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The RMDs e-Centaur offers color click-through ads for your company, product, service or item for sale. Rates are \$50 per issue and additional specifications can be found here.

April 5 Ride-A-Test Benefits YR Team

Area riders can test their dressage skills and benefit the USDF Region 5 NAJYRC team in a Benefit Ride-A-Test on Saturday, April 5 in Longmont, CO. All proceeds will go to sending our teams to their championships in Kentucky. Ride the dressage test of your choice (including eventing dressage, western dressage and gaited dressage), with a local judge, and receive immediate feedback for improvement of your ride and test.

The fund-raiser is at Autumn Hill International Equestrian Center, 9417 N. Foothills Hwy., Longmont, CO 80503. Opening date for entries is March 10; closing date is March 29.

Judge is Julie Haugen, "L**" with secretary Heather Petersen, 12395 Gull Lane, Peyton, CO 80831, 719-683-8435, slush@drwgw.net.

[ENTRY FORM](#)

Learn Biomechanics for Horse and Rider RMDs Education Event April 19

RMDs Education Chair Jon Haugen, along with Beth Geier, has organized the educational program for all ages and skills, *Biomechanics of the Horse and Rider*, presented by Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez, a 'S' judge and Arvada, CO, trainer/instructor.

The day-long program is indoors in a heated facility on Saturday, April 19, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Larimer County Fairgrounds. This multimedia seminar focuses on the interplay of horse and rider biomechanics. Learn how the position and aids of the rider affect the movement of the horse, and how horse conformation affects its abilities. University credit is available. Debbie is a certified personal trainer and member of the USDF 'L' faculty.

Click [HERE](#) for entry form.

Call for 2014 Championships Sponsors

RMDs Championships depends on sponsors and advertisers to assist in defraying the cost of mounting our annual celebration.

Do you know someone who would be interested? Your barn, your local tack shop, a favorite vendor?

RMDs offers many levels of sponsorship participation!

Contact Beverly Swanson, RMDs Championship Show Liaison at ShowLiaisonRMDs@gmail.com for complete info packet, or check the website for info: [Championships Page](#)

Secrets from the Trainers' Vault

Sooooo - you have a burning question?

Maybe you want to learn about a certain movement, improve a movement, find a deeper seat, keep your hands more quiet, and lots more?

Don't despair - help is here.

Post your burning question to Simone Windeler at simonedressage@gmail.com. Then look for an answer in the new Trainers' Vault column in the next Centaur.

2014 Jr/YR Camp Director Position

This position is open for bids. Please go to rmds.org for guidelines.

Members

View and print your membership card. Not a member yet? Join now.

[Click for Membership](#)

Calendar

See the upcoming USEF/RMDS Show Schedule, clinics, schooling shows and events.

[Click for Calendar](#)

Chapters

RMDs has 12 chapters in the Rocky Mountain Region. Check for changed days/times/venues for meetings! If you would like to change your chapter affiliation you must personally notify the central office in [writing](#).

[Click for Chapters](#)

USDF Region 5

Click [HERE](#) for latest report from Heather Petersen, USDF Region 5 Director.

For the latest updates and current Region 5 news. [Click for Region 5](#)

Marketplace

Our Marketplace advertisers support RMDs while promoting their businesses.

[Click for our advertisers](#)

Classified Ads

Clearing out your tack room? List your items in our classifieds, or see what is for sale.

[Click for Classifieds](#)

Advertise with us

RMDs has many print, show season, championship and online advertising opportunities to reach your targeted equine market.

[Click for Ad info](#)

Facebook

RMDs and many of our chapters are on Facebook, like our page to keep up with us.

[Like us here](#)

Artwork for Year of the Horse RMDs T-Shirts Championships Original art by Stephanie Gallegos

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is here and we have had many glimpses the last few weeks. Grass is growing in our pastures and the horses are all shedding their coats. Most of us have been covered with the fuzz we curvy off along with the mud. As the horses shed for the summer, we get to see the smooth shiny coats and the muscling that has developed through our winter training. Show season is upon us, as well as clinics and several educational opportunities.

Email Blasts and new listings on the website have announced some wonderful chances to learn. RMDs is making the most of our local resources and we are organizing educational opportunities for everyone. Biomechanics with Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez on April 19 and Learning to Scribe on April 27 at the Colorado Horse Park during the Dressage for the Cure Show are just a few of the educational workshops available. A big thank you to Jon Haugen, Beth Geier and Heather Petersen for getting things organized and running.

