



# CENTERLINE



CONNECTICUT DRESSAGE ASSOCIATION

April 2006

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*Centerline is the official newsletter of the Connecticut Dressage Association and is published about 10 times annually. It is distributed to all members. CDA welcomes story ideas, informative articles and commentary. Please submit all contributions to: John Gordon, 24 Darren Court Waterbury, CT 06708*

**Email -**

Centerline@ctdressageassoc.org  
Subject: Centerline

**- CDA Website -**

www.ctdressageassoc.org

CDA is a USDF member, and the GMO's members are automatically USDF Group Members.

## March President's Message

After a very odd winter, spring is on our doorstep. Little green things are poking up in my yard and they are not Martians. Some of us have been able work our horses, but many of us have been sitting on the couch. Really, now, how many of us have been attending those Pilates classes to stay in shape? *My* good intentions have wandered off....

CDA's two seat clinics, one in March and one in April, are the perfect way to dust ourselves off, get inspired, and inaugurate the new riding season. These workshops are for auditors. After last year's highly appreciated offering by Vicki Hammers-O'Neil, CDA has arranged for Vicki and Ann Guptill to extend that popular workshop into two.. These workshops are suitable for all ages and levels, and would be very interesting to riders of other disciplines. So if you have friends who ride, but not dressage, bring them along. Registration forms are available at our website for Ann's workshop, April 29 at Fox Ledge.

CDA's annual meeting and party were a real pleasure. In spite of very threatening weather we had about 65 people. The silent auction that supports our educational activities raised over \$1300. As usual the food was yummy, and our Award recipients were hailed. Eventually we will post photographs from the party onto the website.

We are beginning to look for volunteer help for our June Recognized Show, to be held again at Ox Ridge. Even if you have never volunteered before, this is a great chance to join in. We particularly need help finding sponsors and advertisers for the program. In addition we need take-charge folks to help with parking, strong backs to help set up and tear down, social skills for minding the awards table, people who need to exercise as runners, people who like to sit for scoring, people who can write fast as scribes, and very well organized multi-taskers for ring stewards. If you would like to come and play with us, contact Kari Bradshaw, 860-542-5375.

Also, please visit the CDA website at ctdressageassoc.org to view a personal perspective by David Collins on the 2005 Global Dressage Forum.

I hope to see you at our clinics and shows, on or off your horses. Happy spring!

*Leslie*

## SILENT AUCTION SUCCESS!!!

I would like to thank everyone that donated items to the Silent Auction at the 2006 CDA Awards Dinner:

Little B Barn	The Paddock Inc	Sandy Rabinowitz
Vicki Hammer's O'Neil	Leslie Weiss	Farnum
Marisa Evans	Debra Reinhardt	Donna Leonessa
Fern Feldman	Ariat	Margaret Freeman

I would also like to thank everyone that purchased an item(s) at the Silent Auction! Your support helped us to raise **\$1327** for the CDA Educational Fund! These funds will be used to support our educational clinics throughout the year.

I look forward to next year's auction, as it is always fun to watch people sneak into Fern's garage to try to bid on an item they really want! Hope you can join us! If you have any ideas or would like to help please let me know!

Heidi  
Membership Secretary  
(860) 779-7816

## 2006 Calendar of Events

### April 8, 2006

Dressage Schooling Show  
Red Horse Stables  
Southbury, CT  
Cristina Nocito  
203-313-3255

### April 9, 2006

CDCTA Dressage Clinic  
With Sybille Crafts  
Wishing Rock Farm  
Suffield, CT  
Sue Wierzbicki  
860-809-2234  
[susiell@hotmail.com](mailto:susiell@hotmail.com)

### April 22, 23, 2006

Open Centered Riding Clinic  
Willington Hills Equestrian Center  
Willington, CT  
Contact: Ruth Gilman (860) 684-4849  
Clinician: Deb Moynihan  
Centered Riding Instructor/Clinician  
USDF Certified Instructor/Trainer  
USDF Bronze Medal

### April 29, 2006

CDA Clinic Seat Series  
"It's All in Your Seat, Part III"  
Fox Ledge Farm  
East Haddam, CT  
With Ann Guptil  
Leslie Weiss  
203-777-1950  
[lesweis47@yahoo.com](mailto:lesweis47@yahoo.com).

