

FOXHUNTING LIFE

with Horse and Hound

ERIC BOWLES PHOTO



Shakerag Hounds (GA)

FHL WEEK, November 24, 2015

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Passing the Horn at Potomac

Category: Photo of the Week

Photo by Karen Kandra Wenzel



Larry Pitts, huntsman for thirty-five seasons at the Potomac Hunt (MD), passes the horn to huntsman Brian Kiely at Opening Meet, 2015. Pitts leaves behind a brilliant legacy of breeding American foxhound Champions and Grand Champions, including the impossibly handsome MFHA Centennial Grand Champion, Potomac Jefferson 2005.

Posted November 20, 2015

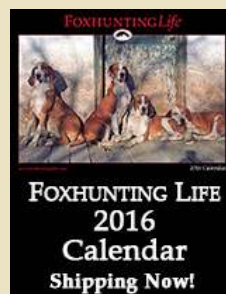
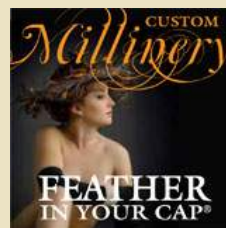
JoAnne Helfert Sullam Fuses Art and Activism

Category: **Art**



The Fox, bronze. See more examples of Ms. Sullam's art on her [website](#); she is represented by the [Chisholm Gallery](#).

Born in Brooklyn, New York, JoAnne Helfert Sullam is a celebrated animal and wildlife artist. Her award-winning works have been featured in the New York Times, Who's Who in America, Art Business News, "The Best of Sporting Art" in Polo Players magazine, and on the cover of The Chronicle of the Horse. She received Special Congressional Recognition for Work in the Arts from then U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. Ms.



Sullam's paintings and sculptures have been displayed in solo and group exhibitions in galleries and cultural centers throughout the country.

An advocate for conservation, Ms. Sullam also writes, lectures, and produces films about wild and domestic animals. She is the author of a children's book and has interviewed personalities such as Richard Gere, Bobby Kennedy Jr., and concert pianist/animal activist, Helene Grimaud.

Furthering her commitment to her artistic subjects---animals and landscapes---Ms. Sullam is also a license wildlife rehabilitator, and works as an animal handler/consultant. In these capacities she has worked with Academy Award-winning actress Melissa Leo, Jim Fowler of Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, the Today Show, and the Martha Stewart Living show alongside animal expert and longtime friend, Marc Morrone.



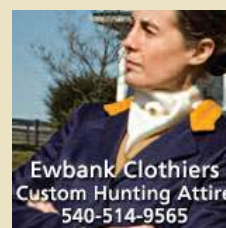
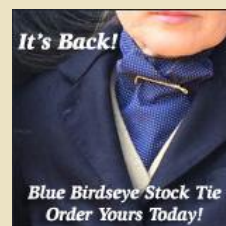
As a child growing up in the city, Ms. Sullam loved and understood the importance of connecting with nature, but learned about her subject only through books and television. As an adult, she has combined her passion for nature with her love of art, using her work as an instrument for conservation. She has donated her artwork and time to land and wildlife protection and has fostered and placed feral cats and unwanted dogs. We asked Ms. Sullam about her art, her hands-on work with animals, and her educational productions.

"As a working artist, one of my biggest challenges is to maintain freshness in my work, continue to challenge myself, and not allow myself to get stuck in a zone of comfort. I am an explorer at heart, although I've never done as much traveling as I would like. Yellowstone Park is one of my favorite places to go in the States. I am always trying new mediums and various forms to best express the point I'm trying to get across.

"First I ask myself, what would be the best way to express this idea: in two-dimensions or three? For me the size, the colors, the form

all comes into play. That being said, I find that when I'm painting I do prefer to use acrylic because it is the most versatile. With sculpting I am now experimenting with new mediums but love the lost wax method and casting in bronze.

