

The Old West Rides Again! September 11 and 12, 2010

Pull on your boots, saddle up your 21st Century “horse-powered” car or truck and ride on out to Tuckahoe State Park on Saturday and Sunday, September 11 and 12. For the fifteenth year, the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center, located in the state park just north of 404 and the town of Queen Anne, will put on *Outlaw Days* - fabulous old west entertainment for the entire family.

Five times each day, twenty-minute western shows are held in Tuckahoe City - the western town that annually comes alive with horses, shoot outs, bad guys, good guys and sometime hilarious shenanigans by both. This year under the guiding hand of professional director, Wayne Shipley, the actors will be presenting the following five shows: “Old Rangers” (10 a.m.) - four decrepit old Texas Rangers come to the aid of a reluctant sheriff in his battle with a gang of desperados; “Reputation” (11:30 a.m.) - a former gunslinger tries to leave behind his bad reputation; “The Big Bank Robbery” (1 p.m.) - children from the audience help the Sheriff capture the bank robbers; “The Swills, the Good Ol’ Days” (2:30 p.m.) - inept family of criminals remember their trouble-making childhoods; and “High Noon” (3:45 p.m.) - a tight, intense production of the classic gunfight.

Now a family tradition, follow your young ‘uns as they try to find the outlaw on a Wanted Poster they receive. The outlaw is then ‘forced’ to sign the poster. For helping the Sheriff in his quest to find all the bad guys, every holder of a signed Wanted Poster is awarded a free Deputy Sheriff’s badge at the Trading Post. All ages will enjoy the Living History encampment – the late 1800s re-created in authentic detail. A short stroll away, the kids enjoy panning for gold at the water sluice. Nearby, the State Park Rangers will display and talk about all kinds of feathered and scaly critters at Scales and Tails, which is next to a fascinating (but safe) display of hives and bees.

All ages enjoy the arena events and demos – too many to mention – but they include drill teams, mini horses being driven and jumping, a Mustang presentation (horses once wild), draft horse demonstrations, jumping by Melanie Ferrio, presentations by Brendan Wise – a John and Josh Lyons Certified Trainer, llamas, a costume competition, reining, and both amateur and professional barrel racing.

In the front field, get up close and personal with a Hands-On Horse. If you’ve never felt the velvety nose, smelled the sweet breath or hugged the neck of a real horse, now is your chance! Next enjoy a pony ride or wagon ride or wander down Breed Row and admire the sizes, shapes, and colors of the many breeds represented. The petting farm is a great place, too, for more of a love-in with all kinds of critters. A collection of vendors offer just about anything you might want to buy in the early West, and for the tiny tots, there is a maze, saddled “broncs” and a “corn box” – just their size. Older ones may want to try their hand at riding the mechanical bull! Top it all off by watching the nationally-known horse trainer Kenny Harlow, from Cumberland, Virginia, work his “magic” training or re-training horses with problems in the front field round pen.

If all this is just too much excitement, enjoy the All Equine Parade at 12:30 and relax in the picnic area shade with a tall cool drink, and a plate groaning with chicken, BBQ, burgers, hotdogs, seafood, fries or fruit, ice cream, snow-cones and lots more.

Getting to the equestrian center is easy. From Route 404 on the Eastern Shore near Queen Anne, go north on Route 309 for 1 mile. Right on Horseshoe Road, go 2 miles, then right at the "T" intersection onto Crouse Mill Road. Go one-half mile, parking on right. Admission: \$7, Children 5-12: \$3, ages 4 and under, free. Hours: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday.

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