

Governor Dodge Equestrians keep the FUN in fundraising

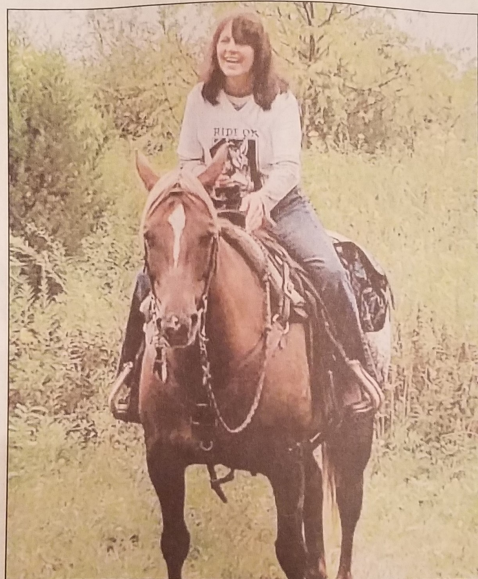


Finding a "Trail Treasure" is Brittany Pierpont, Avoca.

Rather than cancel their annual fundraiser in response to pandemic concerns, The Friends of Governor Dodge State Park Equestrian Committee re-imagined their event this year.

Instead of a one-day event, this year riders and hikers visited the park on their own schedules during a two-week period in September

searching designated trails for small hidden "treasure" discs and great photo opportunities. The flexible schedule allowed friends and families to attend when it best fit their calendars. Finding the hidden trail treasures tagged with sponsor names meant prizes donated by local merchants for the lucky trail riders and hikers.



Enjoying the treasure hunt is Jill Cheney, Mineral Point.

Joyel Rule of Mineral Point, like many others, recognized that the real treasure was the "green therapy" they received in the process.

Participants also creatively captured the beauty of nature, submitting photographs in six categories to win cash prizes. As Heidi Hochhausen of Cassville, WI said, "The picture contest made me see things I

had never looked at before!"

The re-imagined fundraiser turned out to be the group's most popular fundraising event ever, with an amazing 149 registered participants! The fun, custom designed T-shirts were a big hit, too!

The 2020 fundraiser also included the group's first-ever online auction. This turned out to be a great format,



A successful Treasure Hunter is Joyel Rule, Mineral Point.

generating spirited bidding on 120 donated "lots." Through a combination of generous business sponsorships, plentiful auction item donations, enthusiastic registered participants, and competitive auction bidders, the auction generated nearly \$7,000, taking the fundraiser total to over \$12,000 for the park's equestrian campground fund! Thank You!!

In addition to boosting the campground fund, many participant comments reminded us that their best "prize" was the chance to get out and ride/hike the beautiful trails at Governor Dodge State Park.

To view photo contest submissions and for more information about the project visit GovDodgeEquestrians.com.