



The HorseCountry Quarterly

A PUBLICATION OF THE TRYON RIDING & HUNT CLUB

PEER Holds Technical Large Animal Rescue Training - PAGE 4



PHOTO: ELZ CRAMLEY PHOTOGRAPHY

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TR&HC PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

A New Century Ahead!



Happy New Year to all! As we head into the new year and the club’s next century, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every member, volunteer, and sponsor who continues to support and strengthen our organization.

For 2026, we’re excited to build on the traditions that have shaped our identity, like our historic horse shows and our longstanding community events. We are also striving to make space to embrace new opportunities for connection and growth. In response to member feedback, we will be expanding our calendar to include more social

gatherings and educational workshops, designed to welcome all. More to come on these events!

We also want to get to know you better. Our recent member survey provided some valuable feedback, helping us to build a club experience that truly reflects the interests and spirit of our members.

If you are interested in checking out some of our events, but don’t know where to start, we encourage you to contact us! We have numerous opportunities for volunteer activities, from assisting at events, to supporting our community outreach programs, there’s a place for everyone to get involved.

Join us for an exciting year ahead!

Joanne Gibbs

Joanne Gibbs
TR&HC President

DID YOU KNOW?

Blinders and other head gear aren’t used only for skittish horses — some horses need extra help protecting their eyes from the sun.

Horses with eye conditions like uveitis may suffer from eye damage from the sun’s UV rays, so they may wear fly masks or goggles with UV protection while they’re outside.



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The HorseCountry Quarterly

A PUBLICATION OF THE TRYON RIDING & HUNT CLUB

The Horse Country Quarterly is the official publication of the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club, published four times a year. Visit TryonRidingandHuntClub.org and click JOIN to receive *The Quarterly*. Send comments, article ideas and events to tryon1925@gmail.com.

TR&HC President

Joanne Gibbs

Editorial Director

Margie Askins

Art Director

Stephen Bleezarde

PLAN AHEAD!

TR&HC Events Coming in 2026

Watch for new event details and announcements!

April 17-19: Horse & Hound Show at FENCE
TR&HC Silent Auction

May 15: Scholarship Applications Due

June 2-7: Charity I Horse Show (Spring 6 at TIEC)
Scholarship Winners Announced

July 1-5 : Charity II Horse Show (Summer 4 at TIEC)

September: TR&HC Tailgating at The Fork at TIEC

October: Tryon Halloween Event

November: Any & All Dog Show

December: TR&HC Annual Meeting/Holiday Party
Tryon Christmas Parade

— — —
Visit tryonridingandhuntclub.org for more information.

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK

A New Year, a New Chapter

My love for horses began a few years ago, and consequently, through this publication. I had been a college professor of English for 20-plus years, and had decided to teach high school as a new adventure, and a change of pace. What I did not realize was that one of my dearest students would have a mother, Michelle Yelton, who would steer my heart and latest writing endeavors towards equines. Through conversation, we soon discovered that we both had years of experience in publications, writing, and editing. It was then that she was handed her position as editor, and she asked me to join her writing team. Initially, I was hesitant. I knew very little about the world of horses, but she encouraged me to dive into it, and learn, write and grow. I plunged in head first.

And here I am now, three years later, 20-plus articles contributed, and I am deeply invested, not only in the life of horses, but our community, this club and this publication. I am in awe of the beauty and power of these animals, the soul and outreach of the club, and the community within it all. The more I write, the more people I meet, the more I fall in love with it all.

I am honored for my next chapter as editor and thank you for entrusting me with this publication and its future. If you have any suggestions, questions, or even ideas for articles, you can contact me at thcqaskins@gmail.com.

Margie Askins

Margie Askins
Editorial Director



BUILDING NEW TRADITIONS
First Annual Tailgating at “The Fork”

by Donna Younkin

Tailgating came to The Fork at Tryon International for the first time in September. The competitors — human and equine — numbered over 350! It was a perfect late summer day when Tryon Riding and Hunt Club set up at a tailgate spot overlooking the water complex for cross country — one of the three phases of eventing, which also includes dressage and show jumping.



The cross country phase of eventing took place right before our eyes and was non-stop action throughout the day. Riders enter the course every two to four minutes and can tackle up to 40 jumps. There is a lot going on all day and in every direction, so plan to attend in 2026!

