First, on behalf Region 1 officers and membership, I want to thank Sally Oxnard for all her hard work and ongoing dedication to promoting Connemaras in our region. Sally never ceases to impress me with her both her energy and knowledge. The baton has been passed to me and some women who are continuing to volunteer their time and talents with the help of a great Assistant Chair, Linda Haines, secretary, Carolyn McEvitt and our treasurer, Susan Goodhouse (and Sally, who thank goodness continues to be available) we are off to planning another busy year. Our first event was a huge promotional endeavor, which was attended by thousands of people. We kicked off our promotional efforts with a booth, petting stall and Connemara Demo at Equine Affaire, in Massachusetts. Sincerest appreciation to our wonderful EA volunteers, who greeted folks, set-up and took down our booth, brought and showed ponies in the Region 1 Demo, and participated in promoting Connemaras and Connemara Crosses.

I would like to acknowledge our volunteers, who decorated our ACPs Booth and Petting Stall: Sally Oxnard, Lyn Chatham, Wendy Warner, and Becca Shields. Our booth volunteers were

continued on page 2

Linda Haines of NH for the rest of her life. The Camlin Award to a performance mare or gelding went to Tower Hills’ Darby Dun owned and loved by Stacy Taylor of CT. He is out of Tower Hill’s Killaire. One highlight of the awards

continued on page 3
ACPS Region I Officers

Chair
Patricia Shields: 860-866-7116
57 Lake Rd., Harwinton, CT 06791
drybrookfarm@yahoo.com

Vice Chair
Linda Haines: 603-934-3895 or 603-387-0157
149 Shaw Road, Northfield, NH 03276
troutranch@metrocast.net

Treasurer
Susan Goodhouse: 802-484-5540
Rolling Meadows Farm
1212 Bailey Mills Road, Reading, VT
goodfarm@vermontel.com

Secretary
Carolyn McEvitt: 860-228-8675
32 Hope Valley Road, Amston, CT 06231
cbmcevitt@comcast.net

Show Organizers
Amy Plavin: 413-834-1804
403 Parker Hill Road, Bellows Falls, VT 05101
whconnemaras@gmail.com

Sue Antilla
antilla.suzanne@gmail.com.
Can accept PayPal

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ceremony was the wonderful photo collages of the winning ponies and their offspring, all done with great care by our own Sue Antilla.

At the BOG meeting on Saturday there was great news about our new webmaster who had been hired, also about the new membership process which is saving us money, also reports on the Melanoma study, and discussion of the Hoof Wall Separation Disease.

The melanoma study is hampered by the need for more ponies who had melanomas UNDER the age of 6 to participate. If you have or know one, please tell Sally Oxnard.

The HWSD is a recessive genetic Connemara hoof disease which has been studied at UC Davis. Carrier ponies only have one gene for the HWSD, and they may have GREAT feet and show no symptoms. Then if you breed two carriers inadvertently, you may get an affected pony which has TWO genes for HWSD and will have a shortened life span due to this terrible hoof disease. They now have a test at UC Davis which can be run on mane hairs and only costs $40. A breeder needs to know the HWSD status of his or her ponies BEFORE breeding them so we do not get any more affected ponies. Carriers are still breedable and may have many other wonderful qualities, you just need to breed them to a non carrier! The BOG voted to ask the owner of every breeding stallion in the US to test their stallion before February of 2015 so mare owners will be able to make smart decisions re who to breed their mares to. The results will be published in the American Connemara Magazine.

The closing was banquet with Salsa dancing and silent auction. A great time was had by all. Many thanks to Region III for putting on the Annual Meeting. Get ready for the 2015 meeting which will be in PA—also easy driving. Attending an ACPS Annual meeting is entertaining, educational and you get to meet many more Connemara friends.

