

# THE CENTAUR

## Enter At "A": A Novice Rider Visits the Spanish Riding School in Vienna

by Grace Maddox

Recently, I have been thinking about the relationship between humans and horses in a historical context. Without the domestication of the horse, Western civilization would have developed much differently. Can you imagine history without equine partners to plow fields, pull carts or, of course, to gallop bravely into war after bloody war? I was in this introspective mood in late December when I flew to Austria to be with friends and family for the holidays. While I was there, this idea was reinforced by statues in public squares, art exhibitions and also through mainstream culture.

I was still was still in this frame of mind when I made my usual pilgrimage to the Spanische Hofreitschule, or Spanish Imperial Riding School, in Vienna. This is the home of the Lipizzaner stallions that perform airs both above and on the ground. This time, I spent several hours at the school and saw not only the morning exercises, but also took a tour of the Winter and Summer Riding Schools and the recently renovated Stallburg (the imperial horse barn, of course). I would like to tell you about some of the history of this famous place and fill you in on what's going on now.

The Spanish Riding School (SRS) in Vienna, Austria is the oldest continuously running riding academy in the world. The school, housed within the immense Hofburg (Imperial Palace) in the center of Vienna, has been teaching the art and science of classical horse training and equitation since 1572. The SRS schools horses and riders according to principles first developed by Xenophon, an ancient Greek horse master, based on his treatise *On Horsemanship* (circa 350 B.C.). Horsemen and cavalry captains throughout

Europe used and refined Xenophon's principles to develop task-specific breeds and train them in a non-abusive manner. The Spanish Riding School, in the opinion of many, represents the finest distillation and use of this time-tested training philosophy.

The School is located in the oldest section of the Hofburg, which was first mentioned as the seat of government in 1279. The royal families (first the Babenbergs, then, since 1415, the Hapsburgs) who lived in the palace developed the habit of never living in the same residences (groups of rooms) as those of the previous ruler. Thus, many buildings, rooms and gardens have been added, renovated or replaced over the centuries. The Hofburg is now an imposing amalgam of buildings from every century and architectural style. The grounds are immense, covering about 10% of the inner city of Vienna. In addition to the winter and summer riding schools, the Hofburg currently houses within its thousands of rooms the offices of the Austrian president, the chancellery, three chapels, two churches, the national library, a huge ballroom, the treasury, the national theater, enough art to fill two national museums (now located across the street from the Hofburg), and many residences.

The world-famous Winterreitschultrakt (Winter Riding School) sits between Michaelerplatz and Josefsplatz in the middle of the Hofburg complex. The building, commissioned by Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, was designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723), the greatest baroque architect in Austria. It was his son, Joseph Emanuel, however, who completed the work in 1735. Baroque architecture, espe-

*Cont. on pg. 2*



*An historical depiction of the arena.*

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### **SHOWING THIS YEAR?**

### **SEND YOUR CARDS!**

**It is required that you send a copy of all membership cards with your entries - including your RMDS membership card!**

### **Attention Young Riders & YR Parents**

The Dressage Federation "Olympic Dream" program is accepting applications from Young Riders for the July 2008 trip to Germany. This is a 100% scholarship for a 10-day trip around Germany to top trainers Klaus Balkenhol, Ingrid Klimke, Hubertus Schmidt and Jean Bemelman's, followed by 3 days at the European Young Riders Championships. Contact the Dressage Foundation for an application at [john@dressagefoundation.org](mailto:john@dressagefoundation.org)

*Spanish Riding School* Cont. from pg. 1  
cially as built in Vienna, is lavish, full of symbolic meaning, and was used as a projection of political power. To this day, each and every time a rider enters this arena, he lifts his bicorn hat in salute to Emperor Charles. All gala performances and exercise sessions attended by audiences are held in the Winter Riding School arena.

By current standards, the winter riding arena is not a true dressage court (that is, 20 by 60 meters). It is 18 meters wide and 56 meters long, but what it lacks in area, it makes up for in elegance. The Winter Riding School was built to be a setting worthy of the noble Lipizzaners. Although it was mainly used to train military and riding horses, it was also used to put on royal games: carriage races, jousting (into metal rings), and even balls for as many as 7,000 people were held there.

The Summer Riding School is an outdoor arena that sits in a courtyard outside



of the Winter Riding School. Summer in Vienna can be quite hot, so the courtyard and arena are full of tall trees. During the warmest days, the stallions are exercised early in the morning in the shade. The riders perform their schooling patterns around and through the trees and each other. Since it is now winter here in Colorado, we are riding most of the time in a (usually) crowded indoor arena. Now imagine trying to navigate both six or eight other riders and the trees while still aiming for the perfect 20-meter circle? I think I could handle the other riders or the trees, but not both! I would love to see this, but visitors are not allowed to attend schooling sessions in the summer arena.

Every morning, the white stallions walk across the street from the Stallburg (literally barn-castle or barn-palace) to the school, the city traffic waiting patiently for them. When the horses and riders enter the Winter School, the rider salutes the portrait of the Emperor and then they get right to work. Each horse is ridden for about 30 minutes. By American standards, this is a bit short, but the intensity is high. Although the stallions work hard, there is no over-drilling. For example, while practicing the piaffe, a horse-and-rider pair worked with a second rider on the ground who held a whip. The whip was used to lightly tap the hind legs to keep the horse on task and in rhythm. On the more advanced horses, only the sound of the whip was used. In all cases, the group drilled for a minute or two, then the horse got a sugar cube, took a couple of spins around the arena, and then came back and drilled for a couple more minutes. After another sugar cube, the work on the piaffe was over for the day. An interesting note: the riders have a special treat pocket in the back flaps of their riding coats.

I love to watch the morning exercises, rather than attend an SRS performance for a number of reasons: 1) one sees a range of horses from young to old and this is like studying a live version of the training scale, 2) the riders offer a demonstration of kind but professional work, 3) when there is a "hiccup" in an exercise, it is interesting to see how each rider addresses the issue, and 4) the tickets for a performance are sky-high, especially with the current weak dollar. Another great thing about attending the exercise sessions is that you meet fellow horse lovers from many different places. Almost every visit, I wind up sitting next to someone who is excited as I am. We talk about what we see in the arena, about our own

horses and marvel at the display of beauty in front of us.

One thing I had not noticed on previous visits to the SRS: All riders, even the most senior of them, use the mirrors A LOT. Another thing that caught my attention was the fact that these horses are not perfect. When they spooked or misbehaved, the riders never changed position or expression—they just rode it through, calmly. There was never any sign of frustration, anger, or disappointment.

At the end of each of the four exercise sessions, the liveried grooms came in with coolers and halters, the horses got treats—and applause—again. Even the gentlemen that scoop the poop wear a special uniform. Then the riders were brought the next set of horses to exercise. I'm sure this must sound like heaven to trainers here in the USA.

*(To be continued next month....)*

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Scholarship .....	Grace Maddox	303-823-8881	grace.maddox@gmail.com

## CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Arkansas Valley .....	Brenda Haley	719-275-0118	shininghorse@copper.net
Boulder Valley.....	Claudia Barkmeier	303-417-1675	cbarkmeier@rwbaird.com
Colorado Springs.....	Simone Windeler	719-540-2000	wjsimone@msn.com
Foothills.....	Aimee Edwards	720-981-0996	aimeeedwards@msn.com
Grand Valley.....	Tiger Adams	970-523-7464	tiger@thehorseinsport.com
High Plains .....	Alex Curnutte	303-663-0358	curnuttes@msn.com
Northern Colorado.....	Laura Speer	970-378-7573	riversidestables_evans@yahoo.com
Penrose .....	Sharon Ghilarducci	719-462-5760	quailridgedrsg@hotmail.com
Tri State.....	Tammy Fagan	307-856-5451	tfagan@wyoming.com
Western Colorado.....	Judith Family	970-923-8832	dns@rof.net

## GOVERNING BODIES

RMDS is a USDF Group Member Organization.

RMDS members are automatically USDF Group Members.

United States Dressage Federation (USDF)  
4051 Iron Works Pkwy. Lexington, KY 40511  
859-971-2277

RMDS Central Office: rmds@rmds.org

2942 Park Lake Drive

Boulder, CO 80301

Phone: 720-890-7825 Online dues paying now available at: www.rmds.org

US Equestrian Federation (USEF)  
4047 Iron Works Pkwy. Lexington, KY 40511  
859-258-2472

USDF Region 5 Director

Theresa L. Hunt

huntery@mindspring.com

USDF YR Rep: Tammy Fitch, tfitch@lcfsystems.com

USDF Youth Coordinator: Julie Barringer-Richers, 720-341-5033 jbarringerrichers@comcast.net

Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI)

Ave. Mon Repos 24, PO Box 157

1000 Lausanne 5, Switzerland

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### RMDS Meeting Schedules RMDS Executive Board

All RMDS Executive Board meetings occur on the second Thursday of every odd-numbered month. Steering committee meetings are held on the second Monday of every even-numbered month. Board of Governor's meeting is held the second Saturday of Nov. Contact the Central Office for precise dates.

