



# King County Executive Horse Council

“Preserving The Equestrian Way Of Life”

Feb./March 2009

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## PROGRESS ON AGRICULTURAL EXEMPTION TAX

Judy Willman

Thanks to all of you who participated in writing or testifying about the Department of Revenue's declaration that horse related businesses which did not fall into a "breeding and selling" category could not qualify for the agricultural property tax exemption.

The response of the horse community to the Department of Revenue and to the County Assessor's Office was overwhelming. As a result of our input several things have happened:

- 1) The assessor's office agreed to cease with the demands of proof of qualification under the new ruling or payment of back taxes and fines until the Department of Revenue reached a decision.
- 2) The Department of Revenue agreed to revisit their interpretation of the law under the light of current agricultural practices.

(cont. on page 2)

## Meeting Schedule

Meetings are on the second Monday of the month. Meetings start at 7:00pm and end at 9:00pm. All are welcome!

- The March meeting is March 9 at Little Bit Stables in Redmond (18669 NE 106th St, Redmond, WA) (used to be called Simpatico)
- *Directions:* 106th St is a small street off Avondale Rd between the Shell Station on 116th and the traffic light for 104th Ave (Education Hill). Turn onto 106th, go over the small bridge and take the first right into Little Bit Stables. The house on the right is the clubhouse. Check our website for more detail.

(cont. from page 1)

- 3) The King County Council passed a motion which supports the horse boarding concept and encourages the Department of Revenue to adopt an emergency ruling. (Actually the thing I consider most important about this, is that in the language of the motion the council stated "the raising of livestock, including horses..." This in essence commits the county to the admission that horses are in fact livestock, which was a concept not clearly addressed in the last Comprehensive Plan update.)
- 4) The Department of Revenue then issued an emergency ruling which basically uses the logic that commercial pasturing or grazing is considered a qualified agricultural activity and that as long as a commercial horse operation is in essence "selling" the grazing on pastures to its clients, then the operation will qualify for the agricultural exemption.
- 5) The status of an emergency ruling is that it is in effect for 120 days. That means that the Department of Revenue has until April 30 to adopt a permanent rule (however if necessary the emergency ruling can be renewed until a permanent rule is adopted.) The DOR has stated that they intend to begin the permanent rule-making process as soon as possible in 2009. Those of us who were on record as writing or testifying should be notified with the proposed permanent wording and given a chance to comment.

### Northwest Horse Forum

The Seattle Times has launched a free online Northwest Horse Forum ([www.seattletimes.com/horseforum](http://www.seattletimes.com/horseforum)) for horse enthusiasts everywhere. One of the many discussions is focusing on the national crisis in unwanted-horses. Horse enthusiasts from all over are participating. Check out the conversation now! Horse enthusiasts are also talking about everything from what to do if your horse eats a plastic grocery bag, how to reduce mud in paddocks, grumpy and spooky horses, locating good hay, finding someone to share a trailer ride to creating the best footings for paddocks and arenas. You can make this site anything you want -- but we need your participation.

This site is a great resource for the horse community. Please consider passing this information to your horse contacts. Also, if you have a Web site, would you add a link to this forum? I'd be happy to link to your site if you contact me.

Thanks,

Joan Deutsch  
[jdeutsch@seattletimes.com](mailto:jdeutsch@seattletimes.com)  
425-417-9028

If the link doesn't work, please copy and paste it into your browser. Or, if your email format isn't set to "html," you can fix this in Outlook. Open the e-mail and follow these steps: Select "Format" from the drop down list in the individual email and click "HTML", This will activate the link!

Directions for registering are at the top of the forum. If you have technical difficulties, please contact [Webmaster@seattletimes.com](mailto:Webmaster@seattletimes.com).

## King County Comprehensive Plan Update

In 2008 the King County Comprehensive Plan was updated and the portion of the plan which had requirements specific to Equestrian Communities was changed to expand those requirements to cover **all of the Rural Area** in King county. These are most specifically requirements related to trail preservation and roadside treatments. We hope you will take the time to look at these current requirements so that you are aware of what we **should** be getting. Often it is up to us to remind people at the county level what their own rules are. If we don't do it, who is going to? So, please take the time to read these two and a half pages -- keep them handy. We need to make sure that we at least get what is required.