First timer, Club President Joanne Gibbs, remarked

on the non-stop action, the beauty and complexity of the course, and the number of volunteers needed. Club member Cam Stockhausen was on hand to help explain the competition to those experiencing it for the first time. A “course walk” became an understanding of the footing, terrain, jump construction, safety provision and the construction of jumps.

Olympic level eventing has its roots here in Tryon, but today it can use more community support! Numerous other eventing venues have very popular tailgating options with hundreds— if not thousands— in attendance. We now have the opportunity for our area to do the same at Tryon International. In addition, the top riders appreciate

exposure to the added atmosphere of crowds which they encounter at other top venues —particularly if they will be competing in Kentucky or Europe. Local barns, businesses, and families can start a new tradition.

And, it doesn’t stop there! With the introduction of tailgating as one hospitality option, The Fork has the potential to expand its attractiveness to turn a weekend stay in our area into an extended visit for out of town competitors, owners, and spectators. We are rich in resources with our barns, breeding, educational, and therapeutic programs. Tours, clinics and demonstrations can be added to the calendar as a lead up to The Fork. Our art galleries, wineries, hiking, climbing, and wilderness areas are perfect for the eventing market. Let’s find a way to promote and enjoy eventing in Polk County!



During a break, a group of tailgaters joined in the search and successfully found the missing glasses of a rider who lost them in the water complex.
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PEER Holds Technical Large Animal Rescue Training: Three Days of Practice, Growth and Collaboration

by Margie Askins

Polk Equine Emergency Rescue (PEER), alongside 4Hooves Large Animal Services, hosted an incredible Technical Large Animal Rescue Training at Red Bell Run in Columbus, N.C., last October. These three full days of training included experiences that allow participants to work through stimulated emergency scenarios to help prepare them for when real life situations do occur.

PEER is called upon whenever an animal is stuck in a precarious situation and needs to be rescued — stuck in a pool, a hayloft, slipped off an embankment, and countless other possible situations. Although one can't ever fully be prepared for what they will encounter in emergency situations such as these, the training helps to ensure that they are more comfortable and knowledgeable.

During the three day course, over 30 dedicated volunteers were trained and certified on how to assist in large animal rescue emergencies. These participants ranged from firefighters to veterinarians to local barn owners; they showed up, suited up and stepped up. Red Bell Run's owner Mary Adams also participated in a huge way by allowing the use of her property. She even allowed huge holes to be dug and filled with water to stimulate a dummy horse—fondly named Merle—being stuck in the mud.

Merle is used to stimulate situations during the training. “Merle weighs roughly 600-700 pounds, which is half the weight of a real horse, but as close as we can get,” explained PEER volunteer Jasmine Pierce. “We put Merle in all types of situations to practice for real emergencies that may occur. We have



Participants work with dummy horse ‘Merle’ in simulated emergency scenarios. PHOTOS COURTESY OF PEER

him stuck in fences, mud holes, and even in trees. Sometimes these situations take hours to work through and figure out as volunteers work through various scenarios and possibilities to rescue the animal and stay safe. It really is amazing.” Pierce added that as much as they try to stimulate emergency situations, in real life, there is always the unknown — people may be panicking, there's often bad weather, the horse is moving, and other things they just can't recreate, but they try to stimulate possible emergencies so participants can role play and be better prepared when they are put in real life rescues.

Piece has attended the training for five years, and encourages people to attend each year. “There is always something new to learn. After we spend time actively working with Merle through a stimulated experience, we then collaborate. We watch videos, we talk through hypotheticals, and we always say what we would do differently—

there's always a better way, a smarter way; it's a collaboration of ideas and techniques to keep everybody safe while safely rescuing the animal without putting any human at risk,” Peirce added.

After the training, participants are qualified to be dispatched with others to help in situations such as these and more importantly they also are more knowledgeable about risks that help prevent these types of incidents from happening in the first place.

Follow Polk Equine Emergency Rescue on Facebook for more info.

TRYON HISTORY MUSEUM: Exploring the Equestrian Exhibit

by Margaret Freeman

The Tryon History Museum is a fun stopover for those interested in both the history of the Tryon area and local equestrian activities. The museum has a room devoted to equestrian life. This exhibit, full of history, includes information on Carter Brown and his influence on the Tryon area's equestrian life, the 1956 Olympic trials that were held here, and the Blockhouse Races.

