

**2006 Connecticut Horse Symposium: UConn Celebrates Its 125th
Anniversary and Continues to Honor Its Origins
By Dr. Jenifer Nadeau
Equine Extension Specialist, University of Connecticut**

The University of Connecticut celebrates its 125th anniversary this year and the 2006 Connecticut Horse Symposium was part of the celebration. The University started out as an agricultural college where horses were used to help provide transportation and labor; on Saturday, March 18 and Sunday, March 19 the horse was the subject of research based, informative talks and exciting demonstrations held the University of Connecticut's Ratcliffe Hicks Arena and Horsebarn Hill Arena. In attendance were 500-700 people, including over 100 4-H members. The event was sponsored by the Department of Animal Science and College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Connecticut as well as the Connecticut Horse Council. It featured a vendor fair, silent auction, coloring contest, draft horse shuttle and speakers and demonstrations.

There were many vendors present including feed companies, alternative therapies, mustangs to pet, horse rescue, horse product vendors, and horse clubs and organizations. The silent auction included 40 items ranging from unique gift items to equine massage, a truck full of hay, horse feed, and mats for your stall to a body clipping for your horse. Silent auction donors included Berlin 4-H Trail Dusters, Equine Energy Therapy, Equi-Myo, Blue Seal Feeds, Central Connecticut Farmers Cooperative, Kerry Comisky, New Traditions Studio, Equine Comfort LLC, Happy Hoofers 4-H Club, Colonial Hill Quarter Horses, Benedict's Home and Garden, Ruth Beardsley, Esquire, JC Embroidery, The Spoiled Horse, Pawing Ponies 4-H Club, Double L Equine Express, Simply Earth, Dr. Jenifer Nadeau, Just Horses Directory, and Connecticut Equine Massage. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors and vendors and silent auction donors for their generous support of this event. We hope to work with you again next year and would love to add new sponsors and vendors!

The coloring contest had many young participants 13 and under who colored one or two pictures of the CT Helmet Safety Program's coloring book. The coloring contest was sponsored by the Ruth Beardsley, Esquire, Branford Veterinary Hospital, Kerry Comisky, Connecticut Helmet Safety Program, Karen Von Bachel, Northeast Equine Appraisal, and Allen Schoen, DVM. All coloring contest participants received a ribbon and a little stuffed horse for participating.

The draft horse shuttle sponsored and run by Breezy Acres Percherons LLC took people between the two arenas. We would like to thank the shuttle driver and donor, Al Cyr for his fearless continuation despite a flat tire the first day and somewhat chilly weather both days. Coffee breaks were sponsored by Annaray Morgan Farm, Beckett & Associates Veterinary Services LLC, and the Stonefield Equine Clinic. The regular sponsors were Apple Hill Enterprises, Breezy Acres Percherons, LLC, Kerry Comisky, Connecticut Equine Clinic, and Litchfield Hills Driving Club.

There were excellent speakers on both days on informative topics who provided research based information. Speakers on Saturday included Dr. Jenifer Nadeau who spoke about toxic plants and what you need to know. Doris Worcester spoke about how to maximize riding potential through mental training techniques, relaxation, and anxiety reduction strategies. Mark Cummings spoke about best management practices to prevent

manure build up. Russell Wheeler of Wheeler's Landscape spoke about manure management. Dr. Arnold Goldman spoke about the Statewide Animal Response Team and its plan for horses in CT. Dr. Melissa Mazan spoke about the effect of horse barns on you and your horse's health. Reva Seybolt talked about rotational grazing and pasture management.

In the speaker demonstration area on Saturday, Wendy Rivers gave an equine whole body massage demonstration. Dr. Amiee Eggleston, Deborah Crane of Equine Energy Therapy, and Curtis Hanks from Smith-Worthington gave a demonstration on how the horse's back works with thermal imaging to aid in saddle fitting. Cheryl Cobb gave a demonstration on equine dentistry.

Demonstrations on Saturday included the Governor's Horse Guard presenting the Color Guard, the UConn Drill Team honoring the soldiers with their red, white and blue performance, Lori Vogel and her team shared their love for the Kiger horse, Anita Koskoszka gave a wonderful dressage demonstration, Tim Harvey shared his amazing Natural Horsemanship knowledge, and Christine Bomster ended the day with a rousing barrel racing performance!

On Sunday, speakers included Halide Caine of Connecticut Equine Massage presenting a massage therapists guide to muscle wellness. Donna Sims, Esquire spoke about property tax issues for horse owners and gave an overview of contracts. Jessica VanSteenburg of Blue Seal Feeds gave a talk on what you need to know about carbohydrates. Emily McCabe Alger presented an overview of the 4-H Horse Program in Connecticut.

Sunday's speaker demonstration area included horse rescue by the Second Chance Ranch, and a Sulfur Demonstration by Tim Harvey.

4-Hers attended the Horsin' In Stride event on Sunday where UConn students gave talks and 4-Hers participated in activities on different topics such as: Habits for Having a Healthy Horse (speaker UConn student Kristi Kalinski), Not Just Eenie Meenie Minie Mo: How to Properly Select a Horse (speaker UConn student Dorrie Dutelle), Who's Your Daddy: Important Concepts in Horse Breeding (speaker UConn student Rachel Candelora), Hoofin' It: The Importance of Hoof Care in the Horse (speaker UConn student Jennifer Elman), and Hay A Day Keeps the Vet Away (speaker UConn student Theresa Kaeser).

In the dream barn contest at Horsin' In Stride, first place for the senior contest was Violet Stewart, 2nd place was Elizabeth Spielman. In the junior contest, first place was Renee Gauvin, 2nd place was Kari Lemelin, 3rd place was Leah Digzoia (with a special award for most creative and original design), 4th place was Amber Nogiec, 5th place was Nicole Lemelin, 6th place was Kayla Perry, and 7th place was Lauren Marshall.

On Sunday, demonstrations included training the vaulting horse and spectacular display of artistic riding by JD Winslow, the history and showing of Gypsy Cobs by Emerald Winds Farm, an exciting demonstration of cowboy mounted shooting by the Connecticut Renegades, and a lovely dressage lateral movements and musical freestyle presentation by Ann Guptill on Magnum. The crowd also engaged in horse symposium trivia to receive prizes.

A great time was had by all!! Thanks to all participants and attendees. The money generated from this event goes to support future symposiums, equine research, and equine extension programs. Six University of Connecticut independent study students,

two work/study students, and a hard-working committee were involved in the planning, organizing and running of this event along with Dr. Nadeau. This event would not have been possible without their hard work and dedication. They included: Kelle Doyle, TaRa Banning, Kristi Kalinski, Rachel Candelora, Dorrie Dutelle, Jennifer Elman, Jillian Jackson, Theresa Kaeser, Michelle Brozowsky, Karin Marquis, Kerry Comisky, and Jamison Wallace. The independent study students also each participated in a talk on Sunday, which was youth day. They gave their talks to 4-Hers in the horse program on topics including conformation, hoof care, horse health, nutrition, and reproduction.

If you would like to be on the mailing list for next year's symposium, are interested in becoming a sponsor, vendor, speaker or wish to give a demonstration, please call, fax or email: Dr. Jenifer Nadeau, (860) 486-4471, (860) 486-4375 (fax) or email jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu. Also, don't forget to check out our website at www.canr.uconn.edu/ansci/equine/extension for more upcoming events and information! We look forward to seeing you at next year's symposium to be held March 24 and 25, 2007! Don't miss out on this great educational opportunity!