Excerpt from Chapter 3 of the King County Comprehensive Plan dated October 2008

### **C. Equestrian Activities**

King County recognizes the contributions of equestrian livestock husbandry, training, competition, and recreation activities to the overall rural quality of life in King County. These activities provide a lifestyle value to numerous county residents and visitors and economic revenue for rural residents and business owners. There are numerous organizations that support the equestrian industry by providing education and promoting equine husbandry, including the King County Agriculture Program, King County Extension Service, Future Farmers of America, 4H, the King County Executive Horse Council, Backcountry Horse men, the Enumclaw Forested Foothills Recreation Association, and numerous other special interest equestrian related groups.

In the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, Equestrian Communities were identified and mapped to support coordinated activities between the county and the equestrian industry, especially in preserving trails. However, a diversity of equestrian uses are found throughout the county and these uses should be sustained and encouraged where compatible with the existing character of the area in which new equestrian facilities are proposed.

As growth continues to occur throughout the county, open land to sustain livestock and existing or potential trail segments may be lost to uncoordinated land development and road improvements. Also, requirements of the Endangered Species Act may limit livestock management choices and the location of new equestrian facilities on land constrained by large riparian corridors. Additionally, with the county's emphasis on preserving agricultural and forestry lands within the Agricultural and Forest Productions Districts, the development of large equestrian facilities of a size and scale that would be incompatible with agricultural and forestry practices within these districts should be discouraged.

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**R-211 King County should continue to support and sustain equestrian activities and ensure that regulations support those activities compatible with the area in which they are located.**

Equestrian uses in the county include trail riding. Although llama and alpaca treks are becoming increasingly popular, most of the trail riding in King County is on horses. The following policies address the need to continue to support trails for equestrian, multi-use, and existing trail linkage purposes.

**R-212 King County should support the identified equestrian uses in the Rural Area by providing facilities on King County rights-of-way where not in conflict with the terms of utility easements to accommodate horse travel; by maintaining equestrian links, including multiple-use trails, where appropriate; and by adoption of supportive land use regulations for use of these areas for horsekeeping. King County will work with local communities to identify and protect multiple-use trails and other public trails that support horse travel within the Rural Area.**

**R-213 Soft-surface multiple-use trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way are the preferred option for equestrian travel for safety reasons and to avoid conflicts with residential activities associated with the street. Existing off-road trails should be preserved during site development, with relocation as appropriate to accommodate development while maintaining trail connections. The King County Road Design Standards will accommodate safe equestrian travel within road rights-of-way. Where appropriate, capital improvement programs for transportation and park facilities shall also enable the use of new facilities by equestrians. Construction standards for multiple-use nonmotorized trails to be established in road rights-of way within the Rural Area should assure a minimum eight-foot-wide gravel shoulder on arterial roads and 4.5 foot gravel shoulder on local access roads, or provide a trail separated from the driving lanes by a ditch or other barrier. Construction standards for soft-surface multiple-use nonmotorized trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way shall be consistent with current trail construction and maintenance practices as promulgated by the U.S. Forest Service.**

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**R-214 King County's land use regulations should protect rural equestrian community trails by supporting preservation of equestrian trail links in the Rural Area, protecting livestock from intrusions from residential development, and encouraging subdivision layouts that preserve opportunities for keeping of horses. Representatives of the equestrian community shall be given the opportunity to review and monitor regulatory and programmatic actions by King County, such as rural area development regulations, that have the potential to affect equestrian uses.**

**R-215 Property owners in the Agricultural and Forest Production Districts are encouraged to voluntarily allow continued equestrian access to existing trails or alternative access if the existing trail impedes future use of their property.**

**R-216 Equestrian trails should be a category in the county's Public Benefit Rating System, so that a landowner who provides trail access may qualify for a tax reduction under the program.**

**R-217 County departments negotiating trades or sales of county land shall determine whether any historically established trails exist on the property, and ensure that those trails are retained or replaced to ensure that key linkages to regional systems are not lost as a condition of the trade or sale.**

**It's time to renew!** If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2009, now is the time. If you need to renew in 2009 you will find a SASE attached to your newsletter.

