

Dear Members,

Christmas is quickly approaching and the club has had a great deal of activity already this season. The Christmas Parade was spectacular with 23 three turn outs from the club and the largest crowd of spectators I have seen since I've participated in the parade. Our Christmas dinner the following evening was I think the largest we've had with 98 reservations made for members and friends. Highlighted by awards for the parade, a great dinner, lots of good conversation, and dancing, everyone enjoyed a wonderful kick off for the season.

During the dinner we "passed the hat" to collect for the area food bank. Over \$400 was donated by members. The purchasing power of the food bank affords them the opportunity to provide eight dollars in food for every one dollar donated. That means the club was able to provide over \$3200 on food to feed the area's needy.

We have many people to thank for these successful events. Tom and Eleanor Gallagher and Linda and Bill Long organized the parade while Floreen Maroncelli organized the dinner. Special thanks to them and all who assisted for making the events so special.

The club membership drive is complete for the year and while we expect to receive a few more over the next month or so I am happy to say the club continues to grow. We currently have about 60 Family Memberships and 70 Individual Members. The new rosters have been printed and were distributed at the Christmas dinner. Those who did not attend will receive theirs in the mail over the next few days. Any corrections should be sent to me or Abby Shultis so we can include them in the annual addendum.

I am very pleased to announce the board has elected to turn the Carriage Classic in the Pines into a benefit horse show for 2012. The show will return to the three day format and include dressage and fun classes. For the first time we intend to include a sport division so that drivers who have only crosscountry carriages will feel more competitive in their own division. If you are interested in being on the planning committee please contact me so we can incorporate your ideas into the show. Many of our usual volunteers are excited about the idea which we expect will draw attention to the show while helping out less fortunate people in our community.

The show will benefit the North Carolina Food Bank in our area. Details are still being worked out but a good number of area businesses and individuals are keen on the idea. Please join in helping the club put together a show that will keep the pleasure circuit strong and benefit out entire community.

Merry Christmas, David