#### RMDS CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE

**Arkansas Valley** 3rd Thurs,  
Quality Inn, Canon City, 6 m.  
Brenda Haley 719-275-0118  
shininghorse@copper.net  
www.horsetop.net

**Boulder Valley**, 2nd Mon.,  
even months.  
Claudia Barkmeier 303-417-1675  
cbarkmeier@rwbaird.com

**Colorado Springs**, 3rd Tues,  
Location TBD.  
(Check CSDressage.org website).  
Simone Windeler 719-540-2000  
wjsimone@msn.com

**Foothills**, 1st Thurs. each month.  
Aimee Edwards, 720-981-0996  
aimeeedwards@msn.com

**Grand Valley**, 1st Tues. each month,  
location TBD.  
Tiger Adams, 970-523-7464  
tiger@thehorseinsport.com

**High Plains**, 3rd Tues. each month,  
7 pm, location TBD.  
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curnuttes@msn.com

**Northern Colo.**, 3rd Tues.  
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riversidestables\_evans@yahoo.com

**Penrose**, 1st Wed, each month,  
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### Calendar Info

Always contact the individual to check calendar information, as dates, times and places may change. SHOW COMPETITORS SHOULD DO A SCORE CHECK WITH THE CENTRAL OFFICE OR ON-LINE at [www.rmids.org](http://www.rmids.org).

Calendar Submissions: Submissions of events for the RMDS calendar need to be received no later than the 10th of the month prior to the date of the calendar listing. Please be sure to correctly spell all proper names (clinician/judge/location/contact) and include a phone number where you can be reached with questions. Send calendar items and events requiring RMDS sanction to Beth Geier, RMDS Central Office, 720-890-7825.

**THE CENTAUR NEWSLETTER**

The Centaur Newsletter is published monthly. To guarantee that ads and articles will run in a given month, they must be received by the 10th of the month prior to the month of publication, i.e. January 10 for the February edition. If not received by the deadline, articles and ads may be placed in the following issue, if not time sensitive.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For article suggestions, articles, columns, letters to the editor: Centaur editor Gavin Ehringer, PO Box 9, Colorado Springs, CO 80901 ph. 719-471-8764, e-mail gavin ehringer@earthlink.net.

**ADVERTISING**

RMDS office, Beth Geier, 2942 Park Lake Dr., Boulder, CO 80301 ph. 720-890-7825, e-mail rmds@rmds.org.

**DISPLAY ADVERTISING**

For information about corporate advertising and/or sponsorship, please contact Beth Geier (contact info above).

Artwork (ads) must be provided in electronic format only. Acceptable forms include: JPG, PDF, TIFF, EPS, Quark XPress (include all fonts and image files). IF UNSURE ABOUT AD FORMATTING, please contact editor (contact info above) for consultation and advice. Microsoft Word IS NOT an acceptable form of advertisement submission, except in the case of classified ads.

No substitutions may be accepted. If your ad is submitted in a file format other than those listed above, you will be contacted regarding an additional charge for reformatting or redesign. Hourly charge for redesign/reformat is \$35, in minimal units of one hour.

Please be sure to include a printed version of your ad with your payment so that the ad may be proof-read against the electronic version. Printed ad copy cannot be used as final art.

**CLASSIFIED ADS**

Classified ads may be submitted via e-mail to the RMDS office, address above. You may also type or hand-write a classified ad and mail it to RMDS headquarters, attn. Beth Geier, The Centaur. Please, limit your classified ad copy to 50 words or less. Exceeding 50 words will result in additional charges per line.

**PAYMENT AND AD COPY DELIVERY**

E-mail ads to: RMDS@rmds.org, and cc the electronic copy to: gavin ehringer@earthlink.net. Send payment and hard-copy to: RMDS Office, Beth Geier, 2942 Park Lake Dr., Boulder, CO 80301.

**AD RATES AND SIZE SPECIFICATIONS.**

Classified \$20 per item for sale (includes web listing). 50 words maximum. Classified w/photo \$32 per item for sale.

Full page .....	\$150.....	7.5" x 9.5"
Half page .....	\$90.....	7.5" x 4.75"
Outside back half.....	\$105.....	7.5" x 4.75"
1/4 page.....	\$55.....	3.75" x 4.25"
1/8 page (business card) .....	\$30.....	3.625" x 2.25"

Ask about discounts for multi-month or annual ad contracts.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Articles submitted for publication will not be returned. Please contact the editor before submitting unsolicited articles or photos. Articles represent the work and views of their authors, not necessarily the RMDS, its officers or employees.

**TRAINERS AND INSTRUCTORS - Get on the World Wide Web and Build New Business.**

If you wish to increase business, you can place your information on the RMDS website at very low cost. Send information to: Michael Petersen, 12395 Gull Lane, Peyton, CO 80831, ph. 719-683-8435 or e-mail: webmaster@rmds.org (note on the subject line "trainer info").

Please include your name, phone number(s), postal addresses, e-mail, locations where you train and other pertinent info, i.e. awards, certifications, lesson types, schooling horses, etc.

The website averages 200 hits per month on the trainer page and RMDS receives 25-30 e-mails per month requesting names of trainers/instructors in the RMDS region. Don't miss the opportunity to expand your client base and gain recognition.

Cost is \$50 annually. Mail check to: RMDS Central Office, 2942 Park Lake Drive, Boulder, CO 80301.

**ADVERTISE EVENTS ON THE RMDS WEBSITE**

Website ads on the RMDS site provide your event with high visibility. Your ad will run for one month from the date it first appears. Unless the webmaster is notified in advance (webmaster@rmds.org), the ad will be removed from the website once the date of the event advertised has passed.

Please limit content of the ads to 20 words. E-mail and website addresses will be displayed as links.

Because of the implicit connection to the RMDS, we reserve the rights to:

1. Refuse any ad.
2. Edit ad content.
3. Limit the number of ads displayed at any one time.

**IMPORTANT INFO ON RMDS MEMBERSHIP**

Awards are based on the information on your membership card. Be sure to double-check everything very carefully.

Duplicate cards are available for \$2.00. If emailed to you, they are free. Request a new one by emailing the Central Office at rmds@rmds.org

Proof of adult amateur status must be sent to the Central Office every year. Showing proof at shows is not enough for the year-end awards. Owner, rider, horse MUST be current members PRIOR to any ride for the score to count towards qualifying for RMDS Championships and for qualifying for any year-end award. If PONY is not listed under breed and you have a pony, send a copy of the measurement form or the permanent pony card to the Central Office. Remember, membership and its details are your responsibility. Be sure corrections are made.

**2008 OMNIBUS CORRECTIONS**

Contact information for Camille Griffin: camillegriffin@msn.com 719-488-2812



### RMDS Membership Form

RMDS is a USDF Group Member Organization. All members are automatically USDF Group Members.

Individual Membership - \$55.00 (prior & renewing members add \$5 after January 1)

Additional family members (same address) - \$40

Business Memberships- \$75.00 Centaur newsletter only - \$35.00 Life Membership - \$650.00

All business memberships include one individual membership.

Please include all information for person designated as individual member.

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→ Eligibility starts on the date the envelope containing this form and check is postmarked.

→ The name on this registration must be the same as that used on horse show entry forms.

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Breed (if known) \_\_\_\_\_ Registration No. (include copy of papers) \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Editor's Page

## Editor's Scoop - Education Forum Report with RMDS member Beverly Swanson...

On Saturday, February 9, Rocky Mountain Dressage Society presented a show manager and show secretary forum, led by two of our best – Heather Petersen, manager of Two White Feet, and Camille Griffin, an extremely experienced show secretary. The information presented by these professionals was invaluable to novice show managers and secretaries, and offered a wealth of information from which even those with show experience could gain.

Heather took us through all the ins and outs of managing a recognized show, from RMDS to USDF. The prepared handbook (available for \$30 from RMDS) is complete with forms, checklists, sample

contracts, suggestions, tips, websites – everything a show manager or secretary could need to produce a successful show and adhere to all the rules necessary for a recognized show. There are a number of required elements that must be met when you host a recognized show, and Heather's advice showed me where I had holes in my planning.

Camille shared her organization methods and scheduling tips gleaned from her years of experience, plus the pitfalls and trouble spots that one needs to watch for along the way. The benefits of learning from her experience will make any show secretary's job easier and in turn, make for happy

competitors that will want to return to your show year after year.

The seminar concluded with an in-depth demonstration of the Fox Village software, a great tool for managing shows and building your database of horses and riders. Anyone running a show of any size, especially with more than one arena and judge, would be well advised to use this software.

I strongly urge you to make time in your schedule to attend more of these events. Beyond the knowledge one acquires, it is a great way to network with others who are involved in bringing events, clinics and shows to our region.

by Beverly Swanson

## Region 5 Report

The 2007 Annual Convention in Orlando, FL, was attended by 852 individuals and the following is a summary of survey of participants: 75% of the 175 survey respondents rated the overall convention experience as good to excellent. The primary reason given for attending the convention continues to be education with business/networking coming in a close second. Overall the BOG experience was much improved over last year.

