludington Street
P.O. Box 72
Columbus, WI 53925



VISIT US :

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.com, then click on the WSHCEF tab

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SAVE THE DATE!

Wisconsin State Horse Council Equine Foundation

Presents their annual

“Winter Fun Day”

February 14, 2026

at

Springbrook Events

N8400 County Road I

Burnett, WI 53922

- ♦ Model Horse Show
- ♦ Vendors
- ♦ Dog Sled Demos
- ♦ Sleigh Driving Exhibition
- ♦ Bobsled Rides
- ♦ Skijoring
- ♦ Kids' Activities

Sleigh Bell Café - Breakfast & Lunch

Admission is Free!





Save the Date

APRIL 17, 18, & 19, 2026

THE ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER | MADISON, WISCONSIN

Chris Cox Horsemanship

Midwest Horse Fair is excited to welcome back the one and only Chris Cox Horsemanship!

Chris is a true legend in the horse world — a 4-time undefeated Road to the Horse World Champion, 2-time Reno Invitational Million Dollar Team Roping Reserve Champion, National Cutting Horse Futurity Finalist, the 2015 Monty Roberts 'Equestrian of the Year', and a Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame Inductee!

Today, he's known worldwide for his straightforward, practical approach that empowers riders of all disciplines and ages to achieve results.

For nearly 30 years, Chris has inspired horsemen and horsewomen around the globe — and now he's bringing that passion and expertise back to Madison, WI for an unforgettable 2026 Midwest Horse Fair experience.



Plan Your Weekend Retreat!



Plan to make some wonderful memories that last a lifetime once again at the Midwest Horse Fair in 2026! Enjoy a 3-day weekend retreat with your family and friends.

Learn from world class clinicians, indulge in fabulous shopping and tasty food, see over 35 different breeds and disciplines, watch world class entertainment and more.

The Midwest Horse Fair website provides all the information you need to plan your trip under General Info - Plan Your Trip.

Visit Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram for the most up-to-date information.



Save the Date

APRIL 17, 18, & 19, 2026

THE ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER | MADISON, WISCONSIN

First Ever Youth Day!

Midwest Horse Fair will kick off on Friday, April 17, 2026 with our first ever Youth Day!

The horse-human bond is unlike any other — a partnership built on trust, communication, and respect. For youth, especially, time spent around horses nurtures confidence, empathy, and responsibility.

Studies have shown that working with horses can improve emotional regulation, reduce anxiety, and encourage teamwork and leadership skills. These are not just lessons in horsemanship — they are lessons for life.

At the Midwest Horse Fair, we believe every young person deserves the chance to experience the transformative power of horses and will have special programming for youth throughout the day on Friday including Chris Cox - Leadership through horses presentation, FFA State Horse Evaluation CDE, Equine Career Exploration feature and more!



Midwest Horse Fair *Outside the Arena* Podcast!

Listen to the Midwest Horse Fair "Outside the Arena" podcast to hear wonderful real life stories and expert advice from the equine clinicians and entertainers from around the country who have been a part of the largest 3-day horse fair in the USA.

Watch for new episodes every month on your favorite podcast player!

Learn more: midwesthorsefair.com - education - outside-the-arena-podcast-series



**Outside
The Arena
Podcast**
Midwest Horse Fair®

Visit Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram for the most up-to-date information.

INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

Several WHC Directors and members attended the International Trails Symposium held earlier this year in Madison, WI. We will be including reports from those individuals in the next couple of issues of our newsletter. Please enjoy our second installment.

Recap: You Can Get Blood from a Turnip! – Creative Funding Strategies from the Ozark Trail Association By Cricket Jewett, WHC Director & Trail Committee Co-Chair

At the 2025 Trail Talk session, Kathie Brennan and Abi Jackson from the Ozark Trail Association (OTA) shared a refreshingly honest and practical look at what it really takes to fund a volunteer-driven trail organization in today's challenging landscape. Their session, titled "**You Can Get Blood from a Turnip!**", was full of hard-earned wisdom, a few cautionary tales, and a lot of encouragement for those of us doing more with less.

The OTA manages 430 miles of the Ozark Trail, Missouri's longest multi-use National Recreation Trail. With limited funding from public land agencies, they've had to become masters at thinking outside the scope of traditional funding—and their ideas are ones we can all learn from.