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**Back "On the Box Seat" at Equine Affaire!**
_by Patricia Shields_

It was only a year ago Memorial weekend that, while driving her mare at Devon, Cindy Fletcher suffered a traumatic brain injury when her horse tripped and went down. Cindy fell out of her Gig, head first, wearing only her lovely hat. Because of her tremendous spirit, determination and support of her husband and soul mate, Gene, Cindy began the road to recovery so quickly her doctors believe she is a wonder and a miracle.

This Spring Cindy began driving again her homebred warmblood mare, _HMF Baroness_, her beloved Connemara stallion, _Greystone’s Adirondack A’Herne_ (a/k/a “Harry”) and her small pony, _Foxmor’s Chick-a-boom_. And not just in her practice arena. Cindy went full force in competing; returning to top competitions, including Walnut Hill and Glen Willow.

Beautiful hats are traditional fashion when drivers compete in cones and dressage. Cindy now wears her professionally decorated helmet. Both Cindy and Gene are spreading the message that drivers can look beautiful and be turned out traditionally while protecting their heads. Cindy is an amazing inspiration to getting out there and doing what she loves...not only doing it, but doing it with flair.

Cindy was invited by Equine Affaire promoters to drive “Harry” in Fantasia’s show segment promoting a parade of pony breeds. I had the pleasure of leading “Harry” while Gene and Cindy decorated him with costume and Christmas lights. As usual this pair was a crowd pleaser, they went out into a crowd of thousands with full extended trot.

Hats off to Cindy...and helmets on! To a gifted and spirited horsewoman, many congrats and best wishes for continued success in the show ring.
**Courtney King-Dye: Punctuating the Lesson to wear a helmet!**

In March 2010, Courtney King-Dye suffered a traumatic brain injury while riding without a helmet. As former 2008 Olympian, Courtney has since been educating equestrians from disciplines, on the benefits of wearing a properly fitted, fastened and secured, certified helmet through videos and articles. Follow the link to the video to see what Courtney has to say about living with a TBI!

For more videos and information to [www.riders4helmets.com](http://www.riders4helmets.com).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awJDYBhBPzk&list=UU3Ocpll3u6yMfkOQe0L-7mw&index=2&feature=plcp

Always ride wearing a helmet and encourage others to do so too.

---

**Up and Running...**

The ACPS website is up and running! We have a great new webmaster who has created a visually beautiful website that is also mobile friendly and has enough flexibility to meet our needs.

Each region has their own page that we are free to fill with what we want. So, please everyone think about what you want to see on our page and send ideas to: whconnemaras@gmail.com.

**2015 Connemara Horse Show!**

Our horse show dates are July 18 & 19, 2015. We may have the Dales ponies join us and we will have the Friday afternoon trail ride again. We are holding the show in conjunction with the CVDA horseshow on Sunday and CVDA will also be holding a ride/critique day on Saturday. Once again we will open all of our mounted classes to all breeds in the hope of better attendance. Any thoughts about the show please contact me, Amy Plavin, at whconnemaras@gmail.com

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**Older Gray Quarter Horses Less Likely to get Melanomas Than Other Breeds!**

*By Kentucky Equine Research*

Too many owners of grey Connemaras are coping with Melanoma. It is interesting to report that a recent study conducted at the University of Minnesota indicated that older gray Quarter Horses may develop melanomas less frequently than horses of other breeds, possibly because of genetic mutations responsible for variations in coat color. Also, Quarter Horses that do develop melanomas are often not affected as severely.

Some estimates put the incidence of melanomas as high as 80% in gray horses over the age of 15. They can occur below or above the skin surface, and are often found around the anus and on the underside of the tail. Unlike human melanomas, these tumors in horses are generally slow-growing and may be present for many years without causing significant problems.

The researchers collected samples of DNA from more than 330 gray Quarter Horses ranging in age from 1 to 33. Slightly over half of the horses older than 15 years had visible melanomas, a percentage that is considerably below the average for older gray horses of all breeds. Melanomas were scored from 0 (smaller, less developed) to 4 (larger, more developed) based on size and appearance. The tumors on Quarter Horses scored an average of 0.35, far below the average grade of 1.19 for tumors on a comparable group of Lipizanner horses.

