

# Mid-Year Report

Even while the dog days of summer are approaching we are busy planning for upcoming events. Please enjoy some highlights from this past year to date.

Once again January started off with our Tuesday's In The Park schooling jumper series. Given the dramatic increase in attendees we feel that our continued improvements are meeting approval. It seemed as if every week we saw more and more new faces. In February we added a dressage arena to our schooling day offerings which saw ride times almost fully booked each week.

With your urging we are looking at ways to expand our Tuesday schoolings. Thank you for your continued support and interest, we look forward to seeing you in January.



## Dressage at Bruce's Field

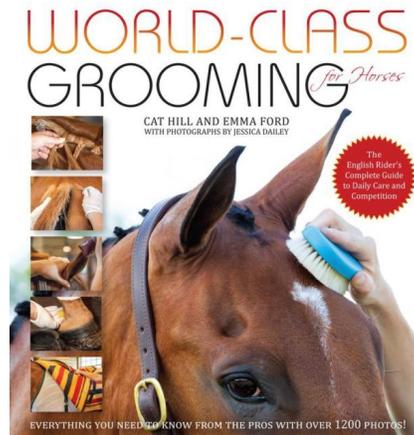
Amidst our Schooling series, the Horse Park held it's first USEF/USDEF Dressage show February 18 & 19, appropriately named Dressage at Bruce's Field. We saw about 100 entries and the event was extremely successful. We felt fortunate to have had the help of Justine Wilson and the SCDCTA to coordinate a great group of volunteers.

Also in February, we held 3 community outreach meetings in an effort to understand how we can better serve Aiken by hosting mission appropriate activities. The meetings were enlightening, and a number of interesting ideas were articulated. All in all it proved to be a valuable experience to help us in our efforts to develop a long-term strategic plan for the Foundation.

## World Class Grooming with Emma Ford

February 20th we saw a tremendous response to a clinic held at the horse park by Emma Ford, who is not only co-author of the book, *World-Class Grooming*, she also works for Olympian Philip Dutton. Emma offered her years

of experience and expertise to those that wanted to better their knowledge of horse care and stable management. Emma donated proceeds from her sold out clinic to Equine Rescue of Aiken.



#### Mark Leone Clinic

For a change of pace, The Aiken Horse Park Foundation hosted a Mark Leone clinic March 3rd and 4th. It was definitely a fun time and attracted riders from Charleston and Savannah as well as some of our local equestrians. The weather and spirits were fantastic both days! Much thanks goes to Aiken Saddlery for organizing and sponsoring this past year's clinic.

On March 7th we hosted a Volker Brommann clinic organized by Matt and Cecily Brown of EastWest Training Stables. ( Volker Brommann pictured below).

Then on March 14th during the last Schooling Day of the season, we hosted the USET Eventing High Performance Team for a training session. 7 horse and rider combinations rode 4\* Test A, "ride a test" in front of Mark Weissbecker. It was an honor to have Phillip Dutton, Boyd Martin, Lillian Heard, Matt Brown, Doug Payne, and coach David O'Connor at Bruce's Field. The public was invited to observe and all that braved the weather were rewarded by amazing riding. Special thanks to Joanie Morris for thinking of us.



**AHPF crew and volunteers show their support for Leelee Jones. Tuesday, February 7th was dedicated to her, and all participants, staff and volunteers wore hats and bracelets to let her know that everyone was pulling for her continued recovery.  
#LeeLeeStrong #TeamLeelee**





On March 29th the AHPF Board announced with pleasure that Mike Laver accepted a seat on the board of directors. A vital member of Aiken's growing eventing community, Mike brings multi-faceted business experience and a passion for equestrian sports to the Board. His enthusiasm for all things Aiken is proving to be especially helpful as the Foundation works to expand its offerings at Bruce's Field.



As we were setting up for this year's Charity Horse Show, we had an early morning surprise delivery! The contents were kept under wraps until the scheduled unveiling ceremony later that week. Not even the staff could catch a glimpse of what lay hidden underneath, which only led to the excitement of Friday, May 12th.