In addition to the equestrian-related displays, the museum has information and artifacts on the Tryon Toy House, Nina Simone, the Oak Hall Hotel, actor William Gillette, poet Sidney Lanier, and Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to Tryon in 1934. There is also a display about Tryon native Hawthorne Wingo, who played with the National Basketball Association, and one on the Tryon All-Stars, an African-American semi-pro team active for two decades into the 1960s.

Some of the exhibits highlight aspects when Tryon was considered both a summer and winter resort destination, said Callaway, with northerners who wanted to escape winter weather and then southerners who wanted cooler weather in the summer. The mild climate and mountain scenery, along with the 1877 arrival of the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad, also helped make Tryon an artist and writer's colony. Many of these people were involved in equestrian activities. Stables and cultural amenities followed, including the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club and the Tryon Charity Horse Show that date from the 1920s.



design. A major fundraiser was planned in 2024, but that unfortunately was for the week that hurricane Helene struck in September.

New membership and support is essential and Callaway said the museum is launching a new membership campaign, which also will include a house tour next spring of “mid-century modern architecture.” He said they have a lot of ideas brewing for members including “curatorial chats and exhibit previews.” A quarterly newsletter is also in the works for next year, plus expanded hours. Membership in the museum will give people “the chance to tell Tryon's story and to educate why history is important,” Callaway said.

The Tryon History Museum is located at 26 Maple Street in Tryon, with ample parking in a lot across the street. Hours are 1-4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. There is no admission fee; donations are accepted.

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SAFETY FEATURE

by Catherine Winter

Staying Safe, No Matter the Arena

When I began my riding journey 40 plus years ago, riding in sneakers and a baseball hat was a common occurrence. (I actually showed up for my first lesson in a cowgirl outfit that consisted of a skirt, cowboy hat and sandals—the trainer was appalled.) Today so much has changed—riding without a helmet is shunned, proper footwear is expected, and new advances in safety equipment is du rigueur.

We all know that riding is a dangerous sport, so it's heartening that there is continued advancement of new types of safety technology and the widespread adoption of these new options—allowing riders to choose to be safer—no matter the discipline, venue, or arena.

There are several categories of safety equipment to consider.

HELMETS - Riders should always wear a helmet when riding, and best practice is actually to wear one even when handling horses on the ground. Proper fit is most important, followed by certifications and testing results. The more certifications, the better as each certification tests for different forces. The Virginia Tech Helmet Lab is a useful resource for information on helmet testing and ratings.

BODY PROTECTORS - These are designed to provide torso protection, primarily focused on ribs, back and vital organs. Made of foam, they are best for pinpoint impacts and dissipate the energy from those impacts across the surface of the vest.

AIR VESTS - These are best for broadside impacts and provide a cushion to a fall – it's like wearing an air mattress! They are designed to protect vital organs as well as the neck, ribs, spine, and depending on model, the upper hip area. These are mechanical, so there is a chain of events that must occur in order for the vest to deploy, and that begins with a separation from the horse. That means that if the horse falls and the rider falls with it, the vest will not deploy until the horse moves away from the rider.

SAFETY STIRRUPS - In January, 2025, U.S. Pony Clubs banned the use of peacock stirrups (those that have a rubber band on the outer branch). The United States Equestrian Federation followed suit, banning them in December, 2025. There are a myriad of other safety stirrup options available with designs varying from those with a flexible outer branch, an outer branch that opens



A rider stays safe, wearing a helmet and safety vest.

PHOTO SHELLY PAULSON

when pressure is applied, or those with no outer branch at all.

HUNTER/JUMPER/EQUITATION – We quite commonly see what we refer to as low profile air vests in use by hunter, jumper, and equitation riders. These are the air vests that look like a garment and blend in seamlessly with show attire. While an air vest must always be your outer layer, there are now air vest compatible garments that can be worn on top of a vest to conceal it for a safe and stylish look. We do also see some body protectors used by this group, especially for those riders who don't want to worry about the mechanics of an air vest or have a medical condition that precludes them from using one. With the introduction of safety stirrups that look like traditional stirrups, we are also seeing more of these in use, including in professional settings.

DRESSAGE – More dressage riders are using air vests, but fewer are using body protectors. We also see an uptick in the use of safety stirrups, although the United States Dressage Federation requires that stirrups have a closed outer branch, so those with gaps (common with stirrups that have a flexible outer branch) are disallowed.

