

Kennel Huntsman Mark Murphy


Fox River Valley and Massbach Hounds' Season of Sport and Hunt Ball *Celebration*

A LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF
CELEBRATING EQUESTRIAN SPORTS

ON SATURDAY, Nov. 16, 2024, the Fox River Valley and Massbach Hounds hosted its annual Hunt Ball at Barrington Hills Country Club. The Hunt Ball supports and celebrates the love of horses, hounds, and land conservation. Barrington area residents and multi-generational families of equestrians from all disciplines gather each year to celebrate in style and toast the year's season of riding horses to hounds.

Guests mingled before the Hunt Ball dinner with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, live music, and a traditional Russian Caviar and Champagne Bar. This year a specialty bourbon sampling was offered with bespoke cocktails. Curated auction packages were on display designed to appeal to the unique audience of equestrians, animal lovers, and outdoor enthusiasts. Hunt Ball dress is formal black tie, with Ladies in white or black, and Gentlemen in scarlet, white, or black tie. Scarlet refers to the traditional red tuxedo tails worn by male members who have earned their colors as seasoned riders in the sport.

The Hunt Ball recaps a robust schedule of riding horses to hounds in Barrington Hills and other locations when jointly hosted with other clubs. The schedule, called the "Fixture," details dates for nearly every weekend from early spring to late fall where riders join club members and guests to ride, and for a traditional "Stirrup Cup" social hour.

The Stirrup Cup is hosted by members and friends of the club, offering generous food and drink that is shared picnic-style before riders move off. It offers a chance to catch up for riders and non-riders who mingle and wish each other well. As the Stirrup Cup winds down, riders and hounds move off majestically together in a sport that originated in England in the 16th century and was brought overseas by George Washington who pursued the sport here in America. Here we share photos from the 2024 season and Hunt Ball end-of-season celebration. 



Naomi West



Emily McHugh is the founder of the Fox River Valley Pony Club.



Riders move in groups called fields.



The Stirrup Cup



Ann Alberts, Jan Nestrud, and Maureen Prettyman



MFH Tony Leahy



Bob Heaton (center) holds a puppy that was adopted at the Hunt Ball.



Cathy and Barry LeCompte



Heidi Seagren and Linda Barrett



Kennel Huntsman Mark Murphy lip-syncs to entertain guests.



Maureen Prettyman and John Pappas



Mick and Susan Schacht



Laura and Larry Ekstrom with Emily McHugh



Bob and MFH Marilyn Heaton



Brian and Julianne Long



Deb and Alex Kremer



Betsy Bramsen and Mark Murphy



Elena Shapiro



Kevin Murphy and Amy Barcroft Murphy



MFH Tony Leahy awards the colors to Naomi West and Katie Tyler.