

Southeast Endurance Riders Association

SERA NEWSLETTER

January
Volume 2, issue 1

Riding through the Southeast Region



Clockwise: Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina

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A Word from our President~ Dr. Ike Nelson

Hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and have started the new year on a good note. The new year for us endurance folks started over a month ago. I was fortunate to be able to go to a new SERA ride the first weekend of the new ride season. Suwannee Sprint was put on by a first time ride manager, Penny Staffney. I didn't get to see the trails but the camp was really nice and I think all the riders had a good time.

SERA was started, in part, to help promote endurance riding. I know that we do that and more. The recent NAETC (North American Endurance Team Challenge) was held on the Goethe trail system and was managed by our Florida director, Helen Koehler. This was not an AERC or SERA ride but was an FEI team ride. That did not deter SERA from taking part and helping with the ride. Joe Schoech was there helping and made available the SERA sound system, blood analyzer, lights, and more. Susan Kasemeyer was there as the safety steward, and the timers were our own Nancy Gooch, Samm Barte, Laurie Underwood, and Carol Thompson. There were SERA member there riding, crewing and helping in the pulse area, but I do not know all their names. Thanks to all who were there helping!!

Hope you all are planning to be at the AERC convention in March. You need to get your rooms lined up if you haven't already. AERC has information on the website about the convention and the hotel information. SERA will have our awards and business meeting on Sat morning, probably very early!! Watch the SERA website for more information. We still need people who are willing to help to contact Laurie Underwood so we can find you a place to assist. Please when you check in with AERC also check in with SERA. We have also extended until March 8 the time for joining SERA and retroactively picking up points and placings back to the start of the ride year.

Speaking of AERC, you may hear that some people want AERC to quit co-sanctioning FEI rides, basically severing ties with FEI, because of horse welfare issues. Please learn all you can about this before forming an opinion, as this issue could affect AERC (and SERA) in some major ways. Check the SERA website for more information.

See you down the trail!

Ride Safety ~ Dogs at Rides

By Jody Rogers-Buttram

In general, horse people are dog people. We love our pets just like we love our horses, and in some cases, like family. There are no AERC rules stating that dogs are not welcome at endurance rides, but there are some rules/guidelines that should be practiced by all of us, whether we bring a dog or not.

At most rides, the ride management has rules printed on their ride flyer concerning dogs at their event. It is very important that we all always READ these flyers to see what this particular ride and manager has set down for us to follow. Many times, these rules are not in place because the RM doesn't like dogs, but because the owner of the property that is being nice enough to allow a ride to take place on their land has some concerns about the smaller four legged friends. If these rules are not kept, it could mean the difference between a ride being held or not being allowed again. We all want to ride, we all want to keep rides going, and following whatever rules are laid down could very well be the difference between us riding or staying home.

As endurance riders, we know how to follow rules. We follow rules set out by our organizations, by our vets, and heck, sometimes

even by our crews (if we are lucky enough to have a crew). So why is it that sometimes the rules about dogs is so hard to swallow?

Let's look at it this way:

If you bring a dog to a ride, you should certainly keep it leashed at all times. And that doesn't mean that the dog is on leash, but the other end is not attached to anything. How many times do we see dogs wandering through camp dragging a leash? I have even heard the owner jokingly say, "well, he is on a leash". This can lead to several possible problems. One, if you really value your pet, it is for HIS benefit to be confined, whether that is tethered at the trailer, on leash with a human on the other end, or crated. Horses can do major damage with those feet, and a trampled/kicked best friend is not what anyone wants.

Some dog breeds are more aggressive toward horses, herding breeds can cause quite the ruckus if allowed to snip or run out at a horse being ridden or lead past. This could cause the horse to spook or bolt, maybe running over the handler, another horse or worse, cause someone to be dumped. Now, if you think that the RM is going to be upset, try a rider who has had their ride ruined because of a dog incident. Better safe than sorry, so protect your dog and your friends by keeping them out of traffics way.