Once again I am reaching out to everyone for suggestions: for more educational events, ideas on making the Championship a special event, and sponsorships and volunteers for all our shows and events. RMDs is for the membership and we can only function with participation.

With spring comes hope and the prospect of achieving great dreams. I am hoping all of you are making plans for the year with your families, friends and, of course, your equine partners. RMDs hopes to be a part of your plans either as a competitor, student or a very happy cheerleader for someone. Let us work together to make 2014 fun and prosperous.

Aloha, Gwen Ka'awaloa

Enter the Sanctuary of the horse ever with honor and respect. - Erik Herbermann

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an exciting spring we are having in RMDs! Our first show is at Kaimana Farms in Elizabeth, CO, April 12. We are going to have great food and a lot of fun. Please come and show, or just spend the day with us. We would love to get to know more of our members personally and include your views in our agenda.

As a teenager, I had the great fortune to study under Bonna McCuiston, whose trainer was Karl Mikolka. One of the greats, he came to our farm consistently for five years and held clinics. Bonna took her Hanoverian, "Laskon," to Grand Prix during that time. I was inspired by her art and impressed by his work ethic, and his amazing exercises for dressage. He was innovative and would make challenging exercises combining patterns for strength and development of fluidity in the movement of the horse. Sometimes his combinations seemed to be impossible because of the speed and the difficulty he required in his training. He was the consummate professional. He never made fun of his students, even though he was blisteringly hard in the ring. He never made the horse afraid or tense. He would demand these amazing things of us, and then stop to pet his Jack Russell Terrier who would inevitably be nesting in the middle of the arena where we were riding.

One of the things I have learned from horses is to always trust my gut. People ask me why my school horses are so obedient and sweet. Part of that reason is that I always protect them. They follow me. I never let anyone take away my power as their leader. We have so many great clinicians coming to our area to teach and instruct dressage. I would encourage anyone who is interested in taking a clinic with an instructor they do not know to attend a clinic with the instructor first, to assess if it is a good fit for your horse. You are paying for that instruction. You are the client. Sometimes we let our desire to please authority interfere with our gut feeling about our horses. Look for a positive environment and a professional attitude. If a person bullies horses, he most likely will bully people as well. There is no excuse for bullying in dressage. Your horses look to you for leadership, so be discerning and spend some time deciding what you want to be surrounded by in a clinic environment. The truly great clinicians do not need to scream or make fun of riders. The first time you see that kind of behavior, walk away. Your horse is counting on you.

I am so looking forward to this show season. Please do not hesitate to call me with any cares or concerns and I hope to see everyone volunteering at the shows. We are making some special Year Of The Horse T-shirts to give just to our volunteers. See you soon!

Best Regards, Aline Brandau, JD

Riders, Spectators, Volunteers Due at Colorado FEI Event in Estes Park, CO

The Florida winter circuit is known for its many FEI competitions. Dressage at Devon is famous, as well, but is in the Northeast. California also hosts several FEI events, but they are a 22-hour drive from Denver.

Where can you come and compete, watch or volunteer and see the best and be judged by the best? It's in your own backyard. The Paragon CDI*** will be held May 23 to 25 in nearby Estes Park. This is the fourth anniversary of FEI competition coming back to Colorado. These new, earlier dates will allow competitors to qualify for every championship in 2014. It is also the only 2014 Verden Young Horse Qualifier in Region 5.



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Did you know that two of our distinguished members for 2014 have judged several Olympic and World Equestrian Games?

Competing for Championships

In 2013, top riders from seven states travelled to Colorado to qualify for the Festival of Champions. Spectators at the sold-out Sunday Brunch were able to see top Grand Prix riders, as well as riders who have represented the United States in Europe at the Verden Championships. With qualifying opportunities for the 2014 USEF Young Horse and Developing Horse Championships, as well as the North American Junior Young Rider Championships, this May show should attract some fabulous equine athletes and their riders.

Last year, more than \$5,000 in prize money was awarded, and sponsors provided fabulous prizes. The Barn Party on Friday night always is a hit, and so is the free Competitors Dinner on Saturday night. A new barn with indoor wash racks is available to the horses, and grandstand competition for the CDI, freestyles and other national classes give the horses a fabulous venue to shine.

