



## OVERVIEW

Orange County Parks and Recreation, with promotional and logistical support from Orange County Tourism, hosted the Inaugural Liberty Ride on Saturday, September 22, 2012. The event was co-sponsored by the County of Orange, Montpelier, Oakland Heights Farms, and the Virginia Horse Industry Board, as well as outstanding support from local individuals and businesses. The Liberty Ride was a horseback ride and wagon drive from Oakland Heights Farm to Montpelier for lunch and back to benefit the newly-formed Orange County Parks and Recreation Foundation. The event was also part of Montpelier's Constitution Day festivities.

There were 66 participants with 70 horses from all over Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina. Special guests included Delegate Ed Scott, Orange County Supervisor Jim White, Miss Rodeo Virginia Lindsay Harper and longtime Orange resident and equestrian, Diana Dodge. The riders were treated to magnificent views as they traveled over Chicken Mountain and into James Madison's Montpelier. Much of this trail was traveled by Madison and Jefferson many years ago in their commutes between Montpelier and Monticello. James and Dolly Madison interpreters joined the ride for the trip to the mansion and addressed a crowd of visitors upon arrival. Riders then enjoyed a barbecue lunch at no additional cost, and returned to Oakland Heights Farm across the same route.

The event was made possible by a grant from the Virginia Horse Industry Board and the collaboration of many others. Piedmont Power supplied ATV's for transporting supplies and a camera crew. When organizers ran into issues regarding closing roads, the adjoining land owners all gladly gave permission for The Ride to go across pasture land instead. Many local businesses also supported the event by purchasing Welcome and Thank You signs.

The Orange County Parks and Recreation Foundation is a 501c3, non-profit that will help fund future significant Parks and Recreation projects in Orange County, as well as vision possible programs for the Department. The Foundation began operation on January 1, 2013, and is an avenue for individuals and businesses to donate for specific projects in the County.