### April 29, 2006

Schooling Dressage  
& Combined Test Series  
Babcock Hill Equestrian Center  
Coventry, CT  
Terry M. Glendinning  
(860) 742-0616

### April 30, 2006

CDCTA Dressage Show  
And Combined Test  
Wishing Rock Farm  
Suffield, CT  
Tricia Forster  
860-221-5709  
[cdcta@comcast.net](mailto:cdcta@comcast.net)

### April 30, 2006

Abacus Events Schooling Show  
Kasson Ridge Farm  
Bethlehem, CT  
Nancy Blanchard  
860-283-8748

### May 7, 2006

CDA Schooling Show  
Once Again Farm  
Meriden, CT  
Nancy Blanchard  
860-283-8748

## A Barn Mom's View: Breaking up is Hard to Do

*By Georgian Lussier*

The 2006 Winter Olympics featured several USA athletes who transferred skills from a similar sport. Knowing a speed skate champion started on wheels vs. blades can inspire young riders who take up dressage from other riding disciplines. However, the horses may not be so easily convinced.

For the past seven years I have supported my daughter's desire to excel at dressage. Helping her find a suitable partner was surprisingly difficult, compounded by my own ignorance and emotions.

Although I grew up with a Palomino in the front yard, I never progressed past a passenger riding status. I did attend a lot of 4-H shows where my brother raced around barrels and had a heck of a good time. When my daughter started competing in a Morgan circuit, I struggled to learn the judging criteria. Once I could explain the difference between a Hunter Pleasure and an English Pleasure class, I thought I knew something about horse competition.

Our handsome, chestnut gelding had three good gaits and won hundreds of ribbons, including year end awards. It seemed reasonable that he and my daughter could enjoy similar success in the dressage arena.

My expectations exceeded reality. Teaching this promising pair to dance to a new tune was two steps forward, one step back. Three years of weekly lessons enabled them to qualify at a Regional Training Level before our horse was sidelined with a serious injury. Although he fully recovered from a broken shoulder bone, we reluctantly retired him from dressage a year later.

My daughter came to terms with this decision long before I did. My parents bought this horse as a gift of love; he became part of our family. We had invested significant amounts of time, money and energy into this magnificent creature, and grappled with the prospect of putting him on a back burner.

However, his heart was not in the game, and our daughter's own learning curve made it doubly difficult to master First Level maneuvers. Once she purchased a Westphalian sport pony, the progress was remarkable. Early on, judges commented on this "talented pair."

Based on my own experiences and observations of other young riders, I offer the following point of view to parents entering the dressage world:

While it is true dressage can benefit any horse, ribbons will not automatically follow. Success may be better measured in improved ground manners, increased flexibility and higher level riding skills. Setting realistic goals is key.

Sometimes it is obvious that you are trying to teach a country-western line dancer to become a ballerina. In our case, it was a more subtle matter of the horse's mental stamina. On bad days, he and my daughter became each other's evil twin.

What starts out as fun can turn into high stake expectations — between parent and child, rider and horse, parent and trainer. Sound medical care and training does not

Opening Date: April 03, 2006

Closing Date: May 1, 2006

**Sunday, May 7, 2006**  
**Connecticut Dressage Association**  
**Schooling Show**

**Location: Once Again Farm**  
**750 Allen Ave.**  
**Meriden, CT 06451**

**Judge: Jody Rossetti (L)**

**Secretary:** Kari Bradshaw  
110 Goshen East St.  
Norfolk, CT 06058  
860-542-5375

Class List: USDF 2003 Introductory Tests A-B.  
USEF 2003 Training 1-4.  
USEF 2003 First 1-4.  
USEF 2003 Second and above-State test to be ridden.  
Dressage Seat Equitation. (Youth and Adult Amateurs only)

Fees: CDA members \$25 per Class.  
Non-members \$30 per test.  
Number deposit: \$1  
Checks payable to CDA.  
No refunds after closing date.

Awards: Up to six ribbons awarded in each class.  
**CDA High Point Award Medal:** Awarded to the Adult Amateur and Junior Young Rider with the High Percentage Score of the show (Training level and above - excluding Equation Class)

Rules: Number of rides per horse/rider combination may be limited to two. State two preferred tests first on application. Current negative Coggins within 12 months is mandatory and must accompany entry. All competitors must wear ASTM approved helmets while mounted or head gear appropriate to the level. Classes may be combined, split, or canceled at the discretion of management. Family pets not allowed on the premises. Please treat the grounds as you would your own property. Place all trash in designated containers; no alcohol, please.

Times: Call the show secretary the Friday evening before the show between 6 - 9 P.M. or check the CDA Website [www.ctdressageassoc.org](http://www.ctdressageassoc.org) on the Saturday before the show.