If you leave your dog tethered back at your trailer, one very important thing to keep in mind is how much reach he has available. There is a saying about giving someone enough rope and he will hang himself, well, the same can go with the dog. Not that he will literally hang himself, but that he might be able to get out into the way of horses walking past or people within “biting range”. Dogs look at our trailers as “their home away from home”.....just like we do. And they are loyal enough to want to protect it. So, as the dog owner, we should be very mindful of that quality when stationing our pet to the trailer. BUT, as much as it is the dog owner’s responsibility, it is also everyone’s responsibility to be aware of WHERE we walk and how close we cut through camps. We may not know who does, or who doesn’t have a dog, but walking too close to a trailer that has a dog tied to it, doesn’t make the dog owner responsible for that dog trying to protect his home. This becomes a very fine line for all of us to walk. Ride camps are just that, tightly fitted camps full of trailers, horses, and yes, dogs, that we must be aware of their personal space. We are careful about leading our horse up to a strange horse, so why not the same thoughts into our dogs?

Other areas that may or may not be off limits according to the

RM are the vet checks and dining/awards. If there are no RM rules, we can always use good judgment. Vet checks can be very busy, they tend to be crowded and in a small area. How many times have we had to get up close and personal with our crewing apparatus? We have our tent, our buckets, feed tubs, hay bag, crew chairs, blankets and at least one horse, all stuffed within a 12 x 12 land claim? Now add a dog to the mix. If you can keep your dog under or contained in “your space” great, but if not, he could get the leash wrapped around a horse’s leg causing a not-so-pretty wreck.

Awards and dining hall situations are another location that could be a problem for your best friend. Be sure to be considerate of people around you and what your dog is doing. Make sure he doesn’t bother anyone while they are trying to enjoy their food and resting after a great day of riding. Likewise, before giving any food scraps to someone dog, be sure to ask if table food is on their pet’s diet, and some owners don’t allow table food in order to keep their pet from begging.

With all this said, don’t not enjoy your dogs at rides, just use some common sense, whether you are bringing a dog or not. Hope to see everyone soon, and I will have my new Corgi puppy along...on leash. 😊

A PROSPECT'S GUIDE TO A FIRST ENDURANCE RIDE

By Angela McGhee

When a person voices an interest in learning more about endurance riding we riders are quick to invite them to come observe or volunteer at an event to see what it's all about. This is great advice and there is much to learn simply by attending a ride. However, the difference between feeling welcomed to what they perceive as a friendly and helpful atmosphere or "blown off" by the veterans may depend on who they approach and when they approach them. Hopefully if some of our members will pass the information in this article along with the invite we can help the newcomer come away with the best possible perception of our sport. A best case scenario would have every newcomer accompanied by an experienced friend who shows them around, but in the event that a visitor does not have this luxury, the following advice could be very helpful.

First, newcomers need to realize that the afternoon and evening before the ride is often a time when a competitor is extremely focused. When we arrive at a ride we have a lot to do. We must take care of the horses, set up a camp, register, vet in, set up a crew area and take the horse out for a pre-ride, after which we need hurry in order to get back for the ride meeting. Chances are there are more things to do in the camper after dark like mix electrolytes, measure out feed for in the morning, etc. The evening before a ride is probably the worst possible time to expect an extended visit from a competitor. If one needs advice on a specific subject for the next day's ride, by all means, ask, but if you want to kill time discussing your theories on endurance at length, this is not the time to do it; so please don't take offense if someone does not have time to visit the

day before the ride. Remember, we have put a lot into the weekend and have a lot on our minds. If you happen to be a very busy rider who is approached by a newcomer, be careful not to make them feel as if they are a bother. Take the time to be friendly, then escort them over to the folks at the vet check and introduce them as a new rider and ask someone you trust to take them under their wing.

The absolute best place to be to maximize the learning experience the day before the ride is the vetting in area. If the newcomer wants the best seat in the house, they should offer to be a scribe for a vet. This will allow them a chance to grow acquainted with the vet card and what the criteria are that the vet is judging. They can listen to the conversation between the vet and the rider and get some idea of what information it is common to share. It's also a good time to observe different people trotting their horses out and learn what techniques seem to work best. If the scribe job is already taken, they can pull up a chair with the "peanut gallery". There are often more career riders hanging around the vet check than they realize. Chances are very good that if a person is timing or taking pulses they have also competed, but for one reason or another are working today. They should feel free to ask questions like: "What did that vet just do under that horse's tail?" Chances are the other workers will be happy to narrate the procedure for them.

