

Orinda Horseman's Association

Here is some information about Orinda Horsemen's Association. If you are considering membership, this may help you better assess whether membership is appropriate for you and your horse..

The Association

Orinda Horsemen's Association is a non-profit cooperative of horse owners. We have about 33 members, including "Proprietary" members who board their horses at the pasture, and "Associate" members who help care for and ride horses belonging to proprietary members. There are also Riding Partners, who can ride with a Proprietary Member. All members share in work at the pasture and help with feedings in the winter.

The Association leases approximately 500 acres of hilly pastureland from East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD). The horses live as a herd and roam freely across the pastureland. These living conditions keep the horses in excellent physical and mental condition. It keeps members in shape as well, as strenuous hiking is sometimes necessary to find the herd!

OHA is administered by a Board of Directors consisting of seven members elected by the membership. The Board meets monthly, and all members are welcome to attend. A meeting of the entire membership is held once or twice annually.

As tenants of EBMUD, the public utility that provides water to local residents, we are required to follow certain regulations that will ensure the maintenance of high quality water on the watershed. These responsibilities include rotational grazing, protection of certain wetland areas, and maintenance of the facilities, including removal of waste from stalls and paddocks. In addition, for liability reasons, EBMUD allows only OHA members and family members access to the leased property.

The Pasture and Facilities

The land we lease is divided into multiple pastures. We rotate the horses between the pastures throughout the year, depending on the growth patterns of the grass. During the winter months when forage is limited, we feed the horses some hay once per day.

The facilities at the pasture are minimal. There are 6 paddocks with covered stalls and three paddocks without shelter. These are available for short-term use, such as when a horse is recovering from an injury. Cold running water and electricity are available at the main "saddling area." There is an uncovered fenced riding arena with dirt footing (not useable in the rainy season).

Trail access is excellent from the property, and most members are avid trail riders. Riders may head west or north into Tilden Park, south on to the Seaview Trail, or, with a trail permit, east on to EBMUD land around San Pablo and Briones Reservoirs.

Responsibilities of Membership

Members pay annual dues, currently \$720 paid in two installments in March and September. The dues cover the cost of leasing the land, purchasing hay for winter feeding, two wormers per horse per year, and the costs of maintenance and administration of the organization.

All members must participate in the maintenance of the pasture. Members are currently required to perform 25 hours of work per year if they own one horse, or 40 hours per year for two horses. In addition, during the winter months when we supplement the grazing with hay, each member is responsible for 8, or 16 for two horses, feedings per year.

All members are expected to follow the Rules and Regulations of the Association.

If you have questions regarding OHA or the filling out of the application form, you may email us at info@orindahorsemen.org

Membership Criteria and Qualities

1. Criteria currently **required by Rules & Regulations**
 - a. The primary member must be at least 21 years of age, and
 - b. Must have health insurance.
2. **What we're looking for in a member/preferred criteria:**
 - a. They should have an **ability and willingness to participate in a co-op environment**, including: 1) conducting themselves in a collegial way with other members, even when involved in a conflict or disagreement; and 2) participating in pasture-related activities and work parties, serving on the board, and performing all work hours.
 - b. They should have a basic **knowledge of their horse** and should have a general understanding of what to do in a horse emergency. They should possess basic horse care and safety skills and know or be open to learning about a herd environment (we're not just looking for experienced horsemen and do not want to preclude consideration of novices who want to learn). They should be able to provide a previous barn owner, or other relevant reference who can attest to their abilities with horses.
 - c. **Their horse** should be able to do well in a herd situation and be able to maintain its health primarily on pasture. The horse should be in good health and be ride-able (not placed at OHA for retirement). The horse must be sufficiently sociable as to not be likely to injure other horses or people. (If a horse turns out to be a chronic aggressor, causing injuries, the member may be asked to move the horse out of OHA).
 - d. They should be able to commit to **seeing their horse at least weekly** and plan to be actively involved in its care and maintenance.
 - e. Live or work within 25 miles of the pasture.
 - f. Own no more than two horses with which they are actively involved.
 - g. Have personal liability insurance.