



## Welcome to the 2018 Virginia Horsemaster 50 Mile Ride!!

I want to welcome you all to the 10th Annual Horsemaster 50 mile ride. This will be our first ride hosted from Burke's Garden, Virginia. The camp facilities are on private farms and very few people have the luxury of riding these amazing trails. The beauty of "The Garden" will help us make this a week you will not soon forget!

We will be riding for long days on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The camp chefs will have dinner planned for our return and we all will enjoy s'mores and stories around the campfire in the evening. Let me know of any recreation ideas that you may have!

For those who do not plan to ride, just driving around the Garden offers unique splendor and there is a lot to explore.

Please carefully read the trail guidelines, conditioning and equipment information. Planning and preparation are the keys to a safe, successful ride and a fun week. Boots and closed toed shoes are required when riding or handling the horses. ASTM-SEI approved helmets are required for all youth when mounted.

There are a few houses for rent in the Garden, if you choose to do so but they are several miles away from the camping area. Please let me know ASAP if you are interested in a rental property and I will get you the necessary information. You will pay the property owners directly for the rooms and will just need to indicate where you are staying on the registration form.

Burke's Garden, Virginia and the Mary Cole Horsemaster 50 Mile Ride will offer a lifetime of memories!

See you there!

Celeste C. Crisman  
Extension Horse Specialist - Youth  
540-231-9162

**Contact Information for emergencies will be provided close to date. Cell phone service is not totally reliable.**

## Schedule of Activities

### **Sunday, June 17th:**

12:00 - 5:00 pm	Arrive, check in, settle horses and set up campsite
5:00 - 6:30 pm	Group Dinner
6:30 - 7:30 pm	Mandatory Orientation meeting, review ride schedules, Trail equipment and introduce trail guides.
7:30 - 10:00 pm	Campfire, recreation and prep work if needed

### **Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>:**

6:30 am	Rise and shine, take care of horse
6:45 - 7:30 am	Breakfast on your own
7:30 - 8:00 am	Saddle up
8:30 am - 4:00 pm	Ride from camp, lunch on the trail
4:00 - 6:30 pm	Take care of horses, prep for Tuesday ride, relaxation.
6:30 - 10:00 pm	Group dinner and campfire activities

### **Tuesday, June 19th:**

6:00 am	Rise and shine, Take care of horse
6:15 - 7:00 am	Breakfast on your own
7:00 - 7:30 am	Saddle up and trailer to trailhead or ride from camp
8:15 am - 4:00 pm	Ride, lunch on the trail
4:00 pm - 6:30 pm	Take care of horse, prep for Wednesday ride, free time
6:30 - 10:00 pm	Group dinner, campfire and activities

### **Wednesday, June 20th:**

6:30 am	Rise and shine, Take care of horse
6:45 - 7:30 am	Breakfast on your own
7:30 - 8:00 am	Saddle up and trailer to trailhead
8:30 am - 4:00 pm	Finish up 50 miles, lunch on the trail
4:00 - 6:30 pm	Take care of horse, free and pool time
6:30 - 10:00 pm	Group dinner, campfire and activities

### **Thursday, June 21st:**

You are on your own schedule to be more relaxed - feed horses, strip stalls/clean paddocks, pack up camp and have a safe trip home!!

**Please leave the camp area and stalls/paddocks clean!!**

## Guidelines for Conditioning the Horse

1. Your horse should be fed a balanced ration based on good quality hay or pasture and concentrate if needed. Evaluate your horse to determine his body condition score. An obese horse scoring 8 or more is not a good candidate to use for this ride. Monitor your horse's weight from now until the ride and dry lot with hay if necessary to control weight gain. Your horse should have free access to a trace-mineralized salt block or supplement and small blocks can be brought with you and put in their feed buckets in the stall during the 50 mile ride.
2. Do not change your horse's feeding regimen. If you do not feed grain at home then don't feed more than a handful of grain on the ride. Bring plenty of good quality hay to feed in the stall.
3. Accustom your horse to accepting electrolytes which are important to use on the ride to compensate for stress and sweating. You can use either a gel/liquid formulation that is delivered directly into the mouth or a powder that is fed with grain. I would not recommend electrolytes added to their water bucket as you cannot control/determine the amount they have consumed. You will give electrolytes the night before and the morning of each day of the ride or according to package directions. This will be very important for this ride as even though the temperatures might be moderate, the horse will be doing lots of climbing and sweating.
4. In order to condition your horse and yourself for the ride you will need to begin riding the horse at least 3 days per week, for a minimum of half an hour the first week and adding half an hour per session each week. By the fourth week, you should be riding for two hours, 3 days a week. Each session should be composed of walking, trotting or gaiting and cantering. Walking and trotting develops muscles, trotting and cantering develops wind. Most of your conditioning work should be done at the trot or gait. Lunging counts, as does ring work but you also need to find some hills and obstacles to work over. By the first part of June you should be taking your horse out at least once a week for a 4 to 5 hour trail ride.
5. You must practice crossing creeks, logs, mud and uneven terrain. Your horse should willingly but cautiously go where you ask. If your horse is determined not to get his feet wet then you need to work with a different horse. Begin practicing obstacles now so that you will know quickly whether your horse is the one to use for the ride or if you need to condition another horse.
6. Your horse should be shod on all four feet unless they are very accustomed to riding long hours with no shoes on rocks. Schedule shoeing with your farrier 2-3 weeks before the ride. This will allow the horses feet to toughen and may allow enough time