Early AM on ride day they can observe their warm up procedure. How long did the riders warm up? How heavily were they dressed considering the temperature? The start of a ride is probably the most daunting part of a competition. This is a great time to observe the order different types leave, whether they all left together or some waited a few minutes, how the horses reacted to

when they left, and what sort of gear they were carrying when they left.

During a ride the best advice is “Talk to a Waiter”...not a waiter like in a restaurant, but a person who is “waiting”. Face it, working in a vet check or crewing for a rider involves a lot of waiting. Once that crew has replenished the water and straightened up the crew area, chances are they are bored and would welcome some conversation. It's a good time to strike up a conversation about how they got into the sport and what sort of advice they have for a newcomer. It won't take much to get them to explain their theories on crewing and why they have the particular items in their check area that they have.

Once an observer sees how crewing works and can anticipate when a person might welcome some help, they should feel free to ask a lone rider who has no crew if there is anything you can do to help them out. It will usually begin with “If you could just hold him while I run to the restroom that would be great”, because we really don't feel guilty to accept that offer. When the rider returns an offer to continue holding the horse while the rider does all the things they need to do will probably be accepted. Watch and learn, but it's still not yet the time to really quiz a rider with too many questions. Even the rider who is running dead last needs to focus and a distracting conversation may make them forget to adjust stirrups, refill water bottles, put in a snack, or remember their out time. Speaking of out times, if the fledgling crew has stayed this long, they should ask the rider what their out time is and warn them when they have ten minutes to go. If this venture went well they can send the rider down the trail and move on to another desperate soul. If there is nobody else who needs their help, it's time to wander back over to the vet

check and if things have slowed down there it's a good time to ask questions about things they've seen, but didn't understand.

When the ride is coming to a conclusion many visitors pack up and leave for the day. This is their biggest mistake. AFTER the ride is the when riders have time to talk, answer questions at leisure, show you what tack they use, discuss the plusses and minuses of their horse's breed, sex or build; or explain their horse containment system. If there is an area where riders are hand grazing their horses, wander over and join them. This is a great time to ask a competitor for any advice they'd be willing to pass along to a newcomer. If they're too shy to ask, they can just listen. You can pick up plenty of information just listening to riders discuss all the challenges they faced during the ride and bounce ideas off of other riders on how they have solved those problems.

If there is a ride meal, they could definitely come and eat. If they volunteered any at the vet checks chances are they'll be given a free meal. Hopefully they met a few people while hanging around the vet check area and can sit with them.

If you are a rider who is reading this, it is now **your** job to spot this new person and invite them to come sit with your group. This is when we, as competitors should take the initiative and welcome the new people and do our part to sell them on our sport. Granted, hopefully you have been friendly and welcoming all weekend, but now it's time to take over the recruitment process. If you plan to have a campfire or gather and visit under someone's awning, invite them. Let people know how fun it is to compete and invite them to join us! Think back to the first ride you attended and imagine how great it would have felt if one of the old hands had taken an interest in you.

With the right information on what to expect at a ride, a visitor will have a much better idea of how to make the most of their day. Remember, you never get another chance to make a first impression!





When Mississippi was KING

We are very lucky here in the Southeast region to be blessed with more rides than any one of us can attend. In fact, the sanctioning director has a very hard time just trying to schedule all the rides. But unless you are wealthy and retired, one might break the bank getting to all of these wonderful rides.

With the state of Mississippi currently without a single sanctioned ride for the 2014 ride calendar, it might be hard to believe that in the past, Mississippi was the state with more sanctioned rides than any other SE state, then or now.

You just can't beat the hospitality of the Magnolia state. This lovely coastal state has great food, friendly faces and a taste of the Ole South along with the competitive spirit that endurance brings to the table.

What some people may not realize is that the state can have varied terrain. From the hills of the northern section, to the flats along the coast and everything in between, Mississippi can offer a wide selection of competition grounds.

During the mid to late 80's, there were 40+ sanctioned AERC rides held during approximately a 5 year period....all within the state of Mississippi. In 1986, there were 19 sanctioned AERC rides held in one YEAR. The average amount of rides held were 12 per year. These rides ranged from LD's, 50's, 60's, 65's, 75's, one day 100's and multiday rides. It was not uncommon at all for there to be several one day 100's held in a ride season. All of these rides were managed by only a handful of ride managers. Hard work for sure, but the benefits were awesome !!!