When asked, was the BOG organized and efficient, 80% responded yes. After the Kansas City BOG, when asked the same question, 45% responded yes. Overall the BOG meeting was rated good-excellent by 70% as compared to 38% in Kansas City. It was also noted that the pre convention communications and availability of reports was much appreciated both by delegates and council and committee attendees. The opportunity to review the budget and other information during the course of the convention was well received. The half-day format over two days seemed to go over well, as did the new streamlined committee and council reporting format. Steps taken, before and throughout the convention to communicate the budget, had a very positive impact. The most popular meetings were those with a roundtable or forum format. There continues to be a call for fewer closed meetings and more opportunity for open discussion. There was considerable request for scheduling priority to be given to the USEF forum, particularly when con-

troversial issues are being presented. Both the Salute Gala and the Awards Banquet received favorable reviews. The Salute Gala was rated as good to excellent by 84% surveyed. In general the Rider Awards being incorporated into the Salute Gala was a positive, as was moving the GMO awards to the BOG. The presentation of the Awards Banquet was deemed as a significant improvement over past years. As you can see, USDF really reviews those surveys and this is an excerpt from the report. Our next convention is in Denver and they will be implementing more ideas from the surveys. It will be a great opportunity for more people in our region to participate in the business meetings, educational forums, demo riders, trade fair, and to make it spe-

cial. The symposium will feature Kyra Kyrklund. I saw her presentation in Scottsdale several years ago and it was super!

Region 5 pledged \$7,500 to the Campaign for the USDF National Education Center in 2005. Our region has a plaque at the first tree on the left side of the walkway going into the Center. Hopefully, when many of you go to the 2010 World Equestrian Games you will see our tree as well as plaques and bricks from your GMO's. Utah Dressage Society contributed \$500 for our pledge in January and we have \$6,018 left. We will be doing more fundraising at regional championships. Thank you Utah Dressage Society!

Happy Riding!

Theresa Hunt

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# Editor's Page

## From the desk of RMDS President

It was great to get a response from readers of my last article. What wonderful people I heard from! I hope to meet many more over the next year.

This time of the year finds it slow with RMDS. In the back of our minds is the USDF Convention this fall. We will be looking for A LOT of volunteers and trade show participants.

The High Plains Chapter will be sponsoring a booth at the Rocky Mountain Horse Expo this month. Stop by and visit or let them know if you are interested in helping. It is great to see a chapter stepping up to promote dressage!

This time of the year is exciting for those of us that don't have an indoor arena. The weather is warming up, arenas are melting, and we are able to start riding again. It is encouraging to see that spring is in the air and show season is gearing up! Happy riding to all!

With forward thoughts,  
Laura Speer"

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## RMDS SPONSORED EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

All events are open to everyone to audit or participate unless otherwise stated. A great opportunity to continue your education.

2008

March 22-23  
April 12-13  
June 29-July 2  
August 23-24  
Sept 25

RMDS Winter Wake Up Show - Norris Penrose Stadium, Colorado Springs- USEF  
Terry Ciotti Gallo Freestyle Clinic - Autumn Hill - Longmont  
Junior Camp - KC Parkins-Kyle 303-841-9953  
USEF 'r' exam - Janet Foy & Lois Yukins - Parker  
Rocky Mountain Series-Sport Horse Breeding Finals & USDFBC Finals - Colorado  
Horse Park  
RMDS Open and Championship Show - Colorado Horse Park

2009

Sept. 24

Rocky Mountain Series-Sport Horse Breeding Finals & USDFBC Finals - Colorado  
Horse Park

Sept. 25-27

RMDS Open and Championship Show - Colorado Horse Park

For details on these and other RMDS events: contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435 slush@drwgw.net - Education Chairman  
OR read The Centaur OR go on the website - www.rmids.org OR contact the RMDS Central Office 720-890-7825 or  
rmids@rmids.com.

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### Dressage Judges Ratings & Levels Qualified to Judge

Status	Status	Levels	Status	Status	Levels
"L"	Learner*	Training-Second (RMDS only)	"S"	Senior	All Levels
"r"	Recorded	Training-Second	"I"	International	All Levels
"R"	Registered	Training-Fourth	"O"	Olympic	All Levels
* May only judge at RMDS shows.					
<b>FEI 'I'</b>		Emmy Detlof.....719-495-4188	Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez 'R' .303-642-7708	Julie Burt.....719-372-6270	
Janet Foy .....719-260-1566		Marti Foster *.....303-277-1132	Kristi Wysocki 'r' .....303-648-9877	Jill Cantor Lee .....970-686-9163	
<b>USEF 'S'</b>		Beth Geier .....303-673-9840	<b>TECHNICAL DELEGATES USEF</b>	RaeAnn Cook .....970-225-1408	
Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez ..303-642-7708		Ilyse Gold .....970-588-3859	Eva-Maria Adolphi (UT) -r	Janet "Dolly" Hannon.....303-279-4546	
Sandra Hotz .....303-817-2030		Jan Goodrich-Spear.....303-664-0152	801-254-3247	Sabine Kallas .....307-733-9497	
Anita Owen.....303-953-9904		Gwen Ka'awaloa *.....303-646-4363	Veronica Holt - R.....303-646-3829	Ellene Kloepper .....303-828-3879	
<b>USEF 'R'</b>		Linda Coates-Markle.....303-469-0279	Laurie Mactavish - R .....970-390-5160	Clayton Martin.....719-379-3716	
Janet "Dolly" Hannon.....303-919-4112		Sarah Martin * .....719-379-3716	Deeda Randle (WY) - R...307-638-6737	Sheri Mattei-Mead .....970-669-3733	
Kristi Wysocki .....303-648-9877		Kathleen Mayger*.....970-310-8729	Catherine Siemiet - r .....719-942-5311	Kathryn Meistrell .....303-646-9059	
<b>USEF 'r'</b>		Linda Ohlson-Gross * .....303-840-9818	Dianne Stanley - r (MT) - 406-652-4061	Bridget Milnes .....303-660-4986	
Loni Gaudet .....970-532-0852		KC Parkins-Kyle.....303-841-9953	Libby Stokes - r.....303-688-2795	Kristi Wysocki .....303-648-9877	
Amy Jablonovsky .....970-493-2833		Sally Robertson.....303-237-6915	<b>RMDS-(RMDS sanctioned</b>	<b>USDF CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS</b>	
Suzanne Zimmer .....303-478-8325		Kathy Simard* .....720-981-4448	<b>shows only)</b>	<b>TRAINING - 4th</b>	
<b>USDF 'L' Graduate</b> - Schooling &		Maria Wasson .....303-682-9594	Joan Clay .....970-490-1927	Simone Ahern-Harless.....719-749-9274	
RMDS only recognized shows		Regina Wendler .....970-879-7505	Rusty Cook .....505-877-1456	Nancy DeVaney .....303-681-2516	
Simone Ahern-Harless*...719-749-9274		Simone Windeler .....719-540-2000	Jeannette Hillery .....303-494-7718	Loma Fowler .....303-841-0417	
Francie Brashear.....303-840-7626		*Denotes graduating with distinction	Susan Selby .....970-227-9530	Sarah Martin.....719-379-3716	
Gigi Brittain* .....303-681-2516		<b>Dressage Sport Horse Breeding</b>	M. Elaine Thomas .....719-495-1510	Kathy Simard.....720-981-4448	
Julie Burt.....719-372-6270		<b>Judge</b>	<b>USDF CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS</b>	Melinda Weatherford.....970-484-5218	
Rae Ann Cook * .....970-225-1408		Janet Foy 'R' .....719-260-1566	<b>TRAINING - 2ND</b>		

# The Story of Chevas

by Dolly Hannon

I was a student at CSU MANY years ago when I went into an investment partnership (the key word being investment) with Lindy Weatherford on a three-year old Quarter Horse cross we named Chevas Regal. He was a small, 15-hand liver chestnut horse with a roached mane and a short tail with a sweet face and personality. I had always been a horse nut but had never had the chance, living in Westport, Conn., with my divorced mother, to own a horse of my own.

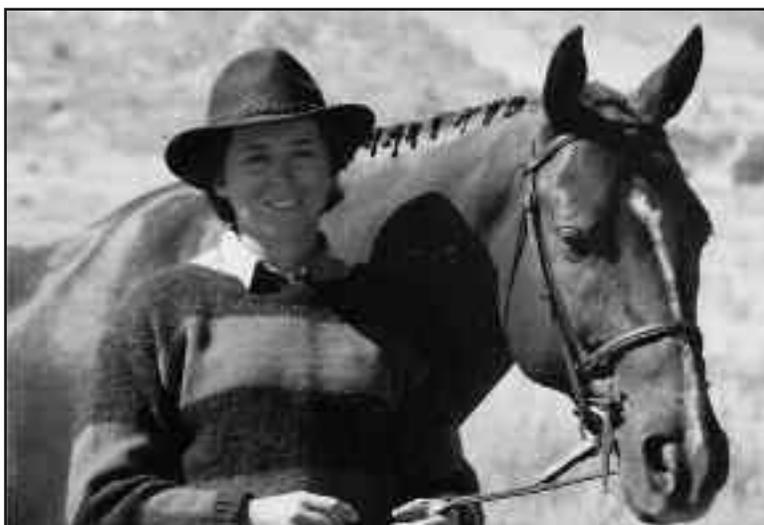
I had taken some riding classes at CSU in western riding for gym credit and got hooked again as an adult. Lindy was the instructor there and taught jumping and dressage lessons at the old riding facility. The western instructor at the time was Dee Dee Raines, a former Miss Rodeo America. I worked in the college greenhouses and used to bring Lindy anonymous flowers each week until I got brave enough to give them to her in person. I worked for Lindy as her working student for about six months after graduation until I got married and moved to Fountain, Colorado.

