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Continuing Ed EVERYONE WELCOME!

'L' Program Continuing Education Clinic
With Bill Solyntjes "S"

Feb. 1
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Larimer County Fairgrounds
Check RMDS website for details.

TD/Show Management Clinic
Feb. 15 at Douglas County Fairgrounds.

Contact [Jon Haugen](#) and/or visit the [RMDS website](#) under Forms.

Secrets from the Trainer's 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 Trainer's Vault column in the next Centaur.

Every month we will pick one or more question(s) and ask several trainers for their best tip on how to handle your particular challenge. We will print the answers in the Centaur or e-Centaur along with the trainer's information so you can contact them directly if you wish to delve deeper.

Don't be shy now - send us your questions. We know you have plenty.

RMDS Paid Positions

Apply by Feb. 28

Every two years, RMDS opens the bid process for paid positions. The following positions are available for members and nonmembers to submit bids and/or renew their bids. Details may be found on the [RMDS website](#).

- Centaur Production, effective with May 2014 issue.
- E-Centaur Production, effective with June 2014 issue.
- 2015/2016 Omnibus Production - new tests in 2015.
- Championship Show Management.

These are paid RMDS positions for qualified persons. Contracts will be awarded to qualified individuals at the March Board meeting.

For guidelines, contact the RMDS Central Office at 720.890.7825, rmds@rmds.org. Bids must be received by Feb. 28. Contract applicants should plan to attend the March 13 Board meeting to answer any questions about their bid. Check RMDS website calendar for location.

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/locations of 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.

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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](#)

Featured Article

What action, if any, do you want your members to take? Add a "Find out more" link to additional information that you may have hosted on your website.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here we are in 2014, the Chinese Year of the horse. This gives us a chance to move forward as a society of horse enthusiasts. The RMDS Region 5 Championships this year will be built around this theme. Ideas and ways to celebrate are needed from all the members as we strive to put on our best season yet.

A few thoughts . . . The sixth animal in the Chinese Zodiac is the horse. Power, beauty and freedom symbolize the horse in the Chinese culture. In Feng Shui, a horse is used to symbolize movement and power. The horse also played an important role in the mythology of early China. It was closely associated with the dragon, with both thought capable of flight and of carrying their riders to the "home of the immortals." The ability to fly has been associated with survival throughout all of Chinese history.

The snow is still flying and we work around the weather to ride and care for our equine partners. Some of you have goals to show for the first time and others to move up to the next level. Then there are those who choose to just train at home, satisfied with improving the connection between rider and horse. We are all trainers in the art of dressage and we need to be satisfied with individual success.

In 2014 we have a new Professionals Committee and chair, Simone Windeler, whose goal is to gather all trainers and instructors and focus on new ways for RMDS to grow. We also welcome Frances Carbonnel as the new liaison for the Western dressage movement. Frances will help us to understand this new group and welcome them.

Western dressage is its own entity and therefore not part of USDF. However as another equine organization, we welcome them in their venture to offer another way to compete.

All the other RMDS committees will continue to grow and help their specific members, as well. Young Rider Chair Julie Haugen has some plans to move forward with camp and the Team Competition. Adult Amateur Chair Jennifer Glass also still is working towards a clinic sometime this year.

Education Chair Jon Haugen is preparing for the "L" Continuing Education program in February, as well as the Show Management and TD seminar. He is helping to coordinate the USDF Instructors Training and Testing program this year. In 2015, we are looking at hosting the USDF Freestyle Clinic for judges in January. Thanks to Holly Hannon and Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez for making this seminar a reality.

We have a big year ahead with shows, clinics, seminars and lots of education. Mark your calendars as you will need to plan ahead to be able to fit in all the opportunities. We still are in search of even more educational events. So, if you dream about it, let us know and see where we can go. RMDS is for the membership; let's make it work as a team.

Aloha, Gwen Ka'awaloa

There is no secret so close as that between a rider and his horse. - Robert Smith Surtees

VICE PRESIDENT MESSAGE

I love winter! It is the time for heavy schooling, clinics and getting that homework done for next show season. In addition, we all need a little time in Florida or California to inspire our winter training! It is a time to dream big.

In keeping with that ideal, RMDS has started a Professional's Committee, chaired by Simone Windeler. I encourage all trainers to find out about how to contribute to this effort. Our president, Gwen Ka'awaloa pushed hard for this to become a reality. It is a committee of trainers who meet, bring in clinicians and interface with the USDF and the USEF to create better learning opportunities for our local dressage trainers. It will be fun to meet other trainers and encourage each other.