If an endurance rider lived in the state of Mississippi or a neighboring state, they literally wouldn't have to go anywhere else to compete. With all these rides being held, and Mississippi being a fringe state of the SE region, it was not uncommon at all to have many Texas riders attend. There were some fantastic races that took place with some of the greatest endurance horses that every crossed the starting line of an endurance ride. Very memorable run offs and superfast times.

In 1987, one of the fastest times that has probably ever been recorded in the country for a one day 100 happened in southern Mississippi. The course was flat, but was not short. Nina Warren and her record setting horse Amir Nezraff, did that 100 miles in a

ride time of 7:36. Yes, you read that correctly, 7 hours and 36 minutes to cover a 100 mile course. He also received Best Condition.

With all of these rides being held, and the sport of endurance booming at that time, the Mississippi Endurance Riders Association was created. It was a very active organization. They kept records for year end awards, very similar to what GERA does now. They held meetings, clinics and awards banquets.

After a long time with little to no rides being held there, we now have some renewed interest. There have been a few rides held over the past years, but no where near the numbers of the glory years past. We have new AERC members that reside in Mississippi and some return of older riders that remembered the “Good ole Days” of by gone. There has been talk of bringing back several rides, held on some of the old location trails. Possibly as many as four rides could return in the future.

Mississippi may not be ride rich right now, but I for one am hoping, and waiting for the “Return of the King”.

American Endurance Ride Conference



March 7 & 8, 2014, in Atlanta, Georgia

We are pleased to be heading to Atlanta for AERC's 2014 AERC convention! Click for the [Convention Flyer & Registration Form](#). The Southeast Region members are looking forward to welcoming endurance riders and interested future endurance riders to their region. They are helping to line up some fabulous vendors for the trade show -- free as always! -- so you won't want to miss that.

The hotel for the 2014 convention is Sheraton Gateway Hotel Atlanta Airport.** We'd appreciate you booking your hotel with the special AERC code as we do have a room minimum which must be guaranteed. The hotel features free airport transportation, a cafe and restaurant, health club and year-round heated pool.

Book your reservation by calling **800-325-3535** (say you're with AERC).

To reserve your room online, click for [AERC Convention Hotel Reservation](#).

Convention is always a great time to greet old friends, meet new ones, celebrate the accomplishments of AERC members, attend informative seminars (and shop at that fabulous AERC Trade Show).

The Veterinary Committee is planning a two-day veterinary CE to run on Thursday and Friday, March 6 & 7.

For more information about the Sheraton Gateway Hotel, visit the [hotel website](#).

For Atlanta visitor information, check out the [Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau](#).

**Room rate info: \$99.00 per night, single and double rate and that rate is exclusive of applicable state and occupancy taxes which are currently 7% and 8% respectively and are subject to change without notice. Rates are available 3 days prior and 3 days after the convention dates.

Reservation requests received after Monday, February 3, 2014, will be accepted on a space available basis at the hotel's published rates. A deposit equal to one night room plus tax will be charged at the time a guest makes a room reservation. An early departure fee of \$75 will apply if a convention attendee checks out prior to the confirmed checkout dates.

Driving to convention? Daily parking fee: \$12.

High speed internet access in guest rooms: \$9.95 per day

All cancellations must be made seven (7) days prior to arrival to avoid forfeiture of room deposit and a cancellation number must be obtained.

THE GERA/SERA AWARDS AND ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE AERC CONVENTION.

Please be sure to attend !!!!! We (the SE Region) are the host, and we want to be super host. Let's show them some Southern Hospitality.

The Endurance Adventures of Ms. Sera

By Jody Rogers-Buttram



SERA AWARDS

THANK YOU to our SERA Year end Awards Sponsors

SERA would like to thank the following for their generous sponsorships of our awards:

New Sponsors

Jana Smith - in Memory of Steffanie Waddington - sponsor of the LD Mileage Champion