Directions: From 1-91 North: Take exit 17 to 691 West. Take Exit 4 off 691W. Turn left at the end of ramp. \*\*Turn right onto third residential street, Gwen Road. At the end of Gwen Rd. turn right onto Johnson Ave. Take the first left onto Finch Ave. Go 7/10 miles on Finch to Allen Avenue, turn left. Once Again Farm is 100 feet ahead on the right. From 1-91 South: Take Exit 18 onto 691 West. Then follow directions from 1-91 North. From 1-84 East and West: Take Exit 27 onto 691. Take Exit 4; at end of ramp, turn right. Then follow directions from 1-91 beginning with \*\*

**Opening Date: April 24, 2006**

**Closing Date: May 17, 2006**

**Connecticut Dressage Association Spring Competition  
Official Region 8 Qualify for the NAYR Championships**

**Saturday, June 4 and Sunday June 5, 2005**

**Official Name:** Connecticut Dressage Association Spring Competition  
Official Region 8 Qualify for the NAYR Championships

**\*\*\*ALL STABLING INDOORS\*\*\***

**Location:** Ox Ridge Hunt Club, Darien, CT  
**USEF/USDF #** 243863

**Management:** Connecticut Dressage Assoc, Leslie Weiss, Pres

**Manager/Secretary:** Debra Reinhardt  
160 Woods Way Drive  
Southbury, CT 06488  
(203)264-2148  
(203)264-0086 fax  
debra@centerlineevents.com

**Judges:** Doreen Horsey, Canada, (S)  
Fran Dearing, TX, (S)  
William Warren, RI, (R)

**Technical Delegate:** Paul Cormier, MA, (r)

**Levels:** Training through Grand Prix, GAIG/USDF Qualifying, North American YR Championship Region 8 Qualifier, Markel Young Horse Qualifier, CFC, and Gray Equitation Challenge (GEC), rules on [www.centerlineevents.com](http://www.centerlineevents.com).

**Awards:** All 1st place will receive a trophy sponsored by the **Equestrian Centre**. Six ribbons will be presented in each class. Awards for high scoring Open, Jr/YR, Adult Amateur, and CDA Member. To qualify for CDA member award you must be a member by closing date. To qualify for Adult Amateur award you must be an USA Eq AA. Breed High Point Awards must have the Horse's Dam and Sire indicated on the entry form, and a copy of registration must be provided to be eligible for the award. Score must be 58% or better. MFS or YH Tests do not count.

- The American Hanoverian Society Trophy for the high score Hanoverian.
- The North American Danish Warmblood Association Trophy for the high score Danish.
- The American Trakehner Assoc Award for the high score Trakehner.
- The Friesian Sport Horse Registry Award for the Friesian high score each day of show. Please direct inquires to Barbara Schwartz at 908-995-7380.

**Entries:** Leadline class - \$10. Class #70 - \$30. Training thru Fourth, USDF Freestyles - \$40 per class. All FEI classes - \$60 per class (mult. judges). GAIG/USDF qualifying classes add \$10 to class fee. All entries **MUST** submit USEF and USDF documents for rider, owner, trainer and horse as appropriate for entry, a \$12 drug fee (\$7 Drug&Med fee, \$5 USEF fee), and non-refundable \$10 office fee. No entry accepted without a negative Coggins dated within 12 months of show. Please include \$20 USA Eq non-member fee and/or \$5 discipline fee if applicable for non-Jrs. All entries must have three signatures including emergency info. Make checks payable to **CDA**. Refunds will be given for cancellations received in writing, email, or fax before the closing date less \$10 office fee. **Unconditionally, no refunds after closing date or for 'acts of god' which require management to cancel classes or day(s) of competition.** Non-negotiable check will be charged \$25. Post entries will be accepted to fill scratches with a \$20 post entry fee. Non-competing horses if space available, \$45 plus office fee.

**Times:** Times will be on the website, [www.centerlineevents.com](http://www.centerlineevents.com), at least one week prior to the competition. If you wish for your times to be sent, please include SASE.

**Stabling:** All stabling will be in the indoors. No Tent stabling. Limited number of temporary stalls with full doors available at \$135 for duration. No shavings provided. Tack stalls only if space allows. No refunds on stabling after closing date. **NO STALL DEPOSIT!!!**

**Accommodations:**

Holiday Select, 203-358-8400. Pets allowed! Host Hotel, \$94

Double Tree Hotel, 203-853-3477, \$94

Howard Johnson, 203-655-3933

To receive the above special published rates, you must call before May 19th and ask for CDA Spring Competition rate.

**Directions:**

From New York: Exit 10 off CT I -95; left off ramp, right at fourth light, Middlesex Rd. Two miles to entrance on right.

From New Haven: Exit 10 off CT I-95; (Noroton Heights), bear left at island, and continue uphill to stop light, turn right, go to third light, turn right onto Middlesex Road. Two miles to entrance on right.

From New York or New Haven on Merritt (cars only): Exit 37, Rte 124 south, right off ramp, 1.5 miles to Middlesex Rd, turn right and bear left at stop sign, entrance on left.