to recuperate from a badly placed nail. Borium or caulks on the shoes is not recommended as the horse's feet need to be able to slide. **Weighted shoes or shoes with trailers will not be allowed as they will not stay on the duration of the ride!**

7. Practice riding your horse with saddle bags, poncho and any other gear attached so that they get used to the feel and noise of equipment flopping around on them.

## Conditioning for the Rider

1. If you have properly conditioned your horse, you should be in pretty good condition yourself for an extended ride.
2. On the 50 mile ride, wear what you would normally ride in - tights, britches, jeans or chaps. Do not buy a new pair of riding pants and start them on this ride! Dress for warm weather and be prepared with sun protection. A jacket may be needed for night time and early morning riding. Bring a poncho or rain gear with you each day of the ride as unexpected storms can often occur. Ride your horse with a poncho or rain gear ahead of time and get them used to the noise and flapping!! Riding boots with a heel are required while mounted and an ASTM approved helmet is mandatory.
3. A western or trail/endurance saddle with wide trail stirrups is recommended. Hunt seat saddles typically do not provide enough support or cushion for 5 - 10 hours (however, it is your bum so choose as you wish) and the narrow stirrups can result in sore feet. You also need saddle strings or rings to tie on equipment. Most importantly, make sure you have a quality saddle pad that offers some padding for the horse and ensure that your saddle fits properly. A gall due to ill fitting equipment will end your ride. Choose a saddle that you plan to use and condition for the ride with it!
4. You will need a set of saddle bags or a cante bag that will carry your lunch, halter and lead, easy boot and any other items you will bring on the ride such as a camera. Plenty of water can go in the saddle bag or in its own holder. Riding lighter is always better so only pack needed items in your saddle bags! If you use saddle bags, balancing the weight on each side is important on a long ride.
5. I recommend that you bring a thin rope halter that you can leave on under the bridle or carry in your saddle bags in order to tie for lunch. Don't forget a thin lead rope in good condition with a sturdy snap.
6. Please bring one easy boot that properly fits your horse - this will need to go in your saddle bag.

## Suggested Equipment for 50 Mile Ride

### **Camping:**

1. Tent, camper, or living quarters for sleeping. (unless you plan to stay in a rental home!)
2. Sleeping bags, bedding and pillow.
3. Flashlight, lantern, miscellaneous camping equipment, utensils.
4. First aid materials for human and horse.
5. Sunscreen
6. INSECT REPELLANT
7. Towels, soap and other personal items - there is a bath house with showers and toilets.
8. Coolers, food and drinks.
9. Card table, folding chairs, lawn chairs
10. Eating utensils, plates, cups, etc.
11. Adequate clothing that includes a jacket and long sleeve light shirt for sun protection, raincoat and at least two pair of footwear - layers are recommended if you tend to be chillier in the mornings. It may be cool at Burke's Garden in the mornings and evenings even in June and rain is always a possibility.

### **Horse Gear:**

1. Bridle, saddle, saddle pad and any other riding equipment.
2. At least 1 hoof boot that fits your horse's foot or an extra set of shoes.
3. Extra halter and lead rope.
4. Grooming equipment including **fly spray** and hoof pick.
5. Extra saddle pad and girth.
6. Grain, hay, salt, electrolytes.
7. Buckets for feed and water in the stalls with chains and bucket hooks for hanging.
8. Stalls must be bedded with shavings and are available for purchase from the 4-H center or you can bring your own. One bag will be provided with each stall.
9. Box Fan for stalls with extension cords (I will check to see if these are allowed)

### **Trail gear:**

1. Thin halter and lead rope
2. Rain gear
3. ASTM approved helmet
4. Saddle bags for food
5. Canteen or water bottle with holder
6. Camera/cell phone for pictures?? Texting and riding not allowed!

We will have a farrier and veterinarian on the ride with us for emergency needs. Extensive farrier or veterinary care will be available to participants at their own expense. The horse owner or responsible party must pay for services when rendered.