Coat color in horses is genetically complex, with many variations in dilution and expression. Horses can show one coat color when they are young and gradually develop more roaning (white hairs mixed with another coat color), turning grayer as the years pass. In horses which are born black or very dark-coated and become lighter as they age, those with two copies of the gene that distributes black pigment are at greater risk for melanoma development than horses with one copy of the gene. Further research could reveal a genetic component that would allow horses to be tested for melanoma risk before the tumors appear.
Join Us for the 2015 Annual Region I
Connemara Tea
March 22, 2015      11 am to 4 pm

Join us to help us kick off the 2015 season! Come and meet Region I members and make new friends! Bring your photos, videos, and stories about your wonderful Connemaras… we never tire of hearing about them!

—— HOSTED BY ——
Carolyn MCEvitt and Hope Valley Farm
32 Hope Valley Road • Amston, CT 06231
Hope Valley Farm is home to Connemara half-breds C.K.C. Katie (Erin Go Bragh x Feather in My Cap) and Creb Glas Mandolin (*Bobby Brown x G.G.s Dove), and the Connemara purebred Ripleigh’s Abra Cadabra (Ripleigh Go Bragh x Lean on the Wind)

Please RSVP to Carolyn that you will attend:
860-228-8675 • cbmcevitt@comcast.net
Be sure to indicate what dish you will bring for the brunch buffet

This year we will have a “straightness” demo by Meg Brauch (the only trainer in US certified for this work) at 1:30 after our business meeting. Please visit: http://straightnesstraining.com/straightness-training-exercises/a-logical-system-of-ever-increasing-exercises/ for more information on this training method. We welcome all our members, young and old. So, please come and enjoy the event!

DIRECTIONS
FROM THE SOUTH: I91 North to exit 25 towards Glastonbury, merge onto Rte 3 North and follow for 2.3 miles. Merge onto Rte 2 East follow for approximately 11 miles to exit 13 (Marlborough/Willimantic). Bear left off exit 13 onto Rte 66 East for 5.3 miles. At the stoplight turn right onto Rte 85 South and travel for 1 mile to Hope Valley Road. Take a right onto Hope Valley Road. #32 will be a long gravel drive on your right, immediately after the yellow cape.

FROM THE NORTH: I91 South, exit 30, merge briefly onto I84 East (.7miles), then onto Rte 2 East via exit 55 towards Norwich/New London. From Rte 2 East follow directions above.

FROM THE WEST: I90 East to I91 South and then go to the directions from the North.

FROM THE EAST: Take Rte 6 West. Follow to the intersection with Rte 66 West and take Rte 66 West. Stay on Rte 66 West for approximately 6 ½ miles until you reach the intersection with Rte 85 in Hebron. Take a left onto Rte 85 South and travel for 1 mile to Hope Valley Road. Take a right onto Hope Valley Road. #32 will be a long gravel drive on your right, immediately after the yellow cape.
Who is Jack Kessler and why is there a Region I Scholarship in his name?

by Liz Platais

Do you know who Jack Kessler was or why Lois Kennedy Kessler and her family generously established a scholarship fund in Jack’s name?

Jack Kessler was a Connemara lover and supporter of the breed who left us much too soon in February of 2003 after a brave fight with cancer. Jack was a journalist and authority in fiberoptics, his lifelong interest in riding was highlighted by winning the Medal/Maclay competition in 1948 at what was then the Boston International Horse Show. He rode thoroughbred’s throughout his life and was hoping to find a thoroughbred for Lois much like his favorite mount “Blue Moon.” This was not to be. Fate stepped in after meeting Willie Leahy during a visit to Ireland—and Connemara’s came into the Kessler’s lives.

Soon *Allie Murdock (aka “Delboy”) was shipped to Newport, RI. And Lois had to tell Jack that she had bonded with her new riding horse and did not need a racetrack thoroughbred. Jack, Blue and Delboy became staunch friends and great partners. Years later, it was Delboy who took Jack on his last ride. For so many of us, Jack was a fixture at Connemara events; always there with words of encouragement at Field Day each May as well as at Woodstock and the Equine Affaire.

