

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In reading your spring 2008 *Apples 'n Oats* magazine, I noticed two letters to the editor regarding the NAIS. Please re-affirm for your readers that the NAIS is voluntary in Iowa.

If your readers are showing or racing in Illinois where NAIS is mandatory, they may need the required paperwork for entrance to the fairgrounds or racetracks. The Horse and Dog Breeding Bureau for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship can provide the paperwork. Please feel free to contact us at HorseAndDogBreeding@iowaAgriculture.gov

We are happy to help.

Jill Paxton, Bureau Chief - Horse and Dog Bureau
Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey
Wallace State Office building, 502 E. 9th. Street, Des Moines IA 50319
515-281-7683 (office) · 515-402-7168 (cell) · 515-281-8025 (fax)

Riding Panther

by Donna Cobley and George Cobley
donnacob@aol.com / gacobley@aol.com

It is time to clean up the tack, get the trailers ready, and convince the horses that this will be a fun year trail riding in the upper Midwest. This year we are planning to visit a trail ride we discovered late last year. Panther Creek Trail Rides, <http://panthercreektrailrides.com/>, is located southwest of Jefferson City, Missouri. Last fall we visited Panther Creek as a part of the *Show Me Missouri Back Country Horseman* annual meeting. Because of the meetings, we didn't get as much exploring done as we would have liked, but what we did accomplish was well worth the effort.

Panther Creek is located in central Missouri about 30 miles southwest of the state capital, Jefferson City. West of the camp about 20 miles is the well known Lake of the Ozarks. Nearby is one of the many popular Missouri rivers, the Osage River. The camp is nestled amidst plenty of natural beauty with access to 4000 acres of scenic overlooks, large meadows, rocky ravines, and winding wooded trails - something for everyone's taste in trail riding. The facility has a special feature for those who prefer "driving" to "riding." There are over 30 miles of trails accessible to teams and wagons.

The Panther Creek facilities were initially built in 1999. The first full year of scheduled rides was in 2000. There is a 4000 sq. ft. dining hall with a rustic decor that is a real comfort when you sit down to enjoy some of Judy's homemade meal creations. The stereo in the background provides you with a selection of music to your liking and requests seldom go unanswered. Steve has a CD collection to rival any disc jockey.

Each campsite has access to electric and its own water hydrant. After a challenging summer in 2006, the camp doubled the electrical capacity and increased the water supply so there shouldn't be any shortages. Panther Creek offers about 80 hookup locations with electric and water, so getting a "good" place to park should not be a problem. As usual, we do recommend calling ahead to reserve your space, particularly for scheduled rides; 573-369-2655.

For your four-legged buddies Panther Creek has nice accommodations, all covered with lights and water near stalls. The stall dividers go all the way to the top to prevent busy noses from reaching over. The dividers are more like a heavy duty "screen" which provides ventilation, visibility, and security. During 2007 they completed and added numerous additional stalls, complete with electric and water nearby! They have approximately 140 stalls. As with camping areas, we suggest reserving stalls in advance, particularly if you'd like to be in a certain area.

As mentioned earlier, there are a variety of trail styles throughout the 4000 acres. You can preview the map and even print it if you wish by going to their WEB site. There are numerous



Creek Trails

new trails added since the beginning of 1999. Riders decide what challenge they are up for and the hosts will provide directions. There are trail markers that we found very useful should you decide to ride without the camp guides. If you prefer to let someone else make the plans, the guided rides generally head out around 9:00 a.m. You can sleep in a little if you want, savor a homemade cinnamon roll (or other breakfast traditions), coffee or milk, and still have time to join the ride.

The camp staff will provide you with trail maps that are regularly updated as trails are added. There are many landmarks indicated on the map and the trails are all named with posted signs at the beginning and end of each trail. Did we mention the hills? They have lots of them. You can also take your pick of wooded or open trails. Plains, hills, trees, creeks and rock ledges...yes, they have a variety!

The trails wind through pastures and you will have to pass through gates. If you find a gate closed, be sure to close



it behind you. As you ride through the miles of trail you may come across some of the permanent users of the various pastures. If your horse hasn't experience mingling with cattle you may want to give a wide berth to the longhorns. And we do mean long horns.

Directions to Panther Creek from Jefferson City:

- From Jefferson City: Take Hwy 54 West to Hwy 17
- Take Hwy 17 South 16 miles to State Rd A
- Make a LEFT on State Rd A
- Go 4 miles to Humphrey Creek Rd
- Turn LEFT on Humphrey Creek Rd (gravel) and go 1 mile
- Entrance is marked on the LEFT

PCTR, Inc.
152 Opal Dr
Ulman, Missouri 65083
United States
Phone: 573-369-2655
Fax: 573-369-0082
pnthrcrk@yahoo.com