## Camp Rules and Etiquette

1. A 4-H member may not leave camp without permission from their responsible adult and the ride organizers.
2. Youth participants will be responsible to the direction of any and all adults.
3. Keep the camping and stable areas clean.
4. No horses are to be ridden on the property unless we are riding out as a group.
5. Horses can be tied to your trailer for tacking and untacking but cannot remain there for extended periods.
6. Dogs cannot run loose in the campground areas. They must be tied or on a leash. Dogs will not be allowed on the 50 mile ride trails.
7. Observe and respect quiet time after 10 pm.

## Horse Care

1. Each participant assumes the responsibility for their own horse. The ride organizers assume the right to call on a veterinarian if it appears necessary.
2. Make sure your horse has unlimited access to salt during the ride.
3. If your horse comes into camp hot, take the time to properly cool him out, clean him up and make them comfortable as they have done the majority of the work. There is a wash area available for use.
4. Once stalled make sure the horse has hay available and plenty of fresh water.
5. Make sure stalls/paddocks are well bedded (if appropriate) and keep stalls/paddock picked out and clean daily.
6. Make sure horse is brushed and clean before saddling.

## Trail Etiquette

1. We will be walking the horses out of camp and back into camp.
2. Most of our ride will be at a walk or trot/gait, with some cantering where terrain allows.
3. Follow the speed of the Trail Boss.
4. Put a red ribbon in the tail of any horse that kicks!
5. Ride at least one horse length behind the horse ahead of you.
6. Do not weave in and out of a line of riders.
7. Do not pass without permission from the rider in front of you.
8. Horses must be ridden in a bridle or hackamore, no halters for riding.
9. The entire group should stay together, no wandering off on your own.
10. Most of the trail will be single file riding, but where room allows you can ride beside someone.
11. If you go under or through branches, do not hold them out of the way, just brush through them so that the person behind you does not get swatted with a branch.
12. If one person needs to stop, the trail boss must be notified and we all stop!



## Leader Evaluation Sheet

This sheet is to serve as documentation that the 4-H member has thoroughly read all information and has adequately conditioned their horse as per the suggested guidelines.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Conditioning Regimen</u>	<u>Leader Initials</u>
5/7 or Week 1:	Rode 3 days for 30 - 45 min/session, 20 min. total trot work	_____
5/14 or Week 2:	Rode 3 days for 1 hour/day, 30 minutes total trot work	_____
5/21 or Week 3:	Rode 3 or more days for 1.5 hours/day, 45 minutes trot work	_____
5/28 or Week 4:	Rode 3 or more days for 1.5 - 2 hours/day, 1 hour trot work Went on a 2 - 3 hour trail ride	_____ _____
6/4 or Week 5:	Rode 3 or more days for 1.5 - 2 hours/day, 1 hr total trot work Went on a 3-4 hour trail ride	_____ _____

The time periods can be made up of lunging, ring work, outside work and trail riding. When beginning the trot work, trot/gait your horse until he becomes slightly winded, return to the walk until breathing returns to normal then trot again. You should work to increase the time that your horse can trot at each session. You do not need to get the horse to the point where it trots the full time continuously but should work up to 20 minutes at the trot. Try to find hills or inclines as this will increase the intensity of the work. Ask them to walk or trot over logs or poles.

- My horse will calmly and willingly load on a trailer. \_\_\_\_\_
- My horse will willingly cross streams or creeks. \_\_\_\_\_
- My horse will calmly walk through mud. \_\_\_\_\_

Puddles and mud in a ring don't count but certainly help them get used to water.

4-H Member signature: \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Leader signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form to be photographed and emailed to Celeste Crisman at ccrisman@vt.edu NO LATER THAN Wednesday, 6/13.**

**REGISTRATION FORM - HORSEMASTER 50**

June 17-21, 2018  
Burke's Garden, Virginia

4-H Member's/Rider's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Agent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader's Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible adult accompanying 4-H member: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee: \$200.00 Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Covers 1 horse stall for 4 nights, 1 camp site, 4 group dinners  
and trailering charge to trailhead.

Additional group dinner: \$50.00/person (Sun - Wed)

# of additional group dinners: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Due:** \_\_\_\_\_

List dietary restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Camping or Rental** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*If you are staying in a rental house, please indicate that above and you will make those reservations directly with the property owner.**

Because we will be on private owner property, please check in with Celeste or camp host as you arrive and prior to pitching your tent!

**Checks made payable to: VT 4-H Foundation - 50 mile**

Mailed to: Celeste Crisman  
380 Litton Reaves Hall (0306)  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

**Postmark  
Registration form,  
Health History, equine  
waiver and payment  
by  
June 1, 2018**