FOXHUNTING – Adoption of safety equipment in the hunting field is skyrocketing! A fairly equal amount of body protectors and air vests are seen in the field. A deciding factor is sometimes the ease of resetting an air vest if it deploys while out hunting. Riders need to carry the resetting tool (just an Allen wrench) and a spare canister with them. Some hunters prefer a body protector if they are sometimes mounting and dismounting in the field, so that they don't need to worry about clipping and unclipping an air vest. Safety stirrups are also becoming a more common sight, with no limitation on options. While there are no restrictions, a closed or fully open outer branch

might be better options to avoid potential snags on things found in the field.

WESTERN – While the adoption rate of safety equipment for western riders has been on a slower trajectory than other disciplines, it is still on the rise. There has been and increase in helmet usage as well as interest in torso protection, especially for those riders who perhaps have experienced previous injury or are more fragile than they used to

be. Safety stirrups are now an option for western saddles, which is an exciting introduction, increasing in popularity awareness rises.

PLEASURE – This group is adopting safety innovations at a high rate. Whether it's safety technology such as fall detection available on phones and watches or the use of torso protection and safety stirrups, this group of riders are taking advantage of safety offerings to prolong their ability to enjoy life on horseback.

The wonderful news is that there are safety products for everyone, and taking advantage of the options will help you stay safe in the saddle so that all riders can enjoy their passion for years to come!

Catherine Winter is a lifelong equestrian and the founder of Ride EquiSafe, a company focused on keeping equestrians safe and stylish in the saddle.

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By Cassie LeMaster, Polk County Equine, Livestock and Forage Agent

Controlling Buttercup: The Late Winter Timing Advantage

As late winter transitions into early spring, North Carolina pastures often display a brilliant, but unwelcome splash of yellow: the buttercup (*Ranunculus* species). This weed is a significant problem for horse owners because most varieties are toxic to grazing animals, thriving in the thin stands and bare patches common in overgrazed or winter-stressed fields.

For effective control, the late winter/very early spring window is critical. Buttercups often behave as winter annuals, germinating in the fall and growing actively through the cool months. By the time they fully bloom with those iconic yellow flowers, the plants are too mature for the most effective treatments.

The ideal time for chemical control in North Carolina is typically from late February through early March, just as the plants begin rapid spring growth, and importantly, before flowers are observed.

- **Target the Rosette Stage:** Buttercups are most susceptible to herbicides when they are small and actively growing in the rosette stage (a compact cluster of leaves near the ground).
- **Temperature is Key:** For maximum herbicide activity, wait until daytime air temperatures are greater than 55 degrees for two or three consecutive days. Applying herbicides during cold periods significantly reduces their effectiveness.

Herbicides registered for use on grass pastures provide the quickest and most effective control when properly timed. Products containing ingredients like 2,4-D, or combination products such as 2,4-D plus dicamba (e.g., Weedmaster), aminopyralid (e.g., GrazonNext HL), or triclopyr (e.g., Crossbow) are all effective against buttercup.

- **Follow the Label:** Always consult the specific product label for correct application rates, grazing restrictions, and precautions.
- **Clover Warning:** Be aware that most highly effective broadleaf herbicides will severely injure or kill established clover and other legumes. If clover retention is vital, lower rates of 2,4-D may offer some suppression with less damage, but complete buttercup control will be reduced.



• **Application:** Use higher spray volumes (at least 15–20 gallons per acre) to ensure the herbicide reaches the low-growing weeds within the pasture grass. Chemical control is only a temporary fix. Buttercup presence is fundamentally a symptom of a weak forage stand. Long-term management requires year-round effort to improve pasture health:

1. **Stop Overgrazing:** Avoid close, heavy grazing during the late fall and winter. Maintain a residual grass height of 3 to 4 inches to provide shade, which suppresses weed germination, and to encourage healthy grass competition.
2. **Soil Fertility:** Buttercup thrives in low-fertility or acidic soil. Soil test regularly and apply lime and fertilizer based on the recommendations to promote dense, vigorous grass growth.
3. **Encourage Competition:** A thick, healthy stand of grass is your best long-term defense.



Consider overseeding with desirable cool-season forages like red clover or annual ryegrass in early spring to fill in bare spots and choke out emerging weeds.

Controlling buttercup requires a commitment to both timely chemical application in the late winter and consistent, year-round pasture management to foster a dense, competitive forage stand.