"I continually push myself to the limits. It is vital as an artist to do this. Of course the icing on the cake and one of biggest rewards for any artist is when someone gets what you are doing. Then all of your hard work takes on new meaning, because you are sharing. If you can carry on and are able to sell your work, even better. It allows you to continue to explore and create. If you can, as an artist, make a difference in the world with what you do—if you can change somebody's mind, life, have a positive impact on the value of our environment, our wildlife—then creating that piece of art is worth all the challenges that an artist has to face every day.



"Most recently I started casting in concrete, then silver, copper, and gold leafing the work. I love the energy that the little fox and barn owl have and will continue to explore this medium with new sculptures. But in the end, it is the subject and how it's represented that matters. My interest in art started, with crayon, pencil and loose-leaf paper, and the first time I knew that I could draw was when, with a Number-2 pencil, I copied a drawing of a bulldog in an ad. I think it was in TV Guide or maybe Reader's Digest. To my surprise I was able to draw it, and I realized that art meant something to me.



Little Red Fox, 2 1/4" w by 2 1/2" h, copper and silver leaf on concrete. Signed on the bottom by the artist. Limited edition of 25 artist's proofs. \$150.00 plus shipping

"I started my real art career on my kitchen table, and when people wanted to buy my art it made me believe in myself. I wanted to be better, so I studied at one of the best art schools, The School of Visual Art in New York.

"After that I upgraded my art studio to a horse stall on the North Shore of Long Island, and was often revisited by its previous owner, a horse, who was apparently an art lover. I now have a lovely space in the Hudson Valley that I had certified as a wildlife sanctuary. My art studio is sometimes shared with the local wildlife as a temporary wildlife nursery and with wildlife that walks past everyday. I never run out of subject matter. I do on occasion still go on location to

work. My sculpture, "The Prophet," a horse head study in bronze, was created at HITS, the Horse Show in Saugerties, New York. When I'm not sculpting or painting, I'm writing about animals. I started my own [conservation website](#). I'm also pretty excited about a new project—a book about the human/animal connection titled, Evolution of a Wild Heart.

"I love what I do and just want to share the beauty of life with my work."

Posted November 19, 2015

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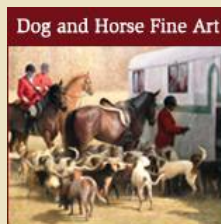
Junior Field Hunter Championships: More Than a Competition

Category: Juniors



Heather Feconda, Loudoun-Fairfax Hunt (VA), was Champion, 13 & Over, on Yogi.
/ [Richard Clay photo](#)

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The Junior North American Field Hunter Championship competition that began modestly twelve years ago between a handful of geographically-close Virginia hunts continues to expand in scope. This year's competition involved juniors from twenty-seven hunts located across six MFHA Districts.

The program is succeeding because it's purpose rises above just competition. Founders Douglas Wise, MFH, Old Dominion Hounds and Iona Pillion from the Blue Ridge Hunt had a larger dream: bring children to new hunting countries and open their eyes to the fact that these playgrounds don't just happen to be there for them by chance, but have been nurtured and conserved for the perpetuation of wildlife, open space, and for those who treasure the natural world.

"We want these kids to know what a conservation easement is," said Marion Chungo, one of the organizers.



Maggie Buchanan, Mr. Stewart's Cheshire Foxhounds (PA), was Champion, 12 & Under, on Good Fortune. / Richard Clay photo

For an entry fee of \$50.00, proceeds of which are ultimately donated to selected conservation organizations, juniors may ride in as many of the qualifying hunts as they wish. And they ride in front! Qualifying hunts were hosted this year by Moore County Hounds and Red Mountain Foxhounds (Carolinas District); Carrollton Hounds, Elkridge-Harford Hunt, Goshen Hounds, New Market-Middleton Valley Hounds, and Potomac Hunt (Maryland-Delaware District); Iroquois Hunt, Long Run Hounds, and Woodford Hounds (Midsouth District); Andrew's Bridge Hounds, Mr. Stewart's Cheshire Foxhounds, and Radnor Hunt (Pennsylvania District); Belle Meade Hunt (Southern District); and Bull Run Hunt, Deep Run Hunt, Loudoun-Fairfax Hunt, Orange County Hunt, and Piedmont Fox Hounds, (Northern Virginia/West Virginia District).

