

Darke County Horse Committee Minutes
6:30 at the Fair Grounds
September 10, 2025

Members present:

Buckeye Buckaroos: Angie Bender

Greenville Rangers: Jessica Post

Horse & Rider: Kelly Smith

Silver Hoofs: Mary Neill

Trails & Trails:

Jr Fair board: Allison Pierron

Other: Shay Ann Auten

4-H Youth Development: Mercedes McFarland

Meeting was called to order by President, Angie Bender

Secretary Report: Minutes from August meeting was submitted via email by Shay Ann Auten. There were no additions or corrections. Mary Neill moved to approve the report, and Jennifer Post seconded. Motion passed. Kelly

Treasurer Report: Treasurer, Brandi Hamm, submitted the treasurer report online

	Beginning Balance	Ending Balance
GNB checking	\$11,48.85	\$11453.05
GNB savings	\$1512.30	\$1512.30

Kelly Smith moved to approve the treasurer report and Mary Neill seconded. Motion passed.

JR Fair board:

1. Kelly asked about the Assistants Program and inquire how someone could apply for the position. Allison mentioned that Sophia inquired about applying for the position. She also mentioned at the time she had several interested, so she got approval to have them fill out a form and submit it to her. She mentioned that she would post the application online. There are 2 spots available for anyone under the age of 14 as of January 1st.

JR. Fair Coordinator: Betsy

1. She mentioned that any additions or corrections to the green book needs to be presented by October 31st so they can bring it to the Jr. Fair Board to be voted on in November in order to get them printed.

Senior Fair board:

1. It was mentioned that the sink holes in the stalls and in the barn isles needed addressed.
2. Patrick and Nick put dirt in the round pen area that was removed from where the shipping container was placed.
3. It was suggested that we reach out to the art departments at the local high schools and see if they were interested in painted murals on the shipping container. Several ideas were suggested (Submitting their mural and voting, allowing the seniors to put handprints and signing it, or allowing all the species to be represented) Everyone seemed to like the idea, and Angie was going to officially present it to the Senior Fair Board.

4H Youth Development: Mercedes

1. She didn't have anything at this time.

New Business

1. Kelly inquired about the locks to the shed. (same key) Angie was going to check that evening to see if there was a lock area for the roll up door.
2. Kelly asked about putting shelving in the shed and if there is a way to contain the poles from rolling around. She also suggested designating where all the items should be stored/organized for those needing to access the equipment.
3. Kelly also mentioned that she noticed that several of the jumps may need to be replaced. It was suggested that we may want to look into getting some jump blocks to use for ride nights/camp in order to preserve the nicer jumps for shows.
3. Angie asked about the big fair signs that the different species use. Kelly said she could look into it again in regard to the different sizes available and the cost of it.
4. The picture area needs to be moved down to the middle of the warmup ring for safety.
5. The playground was addressed, and it was suggested that it be removed (Donated by the Peter's Family- we can ask if they want it back)
6. Angie asked if anyone was interested in taking over the Tack Sale. Madison wasn't interested in doing it next year. It was mentioned that Amy would be interested in taking it over. Jennifer said she was available to help if needed. Kelly would still be handling the food side of the sale.
7. Kelly brought up that Emily Hartman was interested in helping with Horse Camp again this year. Amy was also available on Wednesday and Thursday. Friday, we had the fun show classes, and she planned on having that again this year. She talked about needing more instructors so that she could be able to be available to handle the management side of the entire camp vs. being pulled to fill areas where we were short and tied down to areas. She really wants this to be an instructor-based learning camp. She is going to check if Kyle and Jesse are available for our next camp. Dates are projected at this time to be June 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Mary mentioned that she should be available to help as well.
8. Royalty would be due BEFORE June 1st.
- 9 PAS- June 7th
- 10 Tack Sale- March 22nd (As of now)

Old Business

Fair

1. It was nice not having the tractor and water truck block the view this year
2. We need to look into the judges and make sure they're actually qualified for the classes they're judging that day. Angie explained that she only hires those judges that are on the experienced list or a PAS judge and then gives them an opportunity to pick what day they're most qualified in. She mentioned that she does talk to those at Miami county (Betsy) about judges as well.
3. The Monday judge was discussed especially in regards to Dressage and not being qualified to judge the classes.
4. Angie was going to submit the review on the judges after she discussed them at the Horse Committee Meeting and get everyone's feedback on how they thought it went.
5. Mary mentioned that the judge for Saturday was very inconsistent in their placings, and that she had a difficult time trying to understand what the judge was actually looking for. It was also mentioned that the patterns were very difficult, and it was the same patterns for the beginners (junior) as it was for the advance (senior) classes.
6. We talked about having the judges' present patterns whether beginner, intermediate, and advance patterns for the age-appropriate classes. (Example: Beginner patterns for the 8-11yr olds)
7. Allison then asked how the classes were divided out as far as age group goes. It was explained that after everyone signs up for their classes that Angie goes back in and adds the splits and divides out the groups evenly. This may not look the same year to year based on the ages of the kids in a particular year.

Also keeping in mind that the Championship Jr (8-13) Sr 14-18) classes are divided out as well into those 2 categories.

8. It was mentioned that we need to present the judges with our expectations as far as pattern levels for particular classes.

9. It was mentioned that everyone would like to get the pattern books as early as possible.

10. We talked about posting the Ranch Versatility obstacles- prior to fair in order to allow them a chance to practice with the elements. (Also, adding that to camp) It was also brought to our attention that tarps were no longer going to be used at State due to safety issues. (Could possibly use the driving bridge) Angie mentioned we could decide those obstacles at the June/July meeting.

11. Hunter Hack- allowing an additional opportunity for kids to sign up for (cross rail hunter hack level and the one for the 2ft jumpers) but that they still couldn't cross enter.

12. Angie brought up adding a pony ranch class to the show bill. Everyone agreed that was needed.

13. It was asked about why the youth need to choose between Western vs. Ranch but not English.

14. Angie asked if anyone had any thoughts on Kay Tracy as a judge this past year.

15. Showman of Showman- what is the pattern to be based on in regards to the different breeds

16. It was brought up that we should figure out a way to address particular horses conditions that are coming to fair in accordance with the book. This would impart whether they should be able to compete at fair in poor condition. It was suggested that we may need to have day that we have the fair vet check horses out and help make that determination. Also when should this be addressed in the year in order to give them an opportunity to make any adjustments to their horse project. It was suggested that we address this matter again after we find out who the next fair vet would be. Kelly thought this would be a great opportunity to discuss body condition at camp as well.

17. We discussed that an appropriate club advisor needs to be present for their club's shift. Not left for parents or advisors who are unaware of what is needing to be done. It needs to be an experienced advisor who can communicate too all those that are working their shift, what is expected of them in order to keep fair running smoothly.

The Meeting Concluded:

Allison Pierron moved to adjourn, and Mary Neill seconded.

Next meeting will be Thursday October 9th at 6:30pm at the Fairgrounds.

Submitted by Secretary
Shay Ann Auten