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LOCAL LEGEND: CHARLOTTE CANNON

by Misty Yelton

Evolving Endotapping: The Charlotte Cannon Method

In the evolving world of horsemanship, few have reshaped equine-training conversations as meaningfully as Charlotte Cannon, the creator of The Cannon Method—a science-informed approach to helping horses release tension. A lifelong horsewoman with a deep curiosity for how horses think, feel, and move, Cannon developed her method as an effective way to relax the horse. What began as her personal exploration into equine relaxation and biomechanics has blossomed into a widely respected method used by trainers, veterinarians, and riders across disciplines.

At its core, The Cannon Method is built on a simple yet powerful concept: Endotapping — rhythmic, consistent tapping along targeted regions of the horse’s body. Using a soft-tipped, flexible stick (a dressage whip makes the perfect stick), the handler applies a light drumming motion that stimulates nerve pathways and activates the horse’s internal awareness system. Rather than flooding the horse with pressure, the technique encourages the parasympathetic nervous system—the “rest and digest” response—to take over. As Cannon explains, the goal is not to desensitize the horse but to help it “come back into its body, recognizing tension patterns and releasing them on its own.”

Cannon continues, “I discovered endotapping after watching French Horseman JP Giacomini’s assistant Cedar Potts-Warner at the TB Makeover in 2016. She was kind enough to give me a demonstration and explain the concept and technique. The theory behind endotapping is that a horse can’t learn under stressful circumstances, when its sole focus is on survival. By using endotapping, you can circumvent the flight response, inducing a state of relaxation, leading to willingness.”

Cannon’s philosophy aligns closely with the principles championed by legendary horsemen Tom Dorrance, Ray Hunt, and Buck Brannaman. Like these foundational figures of modern natural horsemanship, Cannon emphasizes softness, timing, and communication that begins with understanding the horse’s mental and physical state. Endotapping can be viewed as a contemporary extension of their teachings—a biomechanically informed way to encourage the same clarity, relaxation, and willingness they sought through feel.

What makes endotapping stand out is its deep grounding in physical correctness. Cannon recognized that many training challenges originate not in disobedience, but in physical imbalance. Horses that brace, rush, hollow, or balk are often communicating discomfort or confusion. Endotapping helps them reorganize. The rhythmic tapping encourages the horse to lower the neck, lift through the back, and gently activate core muscles—creating a posture that supports healthy, sustainable movement.

This physical reset brings mental benefits as well. Horses quickly associate the tapping with a predictable pattern that leads to relaxation. Many begin to yawn, blink softly, or soften through the topline within minutes. Over time, this becomes a learned response: a tool the horse can access even in moments of stress.

Endotapping’s versatility has contributed to its growing popularity. For young horses, the method offers a calm, confidence-building introduction to pressure and communication. Older or stiff horses often regain range of motion they haven’t shown in years. For horses rehabbing from injury,



Charlotte Cannon, creator of The Cannon Method, is happiest when she’s at work with horses in the ring. PHOTOS WINSLOW PHOTOGRAPHY

endotapping provides a low-impact way to reengage key muscle groups without oversteering the body. The largest benefit of endotapping is it strengthens the partnership between horse and human.

Cannon’s method echoes the values of Dorrance, Hunt, and Brannaman by fostering a relationship built on trust, softness, and understanding. Through her gentle, transformative approach, Cannon continues to offer the equestrian world a method that helps horses move better, feel better, and connect more deeply with the people who love them.

For more information, contact Charlotte Cannon by text at (980) 722-2828, or online at www.foxpointfarm.com.

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YOUNG RIDER: CATHERINE GOOSMANN

by Margie Askins

Patience and Persistence When Things Don’t Go as Planned

Catherine Goosmann has always felt a unique bond with animals. From a young age, she would take any opportunity she could get to spend time with them. Fate was in her favor when she developed a friendship with a girl whose family had horses. “I had my mom sign me up for every horse related activity I could have. I first started going to horse camp when I was about eight years old. Then when I came back I insisted that I needed to start taking lessons and riding regularly,” Goosmann said. She began riding at the age of eight, and by the age of 11 she was eventing.

Her journey with leasing horses did not start without challenges. Her love for and connection with horses never faltered when her first two ponies had unfortunate health issues. Even at a young age, Goosmann understood the importance of the bond between rider and horse. “The biggest lesson I’ve learned along my journey is to never take the time you’re given with a horse for granted; it’s a partnership that you can’t just throw away. That, and



Goosmann with her first pony, Glory.



