

The Equine Foundation of Canada Charity Trail Ride  
submitted  
by Laurel Gould

The Equine Foundation Trail Ride held on the Aug.22/23 weekend was a great success. It was held at Black Oak Stables in Orono, Ontario which is a private Morgan horse farm nestled out in the woods on the boundary of Clarington and Kawartha Lakes. It is also conveniently located 10 minutes by horseback from the newly formed East Cross Forest under the management of Kawartha Lake Conservation. The forest just recently opened one trail to the public after a two year regeneration period of the huge tract of land which was donated to them by many local landowners. With special permission our group was allowed to access a trail from the end of the forest on our side which then connected us to the open trail and proved to be the highlight of our ride! The outriders were allowed to go in on the Friday to become familiar with the trail and then take the group of 25 riders in on the Saturday. It was so picturesque from the highest point of the trail and the footing was perfect for horses!

The ride was sponsored by the Ontario Morgan Horse Club and the Just-in-tario Youth group to raise money for the Equine Foundation of Canada which is a registered charity that every year grants money to Provinces on a rotating basis for education and equipment for Veterinary Schools, clubs and people.

Black Oak Stable owners John and Laurel hosted the weekend of fun and non stop activities. While the weather looked menacing at times and the rains came down 5 km up the road, the weather stayed perfect where the riders and horses played all weekend. Saturday started out with donuts and coffee compliments of the local Tim Horton's. The local Lions Club kept the BBQ going before and after the 25 riders went out on the trails. After the ride the ice cream truck came and handed out free cones for an hour and the days prizes were awarded. Marie Lazenby of Whitby brought in the most sponsor money winning a prize and various rider prizes were awarded that had been donated from all the local feed and tack stores. There was a treasure hunt for the kids which was set up to identify and turn in tree leaves and flowers and naturally found objects. The exception to that was the treat hanging up in the trees that a riddle hinted for them to find.

After an hour of down time it was off to the campfire for spider dogs and s'mores. The laughter and stories went on until quite late (or in a few cases early)

Sunday started out again with coffee and donuts and thirteen riders went out in one group and toured along the E 108 snowmobile trail and then spent some time on a lovely private property filled with trails. Due to all the rain this summer there was a lot of puddles and some waist high brambles here and there but all the horses did fine.

The riders came back to a complimentary lunch and received some more prizes, There were apples, carrots, horse treats and more for the taking! The final event of the day was the awarding of the Equine Foundation cooler which was won by Wayne Gerry of Bradford. Everyone then packed up to head home. There were about 50 people over the weekend and one person came from as far away as New York!

All the volunteers did an amazing job of gathering prizes and sponsorships and the local businesses were generous. A grand total of \$1750.00 was raised for the EFC !!

It was a great weekend for all!