However, you can also renew on our website using Paypal!

Just go to <http://www.kingcountyexecutivehorsecouncil.org/membership.htm>



## New Fall City Park District could mean better maintenance for Fall City Park arena

By Ann Shilling

Fall City voters appear to have approved the creation of a Fall City Park District (election results will be certified Feb. 18th), with 58% of voters casting ballots in favor. The proposal on the February 3<sup>rd</sup> special election ballot creates a Fall City Park District to care for the Fall City Community Park and Quigley Park. If things go according to their plan, King County would transfer the parks to the new Fall City Park District, which would then raise money from property taxes to cover maintenance (currently projected at 9.7 cents per thousand dollars of property tax value).

The public riding arena at Fall City Park was built by volunteer labor from the Raging River Riders club in the early 1980's, and was maintained by them until King County Parks took it over. Lately, however, there has been concern about the level of maintenance of the park's facilities, and King County expressed an interest in transferring the park to the Snoqualmie tribe in order to cut costs. Citizens of Fall City were concerned that the transfer agreement between King County Parks and the Snoqualmie tribe didn't include enough safeguards to make sure that the park would continue to be available for public uses, including horseback riding in the arena and ball games on the ball field, and so the idea of a Fall City Parks District was born. The idea was championed by Friends of Fall City Parks, who conducted a public-relations and petition drive to get the proposal onto the ballot.

In addition to providing one of the few public riding arenas in the county, the Fall City Park is also important to equestrians as one of the few trailheads for the Snoqualmie Valley Trail with sufficient parking to accommodate horse trailers. (Note that Snoqualmie Valley Trail access from the Fall City Park along SE 39<sup>th</sup> Place is informal and currently under dispute. When and if the dispute is resolved, however, keeping equestrian-friendly parking nearby will be critical.)

Assuming the Park District does take over maintenance of the Fall City Park, newly-elected commissioner Lee Moderow says that improved maintenance will be one of their first concerns, with an eye toward improving the safety and usefulness of the park, arena, ball fields, and parking lot.



*L.W.S.C.*  
**Lake Washington Saddle Club**  
**2009 Horse show dates**

<b>"C" Shows</b> May 9, and 10 July 11, and 12	<b>Jumper Fun Shows</b> May 2 June 13 August 1	<b>Dressage Schooling Shows</b> June 21 July 19 August 23 September 13
<b>Hunter Fun Shows</b> May 3 June 14 August 2	<b>Play days</b> May 16 September 20	

LakeWashingtonSaddleClub.org



Learn about **GREEN** horse keeping techniques that will make your horse life easier and be eco-friendly at the following educational events. New events added regularly at [www.HorsesforCleanWater.com](http://www.HorsesforCleanWater.com).

**IN MARCH:**

**WEST SEATTLE**

**Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Farm Tour: Seattle Police's Mounted Patrol Unit** Plan now to learn about Seattle's Mounted Patrol Unit and the horses that help protect our streets. The Seattle Police have a beautiful 3-acre equestrian facility located in Westcrest Park that they have worked hard to set up and manage in a horse-friendly, green manner. They even have a KCD farm plan! Hear how the Mounted Patrol Unit manages the manure for seven horses, how they control mud in their large outdoor paddocks, hear about wildlife enhancement techniques and what the Unit does to live in harmony with their urban neighbors. This beautiful facility includes 12 stalls and a 75x130' indoor arena. **West Seattle, WA. Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 10 to noon, FREE!** Register and receive directions with the King Conservation District at 425-277-5581 ext. 122, or [paul.borne@kingcd.org](mailto:paul.borne@kingcd.org).