Goosmann eventing at Windridge. PHOTO GRIFFITH PHOTOGRAPHY

to be patient,” Goosmann explained. The first pony she leased, Glory, had COPD and had to have an inhaler before riding. After a year with Glory, she leased a 14.2hh Welsh Thoroughbred cross named Buddy; however, Buddy also encountered health issues. One winter, while leasing him, on their way home, they had a trailer accident. He had to be taken to Tryon Equine Hospital and ultimately he was deemed fine. He had some scrapes and had to get stitches in his right hind, but with determination and time, Goosmann was able to rehab him back to normal. Unfortunately, later that year, he colicked. He had a lipoma that strangulated his small intestine. Again, he had to be rushed off to Tryon Equine Hospital, to undergo surgery.

“Buddy made it through the surgery and had a long road to recovery. For the second time in one year, I had to rehab that pony. And even though it was a tough process, we made it through. I leased him for two and a half years, and I will never take the time I had with him for granted. He taught me how to ride a buck, be patient, and rehab a horse,” Goosmann stated. When Buddy was almost back to normal work, she had to begin looking for another horse because Buddy couldn’t take her any further in her eventing career. That’s when she found Saul Good.

Despite her busy junior year in high school, she makes time to train and bond with “Saully.” She also has weekly lessons with her trainer, Allison Thompson, at Thompson Equestrian. Goosmann shared, “Allison has taught me so much and is a role model; she has taught me that dressage is the baseline for progress in my riding and my horse’s wellbeing, and she’s right. I use my dressage work throughout all phases of eventing. I try to do dressage work at least two to three times a week.” Goosmann has been competing for five years and takes her eventing seriously: “In the past five years I’ve been to more competitions than I can count. I am most proud of my most recent competitions with Saul Good at Windridge in Rutherford County, where I received first place at both beginner novice and novice finishing on lower dressage scores. When I got first place at beginner novice, I finished with a dressage score of 19.4.”

Through hard work, patience, dedication and many unfrosted strawberry Poptarts (Saul’s favorite snack), Goosmann continues to craft her skills and build her bond with Saul. She plans to continue her dressage work and work with Saul on obtaining her Bronze medal in dressage.

After high school, Goosmann plans to pursue a bachelor’s degree in Equine Sciences and ride on an eventing team. Her goal is to become a large animal veterinarian. Goosmann concluded, “I know things don’t always go as planned, but I know that no matter what I end up doing I will still be riding and eventing horses. Overall, I plan to just continue having fun with my horse, my friends, and my family.”

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4-H for the Win: Building Skills, Fulfilling Dreams

by Leigh Borreson

Jessica Jackson is a Polk County native, but she never knew about the 4-H Club when she was growing up, but she wishes she had. Today, Jackson holds the title of the Polk County 4-H Agent. She has a year of this position completed, and is now looking forward to outreaching and growing even more in 2026. Her goal is to reach

creating recipes, designing and sewing outfits, raising farm animals for competitions...plus career-enhancing capabilities for public speaking, creating presentations, and managing finances. Our kids learn about commitment and discipline — traits that will serve them throughout their lives,” she stated. “Our mission is to help youth

it financially accessible and welcoming to everybody...whether a young person wants to learn basic horsemanship, or pursue riding as a competitive sport,” Jackson said. Fortunately, a partnership with Alexa Moran and Dream Haven Farm has put that goal within reach and they’ve established an after-school



more of the community so that others know of the opportunities available at 4-H. Jackson stated, “If my mom had known about the 4-H Club back then, she would have had me signed up in a second. We just have so much to offer!”

Polk County 4-H Club has a rich history that began in 1926 and is still thriving today. Many people associate it exclusively with agriculture — but now 4-H offers other opportunities that many people may not be aware of. “We provide multiple programs to teach lifetime skills: cooking and



build the life skills, confidence and character they’ll carry with them long after their time here with us,” she added.

Jackson is always looking for ways to grow youth participation in the program, and horses were at the top of her list; however, those opportunities aren’t always available, and equestrian activities may not be affordable for everyone. As a response, she has been devoted to expanding access so more youth in our community can be included. “My goal is to make



program at Dream Haven. “My childhood and life would have looked very different if I had been given this kind of opportunity as a kid. Eventually, horses got my life back on track. I’ve been wanting to do an after school program to give back to others the things I needed when I was young,” Moran explained.

