



Acres of News from the Farm

February 2007
MacNairs Country Acres

Spring is just around the corner and we have a busy schedule full of activities that will help to continue your development into great horsemen and horsewomen.

Each newsletter will be informative of fun programs for you to come and join. We will start some theory lessons that will help as you progress through the levels in your riding. Be sure to reference our website for our calendar of events for any updates or changes.

From the horse's mouth: *What type of riding do we teach at MacNairs?*

We teach forward seat riding or sometimes known as hunt seat riding. Vladimir Littauer was the founder of forward seat riding. He was a Russian officer who started a riding academy in the United States in the 1930s. Mr. Littauer saw that horses were not ridden in a way that allowed the rider to follow the natural movement of the horse. So, Mr. Littauer introduced the forward seat style of riding. This style allowed the rider to stay off the horse's back, be more comfortable in the saddle, jump higher fences at faster speeds and not hurt the horse. George Morris, one of today's most influential hunter riders has continued this theory of riding and made it very popular.

When we teach the forward seat we concentrate on seven physical qualities that help to make you a good rider. We will discuss one quality in each newsletter.

Number 1: The Correct Design of Position:

(The profile view of the rider should be)

- The rider is placed close to the pommel.
- Legs are bent in the knees; heels are pulled down.
- The rider is inclined forward from the hips, more or less, depending on the gait and speed.
- The back is straight, shoulders open, head up.
- The arms are bent in the elbows so that each forearm forms with its rein a straight line of action from elbow to the horse's mouth.

(From the front)

- The weight of the rider is evenly distributed on both stirrups.
- Toes are out just enough to bring the upper-calves in contact with the saddle.
- The grip of the ends with the upper-calves and the rest of the lower leg is away from the horse.
- Look straight between the horse's ears.
- Hands are about one foot apart.

The exercises we use to teach and strengthen the correct design of position are: two-point position, sitting, posting trot, and double posting.

A strong and correct design of position gives a solid foundation for safe jumping. To be a good rider you will spend many hours working on these exercises.

Upcoming: Educational Opportunities

Hoof Beat Clinics (ages 9+)

Saturdays, 3:00-4:30

February 17, Primping Ponies

Come and help give all the school ponies a makeover!

February 24, Horse Care

How to take care of a horse when it is sick!

March 10, Project Ponies

Come and learn how to take care of your horse- feed, hay, etc.!

March 24, Horse Safety

What type of fencing, shelter, etc you need to keep your horse safe!

Trail Rides

These fun times give the student the chance to work on riding skills outside the ring on uneven terrain. Trail rides are an excellent exercise in balance and incorporate all the riding skills you have learned. Not only all that, but you may see some really neat wildlife!!!!

Keep an eye on the bulletin board!

March 10, March 24, April 3, April 5

Call the office to reserve a spot with Debra. All trail rides will be divided up to meet the appropriate rider level and we reserve the right to cancel if enough riders are not interested.

Hunter Riders Corner and 4-H

Riding Clinics: *Open to students interested in 4-H and students interested in additional learning opportunities. What a great way to continue to practice your skills and spend more time with your horse.*

Sign up and we will divide the classes according to ability.

February 24, March 3 , March 24

4-H Show Team Practice for Tryouts

February 3

4H Show Team Tryouts

February 4

REMEMBER-*The February 3 clinic is a mandatory clinic for those students trying out for 4-H. Ride times will be posted on the website and 4-H bulletin board by Thursday February 1. Please get up with Melanie or Betsy (your 4-H leaders) if you have questions 851-1118*

Teacher Workday and Easter Special: *Let your child come spend the morning with us! Let your child love, groom and ride and then eat lunch with their favorite four legged friends. Pack your lunch, boots, helmet and let's have fun! Space is limited, so please sign up ASAP and reserve your spot for this new program.*

This program is for our Pony School riders!

February 19, March 26, April 4

***Saddle Up:** This program is designed for the first time rider as an introduction to horsemanship and riding. Bring your parents and friends and join in this introductory program to this life time sport. Open to children and adults.*

February 17, March 17, April 5

Please check out the website and bulletin board. Call and sign up with Debra in the office.

We welcome your suggestions and comments. Come find us or drop them off in writing in the black box on the porch beside the office door.

Thank you!

From the staff and your four legged friends at MacNairs
Country Acres