We bought Chevas for under \$500 and Lindy and I split his expenses until I got attached and decided to keep him. So I got my very first horse at the age of 22! He turned out to be under three years of age and very sweet, but very green. Lindy let me take him and my father gave me a tiny two-horse trailer as a graduation gift. My mother gave me my first dressage saddle. I paid Lindy back her half of the investment in payments over the next year and was very proud and happy when I gave her a \$25 or \$50 gift certificate as a thank you present. This shows how broke we were at the time and the power of inflation compared to today's prices.

I first boarded Chevas at Cici Lee's house in Fountain before moving to Denver, where I have stayed ever since. We started showing dressage in

the Springs area and Chevas, not being a big mover, was so obedient that he usually placed fairly well. I used to have to beat the bushes and beg to get enough people together to hold a clinic with Lindy at the old Latigo facility. We had jumpers and western riders in the clinics because at the time, there were not enough dressage riders to fill it. When we moved to Denver I started taking lessons from Sue Curry at Capricorn Farm.

Chevas suffered a very severe injury to a hind leg and it was in doubt that he would ever be sound again. He had almost severed the tendon on a bathtub



water trough. Much nursing and time brought him back, but he always had a wobble in that hind leg. We then started eventing, where he really blossomed. He was so reliable cross-country and put in such an accurate dressage test that we were always in the top three after our dressage test. If we did not maintain our placing it was my fault, never his. When jumping a really scary fence I would sometimes just grab mane and pray and he always jumped, in spite of me. My friend Heidi Sielaff, (now Ranney) and I evented together for many years, she with her big Appaloosa named BP's Candyman.

I was offered the position of assistant to Janet Brown (now Foy) and started working at Table Mountain Ranch in Golden where I am still working as a Dressage instructor. I had to choose to

either teach dressage or eventing because with our short show season, the weekends are the same for both disciplines. I decided that I had a better chance of making it to the top levels of dressage versus eventing. Chevas evented through Training level and was the Area Champion and Horse of the Year for the Mountain States Combined Training Association at least once. Not bad for an average sized appendix Quarter horse with modest gaits who had the biggest heart in the world.

I ended up selling him to a little girl named Susannah Moffitt up by Berthoud and he was eventually sold to

a client of Julie Barringer-Richers, with whom he ended up retiring. He lived at Autumn Hill for the past seven years and lived to the ripe old age of 32 or 33. I would visit him when I was at Autumn Hill and he looked amazing. He did not seem to remember me but enjoyed the carrots I would bring. He had retired with another horse we used to event with named "Potsie" and they had many years of happy retirement together. I can't thank Julie, his owners, the staff and owners of

Autumn Hill for honoring my first horse with such amazing care and love. He was given all the support and Legend he needed.

If it weren't for Chevas and Lindy, I probably would have never gotten into the horse business and found my passion for dressage. Chevas was an amazing guy who never gave up and taught me patience as a trainer, a job that he took on with no complaints and much forgiveness. For this I can never thank him or Lindy enough for getting me started on the journey. I have only loved one other horse as much. Rest in peace old friend.

Love,  
Dolly Hannon

*(Next month ... the rest of Chevas' story).*

# Chapter News

## High Plains Chapter

High Plains is working hard getting ready for the Rocky Mountain Horse Expo booth. The dates are March 14th, 9am – 7 pm, March 15th, 8am – 7pm and March 16th, 8am – 5pm. Go to [www.highplainsdressage.com](http://www.highplainsdressage.com) later in Feb for exact location of our booth. Stop by and say hello while you are there as you visit all the sites at the Expo. We hope to generate some new interest in the Art of Dressage and RMDS. As this year Denver is host to the USDF Convention and Symposium in December and the National Young Rider Championships in June at the Colorado Horse Park, we have a lot to tell people about.

Future events for High Plains are still in the works and of course any new ideas are very welcome. Our meetings have moved back to the Warhorse Inn in Parker as Jocks and Jill's has closed. Usual meeting time is the 3rd Tuesday of the month; 7 pm. check the website for updates on dates and location.

Our website is doing great and we are working on a Community page. This page will show local events, shows, clinics and other items. Listings do not have to have High Plain's recognition to be included. Another page in the works is a Local Services page that would include farriers, boarding stables, and specialty fields such as Acupuncture, massage and Chiropractic for your horse. Any one wishing to be included should contact Alex Curnutte [curnuttes@msn.com](mailto:curnuttes@msn.com). Our goal is to provide as much information to the local horse owner/rider as possible. Take a minute to check it out and see what a great site it is becoming.

Alex Curnutte  
[curnuttes@msn.com](mailto:curnuttes@msn.com)

## Boulder Valley Dressage

Will Spring ever arrive? It seems as though it has been a long, cold, dark and windy winter – and all through the long months Boulder Valley Dressage has been planning for warmer weather, and the upcoming show season. 2008 is going to be an extremely exciting year for the entire Rocky Mountain Dressage Society membership and Boulder Valley members are no exception.

Once again our annual awards banquet was held at the Spice of Life Events center on Saturday January 19. Thanks to the organizational talent of Sandy Rosewell, Grace Maddox and their trusty team of volunteers, the event was a great success. Over 40 riders, friends and family gathered to celebrate the year, their accomplishments and awards. Generous donations by Foxcreek provided us with plenty of door prizes and a wonderful time was had by all.

Our last meeting was held on Monday Feb. 11 at the home of Beth Geier. We had an amazing turn out and many new faces. Our calendar is full for 2008 – make sure you check out the new and improved the website at [www.bvdres-](http://www.bvdres-)

[sage.org](http://www.bvdres-sage.org) for all the latest news. Posted here you will find a list of upcoming events, names of all the officers, minutes from our latest meeting, links to other interesting websites and plenty of other useful information to make your riding life easier. A big thanks go out to our webmaster Lori Oakley for putting all of this together and keeping our site updated.

Our upcoming season begins with the our Spring Fling Ride-a-Test and Show. The Ride-a-Test will be held on Saturday, April 26, followed by our RMDS-recognized show on Sunday, April 27 – both events will be hosted by Singletree Farm. The long-awaited Adult Amateur Camp [Do we know who the clinician will be? If so, we should include this info.] will start on Thursday July 17th with a welcome reception and cocktail hour. Plan for a long weekend geared to all rider levels; a wonderful opportunity for the beginner learning to post the trot up to the Grand Prix rider looking to fine tune her skills. Check the website for opening dates and contact information.

Saturday, August 30 is the Boulder Valley Dressage Prelude to the Cure, our fall RMDS-recognized show, hosted



*Smith's goal is to help the rider gain a better understanding of the skills necessary to train each horse and to understand how the horse reacts and accepts the training.*

*"Helping the horse and rider communicate on the same level enables each pair to meet their goals. All riders with a genuine desire to learn are welcome, regardless of their level."*

## Smith is back!

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*Clinic registration and more info about Nancy Smith on our website*

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[info@8thheavenhorses.com](mailto:info@8thheavenhorses.com)



# Chapter News

by Meadow Creek Farms (MCF). Then there will be a two-day Sarah Martin clinic on August 31 and September 1 (Sunday and Monday), also at MCF. This week of dressage has its finale on September 6 and 7 with the 2008 Dressage Classic for the Cure to benefit Renée's Friends Fund – a two-day show with classes through Grand Prix level. Renée's Friends Fund is a successful Colorado non-profit that helps men and women with breast cancer cope with the effects of this disease on everyday life. You can find out more about this worthy organization at [www.reneesfriendsfund.com](http://www.reneesfriendsfund.com).

This year, Boulder Valley Dressage is the host chapter for the Rocky Moun-

tain Dressage Society annual banquet and Board of Governors' meeting scheduled for Saturday November 8. Denver is also the host city for the USDF annual convention. Both of these events are great opportunities to volunteer, learn and meet new people. Check the website and Centaur for details as they become available.