One of the main benefits to RMDS is the ability to have a list of trainers, by location, and specialty. The idea is to support Adult Amateurs by giving them better information on trainers and clinic opportunities. This list will be informative and we hope to be able to encourage all trainers to become certified and to participate in the effort so they can grow their businesses.

By supporting trainers, RMDS hopes to grow dressage even more in our community. I have already gotten a call from a local trainer who wants to bring in an Olympic trainer from Europe. I have attended two clinics in the last two weeks.

We are looking forward to a great spring! I always encourage a spirit of inclusiveness in dressage. It is for all horse lovers! Please let me know any of your ideas or desires for your dressage goals. I am here to support your dreams..

Best Regards, Aline Brandau, JD

RMDS Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to three RMDS members who have won 2014 scholarships to advance their dressage education and/or competitive skills. The winners were recognized based on their financial need and volunteerism. Each receives a \$500 grant. The awards were announced in January by Scholarship Committee Chair MaryJo Hoepner.

- **Leg Up Scholarship** to **Jorden Hobbs** of Longmont, for riders regardless of age, who are training at Intro, Training or First Level. Jorden's funding will enable her to audit USDF instructor and other clinics, and to have lessons with Sarah Martin of Blanca, CO.
- **Solid Seat Scholarship** to **Arlene Rhodes** of Grand Junction, for riders who qualify as USEF Adult Amateurs with a current USEF AA card on file with the RMDS Central Office. This scholarship is available to riders over the age of 21 at any level. Arlene plans to attend a clinic with Sarah Martin and to attend two out-of-town shows.
- **Opening Doors Scholarship** to **Joan Clay** of Fort Collins, for riders/instructors of any age who are considered professionals according to the USEF rules. This scholarship is available to professionals, whether they compete or not, to help support their continuing education and/or competitive goals. Joan requested funding to attend three USDF instructor workshops with the goal of certification.

For the second year, there were no applicants or grants awarded for the Junior/Young Rider Scholarship awarded to a rider under the age of 21 of any level.

Applicants must have completed a minimum of eight hours of volunteering at RMDS events in the year prior to the scholarship year for which they are applying for a scholarship. Hours for this year's applicants ranged from eight hours to a high of 42. They must complete an additional eight hours of volunteering at RMDS events during the year in which they were awarded the scholarship. Details on the Scholarship Program are on the RMDS website at <http://rmds.org/Organization/Scholarship>. Applications will be accepted in 2014 through Nov. 30.

Israeli Clinician Sees Body Alignment As Key to Horse/Rider Balance, Rhythm

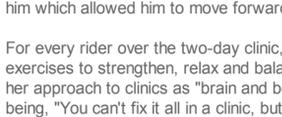
Editor's Note: RMDS member Claudia Nissley shares her observations of a clinic by Susanne von Dietze aimed at improving horse and rider balance.

By Claudia Nissley

TA-KA TA-KA TA - KA.

This is just one of the vocalizations Susanne von Dietze uses to help a rider feel the rhythm of her horse. Her clinics focus on improving balance and rhythm between rider and horse. For every rider that has been injured, had chronic back problems, one leg different from the other, poor posture and other body maladies, von Dietze's studies and work are designed to help. For every rider that has heard, lesson after lesson, the same direction of "shoulders back" or "right leg back" or "left hand more forward" and so on, von Dietze's suggestions can lead to better balance and overall body symmetry.

Von Dietze is an infrequent visitor to the U.S. as her home is in Israel. However, she returns to the U.S. this year Feb. 15 - 16 as a lecturer at the Global Dressage Forum in West Palm Beach, Fla. (www.GlobalDressageForum.com). She also stays busy with her own equine practice and training for competition, teaching clinics in Japan, Europe, U.S. and Israel, writing books, plus tending to her husband and three sons. I met and attended her clinic at StarWest, a professional training center near Springfield, Ill. StarWest is owned and managed by Kate Fleming-Kuhn and Martin Kuhn (www.starwestonline.net).



From left are Martin Kuhn, Kate Fleming-Kuhn and Israeli clinician Susanne von Dietze.