The Kessler Scholarship is a program offered to all members of Region I in recognition and support of their efforts to train and promote their Connemaras and Connemara halfbreds. It is a recognition scholarship given to encourage members to be the best equestrians they can be as they promote the Connemara breed in the show ring, hunt field and at equestrian activities throughout Region I.

The Kessler Scholarship is awarded in recognition of effort. Why not let the Region know what you have been doing to promote your Connemara so we can present this award as a token of support as encouragement of your endeavors? Let Region I recognize your efforts.

To apply, fill out the form on next page. The Scholarship will be awarded during field day in May or at the annual horse show at GMHA in July.

Questions? Contact Liz Platais, plataisee@aol.com or 978-369-4380 or Lois Kesssler, johnkessler@cox.net or 401-619-4624.
Kessler Memorial Scholarship Requirements

- Both rider and owner must be current Region I members of the ACPS. Include copies of their membership card with the application.
- The purebred or halfbred Connemara must be registered with the ACPS and its registration number must be on the application form.
- Applicants must have volunteered their time for at least one Region I event within the 12 months prior the application due date.
- Recipients of a scholarship award agree to share the knowledge of their learning experience with other Region I Connemara members by writing an article for Region I Bits & Pieces Newsletter within 6 months of the activity.
- Applicants receiving an award from this scholarship are eligible to re-apply one year from receipt of previous award.
- Juniors must be 18 years old or younger. Adults are 19 years old or older.

Applications for 2015 must be received by April 1st 2015. You may use a separate piece of paper to describe how you plan to use the scholarship award. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Send to: liz Platais, plataisee@aol.com, 978-369-4380 or Lois Kessler, johnkessler@cox.net, 401-619-4624.

ACPS Region I 2015 Kessler Memorial Scholarship APPLICATION FORM

Mail to: liz Platais, 291 River Road, Carlisle, MA 01741 • plataisee@aol.com • 978-369-4380

Date of Application: ____________
Pony’s Registered Name__________________________________________________
Pony’s Registration #_____________________________
Rider’s Name___________________________________________________________
Rider’s Age_____________
Rider’s Address:_________________________________________________________
Owner’s Name (if different than Rider): ______________________________________
Owner’s Address:_________________________________________________________

Describe the activity for which you will use the scholarship and how you will share the knowledge gained with other ACPS region I members. (Knowledge must be shared within 6 months of completing the award activity) Use another sheet of paper if necessary.
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

List activities in which you or your pony have participated in that you feel have contributed to the goals of the ACPS. (Consider competitive and non-competitive events, volunteer activities for the ACPS, etc.)
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

Remember to include copies of both Rider & Owner Membership Cards
In Loving Memory of...

Precious Patti. There are no words to describe how wonderful this pony was. Born on the Winkler family farm 1984, Patti Pony had a long life teaching dozens of children and adults how to ride. Purchased by Liz and Tyler Gilbert in 1995, Patti taught Tyler the ropes and then continued at Valley Crest Farm after Tyler outgrew her. The Winkler boys have all had turns on her and just about every member of Running Fox Pony Club and Valley Crest Farm has ridden Patti at some point in their life.

Patti was a regular at D rallies, local shows, hunter paces and even hunts in our area. She competed at USPC Nationals for many years and qualified for and competed at both Prince Philip cup and President’s cup.

We will all remember the times she escaped her stall or paddock and led us on a chase or pulled some poor unsuspecting child over her neck to get a bite of grass. Most recently Patti was Cindy Teeple’s trusted MGAA mount and Keara Pearson and Susie Robinson’s pony club mount.

At 30 years old we lost Patti to a severe colic caused by a tumor. She will be terribly missed especially by her long time companion Misty. RIP Patti. We know in heaven you will gallop in green fields and finally be allowed to eat grass again!