## The Aiken Charity Horse 2017 May 3 - 7 and May 10 - 14



The Aiken Charity Horse Shows in May are not only the largest events we produce annually, they also serve as our most significant fund-raiser. We are pleased to report that this year's shows surpassed our expectations and were more successful than those of 2016. A portion of this year's proceeds will go to Equestrian Aid Foundation, Great Oak Therapeutic Riding and Children's Place Inc. We feel incredibly fortunate to have this venue and the opportunity to be able to give back to our community.



In an effort to encourage equestrians to choose Aiken as a month long showing destination, The Aiken Charity Horse Show (ACHS) and The Aiken Spring Classic (ASC) joined forces to provide a new, rewarding opportunity for their exhibitors. A \$5000 rider bonus for those who competed in the USHJA National Hunter Derbys at both venues. This year's winners were Havens Schatt (pro rider) and Celia Cram (non pro rider).



The Aiken Horse Park Foundation's very own director, Daniel Geitner won the Aiken Premier Grand Prix aboard Kenwood during the first week of Competition.

The unveiling ceremony of a life size sculpture of Bruce, Kim's Song and Chummy was truly a special evening that brought a tear to many eyes. Surrounded by several hundred people, Jack Wetzel and Richard L Duchossois had the honors of revealing the stunning work of Camden Artist, Maria Kirby-Smith.



It was not all about judging! Susie Schoelkopf, Kim Dorfman and Bobbie Reber, three of of Bruce's dear friends, took time out from judging to have a little fun and do a little shopping on vendor row.

## USEF International Hunter Derby

And the winner was.....

**Liza Boyd and O'Ryan**

Presented by: Jack Wetzel,  
Richard

Duchossois, Dale Duchossois  
Fortino and Kim Duchossois.



Mercede-Benz of Augusta, joined us this year as the presenting sponsor of the \$25,000.00 Aiken Charity Horse Show Grant Prix. Russ Boykin presented The Inaugural Cup to **Mary Ann Charles and her mount FVF Sailor Man** for a very bold victory.

### **In Celebration of William E. Howard III**

The William E. Howard III Leading Rider Award is given in William's memory in honor of his life long passion for equestrian excellence. Maria Rasmussen received the trophy from William's partner of many years, Michael L. Laughlin

**New for 2018**, The Aiken Horse Park Foundation and Stable View are pleased to introduce Aiken's first season long USEF/USDF dressage series, incentives and high point

awards to be presented at the final show. Dates for this series are below:

### **Aiken Dressage Challenge Series 2018**

January 27-28 - Bruce's Field  
February 17-18 - Bruce's Field

February 14 - Stable View  
April 11- Stable View

In partnership with Aiken Saddlery Inc., The Aiken Horse Park will host several clinics this upcoming year. First of the series is the **Christine Traurig Clinic** (Dressage), September 22-23, **Tye Sturgeon** (Cowboy), December, and **Kevin Babbington** (Show Jumper) look for more information on our events page

Looking forward to seeing everyone this September at Bruce's Field  
for Equus Events' Fall Festivals

**Fall Festival I**  
September 7 -10

**Fall Festival II**  
September 14 - 17

Featuring **\$25,000 Grand-Prix** each week  
**\$15,000 National Hunter Derby**  
**SCHJA Governor's Cup Finals**

Consider supporting The First Tee of Aiken  
this event combines two of Aiken's biggest passions,  
horses and golf, in a unique team relay competition!

#### **Bridles and Birdies**

Friday, September 8th

5:30PM - COCKTAILS (OPEN BAR!)

6:15PM - PONY UP CALCUTTA

6:30PM - RELAY RACES BEGIN

7:00PM - DANCE FLOOR OPENS!

For more information on The Fall Festival Series please contact [Equus Events](#)

[equusevents.com](http://equusevents.com)

803-643-5698

Don't forget the 26th renewal of the Aiken Fall Steeplechase Saturday, October 28  
[Aiken Steeplechase Association](#) Steeplechase Association

Please keep checking our website as we continue to add to our event calendar  
[aikenhorsepark.org](http://aikenhorsepark.org)  
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