

**REMEMBER TO CLICK FOR LINKS!****FOOTHILLS CHAPTER**
SPRING INTO SUMMER
JUNE 10**JR/YR INTENSIVE**
JULY 5-7**MELISSA CRESWICK**
CLINIC
JULY 2**HIGH PLAINS AA CLINIC**
JUNE 23**USDF REG 5 ADULT/YOUTH**
TEAM COMPETITION
JULY 8**RMDS SCRIBING CLINIC**
AUGUST 26, 2018**USDF TEAM COMPETITION!**

July 8, 2018 at Table Mountain ranch.

Get your team together and come have some fun!

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE****Is summer really here?**

April and May have had some tricky weather days. From 70 and sunny to 30 and snowing with everything else mixed in. Riding and grooming/blanketing have been challenging at best. For those of us with our own barns we have dealt with snow, mud, dry grass as a fire hazard and many other challenges. Somehow we always get through so our horses are well fed and comfortable.

With shows and clinics well underway our membership has had many opportunities to visit different places with their horses. Hopefully some rides are with friends on a trail or hack outside in the sunshine. Some days just grooming and walking our horses out for a grazing session is enough to quiet our minds and bring peace to our day.

"The way to Heaven is on Horseback" author unknown
"To many the words love, hope and dreams are synonymous with horses" author unknown

I hope this brings some happy thoughts to all of you. My horse is my one part of my life that helps me through difficult days. Friends and family often do not have time to deal with the small stuff, but my horses always do.

Continue to enjoy your horses, friends and family as the summer days bring joy.

Aloha, Gwen Ka'awaloa**SPONSORSHIP CHALLENGE!**

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**Everything you've always wanted
to know about scribing
(but were afraid to ask)**

- Are you mystified by the marks on your test sheet?
- Have you always wanted the chance to sit by a judge and hear their thoughts?
- Have you always wanted to volunteer but weren't sure you could be a good scribe?
- Do you love this sport and have a drive to give back to your dressage community?

This is your chance!

Sunday, August 26, 2018, 8am
Click [HERE](#) for flyer

To be held in conjunction with the Foothills Chapter Last Chance
RMDS recognized show at Table Mountain Ranch, 19000 W. 58th Ave., Golden, CO

Clinic with Bill McMullin

by Dorothy Kapaun

Editor's Note: Watch for a second report on this great clinic from Judi Devore in the July Centaur.



I had the fortune of participating in a clinic with Bill McMullin on April 21 and 22. Anclaire Spaulding worked through the **National Education Initiative Grant** program and received financial assistance which reduced the cost to participate in this clinic. I was excited to work with Bill as he has so much knowledge and experience. I was anticipating that we would work on trot lengthenings and riding equally off my left and right leg. The winter had been mild and my trainer had made a lot of progress with my horse, Toby, and me acquiring 2nd level skills. I was excited to show off all our new moves and improvement in gaits!

Day 1 Toby did what horses so often do, he humbled me. A cold and wet day, a new indoor with three doors with windows and an audience had Toby quite on edge. Bill McMullin was very patient with Toby's tension and my frustration. Several times we had Toby beginning to relax only to have movement out the window or in the audience put Toby back in defense mode. Bill not only reminded me to be patient, but kept a sense of humor. We ended the ride with Toby finally focused on me and able to remain relaxed even when there was movement.

Day 2 Toby came in very tense. We immediately went to the exercises Bill had us doing on Day 1. The theme for Day 2 was timing of the aides and releasing. Within a short period of time, I had a focused, relaxed horse!! I had signed up for the clinic expecting to work on lengthenings and lateral work, but instead developed the feel of a correct half halt, timing the half halt and the importance of the release! These are very valuable tools that will improve all aspects of my riding. I am looking forward to riding with Bill McMullin again in September!

**THE COLORADO HORSE PARK****Can You Match Your Horse's Workload?**

by Pat Van Buskirk



How many times have you been told by your trainer, coach or even a friend that you're "unbalanced"? And what does that even mean – *unbalanced*? The dictionary defines **balance** as *an even distribution of weight enabling someone or something to remain upright and steady or a condition in which different elements are equal or in the correct proportions*. Does that describe your riding? It certainly does not describe mine.

What created our lack of balance and what do we do about it? After watching Joan Clay at the High Plains Youth Dressage Clinic in March, I was eager to talk to her about how she has achieved the strength, flexibility and coordination she

demonstrated and taught to our young riders. How does she do it?

"I was an athlete in school, including college," she told me. "I participated in basketball and track in junior and high school and was a sprinter in college, running for Purdue University, which is a Big 10 school. Even after college and grad school, I would work out, go to the gym and run. Then in 2007, I was involved in a really bad accident with a horse, not riding, but hand walking. The horse knocked me down, crushing my pelvis, and probably got me to the point where I am today.