God looked around his garden and found an empty place.
He then looked down on earth and saw your tired face.
He put his arms around you and lifted you to rest.
God’s garden must be beautiful, he always takes the best.

Maddie Delande and her Connemara Windy Hollow Finegas recently competed in a Hunter Pace sponsored by Myopia Hunt Club in Hamilton, MA. This annual event draws teams and riders from all over New England. Competitors are judged based on their proximity to an ideal time for the 6-8 mile course. They also compete for best costume. Maddie and Finn came in 6th Place for Time and 3rd Place for their Mardi Gras costume.

Alex MacAaron

Below: 28 year old Windy Hollow Finegas (HH Greystone Irish Wind) pictured below with brothers 6 yr-old Levi Halley giving 3 yr old Reno Halley a lesson. Windy is looking for new children to teach next spring.
Members Pages

Kier

In July I purchased Kier (Trout Ranch Malarky X Gisborne Reserve) a lovely 4 year old Connemara/Oldenburg gelding from Beth Adams in Stratham, NH.

Kier is a beautiful 15 H chestnut with a sweet face and lots of personality. My journey with Kier starts here, but my interest in Connemara's goes back to the 1970's.

My current horse has been a wonderful partner, but last year began to have those little age-related issues that limit her work. At my age and size (64, 5’2”) I knew a smaller horse would be appropriate so I started looking at dressage ponies. I took one look at Kier’s sale video and called to make an appointment to go see him. I recruited my friend Mary Piro to go with me. We both loved him, and I set up a vetting for ten days out. In between the visit and the vetting, my husband John was diagnosed with cancer, but from his hospital bed he insisted that I go to the vetting and buy Kier. That’s the kind of supportive husband I am lucky enough to have!

Kier is boarded at Pirouette Farm in Norwich, VT, and I train with Jane Hamlin. He is very smart, a little fancy and such a personality! Everyone is charmed by his sweet face, and when he is moving well (when I am riding well) he is quite impressive. Right now we are lightly schooling dressage and giving him experiences so he will grow into a life long partner who can compete, hack, jump and be a wonderful pony.

Jeanne Woodward-Poor

Welcome Alyce!

New to Region I is a recent rescue living at the Trout Ranch. Her name is New Song’s Autumn (Exmoor Irish Jack x Glenormiston Rossleague) and she was imported inutero by Alyce Wich back in 2004. Alyce (the person) still has her dam in Colorado. At two, Alyce (the pony) was sold to two Irishmen who wanted to start a Connemara breeding program with bloodlines that were new to the area. Alyce (the person) thought they sounded knowledgeable and had a good plan.

Unfortunately for Alyce (the pony) they never got around to the plan and Alyce spent the next 6+ years in a large field with lots of other equines but no attention or handling. I consider her a rescue because she was lost to our breed and her owners lived over three hours from her field and were only at the farm on weekends. This may sound familiar because Alyce was the third Connemara we picked up from that field. Sally Oxnard has Elphin Kookaburra and her daughter Whistle, also rescued from that field over the past five years. When Alyce (the the person) heard that Autumn was going to move, she was very enthusiastic and sent baby pictures and lots of support. At that point, Autumn became Alyce (the pony) to acknowledge Alyce (the person.) And, well, “Autumn” did not easily roll off the tongue.

continued on next page
Alyce’s new life includes meals twice a day (she adjusted to that change with joy.) She is now healthy, has had a bit of under saddle time, thanks to Elizabeth Latham at Cadbury Woods Farm. (Elizabeth is a great trainer and Alyce solidified her high opinion of Connemaras.) Now she is in foal to *Smaragaid Cliff. He is by the Danish dressage champion Munkholm Cobbergate (Arnasillagh O’Flaherty x Oxenholm Cora) out of the German Federal Premium Mare Shamrock Bright Roxanne (Power Boy x Bright Pearl). He stands at Kingswell Connemaras in Colorado. She is due in June.