Kate Shepard  
Claudia Barkmeier  
Co-Presidents , Boulder Valley Dressage



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# 2008 Shows & Events

## MARCH 2008

- 1 Sun Prairie Schoolins Show** - Peyton  
Contact Cici Lee 719-495-3802
- 8 Triple Creek Dressage Schooling Show** - Longmont  
Contact Lynn McChesney, 303-444-4291
- 8-9 Reliability & Fear Management Clinic** w/ Roger Kyle 8th Heaven Farms, Castle Rock. Contact: Beverly Swanson 303-688-5727
- 15 Mariah Farms Schooling Show** Mariah Farms, Castle Rock. Contact: Lisa Lamke 303-660-2456, llamke@msn.com
- 15-16 Jan Eberling Clinic** - Loveland  
Contact Kathy Coulson 970-290-1895.
- 16 2008 Dressage Benefit Schooling Show Series**-Lazy J Bar S Ranch-Loveland, Contact Donna Baxter 303-229-9085
- 22-23 RMDS Winter Wake Up Show**, Colo. Springs-USEF-YR Qualifier-High Performance. Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drwgw.net
- 29 8th Heaven Farms Spring Starter Series #2**, Castle Rock. Contact Beverly Swanson 303-584-9904 eighthavenhorses@yahoo.com

## APRIL 2008

- 5 Triple Creek Dressage Schooling Show** - Longmont  
Contact Lynn McChesney, 303-444-4291
- 5 Riverwalk Series Schooling Show**-Pathfinder Park, Florence  
Contact Brenda Haley 719-369-2421 or Karen Randall 719-275-4220 or go to www.horsetop.net
- 5-6 Paul Belasik Clinic** - 8th Heaven Farms, Castle Rock.  
Contact: Beverly Swanson 303-688-5727
- 12-13 RMDS Freestyle Clinic-Terry Ciotto Gallo**, Autumn Hill-Longmont. Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drwgw.net
- 18-19 Dennis Callin Clinic** - A Rising Star Equestrian Center - Arvada  
Contact Glenda Needles 303-619-8292 geminidr@geminidressage-lic.com
- 19-20 Nancy Smith Clinic**-8th Heaven Farms - Castle Rock  
Contact Beverly Swanson 303-688-5727 info@8thheavenhorses.com
- 19 Mariah Farms Schooling Show**. Mariah Farms, Castle Rock.  
Contact: Lisa Lamke (303)660-2456, llamke@msn.com
- 20 2008 Dressage Benefit Schooling Show Series**-Lazy J Bar S Ranch-Loveland, Contact Donna Baxter 303-229-9085
- 26-27 Dressage at the Peak** Mid-Spring, Fountain. USEF-YR Qualifier.  
Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drwgw.net
- 26 Boulder Valley Schooling Show**, Singletree. Contact Beth Geier 303-673-9840 bethgeier1@comcast.net
- 27 Boulder Valley Spring Fling**, Singletree. Contact Beth Geier 303-673-9840 bethgeier1@comcast.net

## MAY 2007

- 1-4 Ralf Schmitzer of Germany-Clinic-Whispering Winds Farm**  
Contact Simone Windeler 719-287-2040 wjsimone@msn.com

- 3 Riverwalk Series Schooling Show**-Pathfinder Park, Florence  
Contact Brenda Haley 719-369-2421 or Karen Randall 719-275-4220 or go to www.horsetop.net
- 4 Autumn Hill Sunday Series #1**, Longmont. Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 8-11 Ralf Schmitzer of Germany-Clinic-Franktown**  
Contact Simone Windeler 719-287-2040 wjsimone@msn.com
- 9 Grand Valley Spring Show #1**, Grand Junction-USEF  
Contact Lisa Binse 970-243-8543
- 10 8th Heaven Farms Spring Starter Series #3**-Castle Rock.  
Contact Beverly Swanson 303-584-9904 eighthavenhorses@yahoo.com
- 10-11 Grand Valley Spring Show #2**, Grand Junction-USEF.  
Contact Lisa Binse 970-243-8543
- 17 Dressage for the Cure, Littleton**. Contact Tara Hieb 303-619-5101 tara@cottonwoodridingclub.com
- 18 Foothills Spring Dressage Show**, Golden. Contact Aimee Edwards 720-981-0996 aimeeedwards@msn.com
- 17-18 Paul Belasik Classical Dressage Clinic**, Grand Junction. Contact Lynea Schultz-Ela 970-872-3961 lynea@paonia.com

- 23 Dressage in the Plains #1**, Peyton-USEF.  
Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 24-25 Dressage in the Plains #2**, Peyton-USEF.  
Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 5/30-6/1 Grand Valley Memorial Show**, Grand Junction-USEF.  
Contact Lisa Binse 970-243-8543
- 31 Mariah Farms Schooling Show**. Mariah Farms, Castle Rock.  
Contact: Lisa Lamke (303)660-2456, llamke@msn.com

## JUNE 2008

- 5 Riverwalk Series Schooling Show**-Pathfinder Park, Florence  
Contact Brenda Haley 719-369-2421 or Karen Randall 719-275-4220 or go to www.horsetop.net
- 6 Dressage at High Prairie #1**, Parker-USEF-YR Qualifier  
Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 7 Dressage at High Prairie #2**-Parker, USEF-YR Qualifier  
USDFBC Sport Horse Competition  
Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 8 Dressage at High Prairie #3**, Parker-USEF-YR Qualifier  
Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 14-15 NCDA Rocky Mountain Classic** - Cheyenne, WY  
Contact Jane Donnelly 970-669-5775 dendy20@msn.com
- 14-15 Millbrook Farms Dressage Show**-Lehi, UT USEF  
Contact Jan Lawrence 801-768-8739 millbrk@xmission.com
- 20 Sage Creek Dressage #1**, Charleston, UT USEF YR Qualifier  
Contact Alison Childs 435-640-3287
- 21 Sage Creek Dressage #2**, Charleston, UT USEF YR Qualifier  
Contact Alison Childs 435-640-3287
- 28 Autumn Hill Dressage Festival #1**, Longmont-USEF-YR Qualifier. Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drwgw.net

# 2008/09 Shows & Events

- 29 **Autumn Hill Dressage Festival #2**, Longmont-USEF-YR Qualifier Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 29-7/2 **RMDS Junior Dressage Camp**, 8th Heaven Equestrian Facility Contact KC Parkins-Kyle 303-841-9953
- JULY 2008**
- 12 **Taka Chi Dressage Summer RMDS Show-** Blanca Contact Sarah Martin 719-379-3716
- 13 **Autumn Hill Sunday Series #2**, Longmont. Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 18 **Dressage at the Peak Summer Warm Up**, USEF Estes Park Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 19-20 **Dressage at the Peak II Summer Show**, USEF Estes Park Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 25 **Sage Creek Dressage #3**, Charleston, UT USEF YR Qualifier Contact Alison Childs 435-640-3287
- 26 **Sage Creek Dressage #4**, Charleston, UT USEF YR Qualifier Contact Alison Childs 435-640-3287
- 26 **Autumn Hill Dressage Festival #3**, Longmont-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 27 **Autumn Hill Dressage Festival #4**, Longmont-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 29-8/3 **CN JAYRC Championships**, Parker. Contact USDF 859-971-2277
- AUGUST 2008**
- 2-3 **Cheyenne Dressage & Eventing Open Show**, Cheyenne-USEF. Contact Rowena Heckert 3007-632-4151 rlheckert@msn.com
- 8 **Dressage in the Rockies #1**, Parker-USEF Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 9 **Dressage in the Rockies #2**, Parker-USEF Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 10 **Dressage in the Rockies #3**, Parker-USEF Contact Glenda McElroy 818-841-3554
- 16 **Dressage at Sun Prairie**, USDFBC Sport Horse Competition Peyton-USEF Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 17 **Autumn Hill Sunday Series #3**, Longmont. Contact Contact Camille Griffin 719-488-2812 camillegriffin@msn.com
- 16-17 **Paul Belasik Classical Dressage Clinic**-Grand Junction Contact Lynea Schultz-Ela 970-872-3961 lynea@paonia.com
- 22 **Paragon Dressage I**, Parker-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 23 **Paragon Dressage II**, Parker-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 24 **Paragon Dressage III** Parker - USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 23-24 **USEF "r"-Paragon Dressage, Parker**. Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 23 **Utah Dressage Society Annual Show #1**, USEF Contact Eva-Marie Adolphi 801-254-3247
- 24 **Utah Dressage Society Annual Show #2**, USEF Contact Eva-Marie Adolphi 801-254-3247
- 25 **Sage Creek Dressage #1**, Charleston, UT USEF YR Qualifier Contact Alison Childs 435-640-3287
- 30 **2008 Dressage Classic Boulder Valley/Meadow Creek**, Erie Contact Jeannette Hillery 303-494-7718
- 30 **Aspen Ridge Schooling Show**, Monument. Contact Simone Windeler 719-287-2040 wjsimone@msn.com
- 31 **Aspen Ridge RMDS Dressage Show**, Monument. Contact Simone Windeler 719-287-2040 wjsimone@msn.com
- SEPTEMBER 2008**
- 5 **RMIHC All-Breed Dressage Show - Castle Rock** Contact Tracy Vale 719-495-0248 valmoo@aol.com
- 6 **Pendragon Stud RMDS Dressage Show**, Larkspur Contact Leslie Terry 303-688-4147 lesliet34@aol.com
- 6 **Grand Valley Dressage Fall Show**, Grand Junction-USEF Contact Lisa Binse 970-243-8543
- 7 **Western Slope Championships & Open Show** Contact Lisa Binse 970-243-8543
- 6-7 **Boulder Valley/Meadow Creek Dressage Classic #2**, Erie. Contact Sarah Barnes 303-817-2783
- 14 **Foothills Last Chance Show**, Golden Contact Aimee Edwards 720-981-0996 aimeeedwards@msn.com
- 25 **Rocky Mountain Sport Horse Breeding Championships & Qualifying Open Breed Show**-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 26-28 **RMDS Championships & Open Show**, Parker-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435 slush@drgw.net
- OCTOBER 2008**
- 11-12 **Milbrook Farms Autumn Dressage Show**, Lehi, Utah-USEF Contact Jan Lawrence, 801-768-8739 millbrk@xmission.com
- 31-11/2 **Great American Insurance Group/USDF Regional V Dressage Championship**-Scottsdale, AZ Contact Sue Plasman 530-695-0509 splasman@comcast.net
- DECEMBER 2008**
- 3-7 **USDF Convention - Denver** Contact RMDS President Laura Speer to volunteer 970-330-7233 riversidestables\_evans@yahoo.com
- SEPTEMBER 2009**
- 24 **Rocky Mountain Sport Horse Breeding Championships & Qualifying Open Breed Show**-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 25-27 **RMDS Championships and Open Show**, Parker-USEF Contact Heather Petersen 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net