What makes von Dietze unique is her keen and quick ability to observe a rider's warm-up and identify the rider's particular asymmetry in body position. While not necessarily revealing her observations in the beginning of the session, she requested riders to perform specific exercises in all three gaits. Some

riders were not aware of their specific imbalance, but became so during the exercises. For example, if tension in a rider's back was preventing her from achieving balance in a sitting trot, she would have the rider take a jump position then round and hollow their back to release the tension. For chronic rounding of the shoulders forward, she had the rider move one shoulder forward, then backward, up and down then repeating on the opposite side. While the exercises were brief in duration, observers could see improvement in body position that ultimately helped the rider be more in sync with the horse's movement.

Pointing Out the Problem

The brilliance in her clinic lies in not drilling a movement over and over to improve it, but in identifying what action or inaction of the rider's body is making the movement fall short in the first place. Her exercises made every rider more aware of their imbalances and know how to correct them. For one rider, she noticed the horse placing his left front leg in shorter lengths than his right front causing him to undercut his left front when cantering on a circle. The rider's left leg strength and position was slightly unevenly and different than the right causing the horse to respond ungracefully. Von Dietze gave the rider several exercises to relax the tension in her left leg. By the end of the session, the horse's movement noticeably changed and became more balanced. The left front leg of the horse reached forward further and not so much underneath him which allowed him to move forward on the circle in balance.

For every rider over the two-day clinic, she offered multiple exercises to strengthen, relax and balance the body. She termed her approach to clinics as "brain and body storming." The reason being, "You can't fix it all in a clinic, but you gain enough information to allow you to work on it." While she gave strong and corrective comments, she also brought humor to lighten the lesson. Often the exercises would elicit giggles from riders and auditors, alike. First attempts may have seemed silly but, as riders gained confidence in execution, improvements became obvious. Laughter also can lessen the tension and relax the muscles which often was the goal of the exercise. Von Dietze emphasized "elasticity equals positive tension" - a desirable state of body and mind for both rider and horse.

If a trip to Florida this month isn't in the cards, her books are available at amazon.com. They include *Balance in Movement: How to Achieve the Perfect Seat*, 2005 Trafalgar Square Publishing, North Pomfret, Vt., and *Rider & Horse Back to Back: Establishing a Mobile Stable Core in the Saddle*, 2011 Trafalgar Square Publishing, North Pomfret, Vt. Her DVD is *Balance in Movement* available www.thehorsestudio.com.

Claudia Nissley of Longmont, CO, is a member of the Boulder Valley Chapter. She owns a Hanoverian mare, Cinnamon. She is president of Nissley Environmental Consultants specializing in environmental and cultural property law and cultural resources matters.

NEW! Professionals Liaison on RMDS Board

Trainers, judges, show management etc has really never had a specific voice on the board. Now you do, with the Professionals Liaison, Simone Windeler.

One of the things we would like to help you with is get your name out there more - when people move to our area or even move within the area they often don't even know where all our great trainers are hiding! [Read more...](#)

News from USDF

Petersen Re-Elected Region 5 Director

Elections for the Region 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 directors were held at the Board of Governors General Assembly, at the 2013 Adequan/USDF Annual Convention in Lexington, KY. All incumbent directors, including Region 5's Heather Petersen, retained their positions. For a full listing of Executive Board Members and their contact information, visit the website.

Simard Named to Instructor/Trainer Faculty

Katherine Simard of Littleton, CO, was appointed a new faculty member for the USDF Instructor/Trainer Program at Training-First Level. She is a USDF Certified Instructor through Fourth Level and a USDF Bronze and Silver medalist, as well as a USDF "L" graduate with distinction.

The Instructor/Trainer Program workshops are an opportunity to learn about classical theories of riding, training, teaching and lunging and are open to anyone. Click on the USDF website at www.usdf.org or contact the USDF office at instructorcertification@usdf.org for details.

Ravel Jewelry Funds Youth Education Grants

USDF has a new grant program, Ravel Education Grants, supported through proceeds generated by sales of licensed jewelry designs of Ravel by Jane Heart Jewelry.

Developed by the USDF Youth Programs Committee in partnership with Akiko Yamazaki, Ravel's owner, as part of the current USDF Shining Star Award program, this new grant is intended to recognize the most outstanding displays of sportsmanship among USDF youth. It was based on the USDF Youth Programs Committee definition of good sportsmanship, qualities Ravel displayed throughout his career: Courage, respect, perseverance and responsibility.

All USDF Shining Star Award recipients will be eligible for these grants, which will be used to cover expenses associated with attending an educational dressage event of their choice. Up to four USDF Ravel Education Grants will be awarded each year. Click on youth@usdf.org or call 859.971.2277 for details.