

FARM & GARDEN

HOOFMATES 4-H HORSE CLUB



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Emerald Hill fifth-grader Bryan Ramey, mounted, CCHS sophomore Ashleigh Ramey, center, and senior Amanda Ramey competed at the 2007 VA State 4-H Championship Horse Show Sept. 20-23 in Lexington.

The following is a list of results for the HoofMates 4-H Horse Club at the 2007 VA State 4-H Championship Horse Show held Sept. 20-23 in Lexington:

Amanda Ramey on Just Dreamin':

- 13th out of 80 in Sr. (16-19) Hunter Showmanship
- 4th out of 25 in Sr. (16-19) Large Hunter Pleasure Horse 1st Go
- 6th out of 25 in Sr. (16-19) Large Hunter Pleasure Horse 2nd Go
- 5th out of 38 in Sr. (16-19) Large Horse Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat
- Blue Ribbon for Stable Management

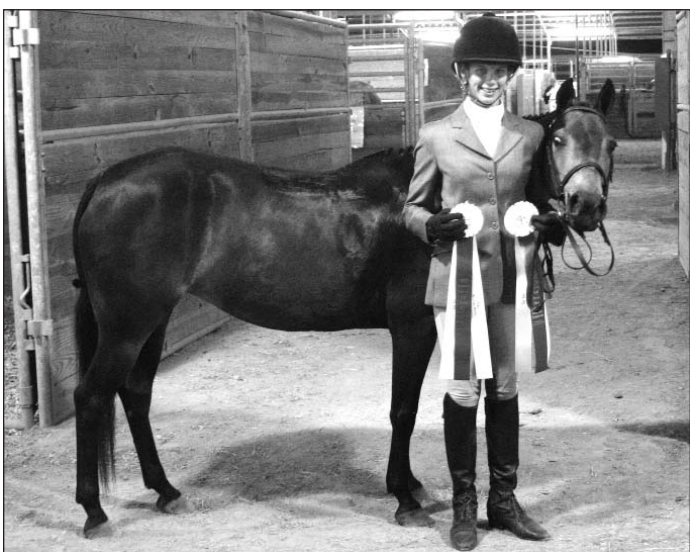
Ashleigh Ramey on A Mocha Moment:

- 2nd - Small Medium Pleasure Pony Sr Rider 1st Go
- 2nd - Small Medium Pleasure Pony Sr Rider 2nd Go
- Reserve Champion Small Medium Pleasure Pony Sr Rider
- 1st - Sr Equitation Over Fences - Small Medium Pony
- 4th - Pony Equitation Classic
- Blue Ribbon for Stable Management
- Red Ribbon for Sr (14-15) Hunter Showmanship

Bryan Ramey on A Mocha Moment:

- 1st - Small Medium Pleasure Pony Jr (9-12) Rider 1st Go
- 4th - Small Medium Pleasure Pony Jr (9-12) Rider 2nd Go
- Reserve Champion Small Medium Pleasure Pony Jr (9-12) Rider
- 6th - Pleasure Pony Classic
- Blue Ribbon for Stable Management
- Red Ribbon for Jr (9-12) Hunter Showmanship
- Bryan was the youngest rider at the event.

Ashleigh & Bryan both qualified for the Pleasure Pony Classic, as both were reserve champions, but Ashleigh let Bryan have the honors. All members have now qualified for the 2008 Southern Regional 4-H Championship Horse Show hosted by Virginia. Congratulations.



Ashleigh Ramey competed at the 2007 Southern Regional 4-H Championship Horse Show Aug. 1-5 in Memphis, Tenn. She and her horse, A Mocha Moment, finished 8th in Working Hunter Under Saddle out of 144 entries and 10th in Pony Working Hunter out of 40 entries.

Pumpkin shortage expected

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BUFFALO, W.Va. — There's trouble brewing in the pumpkin patch.

Scorching weather and a lack of rain over the summer has wiped out some pumpkin crops stretching from western New York to Illinois, leaving fields dotted with undersized fruit. Other fields got too much rain and their crops rotted.

Pumpkin production is predicted to be down for the

second straight year. U.S. Department of Agriculture figures show a slight production decrease from 2005 to 2006 in what the department estimates is a \$100 million-a-year industry.

"If you've got to have them for your 5-year-olds, I certainly would not wait a long time to get them," said Steve Bogash, a Penn State University horticulture educator who works with about 1,600 Pennsylvania vegetable growers.

Greetings from Vermont

Sometimes in life things happen for a reason that at first seems beyond you, although at the time it doesn't seem much like it, this can often be a good thing. One such example happened to us this week.

We came to South Londonderry, Vt., to stay with Betty-Jo Chartier and her family for a couple of days, stabling the horses at Tini Hamilton's yard — Thistledeew Stables (thistledeewstables.com) — a few miles down the road in Londonderry itself.

Now we often don't know what to expect when we arrive somewhere new so it is always with a mixture of excitement and trepidation that we set foot in a new place. Well, we couldn't have been more delighted with Thistledeew Stables, as it is an idyllic place with a beautiful barn full of large, airy stalls, and acres of wonderful pasture for the horses to graze and stretch their legs.