*For updates to the calendar, go to the website: [www.rmds.org](http://www.rmds.org).*

# **FOXCREEK**

## *Mobile Equine Outfitters*

*It's time for our annual*

# *Storewide Spring Sale*

*Friday and Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>  
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***ENTIRE INVENTORY INCLUDED!!!***

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***Close outs reduced up to 75%!!***

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*\*20% instant rebate calculated at checkout on all regularly priced items.*

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### BOULDER'S FAIRFIELD FARM

Fairfield Farm provides a thirty-five acre sanctuary with all the peace and tranquility of a rural farm, but within minutes of Boulder, Lafayette and Louisville. The parcel features a 7000 sq.ft., 5 bed, 7 bath home, including a 6-stall barn, fully fenced pastures, and water rights.

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Magnificently crafted, centrally located 8 bed, 8 bath executive home with amazing family amenities.

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Look to the future by fashioning a compact, energy efficient home in a paradise of 9.5 watered acres.

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### 6077 JAY RD

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Three county-approved building lots, ranging in size from 4.6 acres to 5.5 acres; irrigated farm land.

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Gorgeous 39 acre building site with big water rights! Ideal spot for country estate with room for horses.

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2.02 acres of rural ambiance less than half a mile outside Boulder County.

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\$545,000 | MLS# 55000

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# “L” Continuing Education Clinic Report by Star Hughes

Led by personable and knowledgeable “R” judge Kristi Wysocki, an eager and attentive group of judges, professional trainers and amateur dressage enthusiasts met at Freedom Farms near Parker, Colo., on Saturday for “L” continuing education.

Kristi began by highlighting a number of the new dressage rules and regulations and discussing their impact on the show scene. She stressed the importance of exhibitors, trainers, and coaches reading and absorbing not only the rules specific to dressage, but also the General Rules for exhibitors and trainers in all “recognized” competitions.

The clinic, specifically targeted to assist “L” judges in accurately scoring Training through 2nd Level tests, provided an excellent opportunity for all interested in understanding the criteria by which judges reach decisions. Kristi presented a very organized and logical system of scoring that culminates in the all-important collective marks. Doing the math became clear as she used actual score sheet samples and cited errors involved between the point scores for individual moves versus the collectives marks received.

Kristi advised the possibility of using the whole range of possible scores from 1-10 on the individual moves, noting that fledgling judges are often understandably conservative and reluctant to give either very high or low marks to a competitor. At any level, one particular movement can score at any range. She mentioned, as a judge, an amazing “10” score she had gladly given a Training level team on their entrance and halt on the centerline at X, and the anguished necessity of having given an Olympic rider a score of “3” on a movement.

The entire test is anchored by an overall impression and mental computation of the possible collective marks the judge holds in his or her head from the time the horse enters the arena and the test begins. A relatively instant assessment of the gaits, impulsion, submission, and rider’s effectiveness become a standard of collective marks, which are affirmed or altered by the success of individual movements and presentation by horse and rider. The final tally should reveal the total per-

centage for movements scored to be within a very few points of the collective marks, or the balance is wrong! The collective marks should reflect the test.

Kristi spent much time illuminating and explaining the contents of the box of collective marks and their effect on scoring. In brief, she addressed particular points of interest to all, among them:

**Gaits:** The walk is very, very important! The judge can’t ignore problems at the walk,

even if the trot and canter are an 8! A 4 for walk equals a 6 in gaits for collectives.

**Impulsion:** Horse needs to show a desire to move forward always and cover ground at extensions. Problems (or advantages!) in the back half of the horse is usually to do with impulsion. If they are in front, it belongs under submission.

**Submission:** Lightness of the forehand is now expected to be demonstrated in 1st and 2nd level. Kristi emphasized the importance of the judge enjoying the ride and staying relaxed, good indicators of a consistently harmonious and trusting attitude shared between horse and rider.

**Rider:** Kristi admonished judges to make certain they do not penalize the horse for lack of submission when it’s the rider’s fault! She pointed out that some very elegant riders are not very effective, while some less elegant riders are very effective. Organization and preparedness often prevent mistakes, over-reaction and tension in horse and rider.

Kristi commented on the observation that the quality of American dressage horses continues to go up while the level of riding among amateur owners is on the way down. The consensus is that many riders do not understand the impact their deficiencies in the basics of correct riding can have on their horse’s scores and happiness in work. Several trainers present expressed their frustrations with students who, for various reasons, seem unwilling to make the commitment to improving their seat and aids.

Kristi countered the complaints by noting the responsibility of judges to offer useful final comments written at the bottom of the test; specifics the

rider can go home and work on to improve the abilities and performance of rider and horse. Going back to the test score sheet examples, she called attention to the remarks of one judge:

“Nice pair-with lovely harmony at times” (signed with a smiley face!)

Versus another:

“Smooth and accurate. Rider hangs on mouth, causing horse to toss head in transitions from trot to canter.”

Comments by the 2nd judge can lead to real improvement after soul-searching by the rider involved. Does she hang on the horse’s mouth because she can’t sit the trot and needs the reins for balance?

Honest comments should be helpful. Sincere compliments are welcomed. “After all”, Kristi remarked, “the judge’s job is to help the horse and rider.”

After an excellent lunch of homemade soup and bread, a fundraiser by the Young Riders, the clinic continued with demonstration test rides for levels Training through 2nd. Kristi’s warmly expressed appreciation for the volunteer test riders put at ease even those new to the dressage ring. She was quickly able to create an ambience for study and learning among audience and participants that gave true meaning to the term “constructive criticism”, encouraging everyone to express their reasons for scoring marks and reasons why they gave them, and then guidance on how to improve or justify or strategies to deal with the unexpected.

The eyes-on judging practice was made fascinating and fun as participants benefited from Kristi’s carefully developed, practical and logical scoring system, achieved from her experiences working with many knowledgeable dressage greats and judging riders and horses of all types and levels. She is very generous with sharing her knowledge and experience and is herself, a prime example of her belief that judges should be generous, yet fair, and always to remember a judge’s job is paramount in encouraging the correct education in horse and rider. I found it a valuable experience in understanding the applications, recognition, and reward of true dressage skills through the eyes of the judge.

# Trainer Tips with Sarah Martin

## Part I: Mastering the Half-Halt.

What is a half halt and how do you ride one? Aside from the timeless human query of “why am I here?” this may be the most commonly asked question amongst Dressage riders. As with any widely asked question, there are a myriad of answers. In this article I will be addressing just a few of the many insights into half halts.

Half halts come in many forms, and are used for a range of reasons, from rebalancing a horse to making transitions, to redirecting a horse’s focus. Distilled down to bare bones, however, you want to remember that the half halt is a sequence of aids from the rider to the horse designed to increase engagement of the back.

The aids themselves are:

1. A quick, light closing of the calf or spur
2. Followed by a tucking action of the rider’s gluteus [butt] muscles
3. Into a temporary restraint from the rider’s hand over the rein
4. Immediately followed by a release [without dropping- that’s the hard part!] of the hand
5. Supported by an immediate repetition of closing the leg.

Aside from being able to keep a continuous flow of energy from the horse’s abdominal muscles into their back, allowing a deeper step of the hind leg and creating a stronger bascule over the topline, the rider must be able to allow this energy unimpeded through their own body in order not to block the horse. This requires feel, and it actually can be both taught and learned by those not naturally gifted in this area [and believe me, very few riders truly have this degree of natural feel]. The answer lies in teaching yourself “timing”.

Ideally, a half halt is ridden within the space of time that it takes a horse to place one of his feet on the ground and lift it back off again. Half halts timed to the moment of impact influence and create transitions, one’s ridden while the leg is airborne influence lateral yielding.

To understand this, first teach yourself to feel each of the horse’s legs as

they impact the ground. Start at the walk and learn one leg at a time- for example, start with the right front. Once you know the feeling of the leg hitting the ground, start the sequence of the half halt as described earlier. Be sure that by the time the leg is leaving the ground you are ending with the last, light closing of your leg. All within the moment of the right front leg impacting the ground, bearing weight, and preparing to lift, you close your leg, tuck your seat, restrain the rein, release the rein and close your leg again. That is how quick you will become.