The Dream Haven Farm program begins with basic horsemanship. Everyone does chores together — from stall cleaning to watering and feeding horses, and cleaning tack. Then, they get to ride together. The 4-H horses they employ are steady and calm, perfect for beginner riders to teach the basics of riding. They are trying to keep it affordable for everyone, and have future fundraising ideas to help keep the program accessible and financially within reach. The goal of the program is to give kids the chance to be around the horses, learn to take care of them, ride and compete if they want to. Jessica seeks to incorporate education into the program, expanding on what they are doing at Dream Haven. Their hope is this can eventually lead to careers in the equestrian world.

“We are starting to see growth in these kids and that is such a joy! The Polk County 4-H Club is committed to supporting the next generation of leaders and I’m incredibly proud of the youth, families and volunteers who make this program and all of our programs such a special part of our community,” concluded Jackson.

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For more information on the Polk County 4-H Club go to <https://tinyurl.com/4H-history>



Thanking You One Hundred Times!

“It was great to celebrate TRHC’s centennial in 2025! And, among of the things I enjoyed most were the photographs and memories people shared from all the preceding 99 years. It is clear that TR&HC’s equestrian heritage has played and continues to play an important role in our community as well as in many families who warmly recall their children, parents and grandparents attending our events.”

— JOANNE GIBBS, TR&HC PRESIDENT



PHOTOS BAILEY SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY

LOCAL LEGENDS

The Troppmann Family’s Path to Volunteering

The Troppmann family has become synonymous with volunteering in equestrian sport—especially in eventing. Known for their can-do attitude and unwavering commitment, the Troppmanns bring decades of hands-on experience and leadership to every event they touch.

Their story begins with Ann Troppmann, the family matriarch from California, who grew up riding from childhood into her college years. Her passion began with Pony Hunters, but she caught the eventing bug at age 14. Motherhood to her two children gave a brief pause to her sport until her daughter, Amy, discovered their shared passion at age 10.

Starting with their local Pony Club after moving to Cincinnati, Ohio, Ann volunteered to meet people, advice from her mother-in-law that she says has served her well her entire life. Her husband, Jim, volunteered outside of work, and together they stepped into what Ann describes as “a pivotal moment” in their family’s equestrian journey.

“We attended the Kentucky 3-Day Event every year, beginning in 1980. We saw all the legends compete there, including one [Olympian] Karen Lende, now Karen O’Connor. When we got Amy into horses, a friend and I put on a Karen Lende clinic at a local barn. Karen stayed at our house, it was her birthday, and we celebrated with pizza and a cake. That was the beginning of a lifelong friendship.” Both Ann and Amy trained with the Olympic legend and continued to collaborate with her on clinics, cheering Karen on at the Sydney Olympics and annually at Rolex.

The family’s move to Tryon was prompted by Jim’s retirement after 32 years with Procter & Gamble and a previous visit. Ann stated, “I had competed in the FENCE Horse Trials in the late ’90s and loved the area. We started our search here and found our farm.”

When they arrived in Tryon, the Troppmanns had no idea the scale of eventing opportunities awaiting them with the opening of Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) two years later. Ann fondly recalls how it all evolved:

“It started back in 2016 with the American Eventing Championships, a huge first endeavor for eventing at TIEC. When TIEC was awarded the

World Equestrian Games (WEG) for 2018, we really had to ‘put our shoulders to the wheel’ to make that happen. Since I had already been involved with organizer Shelley Page at the TR&HC Horse Trials, I continued in my role as Cross-Country Volunteer Lead. Jim was in charge of Crossing Guards. TIEC added The Fork Horse Trials and a fall horse trials to its portfolio of eventing competitions. The Fork Horse Trials in the spring became the Test Event for the WEG eventing competition. TIEC was on the eventing map and people referred to it as ‘Tryon,’ like ‘Kentucky’ and ‘Maryland!’”

In addition, Ann also served on the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club board for several years and as president from 2016–2017. During her tenure, she launched a formal donorship program that attracted 70 contributors and helped the club give back more than \$30,000 to the community.

The Troppmanns remain an essential part of TIEC’s annual eventing competitions. Amy takes the lead as Overall Volunteer Coordinator, Ann serves as Cross-Country Volunteer Lead, and Jim assists the Start Stewards on cross-country.

As volunteers themselves, the Troppmanns understand the value of those who lend their time and talents to support these events: “We have built a large cadre of very dedicated volunteers for the Tryon eventing competitions. We absolutely could not undertake events of this size without them. They show up time after time, for which the Troppmann Family is extremely grateful!”