In addition, the whole place is surrounded by views of Magic Mountain (ski resort) and there are very pleasant trails to explore direct from the stable yard.

Tini herself is of Austrian/German descent and has a love of the native horse, the Haflinger, but is actually a Dressage specialist, expert skier and human dynamo, in that she is constantly on the go, running around from place to place and doing a million and one things at once.

As Betty-Jo says, she is on "Tini time", not Vermont time like the rest of us! Nonetheless, Tini found the time to go out on a couple of brief trail rides with us, and even arranged for us to go on the annual "Fall Foliage" ride of the Green Mountain Horse Association (gmhainc.org) in Woodstock, which is normally open to members of the association only.

To get back to my original theme, we would not have gone on the GMHA trail ride had we not had the misfortune, or rather, as it turned out, the fortune to have had a problem with our truck.

We were getting ready to hitch up the truck to the trailer and get on our way to our next venue when we saw that one side of the suspension seemed a little low. Checking that none of the tires had gone flat, we then took a look at the air ride suspension at the rear (without it we would have a much harder time towing our huge trailer in relative comfort and safety), and sure enough, the pressure in one of the bags had dropped to zero.

We couldn't hitch up and drive off with only one side of the truck pumped up, and we certainly couldn't drive any distance without any air-ride at all, so we had no choice but to stay put and get the system fixed.

Betty-Jo as always came to our rescue, running around to find a garage that could do the job without having to drive a hundred miles or more, and luckily we found the local shop could fix the problem, but needed to order a new



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

David and Anita sit on a lift at Stratton & Bromley, a ski resort they toured while in Vermont. Fortuitous trailer problems gave them extra time in the Green Mountain State.



DAVID AND ANITA HASBURY-SNOGLES

part which would take a couple of days to get there.

So we found ourselves having the time to get to see more of the "Green Mountain State" — and my goodness, it sure is a beautiful place, particularly at this time of year when the leaves on the trees are starting to change color.

Betty-Jo would throw us in the car, picnic basket and wine in tow, and take us on many a mystery tour (she never told us where we were going — just upped and left), and we would end up going all over the place as her sense of direction was at best as good as mine — that is, rubbish!

However, once we knew where we were supposed to go and with Anita in the car, we were soon being directed along the right route.

In fact, Betty-Jo nicknamed Anita "Tom-Tom," as she was always so annoyingly correct with her directions, that it was like having a personal GPS on board — she even thought about hiring Anita out to the elderly as an alternative to the computer gizmos!

Anyhow, we went to see some amazingly beautiful countryside and toured the local ski-resorts (Stratton &

Bromley), which, although it isn't winter, are still buzzing with activity.

We went up to the top of the mountain on the ski lift, and rode our "dry-sleds" down the Alpen-slide, which is very similar to a real-life "luge" and just as exciting!

This part of Vermont is perhaps better known for its hunting and winter sports activities than anything else, but I'll tell you what, if it wasn't for the deep snow and cold winters, I'd love to live here — the countryside is beautiful and the villages are full of old-world charm, looking much as you imagine a quaint American town to be.

I guess I'm too much of an English "wuss" to cope with those harsh northeastern winters!

It is quite interesting around here in that we can tour much of the world without travelling very far.

We went to the annual fair in Peru last weekend, drove through Jamaica and Athens on many an occasion, and then of course visited Manchester on our way back to Londonderry — you certainly can get around here, especially with Betty-Jo at the wheel!

But as with most of the places we visit, there is never enough room on these pages to do it full justice.

We went to so many places and met so many people in such a short space of time that it all becomes a bit of a blur, but one place we do remember this trip is Pond Hill Ranch in Castleton (pondhillranch.com) where a bit of Team Penning was going on.

This is actually one of the biggest professional rodeo

ranches in the area, although the season had just ended the week prior, so we contented ourselves with an enjoyable evening of Team Penning.

Of course, we didn't know we were going there, as Betty-Jo hadn't told us, so we weren't prepared with cameras etc., or even sweaters as it was a little chilly in the breeze.

We were even less prepared for the fact that they opened their tack store at 9:00 p.m. on a Saturday night, just so that we could go in and choose a new hat for ourselves!

You see, they had seen our Web site earlier where one of the photos on there showed Anita and I in front of the TV cameras, and contained a caption underneath that said, "As you can see, I really must get a new hat" — they took me at my word and presented us both with some brand new hats — how cool is that?

Once again, It shows just how hospitable and friendly these country folk can be, especially to a couple of ornery old Brits who've nothing better to do with their time than run around the country on some darn fool escapade!

Next week more on Vermont and our unexpected tour around an "Extreme Makeover" house — not as yet seen on TV!

David and Anita Hasbury-Snogles are British residents riding across the United States on horseback to raise money for charity. Visit HorseQuestUSA.org for more information. David can be reached at david_hasbury@yahoo.com.

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