Key Strategies They Shared:

- **Foundations Are Your Friends** - Don't sleep on private foundations. Whether large or small, they often support outdoor access, conservation, and youth engagement—and are more flexible than many government sources.
- **Look Sideways, Not Just Up** - One powerful idea was to check what other trail organizations have received and then look at those funders. If it worked for a peer group, it might work for you too.
- **Tap Community Groups & Corporations** - Local businesses often have volunteer match programs, where employee hours translate into donation dollars. Community groups can also offer grant help, in-kind support, or even adopt a trail section.
- **Leverage Your People** - Don't be shy—ask your volunteers if anyone writes grants, knows a small business owner, or can help with outreach. Use their talents beyond the trail!
- **Use Volunteer Hours as Match** - This one's gold: federal programs often allow you to count volunteer hours as a match, and those hours are currently valued at \$29/hour. That adds up fast—and makes your application more competitive.

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INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

- **Be Strategic About Timing**

They reminded us to time requests wisely:

- * **Giving Tuesday in November**
- * **Volunteer Give Back Day in April**
- * **National Trails Day in June**

Use these built-in awareness days to boost support and visibility.

- **Reapply, Even After Rejection** - Grants often go to persistent applicants. If at first you don't succeed... apply again, but better.
- **Spread the Ask Around** - Don't put pressure on just one funding source. Cast a wide net and consider partnering with a well-known cause. A shared fundraiser with a cancer group, for example, might draw in new supporters.
- **Smart Swag, Not Storage Units** - They advised: don't date your shirts, and don't overbuy merchandise you'll have to store. Focus on low-cost recognition—thank-yous go a long way.
- **Acknowledge Every Gift** - Whether it's \$10 or \$10,000, send a thank you. People remember that, and it helps build long-term support.
- **Use Your Online Power** - Promote fundraisers and workdays on Facebook but also explore new social platforms. Your next donor might not be where you usually post.

In closing, Kathie and Abi reminded us that the road to sustainable trail funding isn't easy, but it is navigable—especially when you're willing to be creative, stay consistent, and never stop asking.

Their takeaway: "If you make your trail's impact visible, people will step up to support it."

Recap: Training the Next Trail Generation—Meeting Gen Z and Alpha Where They Are By Cricket Jewett, WHC Director & Trail Chairperson Co-Chair

The session led by Dr. Jay Post of Arkansas Tech University and Lori Greminger of Northwest Arkansas Community College tackled a question many of us in the trail world are asking: How do we prepare the next generation to carry the trail torch?

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INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

Titled “Overcoming the Challenges of Training New Generations for the Trail Industry,” the presentation focused on adapting education and workforce development strategies to meet the unique needs of Gen Z (born ~1997–2012) and Gen Alpha (born ~2010–2025)—two generations raised with tech in their pockets, emotional wellness on their radar, and a strong desire for purpose-driven work.

The Challenges

Post and Greminger didn’t shy away from the hard stuff. Gen Z and Alpha bring a fresh perspective, but they also come with unique challenges:

- **Shorter attention spans, high expectations for personalization, and preference for hands-on, tech-driven learning**
- **A need for mental health support and coping strategies**
- **Skepticism toward vague authority or unclear expectations**
- **A deep desire for meaningful work—but not necessarily traditional career paths**

Training the Trail Pros of Tomorrow

To reach and retain young trail talent, they shared concrete methods both educational institutions are testing, many of which can apply across trail organizations:

- **Use blended learning:** Combine real trail work with digital tools and videos. Think short, skills-focused clips instead of lectures.
- **Make it personal:** Younger generations respond better when they know why the work matters. Share the story of a trail’s history or a volunteer’s legacy—make it about something bigger than the job.
- **Create growth paths:** Today’s students want to know where they’re headed. Show them how they can move from volunteer to crew leader to trail designer.
- **Normalize wellness:** Include mental wellness, resilience training, and open conversations in your staff development. Build a culture where caring for the land and yourself go hand in hand.
- **Gamify & reward:** Use tracking tools, “level up” language, peer recognition, and goal challenges (like logging hours or team milestones) to keep them engaged.

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INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

- **Share leadership:** Promote inclusive, collaborative leadership models. Let younger members co-lead or mentor others—it builds ownership.
- **Build community:** Offer opportunities for social bonding, both online and in person. A sense of belonging matters as much as skill building.

