



WISCONSIN STATE HORSE COUNCIL, INC.

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A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF HORSES AND HORSEMEN IN WISCONSIN

PRESS RELEASE

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WANTED: A PLACE IN THE RECORD BOOKS, FOR A GOOD CAUSE

BEAVER DAM – The first goal is to help law enforcement officers and fire fighters learn how to handle horses in emergency situations.

The second goal is to host the biggest all-horse parade in Wisconsin.

Bringing those two goals together is the brainchild of the Dodge County Boots and Saddle Club; Maily Kocinski and her husband Rob are co-chairs of the committee trying to make it all happen.

The group is planning an Oct. 28 fund-raising all-horse parade in Beaver Dam. Sponsorships from the event will help finance seminars to help people who protect the public learn how to approach, halter, lead and tie equines during times of emergency.

“We have finished setting up the parade route and arranging parking with the City, and now what we’re looking for from everybody is as much publicity as we can get and volunteers to help with the staging and registration of riders on the day of the parade,” Kocinski said. And, of course, parade participants.

The 1:30 p.m. Halloween-themed parade will be open to horses, mules and donkeys. Single riders and groups, driving rigs and even halter-led animals are all welcome and encouraged, Kocinski said. Participants can dress in Halloween costumes or just put on their show-ring best— all are welcome.

For many members of the Dodge County Boots and Saddle Club, a Halloween parade isn’t a new idea. For years members of the club have gathered informally on Halloween or the closest weekend to ride, in costume, around Beaver Dam.

“It’s always a big hit,” Kocinski said. “People come out of their houses to watch.”

Noticing that many organizations host fund raising events for various good causes, Kocinski and others

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began to brainstorm what their club could do and what cause to support.

“Everybody has a story of having something happen, some emergency, and having to rely on people to help with horses,” she said. “We got to thinking about Hurricane Katrina, and all the horses that were endangered and had to be caught and helped.”

Law enforcement officers and fire fighters are trained to protect the public; no one can expect them to know automatically how to handle horses, Kocinski said. Training sessions would include practice in working with horses and tips on how to manage an emergency scene so equines are easier to handle. One example would be to encourage law enforcement professionals to turn their sirens off. Horses don't seem to mind flashing lights, but the sound of the siren can add to their fear and confusion, she said.

The \$10 parade entry fee will go toward financing the training sessions. Parade organizers will keep track of the hometown of participants and will invite a law enforcement officer or fire fighter from that area to attend the training.

Along the parade route, participants may use signs, banners or other identifiers to advertise their club, horse breed, sponsor, business or farm, she said. Participants may also list the name of the city or county agency they are supporting through their appearance in the parade.

“By October, the show season is winding down and the horses are in great condition,” Kocinski said. “This is another fun thing to do with horses, and at the same time, support a good cause.”

It takes time, money and effort to travel to participate in a parade, and Kocinski said organizers are doing all they can to make it a good experience for all. The parade route is more than 3 miles long – plenty of time for riders and rigs to greet crowds, she said. By June, organizers had already secured donations from several organizations and businesses, so that all participants will be able to get a “goody bag” worth more than their registration fee. Kocinski said she would like all participants and helpers to be able to get a free t-shirt to commemorate the event. Donations and sponsorships are welcome, Kocinski said.

“This parade is growing every day; we're getting more and more calls every day,” she said. “The more participation we can get from businesses and organizations, the more we can accomplish.”

Kocinski and other members of the Dodge County Boots and Saddle Club hope the parade becomes an annual event, that it starts out as the largest all-horse parade in the state, and that it continues to grow each year so it can maintain that honor.

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"We want to make it so fun that horse people can't wait to come back and do it again," she said.

For more information on the Oct. 28 parade, contact the Kocinskis at (920) 382-3738, or email kocinskim@hotmail.com.

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