In addition to juniors from those twenty hunts, entries also came from Bear Creek Hounds (GA); Camargo Hunt, (OH); Green Spring Valley Hounds (MD); and Middleburg Hunt, Middleburg-Orange County Beagles, Keswick Hunt, and Old Dominion Hounds (VA).



Brighton Craig, Old Dominion Hounds, was Hilltopper Champion on Riots Maeve. / Richard Clay photo



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Of the juniors from around the country that qualified, about eighty—the majority of the qualifiers—made it to the final competition hosted by the Old Dominion Hounds on Sunday, November 8, 2015.

“We threw a party for them on Friday night,” said Chungo. “The kids danced and made friends. You would hear, ‘You have to come hunt with us; call me!’”

On Saturday morning all were invited to hunt with Old Dominion. On Sunday the final competition was held consisting of a flat phase and a mock hunt, after which selected finalists were asked to perform individual tests. Judges this day were: Nina Bonnie; Helen Brettell; Katherine Byron, MFH; Snowden Clark; and Joseph Keusch, ex-MFH.



Lucy Arnold, Old Dominion Hounds, was awarded the Lynda Johnston Perpetual Spirit Award by Bear Johnston, for whose wife the trophy is named. Heather Heider is on the right. / Richard Clay photo

“The judges were wonderful about talking to all the kids,” Chungo said. They stressed the positives—things the kids did well—and made suggestions for improvements—such as keeping a safe distance. When we were at Potomac for one of the qualifying hunts, Vicki Crawford [MFH] talked to them about foxhounds as well as conservation. We want it to be a learning experience for every kid who enters. And we want them to carry on the sport.”

RESULTS:

Hilltopper

- Champion - Brighton Craig - ODH - Riots Maeve
- Res Champion - Kate Thresher - LFH - Caramel Topping
- #3 Trey Batts - Red Mountain Hounds - April
- #4 Kylee Keahon- ODH - Halloween Party
- #5 Emalaine Cooper - Belle Meade - Chance
- #6 Ada Catherine Hayes - Moore County - Charlie Dickens
- #7 Kate Sautter - Woodford Hounds - Kiss Me Kate
- #8 Liza Sautter - Woodford - Silver Spring
- #9 Bethany Visokay - LFH - Holly
- #10 Ashby Hatcher - LFH - Lightening Bug

Jumping - 12 & Under

- Champion - Maggie Buchanan - Cheshire - Good Fortune
- Res Champion - Emma Keahon - ODH - Duck Duck Goose
- #3 Phoebe Fisher - Cheshire - Frisky Business
- #4 Grace Schrinier - Long Run - Julep Cup
- #5 Kenley Batts - Red Mountain - Flutter
- #6 Drew Schwentker - Blue Ridge - Scout
- #7 Lydia Eifler - Long Run - I like Bugs
- #8 Colby Poe - ODH - Blueberry
- #9 Skylar McKenna - Cheshire - Waterboy
- #10 Lilia Sharp - Blue Ridge - Isodorable

Jumping - 13 & Over

- Champion - Heather Feconda - LFH - Yogi
- Res Champion - Lee Lee McNeil - Radnor - O'Ryan

#3 Hayley Davis - ODH - Arts N Crafts
 #4 Lakyn Harlow - ODH - Ice Princess
 #5 Kathleen Maloney - Iroquois - Rocky
 #6 Brady Hoffman - Elkridge-Harford - Scooter
 #7 Ashley Johnson - Iroquois - Cobalt
 #8 Maxwell Watters-Round - Camargo - Major
 #9 Anna Highsmith - Belle Meade - Logan
 #10 Connor Poe - ODH - Liberty Bell

The Lynda Johnston Perpetual Spirit Award
 Lucy Arnold, Old Dominion Hounds

[Click](#) for more information about the Junior North American Field Hunter Championships and visit them on FaceBook.

