

**ATTENTION: NEW RIDE = “VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS ENDURANCE CHALLENGE”...**

Website: <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~cullins/VHEC/index.html>

**NEGATIVE COGGINS REQUIRED**

**DO NOT MAIL ENTRIES IN AFTER AUGUST 12 MUST REGISTER IN CAMP**

Or, short version.. “VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS”!! The ride will be on the Virginia Highland Horse Trails (VHHT) August 22 and 23 2008. Base camp will be in Ivanhoe Va. at Jubilee Park adjacent to the NEW RIVER. The trail starts along the river, heads up a gorgeous creek lined by rhododendron then climbs the first Mtn and heads for Chestnut knob and beyond! 99% of the ride is in the beautiful and rugged Jefferson National Forest. There will be 30 mi and 50 mi rides and there will be two days of riding. The trail will have minor changes between day one and two. Vet checks will be away, one easy to get to and one that we will “explain”.....piece of cake. Dr Otis Schmidt will be head vet, he has three excellent and experienced vets with him (Nicki of course and Dr. 's J. Waldron and R. Whaley) and two rookies from NCSU (Dr Alice and Dr Kristin) that we will break in. Tom Sites will be providing Bon appetite – Rocky Mtn. oysters (one of Nicki's personal favorites) and other surprises, so there will be meals. We hope volunteers will be as plentiful as the mountain berries. We have verbal permission from the Forest Service so watch for word of final written approval in this newsletter. We are sanctioned by AERC and SERA.

If you have ridden in the High Country of Grayson Highlands don't worry, we do not have the rocks like they do or like Old Dominion; the climbs are not as steep as Leatherwood or as slippery but they are longer, there are no death defying drops like Tevis but there are some gorgeous look outs. Do expect a mountain ride and a tough workout for you and your partner that was designed by Gina Haggis and Nancy Sluys. Expect any kind of weather, perfect to thunderstorms, cool or heat - you do not know in the Mtns. The trail is marked superbly and permanently and if you get lost the bears will find you. Mtn streams will be drying but Tom and Gina Haggis guarantee water stops with full water tubs, sponge buckets and hay for horses. The Jefferson National Forest is over 400,000 ac. and has over 400 miles of trails for hikers, bikers and horse back riders; we will not use all of them. We hope to have their written approval soon and will keep you posted. From base camp you can ride one way 80+ miles to Elk Garden and you would cross over some gorgeous high country with incredible views. Karen Issacs has recommended no 2 day 100 this year but she and Thomas want a one way 100 in the future!! The trails are mountainous and consist of single track, wide woods trail and some gravel and dirt forest service roads. There will be multiple climbs but nothing too steep, just long. The footing is mostly good but there are some rocky areas. Hoof protection is recommended. Vet checks will be away from camp. Crews will have access to riders at several other locations throughout the course. Crewing allowed at designated locations only. You will cross paved roads with car traffic, one of which we will have spotters to assist you. **It will be difficult to “race” in the last 1-2 miles as the trail is narrow and then follows a creek. Have your place sorted out before this stretch.**

Jubilee park is only 12 miles from I-77 and the Poplar Camp Exit, paved roads entire way and directions will be perfect (are you reading this Joni and Joel?). The last turn is under the trestle into camp and it is a little tight but 18 wheelers have been through there so you

will too. If in doubt see Tom, Chester, or Terry and they will guide you through. This will be one of the prettiest campsites you have camped at. Flat as a pancake and you can walk, ride, float in the NEW RIVER which borders the campsite. There are high cliffs on the opposite side. Camping is primitive so bring your drinking water and turn off your generators after 10PM. **There will be a “Dog Jail” for all dogs not on leash, \$20 bail.** The ride will use VHHT and not the NEW RIVER TRAIL (NRT), however if you come early please ride the NRT for fun. This trail has perfect footing, is an old RR bed, affords no conditioning but the views are gorgeous. From base camp you can go north or south for miles, the entire trail is 50+ miles! Make sure your horse is bike broke, pedestrian broke and bridge broke or you will be broke. There are bridges spanning the New River, none of these are on the trail but they will get you to Foster Falls and other scenic spots on the NRT. Signs advise how to travel. Lots of other users will be on NRT this time of year but none will be motorized. You may also want to get a temporary fishing license, float the new river (rentals about 10+mi. away), and visit scenic spots: Ravens Cliff is close and gorgeous, picnic; Grayson Highlands State park is a drive but it has wild ponies and the Appalachian Trail and the High Country; and we will tell you of others. If you want to test ride the trail between now and August just contact anyone of us and we will be glad to take you out and show you the trails that are on the endurance ride and some that are not. You really need to see Ravens Cliff, Bear Den, Cripple Creek and other spots we love. **Suggest you google search the following if interested: Mt. Rogers, Virginia Highland Horse Trail, New River Trail, Google earth Ivanhoe Va or 1338 Powder Mill road, Ivanhoe Va 24350.** If you google earth click on the blue dots and they will show you scenic spots, some of which you will ride by. If you want to purchase a topo map it is: national geographic MOUNT ROGERS National Rec Area Jefferson Nationla Forest Virginia USA #786. On this map find Ivanhoe, New River and find an orange dashed line that starts at New River and heads up a creek “Big Branch” to Rt. 94. That is “your” trail, it is the VHHT. It crosses 94 and follows Cha Cha ridge.

**Ride Management Team:**

**Ride Manager – Don Meuten [don\\_meuten@ncsu.edu](mailto:don_meuten@ncsu.edu) 919-496-7236**

**Ride secretary and THE boss – Nicki Meuten 808 Brantleytown rd, Zebulon NC 27597**

**Assistants: Dawn Osborne and Laura Cullins**

**Trail Masters – Gina Hagis and Nancy Sluys**

**Mr Everything – Tom Hagis**

**Chef d’Cook – Tom Sites**

**Pot Luck Dinner Thursday for any who would like to bring something to share**

**Head Vet – Dr Otis Schmidt**

**Treatment Vet – Dr. Lynn Johnson**

**Photographer – Becky Siler**

**Farrier:**