Teach yourself to do this with the movement of each leg- right front, right hind, left front, left hind. Start with the walk, then move to the rising trot. Then the sitting trot. Then the canter. Really! Like watching a Karate Master whose hand seems to move faster than light, as you practice this sequence and learn to feel each leg in each gait, you will find it more easily each day, until eventually it does not seem fast at all.

Now that you know the sequence and the timing, what is a half halt used for? Done correctly, the half halt stimulates the horse’s abdominal muscles, causing the back to be lifted and allowing an increased range of motion for the hind leg. An active hind leg enables the horse to become more round through his back and lifted underneath your seat, which you can feel underneath your sit bones and thighs. In the beginning stages of warm up this is often accompanied by the horse sneezing, coughing lightly, releasing gas or passing manure. This is due to the fact that engaging these muscles stimulates the horse’s muscle memory, and at the beginning, these are the actions the muscles remember. As time goes on [or the warm up continues] the memory of lifting the back to sneeze is replaced by the memory of responding to a half halt.

In this fashion, the half halt, much like engaging the clutch in a car with a manual transmission, is used to engage the horse’s back to help with their balance during a transition, to aid the balance during a stronger moment of bend, to cultivate carrying power from the hind leg, to maintain balance and

focus, and to direct the horse’s attention even during an actual halt.

The other mystery surrounding the half halt comes with these questions:

1. How long?
2. How strong?
3. How often?

These are some general answers:

1. Try to keep it to the moment of the footfall, although this will change as training develops the horse’s carrying power.

2. Play with the intensity of your individual aids to determine this answer. You must experiment in order to learn! Try adding more leg- next time more seat- next time more rein- ideal responses result in the horse coming rounder in his back and neck without bracing. The topline lifts and engages rather than flattening. The bascule of the neck where it emerges from the shoulder gets wider immediately in front of the withers [the trapezius muscle].

3. On an attentive horse, half halts can be ridden anywhere from one to three times in a row. Try not to ride more than three half halts in a row- even interspersing one stride of “leaving them alone” will often allow a horse to rebalance even when you did not think they were ready.

Perfecting the half halt is part of every rider’s routine, from the world class trainer to the starting rider. None of this is remedial! Only practice will lead you to the answers- so, off to the barn and give it a try!

*Sarah Martin is a USDF Certified Instructor through 4th level. She holds her USDF Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals. Sarah is a USDF "L" graduate with distinction, and teaches clinics throughout the United States and South America. Twice tapped by The Dressage Foundation to chaperone their Olympic Dream Program [in 2006 and 2007] she does most of her writing on airplanes. Sarah can be reached through her web page, [www.blancadressage.com](http://www.blancadressage.com).*

# A Training Scale for the Rider by Jill Cantor Lee

As a dressage rider, trainer and instructor I have come to rely on “The Training Scale of the Horse” to guide me through my work and help me stay aligned with the principles of classical dressage on a daily basis. Recently, I have realized a growing need for an equivalent or corresponding training scale for the rider. This could be an especially important tool today, given the abundance of amateur riders, and the lack of both school masters and a consistent detailed vocabulary to actually teach people how to sit on, and influence the horse. It could provide riders and instructors with a clearer road map of the sequence of building blocks a rider needs to have in place in order to reach the ultimate goal of dressage, collection. Perhaps most importantly, a training scale for the rider would encourage us as trainers and riders to take responsibility for how we effect the horse, and discourage us from unfairly or prematurely criticizing the horse. In

sum, it would give riders and instructor’s better understanding of how to influence the horse through harmony, not force.

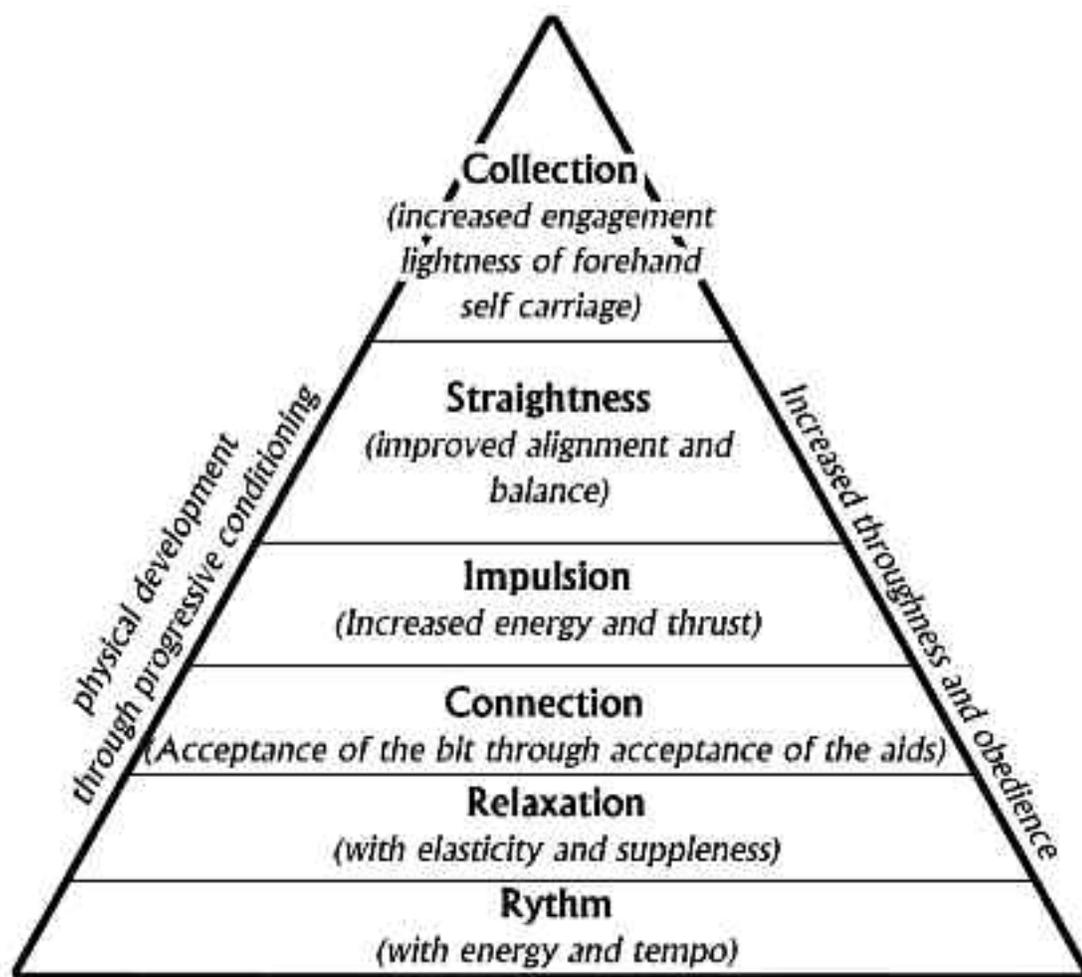
Development of the model is based on the premises that A) each part of the riders body influences a specific part of the horse’s body and B) true collection is a function of how the rider sits on and influences the horse, as well as the result of systematic training, C) the tenets of Classical equitation—maintaining a vertical line ear elbow ankle, and a horizontal line, elbow, hand mouth, are as practical as they are esthetically pleasing (Diagram 2 and 3). It is a case of form follows function. I do not in anyway suggest that this conceptual model is the definitive version, but rather a work in progress that may hopefully guide future discussion so that we can come up with an agreed upon standardized version.

In an effort to develop the rider’s training scale I have mirrored USDF’s mod-

ified version of the Training scale for the Horse. Adhering to classical principles, I determined what skills exactly the rider needs to achieve the parallel development in the horse (see diagram 1). So for instance, the first level of the training scale for the horse is RYTHM (with energy and tempo). In order to achieve this, the rider FORMS A CORRIDOR (with balance and symmetry). This is something that even fairly novice riders can do, and the better their balance and symmetry; the more likely the horse will be able to maintain a consistent rhythm.

The next step in the horse’s development is RELAXATION (with elasticity and suppleness). Horses are prey animals. Because of this their mental equilibrium is greatly dependent on the physical balance, their ability to turn and flee, the more concisely a rider sits on the strongest part of the horse’s back, right behind the withers, the easier it is for the horse to balance. The more balance the horse has, the more mental and physical relaxation it will realize. Consequently maintenance of the VERTICLE AXIS (with shock absorption capacity) is the next step in the rider’s development that corresponds with Relaxation in the horse.

The shock absorption capacity of a rider is determined by how well he or she can maintain the vertical axis (the line running from ear, elbow, and heel). When this axis is maintained, the joints of the elbow, hip, and ankle can be most absorptive. When they are not maintained, as when the rider is in a chair seat, they tend to lock. Also, the rider has far more core strength, which again leads to relaxation, when the elbow is bent, rather than straight. This can be easily demonstrated by having a rider stand on the ground with their arm straight out. If another person puts their hand on the rider’s forearm and pushes it down, it is relatively easy



to move. However, if the elbow is bent, it is dramatically harder, if not impossible to push the rider's arm down. With a bent elbow and adherence to the lines of classical equitation a rider can absorb the horse's shock more effectively, thereby encouraging relaxation in the horse. Ultimately the rider learns to take the concussion of the horse up their stomach and down their back with the hip and ankle absorbing shock. This is an important prerequisite for allowing the rider to develop the deep but elegant seat needed for collection (See energy flow diagram).