Above photo is Blue Ridge Bluebell (Landgate Bluebeard x Blue Ridge Arabel) and New Song’s Autumn (Exmoor Irish Jack x Glenorminston Rossleague) enjoy being together in the snow.

Linda Haines
Trout Ranch, Northfield, NH

Meghan & Aisling...A Love Story

It had been a life-long dream of mine to have horses. I never thought it would actually happen because there just wasn’t time or room for horses. Then about a year and a half ago, when we saw this small farm go up for sale, we knew that we had to jump fast to make it our own. And we did. Horses are such a huge commitment in both in time and money, but that desire to have horses on the farm kept nagging at me. And that’s when we heard about Meghan and Aisling.

Meghan and Aisling are two beautiful Connemara Ponies who belong to Rolling Meadows Farm in Vermont. Their daughter works in Boston and she was hoping to bring Aisling, the 3 year old, closer so she could ride her more often. Along with Aisling they sent Meghan, who is Aisling’s 12 year old mother. So for two months (while the weather was still nice) I was in heaven. I was covered in horse hair, had hay in every pocket and smelled like horses all the time. I loved every second of it! These amazing Connemara’s were a great match for our farm family. My boys, ages 13 and 11, had such a special relationship with them. The ponies were friendly, kind and gentle. The boys loved just being with them, especially at the ponies’ bedtime check. I am so grateful that my boys were

HAY! Everyone would LOVE to hear about your new foal!

Send your baby pictures into the Bits & Pieces (designpoint@mac.com) and we will publish them in our next issue. Don’t forget to include the your name, farm name and the name of the foal, sire and dam.
able to experience the gentle nuzzle of a sleepy horse—So special.

It was my two dogs that probably enjoyed having the ponies with us for the summer the most. In their minds, the ponies turned these regular dogs into ‘real working farm dogs’ and you could see the pride in their eyes as they “helped” me take the ponies out to the paddock every morning.

Now that they are happily back home with their family in Vermont, I still think of them everyday. Both of the ponies were so good to my kids and tolerant with my dogs, they were all I could have hoped for.

If you’d like to see a video about our time with Meghan & Aisling, here’s a link to my blog: http://glenhillfarmers.blogspot.com/2014/10/pondies-well-love-you-long-after-youre.html. Or here’s a direct link to the YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QDVaf1x3zo&feature=youtu.be

Maureen Kaplan
Glen Hill Farm

The early morning sun was generous with its warmth. All the sounds dear to a horseman were around me—the snorts of the horses, the swish of their tails, the tinkle of irons as we flung the saddles over their backs—little sounds of no importance, but they stay in the unconscious library of memory.

— Wynford Vaughan-Thomas

Classifieds

FOR SALE: DryBrook Erin Lass, 3-yr -old purebred, (Bailey's Irish Dream x Laschrai's Blue Oak Dunlaith) both parents inspected and approved. Very lovely mover, well mannered, recently wowed visitors at EA as petting pony and shown in hand in Sport Pony Demo. Ready to back in Spring—prebacking price $4,500. Pat Shields, drybrookfarm@yahoo.com, 860-866-7116.

FOR SALE: Finnegam, 11-yr-old, 14.1h, purebred out of Tullymoors Lisa Supreme by Wild Acres Dunedins Piper. Very talented! Shown hunters, jumpers, hunter paced, three phased, trail ridden, ridden bareback, and safely used in a lesson program for beginner riders. Can safely jump a course up to 2'6." Has been in group turnout and gets along great with other horses. Can be pulled away with no problems. Trailers, crossties, stands for bathing, stands for vet, farrier, and dentist with no problem. Absolutely no vices, no spook, no rear, bolt or buck on this pony—capable of taking a child from the short stirrup into children’s hunters.

Located in Barre, MA. Asking $7,500 negotiable to the perfect home. Contact Annie: crouseannie@gmail.com or text/call at 978-868-0002 for more information.

FOR SALE: Tower Hill’s Aiden McCoy is a 13-yr-old registered Connemara geld., 15.2h, (continued at top of next column)