

# HORSING AROUND

BY MARY JANE MCCALL



The glory and the magic of the horse is celebrated with an exhibition and auction to benefit Friends of Panthertown – 10:00 A.M. Saturday, June 25, at the Bald Rock Equestrian Community.

**B**ald Rock and the Divide at Bald Rock are hosting a horse exhibition and silent auction to benefit Friends of Panthertown on Saturday, June 25, from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Admission is free and everyone is invited. There is a parking fee of \$10 per car and carpooling is encouraged. All the fun will take place in the Bald Rock Equestrian Community at the top of Trays Island Road off US Highway 64 East in Sapphire.

Beginning at 10:00 A.M., you'll be able to bid on silent auction items in the barn, listen to music, engage in kid's arts and crafts activities, meet friends and visit various booths. Guided hikes, a lake tour, art, photography, dining experiences, gift baskets, and more will round out the auction.

Meet and greet horses up close from 11 to 11:30 A.M. and again from 1:30 to 2:00 P.M. Starting at 11:00, a light lunch will be for sale or bring your own picnic. The exhibition will begin at noon with a grand parade of horses.

Over a dozen breeds will be on display showing off their attributes. Some include Quarter Horses, bred to be a fast and powerful sprinter over a quarter-mile track. These horses have huge hindquarters that enable them to pull a cow or jump a big fence.

The Paso Fino and Trote y Galope breeds are called gaited horses. This means they can move their feet very quickly with very little forward advancement in a four-beat gait with three feet on the ground at all times. Listen for their gait. It's fascinating!

Gypsy Vanner horses only first came to this country in 1996. Their name refers to a horse selectively bred for over half a century in Europe to create the perfect caravan horse. These are typically a people-sized draft horse with heavy bone and broad body, but on a smaller scale than the larger drafts. The manes and withers add to the Gypsy Vanner's amazing looks. The breed possesses a temperament that is friendly and engaging – sometimes referred to as a

Golden Retriever with hooves!

Bring your children, family, and friends, but please leave your dogs at home for the safety of all the animals. Lawn chairs and blankets are welcome. Come rain or shine. In the event of a heavy rain or lightning, activities may change.

All proceeds from this event will benefit Friends of Panthertown, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which protects and maintains 30 miles of public trails in Panthertown Valley, a 6,295-acre backcountry recreational area in the Nantahala National Forest. Panthertown offers some of the area's most scenic public trails. Visitors enjoy its gorges, waterfalls, and mountain views, all accessible to hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders. Dedicated volunteers maintain the trail system for the public's enjoyment. This is a chance to give back and support a worthwhile cause.

For more information visit [panthertown.org](http://panthertown.org), email [friends@panthertown.org](mailto:friends@panthertown.org) or call (828) 269-4453.