

**USERL Richmond Area  
Meeting Notes  
December 10, 2009**

Meeting called to order by Susan White, Regional Director, at 7pm. A large number of members/volunteers attended with some new people stopping by to learn more about the organization. Vicki passed around a sign in sheet to capture everyone's information. Vicki and Dennis also provided cider, hot chocolate, and cookies for the meeting which was a huge hit.

**Oral Reports from Coordinators:**

Adoption & Fosters – Kim Chewning-McCarthy shared the finalization of 11 adoptions and she introduced the Rainbow Bridge Fund to assist with the cost of burials for horses in the USERL care. She passed around a collection jar and stated at each meeting she will be asking for help. Kim is continuing to develop new relationships for potential “foster” relationships.

Fundraising – Kim Chewning-McCarthy gave the update for Suzanne Deer as she was unable to attend. Raised close to \$5,000 in Tack Sale in December, Southern States - \$450 and booth at the State Fair raised money as well. Angel Trees located at local Southern States and Tractor Supply Stores are generating equipment/feed for needy horses. Kudos to the individuals for providing the trees and creating the ornaments with the horse's picture with what is needed. Upcoming fundraiser planned for Jan/Feb – Tack/Yard Sale at the Mechanicsville Fire Station.

Investigations – Susan White received a call from the United States Humane Society for 85 horses seized in Tennessee (Tennessee Walkers and Quarter Horses) needing rehab/foster homes. At the present time, USERL-Richmond does not have the space, but we may have some openings next month. Susan is a Member of Homes for Horses Coalition which helps keep USERL – Richmond involved with other organizations helping horses. Susan, also, discussed the progress of two pending court cases - Caroline County (seized a total of 9 horses in 2008) and Prince Edward County (seized 10 horses in Feb 2009).

Volunteers – Vicki Pinner advised (1) to refer potential volunteers directly to the USERL – Richmond site ([www.userl-var.org](http://www.userl-var.org)) in order for her to receive the information immediately. It takes time for Vicki to receive information from the main organization site. (2) FYI to members/volunteers when Vicki sends messages sometimes the email may appear in your SPAM folder. (3) Vicki also provided handouts for new volunteers to complete – Release Forms, Volunteer Handbook and Volunteer FAQs as well as for members/volunteers to take to help recruit.

## **Oral Reports from Barn Managers:**

Mechanicsville Rehab Barn – Anne Guard, all is well, but need trainers and am volunteers.

Powhatan Rehab Barn – Gwen Duchesne, all is well with Tango (pending adoption) and Fancy relocating as a foster with Tango sometime in January. Need am volunteers.

King William Rehab Barn – Susan White, all is well, but need volunteers. Suggestion we need to campaign for more volunteers. Currently have 7 horses.

Rockville Rehab Barn – Virginia Weis, all is well with the new barn - 2 horses currently. Need volunteers.

South Anne Foster Barn – Vicki & Dennis Pinner, 5 mustangs and 2 old timers. Request members/volunteers to visit.

## **Other Items Discussed:**

**(1) 2009 Christmas Parade** – Huge success and the organization won an award. Thank you to everyone who participated including the volunteers, horses and donkey☺ Pictures are available on the web site. The organization plans to participate next year and will be adding a float.

**(2) Program Coordinator**, Anne Guard, discussed her role working with a local 4-H group, the upcoming completion of her 4-H book which she will send to VA Tech for review and approval, and the petition necessary for the VA Assembly to consider passing legislation for a USERL Virginia license plate. The plate will cost an additional \$25/year to the normal registration fees and all proceeds will benefit the organization. Once Anne has all the signatures necessary and the commitment from those to buy a plate she will submit the information to the VA Assembly. After these items are complete, her next goal is to get a US Postage Stamp made. Anne reminded everyone of planned upcoming clinics – Trailer and CPR. Anne asked for suggestions for future clinics.

**(3) Member's new venture announcement** – Wendy Henderson announced she will be renting a facility in the Ashland Area where she will be fostering USERL horses, training, boarding and providing lessons. She will call her stable - Emerald Meadows Equestrian Center. Wendy will open January 1<sup>st</sup> and holding an Open House the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January. She will provide details to the group soon.

Questions from Volunteers – Vicki facilitated a short q&a.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting established by Susan White for Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> 7pm at St. Martins Episcopal Church, 9000 St. Martin's Lane Richmond, VA 23294.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Notes Submitted by Colleen Estep