**Footing:** Two sand arenas with sand warm up. Two sand arenas on grass and warm-up. If needed, grass arena and warm up on closely mowed Polo Field. All competition arenas are 20m x 60m.

**Entertainment:** Food available on the grounds beginning 7am each day.

Other: **Management reserves the right to combine, divide, or cancel any class.** Farrier on the grounds. Veterinarian on call, Fairfield Equine (203) 270 3600. All dogs must be leashed.

**Class List:**

100. Leadline***	4 to 10 yrs old	Sun
1. Training Level Test 1	Open	Sat/Sun
2. Training Level Test 2	Open/AA/Jr-YR	Sat/Sun
3. Training Level Test 3	Open	Sat/Sun
4. Training Level Test 4	Open/GAIG/USDF Qualifying	Sat/Sun
11. First Level Test 1	Open	Sat/Sun
12. First Level Test 2	Open/AA/Jr-YR	Sat/Sun
13. First Level Test 3	Open	Sat/Sun
14. First Level Test 4	Open/GAIG/USDF Qualifying	Sat/Sun
21. Second Level Test 1	Open	Sat/Sun
22. Second Level Test 2	Open/AA/Jr-YR	Sat/Sun
23. Second Level Test 3	Open	Sat/Sun
24. Second Level Test 4	Open/GAIG/USDF Qualifying	Sat/Sun
31. Third Level Test 1	Open/AA/Jr-YR	Sat/Sun
32. Third Level Test 2	Open	Sat/Sun
33. Third Level Test 3	Open/GAIG/USDF Qualifying	Sat/Sun
41. Fourth Level Test 1	Open/AA/Jr-YR	Sat/Sun
42. Fourth Level Test 2	Open	Sat/Sun
43. Fourth Level Test 3	Open/GAIG/USDF Qualifying	Sat/Sun
50. FEI Test of Choice*	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat/Sun
51. Prix St. George	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat/Sun
52. Intermediare I	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat/Sun
53. Intermediare II	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat/Sun
54. Grand Prix	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat/Sun
55. FEI YR Team	Reg 8 Qual/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sat
56. FEI YR PSG	Reg 8 Qual/GAIG/USDF Qual	Sun
57. FEI 5 yr old test-Finale	Open/Markel YH	Sat/Sun
58. FEI 6 yr old test-Finale	Open/Markel YH	Sat/Sun
60. USDF Freestyle TOC**	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual/CFC	Sun
61. FEI Freestyle TOC	Open/GAIG/USDF Qual/CFC	Sun
62. FEI YR Freestyle	Reg 8 Qual/GAIG/USDF Qual/CFC	Sun
70. Dressage Equitation	Jr/YR/AA/GEC	Sat/Sun

\* Any FEI Test that is not listed.

\*\* Pas de Deux and Quadrille are included in this class.

\*\*\* Leadline class held during lunch break, participants will be asked to salute judge; clean & neat attire, shoes with heels, and helmet required.

**Please note the class number, day, and Open, AA, Jr/YR or Qualifying if applicable on your entry.**

RIDER AND AUDITOR CLINIC SIGN UP

CDA CLINIC WITH SILKE REMBACZ

May 13th and 14th at Sunny Hill Farm in Suffield, CT.

CDA will be hosting a clinic with Silke Rembacz at Sunny Hill Farm. Silke is an extremely talented FEI rider that earned the opportunity to ride in the PSG/II USET Championships on two separate occasions with two different horses. She won on both times. With her students, she is totally focused and devoted. Her training philosophy is consistent and direct allowing riders to benefit from her succinct methodology. The clinic will focus on using the dressage training scale with exercises to improve the quality of your ride.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>RIDERS</u>	<u>AUDITORS</u>
<b><u>PLEASE CIRCLE:</u></b>	<b><u>(Open to CDA Members only)</u></b>	
SATURDAY	\$100	\$20
SUNDAY	\$100	\$20
BOTH DAYS	\$200	\$30

**Negative Coggins and Rabies Certificate required for all participating horses.**

Please send Rider and Auditor Sign-Up Form with check payable to CDA to: Donna Leonessa, 3080 South Street, Coventry, CT 06238. Contact Donna at [dleonessa@hotmail.com](mailto:dleonessa@hotmail.com) or call work (860) 240-9614 with questions. No refunds will be permitted unless a substitute rider/horse is located by the original rider or the organizer.

**CLINIC- RELEASE OF LIABILITY  
READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS BEFORE YOU SIGN IT**

In consideration for \_\_\_\_\_ (the "Rider") being permitted to participate in the horseback riding clinic sponsored or organized by The Connecticut Dressage Association, Inc. ("CDA") on July 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at Sunny Hill, Suffield, Connecticut, the Rider and his/her parents (if Rider is under 18 years of age) agree that CDA, Sunny Hill Farm, the clinician, and their agents, members, volunteers and assistants shall not be liable for, and agree to hold them harmless from, any accident, personal injury, death or property damage that may be sustained by any person or entity, including without limitation the Rider, as a result in whole or in part from the Rider's participation in the clinic. This agreement is binding on the Rider and his/her parents whether or not said accident, personal injury, death or property damage is due in whole or in part to the negligence of CDA, Sunny Hill Farm, the clinician or any of their agents, members, volunteers or assistants. The Rider and his/her parents (if Rider is under 18 years of age) agree to defend and indemnify CDA, Sunny Hill, the clinician and their agents, members, volunteers and assistants for any claims, demands, or suits arising from the Rider's participation in the clinic, including without limitation those arising in whole or in part from the negligence of CDA, Sunny Hill, the clinician or their agents, members, volunteers or assistants.

This release is signed on \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

RIDER: (MUST SIGN)

RIDER'S PARENT (IF RIDER IS LESS THAN 18 YEARS OLD):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Barn Mom Continued from page 2**

guarantee a willing horse who is pain-free doing a canter pirouette.

Like an artist born into a business-minded family, even horses bred for Dressage may march to a different drummer. Physical or mental attributes may prevent a Warmblood from continuing a winning legacy.

Every talented pair needs time to hone new skills. One successful show season may be followed by a learning process disguised as a plateau.

Competitive dressage horses need good maintenance, which can include supplements, treatments and massages. These equine athletes are performing precision movements and deserve the same support as the human variety.

Like any type of riding, dressage can help young people develop responsibility, compassion, fitness and focus. In addition, it offers an international set of standards that one can spend a lifetime mastering. As a parent, it is easy to get lofty expectations — fortunately, the horses are very honest about telling us when ‘enough is enough’.

### **The USDF Guide to Dressage Book Release Announced**

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) is pleased to announce the release of *The USDF Guide to Dressage*. USDF has partnered with author Jennifer O. Bryant and Storey Publishing in order to bring dressage to a wider audience. The book will give greater opportunities to interest individuals in the sport of dressage.

“This is a wonderful book that ‘opens the door,’ allowing many to enter and experience the world of dressage,” USDF Vice President George Williams comments in the foreword of the book.

Assuming no prior knowledge of the sport, *The USDF Guide to Dressage* leads riders through the training scale and a full course of exercises, from pre-Introductory to Second Level. The book is illustrated with easy-to-follow photographic sequences, all presented in full color and demonstrated by respected riders, competitors, and USDF-certified dressage instructors.

This authoritative guide includes the dramatic and colorful history of dressage, an overview of proper terminology and equipment, as well as information on competition, cross-training for other disciplines, management of the dressage horse, rider fitness, and more.

Dressage is an intricate ballet of athleticism and grace, demanding precise movement and excellent communication between horse and rider, is particularly appealing to the growing group of “Baby Boomer” riders who are looking for opportunities to expand their riding skills and knowledge without the physical challenges and risks involved in jumping and racing. Whether they’ve been in the saddle for years or are just taking up or renewing their riding practice, these eager riders will find *The USDF Guide to Dressage* key to building a more satisfying relationship with their horses.

Books will be available April 17, 2006 and can be pre-ordered through the USDF merchandise department at (859) 271-7892.

### **2006 North American Junior Championship for Dressage Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures Now Available**

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) is pleased to announce that the 2006 FEI North American Junior Championship for Dressage (NAJC) Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures for dressage competitors are now available. All competitors interested in qualifying for the 2006 NAJC should obtain a copy of the 2006 NAJC Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures for dressage competitors, at <http://www.usdf.org/Programs/FEINorthAmericanJuniorChampionships/> or by contacting Sheila Forbes, USDF Director of Programs, at (859) 271-7879 or [sforbes@usdf.org](mailto:sforbes@usdf.org). Included in the procedures is information on how to declare your intent to qualify for this event. A competitor’s declaration of intent must be postmarked and sent to USDF no later than April 15, 2006.

The 2006 NAJC will be held in conjunction with the North American Young Riders’ Championship, August 1-6, at the Virginia Horse Center, in Lexington, VA. Each of the nine USDF regions will have the opportunity to field a team of FEI-level Juniors and a team of FEI-level Young Riders to compete at these events. They will also feature competitors from Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and Bermuda, as well as each province of Canada. Dressage competitors from the United States must qualify for their respective regional teams by satisfying the requirements outlined in the USDF/USEF approved criteria and selection procedures. FEI Juniors must qualify by obtaining three scores in both the FEI Junior Team Test and the FEI Junior Individual Test. They are also required to compete in at least one FEI Junior Freestyle Test. Scores earned between August 1, 2005, and July 1, 2006, may be used to qualify.

## ATTENTION CDA YOUTH MEMBERS!!!!

The Connecticut Dressage Association is sponsoring a team (or teams) to compete at the Youth Dressage Festival, August 11 -13, 2006, in Saugerties, New York. For full information on the Youth Dressage Festival, go on the web to [ww.dressage4kids.com](http://ww.dressage4kids.com).

### Qualifying Rules for the Team:

1. Youth must be a CDA member in good standing at the time the scores are earned.
2. Youth must send a letter of intent to compete on a CDA team and state the division, their age, and shirt size, to Vicki Hammers-O Neil, 19 Falcon Lane., Meriden, CT. 06451, by June 1, 2006. (This is the opening date for Youth Dressage Festival, which allows CDA to reserve spots.)
3. Youth must send their two highest qualifying scores - as stated in the prize list for the Youth Dressage Festival – with copies of tests to Vicki Hammers-O Neil, 19 Falcon Lane, Meriden, CT. 06451, by July 20, 2006. Teams will be chosen by the Youth Festival closing date, July 25, 2006, using riders' average score.
4. All Youth participating on a sponsored team must volunteer a minimum of eight (8) hours at a CDA sponsored function. This can be a schooling show, the recognized show at Ox Ridge in June, or one of the clinics coming up this summer. Verification of this volunteer time is received from CDA's Volunteer Coordinator, Kari Bradshaw. Please note this volunteer time does not count towards year-end volunteer incentives unless not chosen to be on a team.
5. A designated team captain with input from all team members will write a short article for the Centerline about the experience.
6. Teams will consist of 3 or 4 horse/rider combinations. CDA will send as many as two (2) 4-member teams.
7. All Youth chosen for a team will receive a team saddle pad, and a polo shirt with the CDA logo on it.
8. CDA will sponsor \$130.00 of each individual s entries, and the team member will be responsible the rest.
9. Riders will be responsible for their own lodging and meals.
10. Vicki Hammers-O Neil, CDA Youth Coordinator, will be traveling to the competition as coach and chef d'equipe.
11. Vicki will organize a prep session to help study for the written exam and provide teaching on your horse for the equitation and dressage test. For further information, contact Vicki at [fourtempis@aol.com](mailto:fourtempis@aol.com) or call 203-634-1168 in the evenings.

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### USDF Announces 2006 Young Rider Graduate Program Weekend Seminar Made Possible with Financial Support from The Dressage Foundation

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF), in conjunction with the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF), will host a weekend educational seminar for recent graduates of the USDF Young Rider Program. The seminar will be held October 20-22, 2006, at the USDF National Education Center at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY. Seminar participants, ranging in age from 21 to 25, will include amateurs, professionals, and future high-performance riders in the sport of dressage. The purpose of the program is to provide graduates of the USDF Young Rider Program with information and support for an easier transition into the adult equestrian world.

To help bridge the gap between young rider status and the adult world of teaching, training, and international competition, the USDF/USEF Young Rider Graduate Program weekend educational seminar will focus on crucial topics that young adults need to understand, such as goal setting, fundraising, and equine business management. Discussion on these topics will be led by some of the top dressage professionals in the country.

The Dressage Foundation is generous in its financial support of this program. The Dressage Foundation's mission is to cultivate

and provide financial support for the advancement of dressage. "We are glad to be able to provide financial support for this program, as these young adults will become the dressage instructors, competitors, and judges of the future," said John Boomer, president and CEO of The Dressage Foundation.

USDF looks forward to utilizing the new USDF National Education Center to host the 2006 USDF/USEF Young Rider Graduate Program. With seminar facilities, the Dressage Resource Center, the Hall of Fame, and the USDF Bookstore, the USDF National Education Center offers a wonderful opportunity for promoting educational event such as this.

If you would like to apply for this program or if you have any questions, please contact Sheila Forbes, USDF Director of Programs, at [sforbes@usdf.org](mailto:sforbes@usdf.org) or (859) 271-7879. Additional information and participant applications are also available at <http://www.usdf.org/Programs/AdvancedYoungRider/Graduate.asp>. The deadline to apply for the weekend educational seminar is August 1.

## Riding in Germany – An Incomparable Training Experience for the Amateur Rider

By: Theresa Davidson

Think that training in Germany on top-flight schoolmasters is only for the Olympic-caliber rider with deep pockets? Think again!

One of Germany's best kept secrets is a training facility geared to the needs of foreign amateur riders of all levels. Not far from the Dutch border, the International Equestrian Academy was founded expressly to offer systematic learning of the German riding system to the ambitious and serious rider. Its a uniquely formatted program features individualized training and assessment as well as supportive services in purchasing, training and ongoing development of the horse and rider team.

I first learned about the Academy when I volunteered at Lendon Gray's Youth Dressage Festival at which a one-week training experience at the Academy was donated as a prize. I checked out their website, [www.etoile-iea.com](http://www.etoile-iea.com) and thought, "Wow, I'd love to do that!" Finally, this year I got my chance.

I enrolled in the Improve Your Seat course, a comprehensive two week course designed to help the rider achieve a deeper, more independent and relaxed seat. A key component of this course is the unmounted stretching and strengthening exercises based on Eckart Meyners' revolutionary program of seat development. The approach to training is multi-modal. Instructors draw connections between material covered in theory classes, videotaped and live demonstrations and the riders' feel during the lunge lessons. They incorporate all of this information into the daily practical riding lessons. Three course events (field trips) provide fun and important learning opportunities through observation and participation in different aspects of the German equestrian culture. And for the avid reader, the Academy maintains a small but thoughtfully stocked library.

To ensure a strongly individualized training program, maximum enrollment in all Academy courses is eight riders, divided into groups of two or three for mounted lessons. To ensure a more successful outcome, riders complete a self-assessment form with the application, detailing their goals, strengths, weaknesses and expectations for their coursework at the Academy. The first day or two the trainers warm up the horses. Each participant's first and final rides are videotaped, and with the trainers they evaluate their progress. Everyone goes home with a personalized summary report which includes suggestions for continued training.

The Academy is located in the rural outskirts of Rhede, about 60 miles northwest of Dusseldorf and 100 miles southeast of Amsterdam. There are non-stop flights to both cities from JFK and Newark airports. There is train service to Rhede from Amsterdam and Dusseldorf, but I chose to drive and was treated along the way to a seemingly endless succession of beautiful horse and dairy farms, punctuated with red brick homesteads and fields of golden corn and purple cabbage.

Accommodations run the gamut from a two-bedroom apartment on the premises, to economy guesthouses minutes from

the Academy to a deluxe castle that's a 30 minute drive away. Prices, conversion to the Euro notwithstanding, are competitive to anything comparable in the U.S. The same can be said for restaurants, supermarkets and tack shops in the area.

The International Equestrian Academy is sited on an 80-plus year old farmstead, updated with all the refinements of a modern equestrian facility. There is a 20 x 40 meter indoor arena (scheduled to be lengthened to 60 meters) with large mirrors and an impressive sound system. The "front yard" has a galloping track which encircles a 20 x 60 meter sand ring as well as a grass field dotted with banks, water jumps, cavalletti and small hills. Behind the barns are ample sized paddocks and a hot walker. There are about 35 horses, all of whom can hang their heads out of their stalls and some have small walk-outs as well.

There are no boarders to speak of. Horses at the Academy are either school horses, in training, or owned by Academy staff members. Chief Trainer Stephan Kiesewetter boasts an impressive resume, including holding the third highest score ever in the master Bereiter program examination. Stephan shares the training duties with Christiane Borchert, also a graduate of the master Bereiter program.

Their command of English is excellent, their skills as trainers of horses inspiring and the collective concern for the welfare of the horses is uncompromising. The assistant trainers are effective riders and teachers, and the young apprentices show great promise to achieve similar success. All demonstrated an incredible energy, focus, self-discipline and work ethic mixed with a good humor that carried us all through long and physically demanding days.

The riding and teaching style of all the staff is similar, so that riders benefit from consistency in both what they see and what they are taught. I liked the way they teach. Rather than bombard the rider with many directives, trainers identify one or two key skills or techniques at a time on which they want each rider to focus. The rider works independently for 5 or 10 minutes, but always under the watchful eyes of the trainers. What results is a dialog between rider and trainer with important and sufficiently lengthy pauses that allow the rider to develop feel.

And then there are the horses, the true instructors. They come in every size and shape and can accommodate riders of any level. They all seem happy, greeting newcomers with curiosity and interest. What they also share in common is that they go FORWARD and boast big but soft, comfortable gaits. Their two consecutive days off a week are well earned and they are schooled at the end of each course by the Academy trainers to keep them finely tuned. Like the Academy trainers, they too have a strong work ethic.

As schoolmasters they are superb. That's not to say they are either easy or push button. But they are in excellent condition and are trained to be ridden off the rider's seat. They are sensitive

### **Riding in Germany Continued from page 9**

to even the most subtle shift in weight. They are quite effective, but sane and polite, in letting riders know that they are overusing or misusing rein aids. They are solid, safe, steady-Eddie types. In short, these horses are the stuff that riders' dreams are made of. What I learned from them filled over two dozen pages in my journal!