The Troppmann family, Ann, Amy and Jim (not pictured) are powerhouse volunteers behind many eventing successes.

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TR&HC Members Gather for Annual Holiday Party Full of Gratitude and Glee

by Margie Askins

The Tryon Riding and Hunt Club gathered together for their annual holiday celebration and meeting to have an overview of the year’s successes and create a clear, focused path on the new year ahead. Members came inside from the chilly, rainy evening, and gathered together in the warm space to share stories, ideas, and laughter before President, Joanne Gibbs, began the annual meeting.

The agenda began with an overview of the year’s accomplishments. Gibbs expressed her deep gratitude, “As we wrap up another memorable year

— our 100th — I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks: Thanks for showing up, for volunteering, for giving, and for believing in our mission. You are the spirit and strength of our club.” Gibbs then went on to give an overview of the year’s accomplishments. Some of the highlights included: the fabulous 100th anniversary gala; the 97th annual Tryon Horse & Hound Show featuring fantastic attendance and beloved traditions; and the two annual charity horse shows that continue to prosper and raise awareness of the club’s mission to support our community. Gibbs

also reflected on a new social event from 2025, the 1st annual Tailgating at the Fork, and she welcomed all to attend next year for a wonderful day in the country enjoying high-level eventing with friends. Gibbs ended her recap of the 92nd annual Any & All Dog Show.

Gibbs also shared the financial position of the club: “I am proud to share our nonprofit remains on solid footing. A testament to our strong internal controls, and our board’s commitment to responsible stewardship of the club’s funds. Because of this stability, we have been able to

maintain our event schedule and community programs that allow us to give back in meaningful ways. This year we made our biggest impact, and awarded a record number of educational scholarships.” Two of the club’s Equestrian Grant recipients, Grace Hogan and Charles Burrell, each shared their personal testimonies and gratitude for the opportunities the grants brought to their educational and career paths.

Looking into the new year, Gibbs said 2026 is full of future social and educational events to help members connect, learn and also have fun. “And above all, we will continue to focus on what matters most—you, our community, our horses and the shared experiences that bring us together.” Gibbs ended her speech with a look forward to the club’s next 100 years of growth, friendship and special moments.



TR&HC’s Equestrian Grant recipients, Charles Burrell and Grace Hogan.



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Welcome 2 - National /Level 3 March 26-29

Welcome 3 - National /Level 3 April 1-4

Welcome 4 - National /Level 3 April 9-12

Spring Series 2026

Spring 1 - Premier / Level 3 April 29 - May 3

Spring 2 - National / Level 4 May 6-10

Spring 3 - Equus Events WCHR Week - Premier / Level 4 May 15-17

Spring 4 - National / Level 5 / CSI 2* May 20-24

Spring 5 - National / Level 6 / CSI 3* May 26-31

Spring 6 TR&HC Charity 1 - Premier / Level 5 / CSI 2* June 2-7

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TR&HC MEMBERSHIP NEWS

2026 Brings Familiar Faces to the Board

TR&HC’s 2026 is guaranteed to bring changes while building upon the past. The club’s centennial year concluded with a celebration of accomplishments, and a preview of the year ahead.

In December, we said goodbye to two board members and welcomed two new additions. Pagan Gillman and Sally Frick concluded their board terms. The club thanks them for their dedication, time and service.

Stepping up to take on those positions are Cathrine Winters and Sharon Cargill. Winters is the owner of Ride EquiSafe, and well known for her extensive knowledge with equestrian rider safety equipment. Winters is also a new contributing writer for *The Horse Country Quarterly* [HCQ], and her first article on safety in all types of venues is in this edition. The board and the HCQ team welcome Winters aboard!

Sharon Cargill has also joined the TR&HC board. She is a long-time Tryon-area resident, and horsewoman. The club welcomes both of our new board members, and is excited about the insight and support they will contribute.

The TR&HC officers for 2026 are: Joanne Gibbs, President; Donna Younkin, Vice President; Rhonda Lockhart, Treasurer, and Paula Alcock, Secretary. TR&HC looks forward to a remarkable and successful 2026!



TOP: Past presidents Angie Millon and Nancy Wilson with current President Joanne Gibbs at the 100th anniversary celebration.

ABOVE LEFT: TR&HC President Joanne Gibbs (left) with new board member, Sharon Cargill (right).

ABOVE RIGHT: Pagan Gillman, Joanne Gibbs, and Sally Frick at TR&HC’s Centennial Celebration.



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