"The injury was not to the joint, but to the iliac crest. They pinned me back together, cutting a lot of tissue in the process, which resulted in considerable scar tissue. Even with physical therapy, this scar tissue caused a twist in my torso (over a long period of time) – and unevenness in my pelvis which caused my chest to turn to the left."

Joan's post-surgical physical therapy allowed her to go from just being able to walk safely to finally getting back on her horses. She felt that everything was going well until she attended the **USDF Instructor Certification Program**. "The faculty said I was imbalanced in my riding and the participants told me I even stood that way. They suggested I attend a Pilates program as a way to correct the problem. I began to work with a physical therapist and a private Pilates instructor. They tested my agility, strength, flexibility and designed workout programs based on what I was struggling with. We worked on my full fitness for a couple of years, re-evaluating along the way.

"I didn't realize how badly I felt until I felt better," Joan continued. "I realized I could sit for longer without getting stiff or sore. My attitude changed – I was a little less fussy. Even today, we're still tweaking things and I feel like I can't stop."



Joan is a USDF Certified Instructor/Trainer (pictured here with Raissa Chunks) as well as a USDF Bronze and Silver Medalist. She has won numerous USDF and RMDS Championships and year-end awards. She is an RMDS Technical Delegate and the USDF Region 5 FEI Junior/Young Rider Coordinator, plus volunteers as the Chef d'Equipe for Region 5's dressage teams at the North American Youth Championships (NAYC, formerly known as NAJYRC).

Where on earth does she find the time for all her physical training and workouts?

"You decide it's what you want to do and you will make the time," she explained. "You don't necessarily need an hour. It could be ten minutes here and there. I have one student who works full time, has two children, one a newborn baby, a husband and a horse. She needed to work on her hip tightness and core, so I told her to look up instructions from physical therapists on **YouTube**. She has made an improvement, which makes her riding a lot more effective.

"It's a matter of focus. You can't say one size fits all. Another lady and her horse were both out of shape. I was teaching her arena geometry with the goal of putting together a ride-a-test but she could barely get through a lesson. I told her to just go down the road, get him and you out; walk and trot.

"Another student did the online rider fitness program. Sometimes if you pay for something, you feel you better darn well get your money's worth, so you keep going. It depends on the person and how they motivate themselves. It sounds stupid, but do little things like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, going for long, purposeful walks, biking, marching with your dogs, or hiking around the countryside. You don't need fancy equipment. My cousin does workouts during commercial breaks while watching TV.

"When you're in better shape, your riding improves so much. For me, my biggest pitfalls were old injuries and old, ingrained movement patterns. As you go through the process, no matter how hard you're working, other things start to hurt. Your body has been compensating and now some other thing has to get reprogrammed and re-strengthened. It's like when you have work done on your horse – you inject the hocks and now he looks lame in front. You find other things to address. It feels like at times I'll never be okay and now we have to address this part as we stress our body differently. Don't give up! It's just like training the horse – keep plugging away!"

Joan says she's now riding better than she has her entire life. "Everyone has some imbalance from accidents, surgeries, or poor body habits. With my new knowledge, plus riding more and more horses, combined with my body awareness and Pilates study, I am a better rider, and a better teacher, because I understand the kinesiology."

I asked Joan what she thought was the most important physical improvement we could do to help both our body and our horse's body.

"Whatever you can do to improve your general balance and symmetry. This often involves basic strength of the general core, not only the abs, but the lower back and upper back – the whole torso. Core balance, strength and flexibility, most commonly in the hips, is usually a problem, as is basic cardio/fitness. Can you ride for 45 minutes with a warm-up, work phase and cool down in walk/trot/canter? If your trainer pushes you harder, are you able to match your horse's workload and not die? If you get out of breath and don't have to stop and take a break when your heart rate is up, you can achieve a higher level of riding. You have to be fit enough to match your horse's workload, especially in the upper levels with more collection and extension, where there is lots more going on."

Talking to Joan really inspired me and I've embarked on a walking program. Merlin and I take a very purposeful walk around the pastures and through the trees he's not real fond of. In just a few days, I already feel better, sleep I got from my instructor remarked that I'm gaining more stamina. The take-home messages I got from Joan are:

1. Make a commitment to an exercise program. It's not necessary to commit an hour a day or even every day in the week. Make a schedule and stick to it.
2. If you have an injury or a severe imbalance, get professional help. Consider Pilates, yoga or physical therapy.
3. Be patient with yourself – it took a long time to create these imbalances and we're not going to fix them in a day.
4. Don't give up!

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