Posted November 17, 2015

See more [Richard Clay photos](#) of the 2015 JNAFHC on his website.

Remembering Anthony Trollope

Category: Literature



Anthony Trollope by Spy in Vanity Fair

In 1971, Michael Hart, a student at the University of Illinois, conceived the most wonderful notion. He had access to a computer that was part of the government-sponsored research network that ultimately became the Internet. He set himself a goal to make the ten thousand most consulted books available to the public, digitally, by the end of the twentieth century. He plucked a copy of the Declaration of Independence from his backpack, and it became the first Project Gutenberg e-text. Hart named the project after the German printer Johannes Gutenberg, who revolutionized the printing press.

Today, there are about forty thousand texts in the [Gutenberg collection](#), including works by Somerville and Ross, G.J. Whyte Melville, and other superb writers of foxhunting stories. Many are in the public domain and may be downloaded and freely reproduced. Periodically, we select a favorite and extract a selection both for your enjoyment and as a reminder of the wealth that Project Gutenberg keeps in store for us.

With this year marking the bicentennial of the birth of Anthony Trollope, a popular English novelist of the Victorian Era who tucked foxhunting scenes into most of his novels, we offer an excerpt from *The Duke's Children* (1880), the last volume in his Palliser series.

Trollope had an unhappy childhood and an unsuccessful early career with the Postal system in England. In debt, he was relieved to be transferred to Ireland as a postal surveyor, where his salary and travel allowance went much further than they had in London. He took up fox hunting, which he pursued enthusiastically for the next three decades, and he found the Irish to be pleasant company. "The Irish people did not murder me," he wrote, "nor did they even break my head. I soon found them to be good-humoured, clever—the working classes very much more intelligent than those of England—economical and hospitable."

From Chapter LXII, "The Brake Country":

"You'll cross the ford, Fowler?" asked Mrs. Spooner.

"Oh yes, ma'am; we couldn't draw the Daisies this afternoon if we didn't."

"It'll be up to the horses' bellies."

"Those who don't like it can go round."

"They'd never be there in time, Fowler."

"There's a many, ma'am, as don't mind that. You won't be one to stay behind." The water was up to the horses' bellies, but, nevertheless, Mrs. Spooner was at the gorse side when the Daisies were drawn.

They found and were away in a minute. It was all done so quickly that Fowler, who had alone gone into the gorse, had hardly time to get out with his hounds. The fox ran right back, as though he were making for the Duke's pernicious wood. In the first field or two there was a succession of gates, and there was not much to do in the way of jumping. Then the fox, keeping straight ahead, deviated from the line by which they had come, making for the brook by a more direct course. The ruck of the horsemen, understanding the matter very well, left the hounds, and went to the right, riding for the ford. The ford was of such a nature that but one horse could pass it at a time, and that one had to scramble through deep mud. "There'll be the devil to pay there," said Lord Chiltern, going straight with his hounds. Phineas Finn and Dick Rabbit were close after him. Old Fowler had craftily gone to the ford; but Mrs. Spooner, who did not intend to be shaken off, followed the Master, and close with her was Lord Silverbridge. "Lord Chiltern hasn't got it right," she said. "He can't do it among these bushes." As she spoke the Master put his horse at the bushes and then—disappeared. The lady had been right. There was no ground at that spot to take off from, and the bushes had impeded him. Lord Chiltern got over, but his horse was in the water. Dick Rabbit and poor Phineas Finn were stopped in their course by the necessity of helping the Master in his trouble.

But Mrs. Spooner, the judicious Mrs. Spooner, rode at the stream where it was, indeed, a little wider, but at a place in which the horse could see what he was about, and where he could jump from and to firm ground. Lord Silverbridge followed her gallantly. They both jumped the brook well, and then were together. "You'll beat me in pace," said the lady as he rode alongside of her. "Take the fence ahead straight, and then turn sharp to your right." With all her faults Mrs. Spooner was a thorough sportsman.