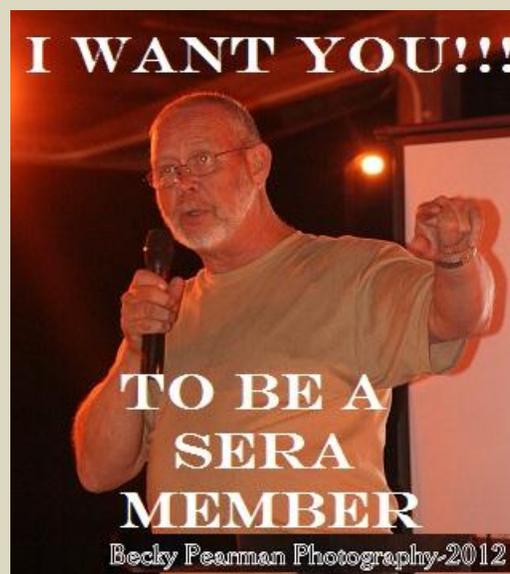
Foster Olson and Lela Nielsen - sponsor of the Freshman Rider of the Year
Red Barn Run (Cheryl and Steve Perry) - Freshman Horse of the Year
LBL endurance Ride-LD Best Condition

Current Sponsors

Running Bear/Teddy Lancaster - Consistent Condition

Christo and Lori Dinkelman - Grand Champion Junior

Please remember that some SERA awards require nomination by December 15th for more details, see SERA's website at: www.seraonline.org



WHY SHOULD I JOIN SERA?

Remember we are on
the Web:
www.seraonline.or

SERA Board

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Director

Joe Schoech

In the Southeast region of the **AERC**, teamwork is synonymous with **SERA**. The Southeast Endurance Riders Association was founded when endurance riding in the Southeast was in its infancy. Today endurance riding in the Southeast is only behind the West region in number of opportunities for our members to participate in the sport. In the Southeast there are riding opportunities for riders interested in all aspects of our sport from LD to Multi-days. While the opportunities for riders to participate in the historically foundation of endurance -the one-day one hundred mile ride - have declined to an alarming low level in the rest of the country, **BUT** the Southeast has maintained a steady number of eight over the last 10 years. **SERA** has been a big factor. **SERA** promotes endurance riding, supports riders and ride managers. The **SERA** team is the members that ride the rides and the managers that sanction their rides through SERA. In addition to the horse scales, a speaker system, flood lights and blood analyzer, SERA will have at many rides their projector and screen available to display whatever you want the riders to see pre- ride (trail maps, ride schedule, etc.) and/or post-ride (awards, etc.). If you have pictures (from previous years, or of the ride-site facilities or of significant trail intersections, or photographer), we can put up a slide show during registration and/or the meals, for example. You can email Joe Schoech what you want to display beforehand or put the data on a thumb(zip)-drive at the ride. Documents can even be scanned directly into a display at the ride site. We can also hook the projector up directly to your laptop, if you wish. If you want to show movies, just provide the DVD (no Blu-ray) and we can have a "night at the movies", if you like. We just need a little setup time and then we can make all or any of this happen. Please contact Joe Schoech for the A/V availability. If you want to be a part of the team that promotes the growth of endurance riding opportunities - you should join **SERA**. If you want to have the access of resources, scales to monitor your horse's weight and a blood analysis machine to help you understand the metabolic capabilities of your horse so you can better manage your horse you should join **SERA**. If you want a stable system of quality trails for not only running endurance rides but also for training and just hacking around you should join **SERA**. **SERA's** goal is to make endurance riding in the Southeast region the best it can be. If this is what you want you should join **SERA**.

SERA Classifieds

3JFarm Training/Conditioning Services

Let us do your conditioning for you. Put over 20,000 competition miles of experience with endurance horses, and 40+ one day 100 mile ride experience to work for you.

We have private turn out paddocks/run in sheds. Varied terrain for training from hills/rocks to flat speed work. Will have openings (2 per month) through winter months. Email 3Jfarm@earthlink.net for more info.

Special Offering For Sale

Storms Sir Lancelot

Reg. ½ Arab and ½ Rocky Mnt. 8 year old gelding. Solid 15 hands, beautiful legs and feet. Sir has completed four rides this past fall, three 50's and one LD. 100% completion rate and top ten in two of the three 50's. HUGE trot and canter, easy to handle, UTD on vaccinations/coggins. Great with loading, bathing and farrier. I simply have too many, and he is too good to let stand around.

Price: \$4,000



Please be sure to make THIS newsletter YOUR newsletter !!!!

Send in any pictures, articles about upcoming rides, best way to get the word out about your rides guys!!! Stories of rides in the past that are informative and fun. Advertise you items, such as horses, tack, etc. that you have for sale free.

Send to: 3jfarm@earthlink.net



Outta here till Next time !!!!