To volunteer or sponsor a class or dinner, contact Manager Janet Foy at dressagejanet@att.net. Prize lists are at www.2whitefeet.com.

Volunteers Make Everything Happen

By MaryJo Hoepner
Scholarship Chair

As RMDs show season gets under way, how many people does it take to get a dressage horse down centerline?

And the answer is....

Before the event can take place, organizers must arrange to have:

- Show officials - judge, technical delegate, emergency medical technician, show manager, show secretary, show veterinarian, show farrier, show photographer, show videographer
- Volunteers - lots of volunteers

At the event, it requires

- Scribes, warm-up ring steward(s), entry gate steward(s), barn manager, scorers, runners, parking lot attendant(s), bit checker(s)

To make the event take place, there must be:

- Chapter web masters, chapter newsletter editors and show committee members to publicize and organize it

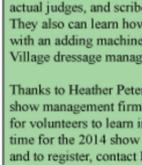
And who are these volunteers? They are just plain folks like you and me. Young riders. Junior riders. Parents and other family of competitors. Competitors. Former competitors. Competitors on a break. Friends of competitors. People who just want to be around horses. People who just want a chance to learn something new.

Learn to Scribe and Score
RMDs is giving members the opportunity to learn how to scribe for judges and score for horse shows in a free clinic on Sunday, April 27, at the Dressage for the Cure Warmup at Colorado Horse Park in Parker, CO. Participants can learn to scribe with actual judges, and scribe live dressage. They also can learn how to score tests both with an adding machine and with Fox Village dressage management software.
Thanks to Heather Petersen and 2WhiteFeet show management firm for this opportunity for volunteers to learn in-demand skills in time for the 2014 show season. For details and to register, contact Education Chair Jon Haugen at dfcianceport@com or Heather at slush@drwgw.net and 719-683-8435.

Some are people who work full time. Some are retired. Some are in-between jobs. Some work running their homes. Some are amateur riders. Some are professional trainers and coaches. Some come from far away. Some live close to the event. And, we all are so thankful for those who volunteer their time so that events can happen.
Here I focused on horse shows. But each and every time an event shows up in the calendar, many volunteers are behind it to assure it takes place.

So, when you see an opportunity to volunteer, consider it. Even if you may not have the experience or expertise, you are welcome to come help out. To volunteer, contact the event coordinator, me (scholarship@rmds.org) or RMDs Central Office at 720-890-7825 rmds@rmds.org. Visit the RMDs web site and click on calendar to view upcoming events at www.rmds.org.

Secrets From the Trainers' Vault



This is the second in a new column introduced in the March Centaur by Simone Windeler, chair, Professionals & Trainers Committee. Each month she invites area professionals to answer questions submitted by members. Trainers/instructors who would like to participate also can contact her with your area of expertise. Contact her at simonedressage@gmail.com.

Q. I want to show First Level this year. What do my horse and I need to be able to do to be successful at this level?

I am looking for your ideas not only on minimum requirements for this level, but also what you consider to be really good abilities to have to be successful. For example, be able to sit the trot even though it is not required or be able to ride a 10-meter circle in canter, etc.

Answer #1 from USEF 'S' Judge Janet (Dolly) Hannon, Golden, CO.

To be prepared to show First Level this season, you must first look over the tests to read the change in the purpose (on the front of the test) from Training Level and familiarize yourself with the test movements and the directive ideas (in the middle of the page inside the score sheet) on the test. The tests, themselves, have a lot of information in them to help riders better understand the judge's evaluation process and expectations.

The big change from Training Level are the additions of leg yield, 10-meter circles in trot, 15-meter circles in canter and lengthening of the trot and canter. There also is the introduction of a small amount of counter canter in the canter loop in First Level Test 3. The horse has to start to push from behind, and develop more impulsion and better balance, bend, thoroughness, straightness and suppleness.

You should feel comfortable with not only the requirements of First Level Test 3, which is fairly hard in comparison to Training Level Test 3 and be schooling at least some Second Level movements. Many people are prepared for the first test of the next level, but are not quite ready for the hardest test of the level. If you want to be competitive in the open shows, schooling some higher-level movements will help your horse to be more on the aids and better balanced in and through increased suppleness that is developed through shoulder in and other Second Level movements.