He did take the fence ahead,—or rather tried to do so. It was a bank and a double ditch,—not very great in itself, but requiring a horse to land on the top and go off with a second spring. Our young friend's nag, not quite understanding the nature of the impediment, endeavoured to "swallow it whole," as hard-riding men say, and came down in the further ditch. Silverbridge came down on his head, but the horse pursued his course,—across a heavily-ploughed field.

This was very disagreeable. He was not in the least hurt, but it became his duty to run after his horse. A very few furrows of that work suffice to make a man think that hunting altogether is a "beastly sort of thing." Mrs. Spooner's horse, who had shown himself to be a little less quick of foot than his own, had known all about the bank and the double ditch, and had, apparently of his own accord, turned down to the right, either seeing or hearing the hounds, and knowing that the ploughed ground was to be avoided. But his rider soon changed his course. She went straight after the riderless horse, and when Silverbridge had reduced himself to utter speechlessness by his exertions, brought him back his steed.

"I am,—I am, I am—so sorry," he struggled to say,—and then as she held his horse for him he struggled up into the saddle.

"Keep down this furrow," said Mrs. Spooner, "and we shall be with them in the second field. There's nobody near them yet."

Posted November 13, 2015

A Fast Day and Foxes Aplenty at Blue Ridge

Category: Hunt Reports



Huntsman Graham Buston, hounds, staff, and field of the Blue Ridge Hunt / Joanne Maisano photo

by Denya Dee Leake

The November morning was unseasonably warm as I tacked up my beautiful Cleveland Bay/TB cross, Fearnought. It was a surprise that I had come home from school, but with my mother keeping him fit for me, I knew that he would be all ready for a day's hunting. Conveniently, the Blue Ridge Hunt (VA) meet was only a fifteen-minute hack from my grandmother's stable where I keep my horse. By the time we arrived I was already very warm in my formal coat and wondering, 'Did I drive all the way home for nothing?'



The author on Fearnought / Douglas Lees photo

Hounds moved off promptly at 9:00 am. It was trying to rain but that did not deter the forty-plus riders from following the beautiful pack of English and Crossbred hounds and their huntsman Graham Buston at a trot to the first covert. Hounds instantly started speaking and working their way south through the covert. Off to our left we could hear John, the kennelman, hollering a fox away, but hounds seemed to be on the line of another fox. We galloped through the covert and ended up in a wide-open field surrounded by woods. The hunt was on, and foxes were flying in every which direction. In total, at least two brace were seen. We went round and round from the covert back into the field and then back into the covert. After an hour of these foxes playing relays on who would give us a run next, ex-Master Doris Stimpson and others in the field viewed yet another fox peering out from the same well-used covert.

Graham shook his head. "We've done quite enough here," he said wryly. "I'm going to new country!"

I had been asked to help whip-in by the Master, and from there we headed west towards Billy Eyles's Mount Airy Farm. I took the left side while Graham's wife, Sheri, had the right. Almost immediately hounds started speaking. At this point the rain was coming down pretty steadily, and the temperature had dropped a few degrees—perfect hunting weather. Hounds took off heading northwest. They screamed through the next farm over, Salter Hill, and then across the road into the big covert, Fox Spring Woods. Hunting hard, hounds made a huge loop through Fox Spring Woods and followed the line back across the road to Salter Hill. They flew through Salter Hill in full cry, ran back through Billy Eyles's farm, and ended up near Christ Church almost to Millwood village where Graham and Sheri stopped them.

We collected hounds and, being all on, moved on to the next covert. Graham put them back in at Salter Hill and drew through and across the road and into Fox Spring Woods again. They found somewhere in the middle of the woods and ran first left-handed then back right handed. The fox, hounds roaring on the line, made a full circle in the large wooded covert, well criss-crossed with trails, and came out the east side. We ran through the next three or four farms, easterly then northerly into all fresh country until we were almost on the opposite end of the county. After about forty-five minutes at a dead gallop hounds checked near the bank of the Shenandoah River. Did the fox swim across? The huntsman decided not to find out and stopped hounds at that point. Sheri and I had been picking up tail hounds as we ran along, and, since we were quite a distance from the meet, the decision was made to meet the hound trailer at Master Brian Ferrell's farm not too far away. Hounds were praised as they loaded.