The next step in the horse's development is CONNECTION (acceptance of the bit thru acceptance of the aids). The corresponding building block in the rider is the HORIZONTAL AXIS (with independent seat). In order for the horse to be able to accept the bit and develop a good connection, the rider must have developed a strong vertical axis that allows for the subsequent development of the horizontal axis. The horizontal axis is the line running from the elbow to the hand to the horses' mouth. It is only as good as the riders

Vertical Axis and core strength allow. The horse can only accept the bit through the acceptance of the aids when the rider's body is quiet, so that an aid can actually be distinguished from flopping, pulling etc, and the rider does not depend on the reins for balance. The stronger the rider's Vertical axis, the quieter and more empathetic the horizontal axis can be. Hence the opportunity for an ideal connection improves.

The next building block in the horse's development is IMPULSION (with increased energy and thrust). The corresponding building block for the rider is USE OF OVERLAPPING AIDS (through coordination and positive tension). In order to achieve impulsion in the horse, the rider needs to not only create or stop energy, but to start effectively shaping it. The rider must start developing a sense of tone or positive tension in her body that shapes the energy from the horse's hind leg in an upwards forward direction that results in thrust. Auction riders are a good visual example of this kind of tone. At this point the rider needs to tighten his core muscles,

much like one tightens the string on a musical instrument.

The next step in the Training Scale of the Horse is STRAIGHTNESS (with improved alignment and balance). In order facilitate this in the horse the rider must develop SYMMETRY OF INFLUENCE AND BALANCE). In other words, in order for the rider to affect straightness in the horse, he must be able to not only sit in the absolute middle of the horse, but to also use both set of aids (right and left) with equal timing, strength and dexterity.

Once the horse is straight, we can finally reach the pinnacle of dressage COLLECTION (increased engagement, lightness of the forehand and self carriage). The corresponding building block for the rider is ABSOLUTE ELEGANCE (internalized timing, ability to take horse's energy up the stomach down the back, extreme coordination). In the words of Charles de Kunffy, "Collection can succeed only if the rider can maintain, or increase, energy (activity) of the haunches while actually slowing his progress through space. The ability

*continued on page 25*

## Mariah Farms 2008 Schooling Show Series

February 16th Judge: Simone Ahern-Harless  
 March 15th Judge: Gigi Brittian  
 April 19th Judge: Simone Windeler  
 May 31st Judge: Emmy Detlof

**Snow Cancellation:** If a show must be rescheduled due to weather, it will be held the following day, Sunday. If a show must be canceled, entry fees will be refunded except for office fees.

**Opening Dates:** 30 days prior to each show date.

**Closing Dates:** 5 days before each show date. Entries received after closing date will be subject to a \$10.00 late fee.

**Show Secretary:** Lisa Lamke 4490 E. Hwy 86 Castle Rock, Co 80104 (303)660-2456 llamke@msn.com

### Schedule:

Divisions for all classes: Open, Junior & Adult Amateur. We reserve the right to combine, split or cancel classes based on entries.

- |                            |                    |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Eventing Test of Choice | 7. Training 4      | 13. Level 2 Test 2 |
| 2. Intro                   | 8. Level 1 Test 1  | 14. Level 2 Test 3 |
| 3. Intro B                 | 9. Level 1 Test 2  | 15. Level 2 Test 4 |
| 4. Training 1              | 10. Level 1 Test 3 | 16. Level 3        |
| 5. Training 2              | 11. Level 1 Test 4 |                    |
| 6. Training 3              | 12. Level 2 Test 1 |                    |

\*\*Other tests available, contact show secretary for information.

### Fees:

Office Fees: \$25

Schooling show per test all levels: \$20

Entries: Please use the 2008 RMDs entry form. This is available at [www.rmds.org](http://www.rmds.org), [www.csdressage.org](http://www.csdressage.org) or contact the show secretary. Please send entries and checks together to show secretary, make checks payable to Mariah Farms. Show times will be available 4 days before show. Riders will be contacted via email or phone. Ribbons will be awarded through 6th place in all divisions.

Mariah Farms 4490 E. HWY 86 Castle Rock, Co 80104

# Classified Ads

## HORSES

**Thoroughbreds:** Two yr old TB gelding and 3 yr old TB filly by Pragmatic (Silver Deputy) out of Chunkus T mare. Beautiful movers, great natural suspension, exceptional athletic ability. Super dressage potential. Great cross w/ filly on warmblood. Call 719-829-4231 after 8:30pm.

**Oreo's Pizzazz** 4 yrs, 16.3, reg Friesian Sport Horse. Black with 4 white socks! Nine months professional dressage training, amateur owner at Intro level in 2007 scoring low 70's. Sadly, Reo's owner passed away-needs loving home. Lovely temperament, 3 great gaits, ready to move up levels. Loves trail rides; a dream to ride in and out of arena. Video available. \$15,000. Contact Tammy 406-962-9944 www.heartranch.com

**Westfalen x TB** Attractive 16.1, 8 yo, bay mare. Athletic, talented horse for an experienced rider. Successfully shown at local shows last year. In training with a professional dressage trainer schooling 2nd level. Has shown an aptitude for jumping. A comfortable horse to ride, healthy and sound. Regretfully for sale as age has crept up on owner. \$12,000 obo contact Hilary 605-787-5922

**1996 Registered N.A. Oldenburg.** This beautiful, PALOMINO mare is trained to third level, is very level headed, trailers easily, loves trail rides and is a joy to work with. Would be good for a Jr./Young Rider or an Adult Amateur. Please call Greta at 720-341-5031 or email at grbr86@yahoo.com

**REDUCED PRICE! MOTIVATED SELLER:** Capezio (aka Cecil) is a 1992, 16.3 hh bay, Holsteiner gelding. Numerous RMDS/USDF Reg V Championship wins & placings @ Training-2nd Level with adult amateur rider. Schooling third level. Easy to sit and is also an awesome lunge lesson horse. Loads, clips, ties, bathes. Excellent manners for vet and farrier, too! \$19,000 or come see him and make me an offer. Joan Clay (970)420-0887.

**UNEXPECTED** 7 yr. old, 14.3+ Dutch paint mare by Art Deco. Solid 3rd level. Nice movement, easy to sit. Would be good for advanced young rider or smaller intermediate adult. Sound with beautiful markings. Can also jump. 30K. Call Colleen at 719-330-6238.

## TACK/EQUIPMENT

**Prestige 2000/D,** size 17 X 35 Black Dressage Saddle. Great Condition. Used 5 years with TLC. \$1500.00 No leathers or girth. patroark@comcast.net 303-697-6606

**Stubben Saddle. Romanus,** 18" seat, 29 centimeters, newly re flocked, beautiful condition. Very, very comfortable.\$1,000.00 Susan 970-227-9530

## HELP WANTED

**Skelton Mountain Dream Ranch** is offering 2 intern positions for this summer (minimum of 12 weeks) to work with our Trainer, Christa Elaine Wood. Full description of the position is available on our web site www.SkeltonPureSpanishHorses.com. If you have further questions, please contact Joe Skelton at 970-482-1954.

## OTHER

**Hunter Hill Pony Club** is holding a Hunter/Jumper Schooling Show as a fundraiser for the Pony Club. It will be held March 15th at Pendragon Stud Equestrian Center (near Greenland (exit 167) and I25.) Entries: \$7.00 per class or \$40.00 unlimited entries. \$10.00 office fee per horse/rider combination. For a complete show bill, directions and any additional information, please contact Paula at polarbearquilter@hotmail.com or 720-346-3777.

# ~Jessica Greer~

*Assistant to Sandra Hotz*

*Prix St. Georges Qualifier for 2003 NAYRC*

*4th Level Horse of the Year RMDS 2003*

*3rd Level Open Champion USDF (70.0%) 2007*

*2nd Level Horse of the Year RMDS 2006*

*Is now accepting a limited number of students and horses in training.*

*Able to travel. Call (970) 581-5613*

*for availability and scheduling.*

*E-mail: Hercules\_35@msn.com*

*'L' Judge Candidate*

## **ATTENTION JUNIORS AND YOUNG RIDERS**

With the 2008 NAFYRC approaching, we are diligently working on earning the funds required for both our Junior and Young Rider teams. People throughout the Region are already working hard on fundraising. Food concessions have been successful. Get involved—spend time with your fellow Jr/YR's! Here are some upcoming dates for fundraising events that you can take advantage of and do your share:

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday thru Thursday @ Freedom Farm - Lunch concessions

March 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>, Sat. & Sun. @ Penrose - Winter Wake-Up Horse Show- Clothing sales

March 29<sup>th</sup>, Sat. @ 3<sup>rd</sup> Heaven Farm - RMDS Show – Lunch concessions

April 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, Sat. & Sun. @ Freedom Farm - Paul Belasik Clinic - Lunch concessions

April 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>, