



CENTERLINE



CONNECTICUT DRESSAGE ASSOCIATION

February 2006

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CENTERLINE

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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 -

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Subject: Centerline

- CDA Website -

www.ctdressageassoc.org

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

Past President's Message

No, this is not Leslie! She is still our president and doing a wonderful job at it, I might add!

Leslie and I both attended the USDF Convention representing CDA. It is true Leslie carried our CDA votes, but I carried Region 8 PM (Participating Member) votes. As she was very quick to get her USDF report in to our editor, I realized after I read it that I had very little to add. When I spoke to Leslie, she immediately came up with the idea for me to write this month's president message. I am honored; as I enjoyed and miss writing to you all since I stepped down as CDA's president!

So what to talk about? I have two things. First, how is CDA perceived at the USDF convention? CDA has about 250 members and I believe in Region 8, is the second only to NEDA. NEDA's membership is well over 2000 members and is the second largest GMO in the country. USDF considers CDA a medium GMO. At the convention, when you say you are member or president of CDA, the response is that they ask you questions, that they are very interested on how we get things done, and that people listen. Not quite like that brokerage commercial but for a medium GMO, CDA is a very active. Our activity level can be at times compared to the larger GMO with over 500 members. We have a huge schooling show program, our education programs have been copied by others, we send teams to competitions and most outsiders know about our recognized show at Ox Ridge Hunt Club. Our volunteer program is great but our volunteers are wonderful! There is where it all happens!

This now brings me to the second topic I wanted to talk about. As a past president and board member, I must tell you that our board runs EXTREMELY smoothly. Leslie said it well at our last meeting... "This board runs itself!"...Each president brings in their own ideas and directions but what has stayed fairly consistent throughout the years is the level responsibility each board member takes to do their part. This past board meeting had several CDA members attend who had never been to one of our board meetings before. As we, the board members, introduced ourselves to our guests one by one, I listened as each of us stated the particular job we do on the board. Most of us have a job that requires hours and hours of work. I think the guests were either really scared or amazed and impressed that all the activities come through these 10-12 people and 2-3 sub-committees. At the annual meeting, (Leslie told me to mention that everyone must come to our annual meeting and award party on February 11th. See information in this newsletter. It will be loads of fun as usual.) Leslie is going to tell the membership what CDA has accomplished this year.

As you read this, I want each one of you to be very proud to be a CDA member (and if you have not renewed, do it NOW!). We are always open to having members at our meetings for new ideas, directives and participation, and we are always looking for more volunteers to keep the level of excellence high. Leslie and I are proud to attend the USDF convention because of the passion our volunteers and board members (who put in endless volunteer hours!) put into the running of CDA.

Leslie and all the past presidents of CDA thank you all!

See you on the Centerline....

Debra

2006 Calendar of Events

February 11, 2006

CDA Annual Party & Awards Celebration

Contact: Leslie Weiss
203-777-1950

March 16, 2006

Board Meeting
Fern Feldman
203-272-0711
Secretary@ctdressageassoc.org

March 24, 2006

CDCTA Silent Auction
Gallery Restaurant
Glastonbury, CT
Cheryl Matthewson
860-848-7844
cmatthew@easthaddamschools.org

March 25, 2006

CDA Clinic Seat Series
"It's All in Your Seat, Part II"
Once Again Farm
Meriden, CT
With Vickie Hammers-O'Neil
Leslie Weiss
203-777-1950
lesweis47@yahoo.com.

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

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.

April 29, 2006

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

April 30, 2006

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

Virginia Horse Center to Host First FEI North American Junior Championships for Dressage along with

FEI North American Young Riders' Championships

Lexington, KY - The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF), in conjunction with the United States Dressage Federation (USDF), is pleased to announce that the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia, will host the inaugural FEI North American Junior Championships for Dressage in 2006, along with the traditional FEI North American Young Riders' Championships, August 1-6, 2006.

The 2006 FEI North American Young Riders' Championships will continue to honor its tradition as the premier competition for young riders, ages 16-21, in the three equestrian disciplines of eventing, dressage, and show jumping. In addition, the recently approved 2006 FEI North American Junior Championships for Dressage will take place, allowing junior dressage competitors the same thrills of competition in an FEI-team format as the young riders. This new event provides a second competitive opportunity for juniors in 2006, and follows the USEF Junior Dressage Team Championship which will be held in Pebble Beach, California, July 6 – 9, 2006. (For more information on this event, sponsored by Collecting Gaits Farm, the Dutta Corporation, and Performance Sales International visit www.usef.org.)

The two FEI dressage championships are comprised of dressage young riders competing at the FEI Young Rider Level (equivalent to Prix St. Georges), and juniors competing at the FEI Junior Level (equivalent to Fourth Level). Each USDF region will be given an opportunity to field a team of up to four juniors and a team of up to four young riders. Riders must qualify throughout a designated qualifying period according to criteria jointly approved by USDF and USEF, in order to be named to his/her respective regional teams. Only the top thirty-six young riders and top thirty-six juniors in the country are invited to compete for the United States in these FEI dressage championships.

In addition to dressage riders from the nine USDF regions, this event also includes riders from United States Equestrian Federation zones (for show jumping), and United States Eventing Association areas (for eventing), as well as riders from all provinces of Canada, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and Bermuda. Teams and individuals are invited to compete via each country's national equestrian federation. The broad range of competitors attending the championships produces an atmosphere much like our High Performance riders experience on the international scene.

The United States Dressage Federation will field teams for both of these dressage championships, and will make qualifying criteria and selection procedures available in January 2006. For further information, please visit the USDF website at www.usdf.org, or contact Sheila Forbes, USDF Director of Programs at (859) 271-7879, or at sforbes@usdf.org.

A MARTIAN'S EYE VIEW OF THE USDF CONVENTION

By Leslie Weiss

On my maiden voyage to USDF, I was given a few assignments by Region 8 director, Fern Feldman. First you should know (if you don't already) that CDA sends a delegate (this year, me) to the working meetings and to what is sweetly known as the BOG. More about the BOG later.

The USDF convention has several tracks. Professionals—trainers, judges, competition managers, and Technical Delegates – attend lots of meetings just for them. This helps keep the professional standards high and coherent. Then there is Governance. These meetings are for discussing Issues of Concern to USDF and its relations with other equestrian groups such as USEF. These meetings can be very solemn-sounding and possibly dry, but the committee chairs and their members are quite organized, so actually a lot got discussed. I attended all the meetings relating to GMO's, adult education and volunteers. I brought quite a few ideas back for CDA's board to consider. FYI, every GMO seems to have the same issues: how to improve communication, how to keep members happy and involved, and how to raise money.

The convention also provides an assortment of interesting educational presentations. In between the administrative meetings I attended workshops on freestyle development, one on the anatomy of the dressage horse in relation to training, and another called "No Foot, No Horse." There was another one on how to be a good leader.

I was pleased to hear much concern expressed about improving outreach to beginning dressage riders and horses. There are plenty of events for the more experienced members of our dressage community, but few for, say, folks switching into dressage from another equestrian discipline, or for people devoted to breeds not usually considered "dressage-y." The Adult Education Council has established an agenda for this next year to improve accessibility to grant money and to make participation in dressage events less intimidating.

The USDF convention's governance/administrative meetings offered an opportunity for very high quality information-sharing about both problems and solutions that confront all GMO's. It was surprisingly friendly and inviting for a newbie like me, and provided a lot of food for thought. I found out that there is an internet discussion list for all the GMO presidents, which I have joined.

I plan to bring some ideas to CDA's board of directors in order to more creatively develop programs for our members at all levels, and hopefully, encourage participation in our activities from other interested riders. I also hope to develop more close working relationships with our adjacent GMOs, particularly CDCTA and WFDA, for mutual benefit. For example, there will be a new Forum Series which adapts material from the Instructors' Certification program into workshops for Adult Amateurs. I will be exploring with the Board and with our sister GMOs how best to bring this opportunity to our area.

Of course, celebratory dinners are a big draw at the convention. Everyone looks very different in slinky fabrics and strappy sandals. The gentlemen, of course did not wear sandals! The Salute Gala honored a number of people and horses for special contributions in a glitzy "Academy Award" format. Of course, we were in Burbank! From Region 8 the USDF's Volunteer of the Year went to NEDA's Paul Cormier. NEDA was also recognized for the volunteer services of Beth Jenkins, and for Tip of the Hat, NEDA's newsletter. To our west, WFDA also won recognition for the layout and presentation of their newsletter. Congratulations, all.

With great sentiment, Lendon Gray's Olympic pony, Seldom Seen fondly known as Brillo, was inducted into the Hall of Fame. Seldom Seen and Lendon were the first to demonstrate unmistakably that dressage is for everybody. They broke the bounds of convention, competing against the big, typey horses, risking scorn until they just out rode the competition. Seldom Seen was honored as an ambassador for the sport of dressage. The tribute was beautifully presented and brought tears to the eye.

Now, About the BOG.....

BOG stands for Board of Governors. All the delegates meet with the leadership of USDF in an all-day session to Decide Things. USDF is made up of councils and committees. Committees have a representative from each of the nine regions. Committee members come from anywhere. They are extremely well organized. Each committee presented its accomplishments for the year and its goals for the next year. Some had motions to be voted on. What could have been a very tedious, stultifying experience ran very smoothly and

Martian Continued from page 3

ahead of schedule. It was punctuated by the drawing of prizes, baskets donated by about 100 of the GMO's, including CDA.

CDA received special recognition at the BOG for our level of financial commitment to the Capital Campaign. I accepted a plaque, reproduced in this issue, on our behalf. The new Educational Center in Lexington, KY is being built right next to the USEF headquarters. It might be occupied as soon as February, and both organizations are finding greatly improved communications as a result. And, it was just announced that the 2010 World Equestrian Games will be held at the Kentucky Horse Park, right in the new back yard!

This year's BOG turned into a fund-raising challenge that became uproarious. Paul Cormier from NEDA issued a call to the leaders of USDF. If they would forego their usual dapper suits and ties for a T-shirt designed by Paul (only slightly lewd), NEDA would match donations to the Capital Campaign up to \$5000. In turn this would be matched by the Roemer foundation. With a possible \$20,000 up for grabs, the T-shirts appeared, some worn with ties. As the day wore on, donations came in from the floor. At one point, Sam Barish, President of USDF jumped up on the table and stripped to his Bermudas. USDF's director, David O'Connor, even demanded a shirt, and when done with his speech, auctioned it off! At the end of the day, all the shirts were auctioned and the total amount of money raised for the Capital Campaign approached \$100,000. It was all hugely funny. Oddly, dignity reigned over foolishness, all in a good

cause. My respect for "nos Maximos Lederos" has gone way up. Truly, they have grace under fire.

As a first-time delegate to this meeting, I conclude:

- We have leaders of quality.
- We have dedicated volunteers who coordinate things on a national level in a truly representative way.
- There is constant attention to improving communication throughout USDF.
- There is true recognition of the 80%+ of the membership that are lower level adult amateur riders and commitment to developing activities that will serve our interests.
- While fielding teams of high-quality international competitors is important for public recognition, there is a more serious commitment to developing training and education for ALL.

I really enjoyed attending this convention, and now recognize the privilege of serving as part of CDA's leadership. I understand better that the role of the GMO is to draw on the resources available at the regional and national levels in order to bring us activities that will be fun and satisfying. It is not a dreary thing at all to spend time with talented people with vision and a sense of humor as well as a sense of business.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Weiss
CDA President

Calling Young Artists for USDF's Art of Dressage Contest

The 2006 USDF Youth Art Contest rules and entry forms are now available at <http://www.usdf.org/Programs/ArtContest/index.asp>. USDF members age 21 and under may enter this contest to show off their talent in writing, art, and photography. USDF conducts this contest each year and typically receives an average of 100 very competitive entries. The contest is designed to highlight the creativity and beauty inherent in the sport of dressage and it allows juniors and young riders to express their interest in the sport outside the competition arena. The winners will receive trophies and other prizes. The winning entries will be displayed at the 2006 USDF Annual Convention, and also published in the Yearbook issue of USDF Connection. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2006

For more information or to receive an entry form, please contact Sheila Forbes, USDF Director of Programs, at (859) 271-7879 or .

A Chance for Horsemen to Come in Out of the Cold

The **4th Annual Weekend Educational Program** organized by Olympian Lendon Gray will be held at **Post University, Waterbury, Conn., on February 4/5, 2006**. This weekend of education, camaraderie, and fun has programs for everyone interested in horses in general and Dressage specifically. The activities are directed to youth, adult amateurs, trainers, and parents. For the horse and rider to be successful they must not only be well trained, but also healthy, with good competitive skills, financially sound, and with a strong support system. Most subjects will be ideal for Pony Club members going for higher ratings and for instructors planning on certification. For many sessions there will be a choice of speakers. It will be held **8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.**

Participants are being encouraged to bring any equestrian clothing or equipment for a tag sale to benefit the Dressage4Kids, Inc Scholarship Program. Any youth who participate both days is eligible to apply for a scholarship.

Some of the speakers and topics for the Weekend Educational Program will include: author and lecturer Susan Harris, "S" dressage judge Margaret Freeman; psychologist

Dr. Leslie Weiss; equine nutritionist Mary Beth Gordon; and Lendon Gray. Topics include How to Attract Sponsorship, The Training Scale, Goal Setting, Feeding and Conditioning, How to Raise a Horse Crazy Child, Basic Teaching Skills, Fear NOT, Alternate Breeds in Dressage, Riding in Germany as an Adult Amateur.

Admission for the Weekend Educational Program is kept very low: \$5/day or \$8/weekend for youth and \$15/day or \$25/weekend for adults, if application is postmarked by January 20; all fees are \$5 more after Jan. 20. There are special fees for groups. The program will be held in the **Leever Student Center at Post University in Waterbury, CT.** Lunch and dinner can be purchased at the cafeteria. Space will be limited so early application is recommended.

The application can be found here: <http://www.dressage4kids.com/pdf/WEP2006.pdf>

The program is being organized together by Dressage4Kids, Inc., and the Post University Equine Program. More information is attached or contact, Lendon Gray at graydressage@optonline.com 914 234-4158, or Carole Baker at Post University, 203-596-4631, cbaker@post.edu.

2006 NAYRC Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures Now Available

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) is pleased to announce that the 2006 North American Young Riders' Championships (NAYRC) Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures for dressage competitors are now available. All riders interested in qualifying for the 2006 NAYRC should obtain a copy of this information. Included in the procedures is information on how to declare your intent to qualify for this event. A rider's declaration of intent to qualify for the NAYRC is due to USDF by March 1, 2006.

The NAYRC is the premier competition for young riders, ages 16-21, in the three Olympic equestrian disciplines of eventing, dressage, and show jumping. Riders are invited to compete from each province of Canada, U.S. Equestrian

zone (for show jumping), USDF region (for dressage) and United States Eventing Association area (for eventing), as well as from Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean Islands, and Bermuda via each country's national equestrian federation. The broad range of competitors attending the championships produces an Olympic-like atmosphere.

The 2006 NAYRC will be held at the Virginia Horse Center in Lexington, VA, August 1-6. To obtain a copy of the 2006 NAYRC Qualifying Criteria and Selection Procedures, go to or contact Sheila Forbes, USDF director of programs, at (859) 271-7879 or sforbes@usdf.org.

Save the dates! Seat Clinic Series

“It’s All in Your Seat, Part II”

Saturday, March 25, 2006 from 1pm - 4pm,
at Once Again Farm in Meriden ,Ct.

As a continuation of the 2005 seat clinic, in “Seat II”, Vicki Hammers-O’Neil will discuss and demonstrate the uses and different types of leg, seat and rein aids and how to apply them for correct response in upward and downward transitions, turns and school figures.

“It’s All in Your Seat, Part III”

Saturday, April 29, 2006 from 1pm - 4pm,
at Fox Ledge Farm in East Haddam, CT.

Continuing in the same vein, Ann Guptill will discuss and demonstrate the use of the seat & position in riding lateral movements, including the progression of the exercises and application and timing of the aids.

There is a discounted fee for registering in advance for both events but you are not obligated. Please register by March 20th for the first clinic and April 25th for the second clinic. Please bring your own chair and dress warm.

REGISTRATION

Name	Phone Number
Email address:	
March 25, 2006 It’s All in Your Seat, Part II	Member adult: \$20 _____ Non-member adult: \$25 _____ Youth: \$15 _____
April 29, 2006 It’s All in Your Seat, Part III	Member adult: \$20 _____ Non-member adult: \$25 _____ Youth: \$15 _____
BOTH CLINICS	Member adult: \$35 _____ Non-member adult: \$45 _____ Youth: \$25 _____

You can join CDA at this event and pay the member price. Send completed registration and fee to LESLIE WEISS, 59 Hobart St., New Haven, CT 06511. For questions contact Leslie Weiss 203-777-1950; lesweis47@yahoo.com. Registration form will be available online and in the Centerline also.