Final Thoughts

What doesn't work? According to the presenters, strategies like vague directions, rigid structures, or assuming one-size-fits-all motivations. Fame and vague promises of "making a difference" without showing impact just don't resonate.

What does? Authenticity, flexibility, feedback, and storytelling. We need to show this next generation that the trail world isn't just about moving dirt—it's about connecting people to place, purpose, and each other.

This session was a great reminder that training trail professionals isn't just about teaching tools—it's about evolving with the times and embracing the values of those who will carry this work forward.

Recap: Innovative Trail Funding – Make the Ask, Make it Matter

By Cricket Jewett, WHC Director & Trail Committee Co-Chair

At the 2025 International Trails Summit, Jed Olson of ORA Trails shared a dynamic and inspiring presentation on creative approaches to funding outdoor recreation and trail projects. His key message? Money is infinite—and it moves in a circle.

Jed encouraged attendees to dream big, lead with joy, and be bold in asking for support. His philosophy centers on the idea that giving should feel good, and fundraising should come from a place of purpose and connection.

Highlights from the Session

- **Start with the Vision:** Be ambitious. Share your dream with clarity and passion. "Shoot for the stars," Jed said. "People give to bold ideas."
- **Make the Ask:** Be specific, and don't shy away from it. Use open-ended questions to engage potential donors, but make the goal clear. Have your elevator pitch ready.
- **Recognize and Celebrate Support:** Thank people often, publicly and personally. Create urgency with matching gifts, prize drawings, or limited-time campaigns.

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INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

- **Use Tactics that Work:**
 - * Make giving easy—QR codes, Venmo, monthly gifts.
 - * Use “seed money” to launch a campaign.
 - * Set specific goals and share progress.
 - * Respond to common objections (like cost or timing) with solutions.
 - * “Pass the hat”—sometimes the simplest method is still powerful.
- **Fundraising is a Skill:** Jed emphasized the importance of learning continuously—from podcasts, mentors, books, and peers. He also encouraged trail organizations to connect with community foundations and professional networks like the Association of Fundraising Professionals.
- **Treat It Like a Business:** If you want funding to be more than a hobby, you have to approach it professionally. Plan ahead. Mobilize your team. Prioritize the \$10,000/hour tasks—the things that really move the needle.
- **Build Relationships First:** Whether it’s one donor or a whole board, success starts with trust. From the top down and the inside out—people give to people.

Jed closed by reminding us that two people working together (1+1) is much more powerful than one working alone. And that the key to sustainable funding lies in leading with heart, strategy, and boldness.

Recap: Trail Systems as Economic Drivers—Turning Dirt into Dollars

By Cricket Jewett, WHC Director & Trail Committee Co-Chair

At the 2025 International Trails Summit, the “Trail Systems as Economic Drivers” session made a compelling case for what many of us already know: trails are not just recreational amenities—they’re economic engines.

The panel brought together leaders from across the country, including Nathan Reigner (PA), Jackie Dagger (VT), Tara McKee (UT), Brad Garmon (MI), Chris Perkins (Outdoor Recreation Roundtable), and Andy Williamson (WV). Each shared success stories from their states and reinforced the growing understanding that well-planned trails drive real, measurable benefits for local economies.

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INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM NOTES

Key Takeaways:

- **Tourism & Small Business Thrive Around Trails** - From Vermont's village-to-village trail networks to Utah's backcountry trail loops, strategic trail investments are drawing visitors, boosting tourism dollars, and supporting small, trail-friendly businesses like bike shops, cafes, and gear rental services.
- **Trails Improve Public Health and Save Money** - Trails promote active lifestyles and improve mental health, reducing healthcare costs over time. Several states are now including outdoor recreation in public health planning.
- **Property Values Go Up with Access to Trails** - Homes near quality trails and greenways often see increased value and desirability, making trails a solid investment in both economic and community well-being.
- **Policy and Partnerships Matter** - Strong state-level support, like outdoor recreation offices and collaborative funding programs, plays a crucial role. Panelists emphasized the need for public-private partnerships, creative funding mechanisms, and clear policies to keep trails well-maintained and economically impactful.
- **Challenges Still Exist** - Sustained funding, equitable access, and long-term maintenance are ongoing issues. But with inter-agency collaboration and storytelling that emphasizes economic return, more states are stepping up to make trails a priority.

The panel left us with this thought: Trails aren't just good for recreation—they're good for business, health, community resilience, and quality of life. Every foot of tread we lay down has the potential to ripple out across entire towns and regions.



Equest ePress

*News about Wisconsin and border region's equine industry
- its animals, people, events, businesses, and organizations*

Subscribe to receive this **free** e-newsletter in your email box by visiting the EquestETS blogsite and filling in the form under Newsletter or emailing using the email address below.

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Day Outings; Book Clubs, Team Building
Field Trips; Day Care, Seniors
Youth Club — 4-H Groups

Youth — Adult — Family Programs



Wisconsin Horse Council Trail Grants

*Now is a great time to start
gathering the required
information to apply!*



Due date February 1

- Get your application in early - so the trails committee can review, and ask for additional information if needed.



Required Documents

- WHC Application
- Letter from Land Manager
- Quote for project
- Maps



Up to \$4000

- Funds can be used for new trail development
- Trail Improvements on existing trails
- Trail Enhancements

WHC Office

121 S Ludington St,
PO Box 72
Columbus WI 53925

920-623-0393

More Information

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

**WISCONSIN HORSE
COUNCIL - TRAILS**

*Up to \$10,000
available!*

**CAPITAL
IMPROVEMENT
TRAIL GRANTS**



**Details and application at
wisconsinhorsecouncil.org**



WHC District 2 Open House & Fall Horse Festival

By Shaughn Novy, President, Wisconsin Horse Council District 2

The idea for the Fall Horse Festival began during a late spring meeting of Wisconsin Horse Council District 2 with a handful of officers, and the conversation turned to a familiar challenge on how to boost engagement and give horse enthusiasts a reason to come together during Northern Wisconsin's busy trail-riding season. It was clear that people needed more than just another meeting; they needed an experience that celebrated horses, horsemanship, and community.

From that conversation, the vision took shape: a weekend filled with demonstrations, clinics, vendors, and connection. Something hands-on, inclusive, and worth stepping away from the trails for. As plans came together, the search for a venue led to Riverwind Ranch in Merrill. With its beautiful indoor and outdoor arenas, convenient access off Highway 51/39, and owner Tammy Guite's enthusiasm to bring an event to the area, it was the perfect fit.

Held on October 11 and 12, the Fall Horse Festival exceeded every expectation. The weather cooperated, the energy was high, and the turnout was great bringing in attendees from a broad area. Our goal was exposure and engagement and we achieved both through a lot of personal outreach, news coverage, and social media promotion.

Inside the arena, featured clinician Maria Bendixen of M&M Stables led a sold-out ranch clinic both days, focusing on flag work Saturday and reining on Sunday. Outside, a lineup of demonstrations kept the crowd entertained and educated, with Taylor Fremming, TJ Clibborn, Mark Jenkins Horsemanship, and the always-popular Mounted Justice.

Under the tent, vendors, clubs and nonprofits connected with attendees, along with representatives from the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo and the Rodeo. Northcentral Technical College shared information about its agriculture programs, and WJFW TV-12 provided local news coverage.

The entire event was a testament to teamwork. Volunteers made the event possible from setup to cleanup and everything in between. Special thanks go to Patti Brockman, Kevin Griepentrog, Lori Selinger, Lisa Redfern, Carol Lese, Dustin Spink, Shaughn Novy, and of course, Tammy Guite, whose generosity and partnership helped bring the vision to life.

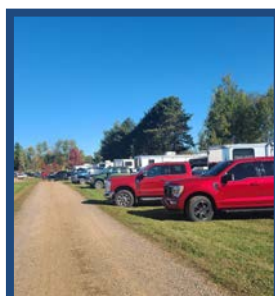
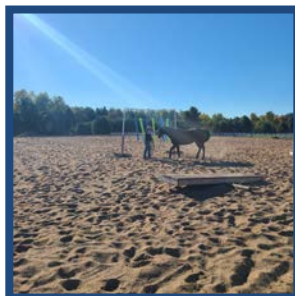
By the end of the weekend, more than 350 people had attended which was a remarkable turnout for a first-year, free event.

WHC District 2 was well represented. As plans begin for next year, we're carrying forward that same energy and excitement because when horse people come together with a shared purpose, something truly special happens.

Enjoy pictures from our event on the next page.

WHC District 2 Open House & Fall Horse Festival

Photos by WHC District 2 Fall Horse Festival Committee



WHC Youth Member & Friend Attend

National Walking Horse Association Championships

My name is Lilli Gyrion, and I ride Almighty Blue, also known as 'Rio,' a 9-year-old registered blue roan Tennessee Walking Horse. In September, we traveled to Murfreesboro,

Tennessee, to compete at the national championships together for the second time. Rio and I participated in a wide variety of classes, including trail, water glass, showmanship, halter/model, and our standard 2- and 3-gait classes. While in Tennessee, we had the opportunity to attend a showmanship and equitation clinic led by world-renowned clinician Keegan Meadows. In the clinic, we learned how to perfect the small details of rider position and how to showcase our horses to their full potential. I am grateful to have attended this clinic, as I learned a great deal.



This year was my last chance to show in the youth division, as I am currently a freshman in college. It was a bittersweet experience to compete in the youth division for the final time, especially since I have decided to take a break from showing to focus on my education. That being said, I wanted to make the most of my last year. I really made the effort to branch out and make new connections. I met many wonderful youth from all over the U.S. who share my passion for horses. It was fun getting to know them, and we even had a pirate-themed youth party where everyone could hang out, play games, eat pizza, and enjoy ice cream. I also connected with a few adult exhibitors who lent a helping hand and offered endless support.

Last year, we traveled to nationals for the first time, but unfortunately, Rio got injured while we were there, so we had to drop out of most of our classes. Since I didn't get the full experience last year, we decided I deserved a do-over, which is why we made the 14-hour drive again this year! I have been showing in Wisconsin Walking Horse Association shows for five years, but competing at the national level is a whole different ball game. The classes were much larger, which made it incredibly daunting. The classes also took longer than we're used to, so we often had to exercise our patience as the week went on. Another significant difference was that the show lasted eight days, compared to the 1- to 2-day shows I'm accustomed to. Last year, I was able to overcome most of my nerves, so this year, I entered my classes with much more confidence.

We did amazingly well at nationals this year, walking away with the titles of National Champion and National Reserve Grand Champion, along with numerous other top-10 placements. Achieving these titles means the world to me, but what makes these victories even sweeter is remembering where we started. Rio unfortunately lost his left eye a month after we purchased him in 2023 due to a fungal infection. At that time, I was devastated and thought my dreams were over. I feared we wouldn't become the team I wanted us to be with only one eye.

Continued on next page...

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WHC Youth Member & Friend Attend National Walking Horse Association Championships

Boy, was I wrong! After three years of hard work and dedication, I have taught him the ins and outs of cantering, showmanship, and trail obstacle—all while forging an unbreakable bond between us. Rio has made all my dreams come true, and I couldn't be happier to call him mine.

I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to showcase our hard work at nationals again this year and look forward to returning one day!



Mya Malotke's NWAHA adventures

I was able to attend The National in Murfreesboro, Tennessee September 20-27 this year. I have been showing Tennessee walking horses for the past 4 years. This was such an exciting and fun time. We took my mare Lilly, who is 24 years old.

I attended a clinic for equitation, which I love showing in and got some great tips that will help me for years.

The amazing horses that I have been watching for the past couple of years and meeting trainers that I have admired along with new people that I met other youth from different states and adults was such a highlight for me. They had a themed pirate party for us too that was super fun!

The week didn't go as planned for showing and Lilly ended up getting hurt three days before the show ended. As sad as I was, it turned out to be something cool. I was offered 3 horses to show from 3 different people! I never expected that and I was so grateful for the experience.



Wisconsin Horse Council

ATTENTION !

FREE....Upcoming Events section on Website.

We have created a section on our website for your upcoming events...FREE..... You can send (email) us any EQUINE related event (shows, tack sale, clinic, meetings, events etc.) and we will put it on our website free of charge. All you need to do is send us a copy of your event with a contact phone number and we will list it for all to see.

Questions-call 920-623-0393/email info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

I would like this event posted on the Wisconsin Horse Council website.

Date: _____

Event: _____

Location: _____

Phone: _____

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

920-623-0393

121 S. Ludington St. Columbus, WI 53925



WHC Calendar of Upcoming Events



November 2025

- November 2 Northern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association (NKMHTA) Giddy Up & Groove, Foundry 45, 9442 Old Fond du Lac Rd, Kewaskum, WI 53040, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Music by Downtown Harrison, Food served 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Donations, raffles and auctions supports the Bridle Trail and Horse Campground projects. Learn more and purchase tickets at NKMHTA.org/Giddy-up&Groove
- November 9 Hope Community Farm presents Horse Powered Freedom Open House, 7510 Deer Road, Custer, WI 54423, located at Heartland Equestrian Center, light refreshments, tour the farm, meet the program horses, have the opportunity to do hands on activities such as grooming and leading (optional), and learn about the healing power of horses and what they can do for you, Contact 715-323-2626, hopecommunityfarminc@gmail.com
- November 10 Northern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association Monthly Meeting, Rusty Spur Saloon, New Fane, WI, 7 p.m.
- Nov. 14 & 15 Rohling Hills Saddlery & Leather Holiday Open House, Wausau Business Incubator, 100 N. 72nd Ave, Suite 138B, Wausau, WI 54401, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Saturday, Breast collars, Headstalls, Halters, and more, all in-stock items will be available to shop through, In-Person ONLY Sale Specials, looking for a custom order, come see our wide selection of leather in person, rohlinghillsleather.com
- November 27 **Happy Thanksgiving!**

December 2025

- December 1 WHC Annual Awards Equine of the Year Nomination Submission Deadline
- December 8 Northern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association Monthly Meeting, Rusty Spur Saloon, New Fane, WI, 7 p.m.
- December 13 Festival of Lights—Equine Trail, Geitner Homestead Equine Campground, 5883 Oak Road, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235, Contact 920-493-7669, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Light up your horse and ride through the enchantment of a magical wonderland, sponsorship opportunities available, check out our website for more information, geitnerhomestead.com
- December 25 **Merry Christmas!**

January 2026

- January 1 **Happy New Year!**
- January 1 WSHCEF Scholarship Application Submission Deadline
- January 10 WHC Annual Awards Nomination Submission Deadline
- January 21 Ag Day at the Capitol, Madison, WI
- January 28 **WHC BOD Monthly Meeting, 121 S. Ludington St., Columbus, WI 53925, 7 p.m.**
- January 31 WHC Ride Wisconsin Program Hour Log for 2025 Submission Deadline

February 2026

- February 1 WHC Trail Grant Application Submission Deadline
- February 14 **Happy Valentine's Day!**
- February 14 WSHCEF Annual Winter Fun Day, Springbrook Events, N8400 Cty. Rd. I, Burnett, WI 53922, Model Horse Show, Vendors, Dog Sled Demos, Sleigh Driving Exhibition, Bobsled Rides, Skijoring, Kids' Activities, Sleigh Bell Café for Breakfast and Lunch, Admission is Free!
- February 25 **WHC BOD Monthly Meeting, 121 S. Ludington St., Columbus, WI 53925, 7 p.m.**
- February 28 WHC Roundup Program Map Submission Deadline
- February 28 WHC Sponsorship Application Submission Deadline

***** Also check WI Pleasure Horse Shows on Facebook! *****



WISCONSIN HORSE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

All Memberships run from January 1st through December 31st

Office Use Only:

Payment Type: _____

Check #: _____

Amount: _____

LEVEL I MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Individual Name: _____

Youth Name(s): _____ Age(s): _____

Family Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail Address: _____

County: _____ District #: _____ Number of Horses: _____

LEVEL I MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS (Please check type of Membership & choice of newsletter.)

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ☐ Individual Membership (no insurance) | \$ 20 |
| ☐ Individual Membership PLUS (includes \$1 Million personal liability insurance) | \$ 45 |
| ☐ Family Membership (no insurance) | \$ 30 |
| ☐ Family Membership PLUS (includes \$1 Million personal liability insurance) | \$ 80 |
| ☐ Youth (age 17 & under = free with <u>paid</u> Level I adult membership) | \$ 0 |
| ☐ Individual Lifetime Membership (one-time fee which includes the 1st year of liability insurance) | \$250 |
| ☐ Annual fee on Lifetime Membership for \$1 Million personal liability insurance..... | \$ 25 |
| ☐ Printed Newsletter mailed to the address above..... | \$ 30 |
| ☐ Free E-newsletter sent to the e-mail listed above..... | \$ 0 |

Description:

Level I membership class is available to any individual/family whose interests are similar to those of the Council and is for individuals/families only. Level I and Level II members elect Directors to the WHC Board to represent their District. Family membership is for a family of 2 or more living at the same residence and has 1 vote in the elections and business of their District. Membership must be current to vote at District meetings.

- Programs such as the Certified Judges and Ride Wisconsin require a Level I membership - even if you are a Director or a contact person for a Level II or III organization, you will need to be a Level I member yourself to participate in programs.
- Youth (17 & under) are free with a paid Level I adult membership.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP is an individual Level I membership with a one-time fee, giving the individual a paid-up membership for his/her lifetime. If LIFETIME MEMBERS wish to retain the \$1 Million personal liability insurance after their first year, they must purchase it on an annual basis. The printed newsletter is included with this membership annually at no additional cost.

Wisconsin Horse Council does not sell or distribute our membership list. Information is kept private for use only by our organization for WHC business.

Membership dues, payments and gifts to Wisconsin Horse Council are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Such payments may be deductible under the Internal Revenue Code as ordinary and necessary business expenses.

Return application and payment to:

**Wisconsin Horse Council
P.O. Box 72
Columbus, WI 53925
Phone: 920-623-0393
www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org**

Wisconsin Horse Council Mission & Vision Statements

To represent, protect and foster a unified equine industry in Wisconsin through leadership, education, service and communication.

To take a pro-active role in the future growth and development of the equine industry.

*** FREE ***

Upcoming Events

Listing on WHC website

We have created a special section for your upcoming events ... and it's FREE! E-mail any equine-related event (shows, tack sales, clinics, meetings, etc.) to info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org.

Information to include:

Date:
Event:
Location:
Contact phone: (Very important)
Questions? 920-623-0393
info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

121 S. Ludington Street
P.O. Box 72
Columbus, WI 53925
Phone: 920-623-0393
info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org
www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

The Wisconsin Horse Council has given out more than \$424,940.00 in Sponsorships since 1995!

Please visit the WHC website for a complete breakdown of who has received these funds and how much was given.



The Wisconsin Horse Council has given out over \$416,300.00 in Trail Grants from 1995 to 2024!

Please visit the WHC website for a complete breakdown of who has received these funds and how much was granted.



Wisconsin Horse Council

WHC Supports You With Sponsorships & Trail Grants



info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org
www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org





SPONSORSHIPS

The Wisconsin Horse Council Sponsorship Committee looks for ways to promote the use and enjoyment of horses and ideas to educate horse people and the public at large—particularly youth.

Maximum amount that could be approved for any one project or event is \$5,000. For requests more than \$5,000, the application will go to our Board of Directors. Funding amounts vary depending on the purpose of the request and how it fits with the WHC Mission statement. WHC Sponsorships offer funding for organizations in need of assistance for a specific use. We encourage fundraising efforts by your organization, as we may match those funds up to a limited amount.

Organizations applying for a sponsorship must be a current WHC Level 2 or Level 3 member. **Sponsorship applications MUST BE POST-MARKED BY February 28 or September 30.** An organization may receive only one sponsorship per calendar year.

Sponsorship money is not provided for normal operating expenses, horse show judges, awards, food, repairs to personal property or new building construction, feed or hay. Applications are analyzed and their merit assessed based upon the following criteria:

- ◆ Educational value
- ◆ Horse industry promotion value
- ◆ How many people it will reach
- ◆ Whether the project benefits youth
- ◆ Whether the money will be well spent

Visit website for more details & application form, or information can be mailed to you.

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org
920-623-0393
info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The primary purpose of the Wisconsin Horse Council (WHC) capital improvement grant is to provide funding to increase trail access and amenities for equestrians. ADA compliance is important to keep in mind as a trail or building enters design or construction phases. WHC developed this grant to fund property enhancements, including the building of permanent structures. The Capital Improvement Grant program is not an annual grant, but one that allows the WHC Trails Committee to recognize and support larger projects that will be of benefit to the equestrian community. The Capital Improvement Grant is a 50% matching grant. WHC encourages volunteerism and effectively turns volunteer time and effort into project funds, when a log of volunteers' names and donated hours are maintained and submitted with the Grant Completion Report. This means that the 50% of matching funds (approximately 175 hours) may be achieved in volunteer time. Volunteer hours are valued at \$29.00/hour.

WHC Trails Committee accepts and reviews applications throughout the year. Grant application acceptance or denial is determined within three months of receipt. Approved grant projects requiring multiyear fundraising will receive a pledge of funding. Funds are mailed when work on the project begins.

To be eligible for the Capital Improvement Grant, projects must be projected to cost over \$50,000. Grant funding is available up to \$10,000.

Visit website for more details & application form, or information can be mailed to you.

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org
920-623-0393
info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org



TRAIL GRANTS

Grants are offered to Wisconsin Horse Council member clubs for work on public trails open to equestrians for riding and/or driving.

Grants are awarded in three distinct categories:

1. New trail development
Maximum amount per grant up to \$4,000
2. Existing trail improvements or repairs
Maximum amount per grant up to \$3,000
3. Trail enhancements
Maximum amount per grant up to \$2,000

Applications for trail grants must originate with an equestrian organization who is a Level 2 or Level 3 WHC member. An exception to this requirement is for government entities; however, their trail work must benefit equestrian trail riders. Grants are not awarded to individuals.

Applications must be postmarked by February 1st; approved grants will be awarded by May 1. Grants are 50% matching, allowing the value of volunteer labor, donated materials and/or use of equipment, and other monies to count as the 50% matching share from the applicant.

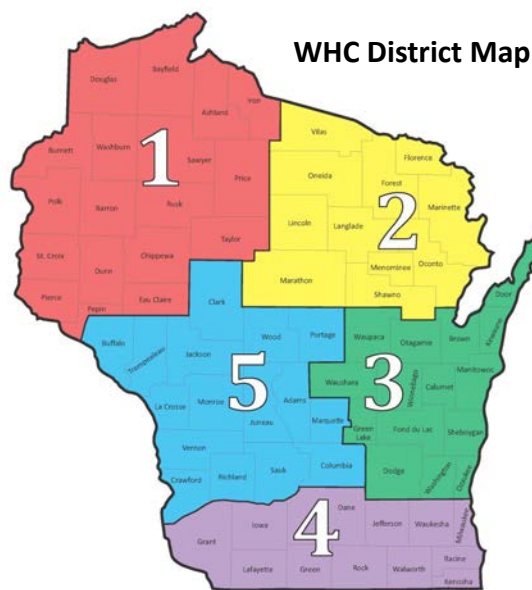
No more than two grants per year will be awarded to the same property and each must be used for different trails/projects.

Completion reports of projects are required and must be submitted to the WHC office by December 1 in the same year as grant was received.

Visit website for more details & application form, or information can be mailed to you.

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org
920-623-0393
info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org





WHC District Map

WHC District 1:

Contact - Paulette Adair
715-554-2904
cca2lucky@gmail.com

WHC District 2:

Contact - Shaughn Novy
715-610-1065
slnovy20@gmail.com

WHC District 3:

Contact - Katie Bachhuber
920-539-0601
rideendurance2@yahoo.com

WHC District 4:

Contact - Floyd Finney
608-201-9539
floyd-diane@outlook.com

WHC District 5:

Contact - Mark Long
715-323-3666
yeahicanfixthat2@gmail.com

District 1 includes the counties of: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Iron, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, St. Croix, Taylor and Washburn

District 2 includes the counties of: Florence, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Shawano, and Vilas

District 3 includes the counties of: Brown, Calumet, Dodge, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago

District 4 includes the counties of: Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Kenosha, Lafayette, Milwaukee, Racine, Rock, Walworth, and Waukesha

District 5 includes the counties of: Adams, Buffalo, Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Marquette, Monroe, Portage, Richland, Sauk, Trempealeau, Vernon, and Wood

CouncilLetter Deadline

The deadline for articles, upcoming events and advertisements for the WHC CouncilLetter is:

**January / February Issue:
December 15th at noon**

Articles must be equine related, may not be for commercial benefit and must be sent to us in a timely fashion. The Editor reserves the right to revise or refuse articles.

Ads and articles are best sent in electronic format (prefer MS Word or Adobe Acrobat) to:

info@wisconsinhorsecouncil.org

Office hours: Monday-Friday - 8am-4pm



Join us on Facebook and become a friend. You will receive the most up-to-date information and connect with fellow horse people.

www.wisconsinhorsecouncil.org



Important Dates to Remember

November 11
November 27

Veterans Day
Happy Thanksgiving!

December 1

**WHC Annual Awards Equine of the Year
Nomination Deadline**

December 25

Merry Christmas!



Merry Christmas

** Please check out our Calendar of Upcoming Events, included in each issue of the CouncilLetter, as well as posted on the WHC website, for shows, fundraisers, clinics, tack sales and more!*



Join us on Facebook and become a friend. You will receive the most up-to-date information and connect with fellow horse people.