**IN APRIL:**

**RENTON, WA**

**Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>**

**NEW PARTNER & NEW EVENT!! WORKSHOP: Caring for Your Horse & His Home** Are you new to horse ownership or do you have children who want a horse? Do you know what the regular health, dental and shoeing needs are for horses? Would you like to learn about shelters requirements and horse-safe fencing? Join Alayne Bickle for an all day workshop geared for novice horse owners. Topics include horse behavior, horse & handler safety, planning your horse facility, how to buy a horse, nutrition & feeding, vet & farrier care, and pasture, manure & mud management. **Renton Technical College, Renton, WA, room C113, Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 9am to 4:30pm.** \$50. Get on the Horse Care Class Contact List for early registration by contacting Jennifer Rock at Renton Technical College's Lifestyle Program at 425-235-2352 ext. 5727 or email her at [jrock@rtc.edu](mailto:jrock@rtc.edu).

**RENTON, WA**

**Wednesdays, April 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>**

**NEW PARTNER & NEW EVENT!! CLASS SERIES: Green Horsekeeping: Mud, Manure & Pasture Management for Horses** Tired of seeing your horses slosh around in mud? Wondering what to do with all the flies and manure behind the barn? Are you new to horsekeeping on small acreage? Then join HCW for Green Horsekeeping! There are many great ways to banish mud on horse properties. Learn about French drains, footing options, geotextile fabrics & other great ideas for managing horse paddocks. Find out how to compost horse manure, see different compost bin designs and get tips for reducing stall waste in the barn. Study basic techniques for good pasture management including how grasses grow, creating a winter paddock, liming, spreading compost, rotational grazing, weed control, fencing options & small farm equipment. Learn how to make your horse property chore-efficient, horse healthy, more productive during the growing season and a healthy place for the environment! **Renton Technical College, Renton, WA, room C113, Wednesday evenings, April 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm to 9:00pm.** \$50. Get on the Horse Care Class Contact List for early registration by contacting Jennifer Rock at Renton Technical College's Lifestyle Program at 425-235-2352 ext. 5727 or email her at [jrock@rtc.edu](mailto:jrock@rtc.edu).

**MAPLE VALLEY, WA**

**Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 5pm Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 5pm, Tuesday,**

**September 15, 9am – 5pm**

**NEW PARTNER & NEW EVENT!! CLINIC: Natural Ways to Manage Horses & Horse Properties** Barb Apple & Alayne Bickle team up to bring you hands-on help & information towards a holistic approach to managing your horse and horse property. Build confidence with your horse and strengthen your horsemanship by understanding horse behavior with the Northwest's own Natural Horsemanship Clinician, Barb Apple. The morning session will be groundwork with your horse to help you understand your horse and build your partnership together. For the afternoon, join Alayne Bickle to tour her eco-friendly farm. Get tips and ideas on ways to set up and manage horse properties that are good for you, your horses and the environment. Learn about mud-free paddocks, composting horse manure, pasture management with less chemicals – and more GREEN horsekeeping! Horse & rider participants, \$195, limited to 10 participants. Auditors, \$35. For more on Barb: [www.BarbApple.com](http://www.BarbApple.com). More on Alayne: [www.HorsesforCleanWater.com](http://www.HorsesforCleanWater.com) For more clinic pricing, stalling, registration details, guest horses or overnight accommodations contact [Alayne@horsesforcleanwater.com](mailto:Alayne@horsesforcleanwater.com) or 425-432-6116.



# Membership Dues

Individual Family \$15 Club/Organization \$25

Membership is based on a calendar year of January 1 through December 31. After October 1, new membership will be applied to the following year.

Please make check payable to KCEHC and mail to: King County Executive Horse Council, P.O. Box 2904, Woodinville, WA 98072-2904

Name/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you want your name excluded from the membership directory?  Yes  No

2. Do you want to receive your newsletter by e-mail?  Yes  No

\* Please make sure that you have provided us with your correct/current e-mail address \*

Education Committee

Kathryn Taylor Horse Park Maintenance committee

Publicity Committee

Membership Committee

Newsletter Committee

Trails Committee

Equestrian Issues Committee

Watchdog Committee

At this time I can only support the KCEHC with my membership

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Mailing Label

King County Executive Horse Council  
PO Box 2904  
Woodinville, WA 98072-2904