Most of the school horses are available for sale, and I was not surprised to learn that a significant percentage of Academy participants end up purchasing a horse they'd ridden during their course. Nor did it surprise me to learn that over 90% of participants return to the Academy!

I had such a great time that, no sooner returned home, I went back on-line to view the schedule of courses. Two months later, I returned to the Academy for the one-week Do's and Don'ts of Horse Purchase course – as I had gone recently from owning and riding two horses daily to leasing and riding one horse three times week. This time I enjoyed the single most fun week of my entire 51 year long life! Together with Stephan, I constructed a rider profile, including goals, to assist me in an eventual horse search. We also covered how to assess conformation. And I rode 15 times in one week. I have never ridden better in all my life than I did on my second trip.

I came away from my Academy experiences more skilled and confident, and much more optimistic about my potential as a rider. I gained a greater appreciation for the necessity of correctly learning the basics and for accepting my role as the team leader or "alpha mare." I adopted a workmanlike attitude and sensitive approach to my equine partner. I learned the value of riding more forward and with greater concentration and intensity of effort. I added to my toolbox imagery, both for a positive state of mind and for riding figures and movements. I came to understand the importance of building on yesterday, coupled with riding what I was feeling today. But perhaps most important of all, I learned that I must become one with the horse, in spirit and in movement, and not the other way around. For me, this was a riding-life altering experience. There was only one aspect I didn't like about it. It had to come to an end!

I'm an ordinary person with a full life outside my riding life. So how did I achieve such remarkable results? I believe it's because being at the Academy is a "total immersion" experience. All I did every day was to ride, to think and read about riding and to observe horses being trained by professionals totally committed to their improvement. Tacking up my horse everyday, which I don't do at home, provided me with a "warm-up" to riding that was physical, mental and emotional all in one. I was in an environment where excellence, not perfection, was both the goal and the modus operandi. This was uplifting, not just of my position, but of my standards.

The two week Improve Your Seat course runs about \$2,000, which gets you 10 mounted lessons, 8 lunge lessons, 8 exercise classes, 6 hours of lectures/demonstrations plus 3 field trips. I consider that tremendous value for my money before I even factor

in the excellence of the instruction. For courses booked in December and January participants can get a 50% discount by paying a little earlier in advance. During these winter months, the weather is comparable to anything we'd find in New England, and possibly milder. Groups of 4 or more also enjoy discount pricing. To keep expenses even lower, you can share a room with another participant, and the Academy will help you with those arrangements. The Academy also distributes a Student Handbook to participants upon receipt of payment and it contains all the practical information you'll need in planning your trip.

If you're looking for a playful riding "vacation," I would say look elsewhere. But if you're looking to put yourself in a place that will help you reach a higher level of skill and practical knowledge, a fuller understanding of your needs and goals as a rider, and a greater appreciation of the horse as your partner, then the Academy's the place for you.

The selfish part of me wants to keep this incomparable training program a secret, so that when I return I won't have to share the ring or the horses with too many other riders. But the part of me that feels fortunate for having had these experiences just wants to shout from the rooftops, "Go to the International Equestrian Academy. This could very well be the best thing you can do for your riding!"

Theresa Davidson is an adult amateur who rides at Lendon Gray's Gleneden Dressage.

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### **USDF Now Accepting Nominations for Youth Volunteer of the Year**

USDF is pleased to announce that it is accepting nominations for the 2006 USDF Youth Volunteer of the Year Award. This prestigious award honors one outstanding youth volunteer who has contributed on a national basis to USDF's mission: "Dedicated to education, the recognition of achievement, and the promotion of the sport of dressage."

Nominees must have volunteered at least 25 hours during the current year on any USDF-related project at the local, regional, or national level. Nominees must be age 21 years or younger and be a current USDF Youth Participating Member, GMO, or IMO Member in good standing.

The 2006 USDF Youth Volunteer of the Year will be presented with a perpetual trophy at the USDF National Convention and Symposium, which will be held on November 29 - December 3, 2006 in Kansas City, Missouri. The award winner will also receive a "keeper" trophy and will be featured in the USDF Connection. This is the inaugural year of this award, made possible through funds raised at the USDF Youth Executive Board Silent Auction held yearly at the USDF Convention.

Nominations may be made by any USDF member and are due August 31. Forms are available at [www.usdf.org/Programs/awards/index.asp](http://www.usdf.org/Programs/awards/index.asp). Send nomination forms or questions to Sheila Forbes, 220 Lexington Green Circle, Suite 510, Lexington KY 40503; phone: (859) 271-7879; e-mail: [sforbes@usdf.org](mailto:sforbes@usdf.org).