



KHC Newsletter

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Equestrian Trails in Kansas Guidebook

By Jim Thomas, KHC Trails Director

It's been in the works for a while and we're excited to announce that it's now available! *Equestrian Trails in Kansas* is a newly published guidebook to public equestrian trails in Kansas. It includes state parks, federal reservoirs and public lands. Guidebooks will be available for free at all state park offices. Ask for them at your local western retail store or send \$3 to have one sent directly to you from the KHC office.

Thank you to Wendy Bowles, Kansas Wildlife & Parks at Kanopolis, for sharing information from her *Kansas State Parks Trails Directory*. In addition to this State Park information, the KHC directory includes county and federal public use areas, totaling over 300 miles of potential trail riding in Kansas. Also, thank you to my wife, Cheryl Thomas, and her Computer Applications class at West Franklin High School, Pomona, for compiling information to create the directory and to Charlie Armour, KHC Web Master, for his work on the maps. Please support the businesses whose advertisements appear in this directory — we appreciate their support of this project, especially the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

Kansas is not just flat prairie, as you will find when visiting some of these trails. Jerry Hover, Kansas Wildlife & Parks, reported at a Kansas Trails Conference that equestrian trail use is the fastest growing sector of trail use in Kansas. So, enjoy your Kansas trails and don't forget to thank park managers and directors for making them available to equestrians. Ask what you can do to help maintain these trails and keep them open.

Happy trails, and enjoy riding Kansas public lands. See you on the trail!



“Fall in the Flint Hills Trail Ride”

October 17th was cloudy, cool and a little breezy. It was also an exceptional day to be out trail riding in the Flint Hills. Onaga rancher, Cody Zabel, guided several dozen riders through the varied terrain of the vast Roby Ranch near Belvue. We were grateful to Jim Vandavelde, ranch manager, for assisting with this ride. Riders were up and in the saddle ready to head out at 9:00 Saturday morning. The crisp morning air had one seasoned trail horse feeling a little fresh, but his also seasoned rider, Cheryl Thomas, rode out the buck and it was smooth sailing for everyone from then on.



Around noon we rode into a beautiful ravine with a small creek sheltered by a ridge of Oaks covered in golden, auburn and crimson leaves. The recent cooler temps painted the prairie grass in vibrant fall colors. The views were beautiful in every direction. After a few more hours on the trail we arrived back in camp for some down time before dinner. Food is always better around a camp fire, particularly a campfire on the open prairie. The delicious meal catered by Wanda's Country Cookin' of Onaga was topped off with giant, homemade cookies for dessert.

After dinner Flint Hills Folklorist, Jim Hoy of Emporia, shared stories of this historically rich area. We gave away lots of horsey door prizes courtesy of Classic Equine before introducing Cowboy Lariat, Ron Wilson of Manhattan. Ron's creative cowboy poetry was a perfect accompaniment as darkness settled around us outside of the campfires' glow. Below is an original composition Ron wrote just for the occasion.

Folks, it's mighty good to be with you tonight.
I hope the Fall in the Flint Hills Ride has treated you just right.
The Kansas Horse Council is a great organization,
Which provides Kansas horse owners a strong foundation.
It's a place for anyone who is interested in the horse,
To share interests, information and trail rides, of course.
From EquiFest, scholarships, ads, insurance and liability signs,
There are many benefits for Horse Council members that we find.
Thanks to Jim Thomas for working on trail rides.
We appreciate the officers and Pattie Stalder, for the leadership they provide.
For equine enthusiasts, they can be a powerful force.
We support them and share in their love of the horse.
So I am pleased that I can say with pride,
I was part of the Kansas Horse Council Fall in the Flint Hills Ride.

By: Ron Wilson - Poet Lariat

Sunday morning we headed out again for a different ride as the sun made a welcome appearance. Back at camp around noon and time to head back to the real world. If you weren't able to join us this time please consider riding on the next KHC ride. The annual Elk City ride will be in late April. If you know of a special area in Kansas that would be a good site for a ride, contact Jim Thomas, KHC Trails Director, or Pattie Stalder, KHC office.

KHC Membership Renewal Time

Annual membership renewal statements will begin arriving in mailboxes this month. To maintain coverage on your \$1,000,000 liability insurance we recommend sending dues in before January 1, 2010. Member packets will be mailed out within 2 to 3 weeks of payment. Thanks to all our members for their continued support.

We encourage all horse owners to join and enjoy the benefits of membership. Where else can you get liability insurance on all your horses anywhere, anytime for \$50/year?

The Kansas Horse Council is an affiliate of the American Horse Council and was formed in 1992. If you have an interest in horses, visit our website, www.kansashorsecouncil.com, to learn about our member benefits. The Kansas Horse Council Foundation has awarded over \$40,000 in scholarships. We also put on EquiFest of Kansas each February in Wichita. EquiFest is the largest three-day horse event in the state. Please join us in promoting and protecting Kansas horses and their owners.

Kansas Statute Protects Owners of Domestic Livestock

How often have you worried about someone coming on your place for a visit or activity and getting hurt by one of your horses or other livestock? As the Administrator of the Kansas Horse Council, I regularly get calls on this subject. Kansas farmers and ranchers are generous and good-natured but the idea of letting someone ride horses on their property or hosting an event in their arena is usually followed by, "What if someone gets hurt and I get sued?"

The Kansas Limited Liability Law addresses this issue. One of the proudest moments in Kansas Horse Council history was when this statute was enacted in 1994. KSA 60-4001 through 60-4004 basically state that anyone who comes on your property assumes the inherent risks of domestic animal activities, thus protecting you from frivolous lawsuits. However, the most important fact to know is that a warning sign stating this law must be posted in a clearly visible location on or near the area where domestic animal activities are conducted. **If your property does not have a Kansas Limited Liability Law warning sign posted, you are not protected by the law.**

Domestic animals include: cattle, swine, sheep, goats, domesticated deer, llamas, poultry, rabbits, horses, ponies, mules, jennys, donkeys or hinnys. Some domestic animal activities include: shows, parades, rodeos, driving, cutting, polo, trail riding, training, giving lessons, riding, inspecting or evaluating domestic animals belonging to another, hoof care and placing or replacing shoes on a domestic animal.

This law was designed to protect responsible domestic animal professionals that maintain livestock or allow livestock on their property. This includes individuals, partnerships, corporations and their employees. Failure to provide a reasonable standard of care or obvious negligence limits your protection.

The Kansas Horse Council provides signs to its members for \$30 and non-members for \$40. This includes taxes, shipping and handling. The aluminum signs are 18"x24" with pre-drilled holes for mounting and are constructed to last for many years. Signs can be ordered from the Kansas Horse Council website at www.kansashorsecouncil.com, or by calling the office, 785-776-0662. The following businesses also have them in stock: Hunn Leather in Augusta, Roy Frey Western Store in Topeka, Kansas Country Store in Leavenworth and Y Bar H Outpost in Olathe.