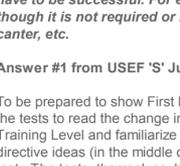
You also should be developing your seat and balance so that you can sit the trot in a balanced way to help with the transitions and some of the movements, like possibly the leg yield and the turns on and off the centerline and in and out of the halts. Most horses move better when the rider posts, unless the rider has a very elastic and better seat, so plan ahead for where it helps for you to sit or not.

You want to present a correct and pleasant picture, with your horse looking eager to cover ground, well focused and understanding the rider's aids. You, as a rider, want to look balanced and able to keep the horse's attention, and show correct bend and aiding of the movements and transitions. Transitions should look prepared and balanced so they are fluid and more precise than at Training Level.

To prepare your horse, you want to practice riding from medium walk, free walk to medium walk so your horse is comfortable with the lengthening and shortening of the reins without tension or loss of rhythm or energy. Practice your halts, as they are now ridden out of the trot with no walk steps in or out.

Your leg yields should be fairly even, with correct alignment and balance, and look fluid and willing. The halts are your "calling card" and are the last impression judges have before they fill out the collective marks at the bottom of the test. If your horse does not yet have a developed lengthening, be sure to practice them with a correct tempo (speed) and not chase the horse to try to get more than he can manage. The transitions in and out of short periods of lengthening help the horse to become more balanced and longitudinally connected, and will help to develop the lengthenings with time and patience. Your horse should not be anxious about the counter canter on the loop, but look confident in your aids and stay balanced.

First Level is a lot of fun if you and your horse are prepared for the increased expectations of the level. Keep working on correct basics and your seat, and you will be pleased with the result.



Born in Westport, Conn. and graduated from Colorado State University with a B.S. in Horticulture, minor in Animal science, plus a Riding Instructor's teaching certificate from CSU.
Dolly has trained and taught dressage and combined training at Table Mountain Ranch in Golden, CO for over 30 years. She currently trains at Legacy Valley Farm in Arvada, CO. Dolly is a USDF Certified Instructor, USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold medalist, a USEF 'S' Dressage judge with additional training in judging equitation, young horse, and freestyle classes. She is the current chairperson of the USDF freestyle committee, former member of the USDF judges committee, and helped develop and write the USDF continuing education program for 'L' graduates and judges that are held regionally.
Dolly has competed extensively through Grand Prix winning many awards from both USDF and RMDs. She is currently competing and riding the 2013 USEF riders tests on Finesse CB.
Contact her at dollyhannon@msn.com.

Answer #2 from KC Parkins-Kyle, 'L' judge and trainer at Hidden Ridge Farm, Franktown.

First of all, being "successful" is a relative term, and varies amongst every rider and individual. But, that's a whole different discussion. At the beginnings of First Level (Test 1 and 2), I want to see that the horse and rider have:

- Not lost anything that should be achieved in Training Level
- And are headed in the right direction to achieve the requirements of First Level

At the end of First Level (Test 3), I am looking for a horse and rider who may be ready for Second Level. I want to see that the added movements for this level are understood correctly by the rider and horse, and can be performed with a "degree of competency."

What does that mean? I don't want to see the rider pull the horse's head off center, collapse in the body or careen to the side, in a rush to get from point A to point B in the leg-yield. The leg-yield should be exactly that: a yielding of the horse from the rider's leg. I want to see that the circles are maintained by a coordinated effort of the outside aids, not by pulling the inside of the horse around. I want to see that the rider has a plan and prepares for the transitions between movements. When you look at the requirements for First Level, it is really about the ability of the rider to apply the aids laterally, and forward and back, and the horse's ability to comply with the requests. Whether the rider sits or rises to the trot is irrelevant to me, unless I see that their decision inhibited the horse's ability to comply with the request.

It's important to realize that this is not easy, especially in the atmosphere of a show, compared to your home base. There is why it is truly a test of your relationship with your horse. There is no failure here, only an opportunity to determine what your homework will be when you get home and how to better approach your next horse show.

KC Parkins-Kyle has been teaching and training dressage since 1986. She is judged at her home farm in Franktown, CO. She is a graduate of the 'L' judges program and a USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold medalist. She has been involved with juniors, adult amateurs, gaited horses, pleasure riders as well as competitive riders. Contact her at 303-478-3637.