With two views and a very tired horse (and rider) I was ready to go home. The rain had stopped and a breeze was picking up. A good time to say goodnight after an excellent day's hunting.

Posted November 15, 2015

Denya Dee Leake started her hunting career at the age of nine in the first field at Blue Ridge on her wonderful gray pony Happy Mouse. Her mother Caroline Treviranus Leake rode in two 3-Day World Championships for the U.S. in the 1970s. As a child, Denya absorbed a love of foxhunting from her step-grandfather Alexander Mackay-Smith and her grandmother Marilyn Mackay-Smith who whipped-in the Blue Ridge hounds in her day. Through the past four years in college, whenever she has been able to take a weekend from school, Denya often serves as honorary whipper-in.

Carol Easter, MFH, Farmington Hunt (1938–2015)

Category: Latest News

Mrs. Peter (Carol) Easter, MFH for twenty years of the Farmington Hunt, Charlottesville, Virginia, passed away on Tuesday, November 3, 2015, after a battle with lung disease.

Carol served the MFHA from 2006–2012 as District Director of the Virginia District. In addition to foxhunting, she competed in horse shows. She became active in long distance trail riding, winning several 50- and 100-mile rides sponsored by the Virginia Trail Riders, Inc., which organization she served as president for more than twenty years.

Carol was a devoted Labrador Retriever owner for more than fifty years and trained her two dogs, Bagel and Triscuit, to become Therapy Dogs. Carol and her dogs voluntarily visited patients at Charlottesville's Martha Jefferson Hospital for many years.

She is survived by her husband of fifty-six years, Peter Easter; her children, Deborah Easter of Charlottesville, Douglas Easter and his wife Page of Charlottesville, and Brooke Maley and her husband, Dave, of Chattanooga, Tennessee; and her grandchildren, Owen and Elly Easter of Charlottesville, and Will and Emily Maley of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

A memorial service and reception in Carol's honor will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, December 19, 2015, at the Easters' Springhaven Farm. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the MFHA's Hunt Staff Foundation, which provides grants to retired professional huntsmen in financial need. Mail donations to MFHA, Box 363, Millwood, VA 22646. Donations may also be made to [Therapy Dogs International](#), 88 Bartley Road, Flanders, NJ 07836.

[Click](#) to send condolences to the family.

Posted November 18, 2015

Hunt Members, Family Stunned by Murder of Senior Master's Wife

Category: Latest News

Members of the Golden's Bridge Hounds and the entire community of North Salem, New York, are shocked and in mourning over the slaying of Lois Colley, wife of senior Master Gene Colley and mother of Bruce Colley, MFH. She was found dead in her home on Monday, November 9.

Police believe that Mrs. Colley was bludgeoned to death by a small fire extinguisher, the only object missing from the house. They have asked for help from the community in their search for the suspected murder weapon and other information, but beyond that have not identified a suspect. For a fuller account, see Lisa Foderaro's [article](#) in the New York Times.

Lois Colley was warmly regarded by the community, and was a regular presence at hunt meets, many of which were held at the Colley's Windswept Farm. She was recently featured in a [photograph](#) in *Foxhunting Life* along with her husband and the Golden's Bridge mounted field in front of the house.

We extend our sincere sympathies to the Colley family at this terrible time.

Posted November 12, 2015

A banner advertisement for Blue Ridge Trailers. On the left, a white horse trailer is shown with the text "BLUE RIDGE TRAILERS Brings to the East Coast" above it and "Platinum Coach Straight Load Trailers" below it. The main text in the center reads "Trailers Designed By Fox Hunter For Fox Hunters". To the right of this text are several logos, including "BLUE RIDGE TRAILER SALES 834-985-4151", "Valley", and others. Below the logos, it says "Trade-ins ~ Consignment Program ~ RENTALS ~ Credit Cards", "US 29 N ~ Ruckersville, VA ~ 434-985-4151", and "www.blueridgetrailer.com".

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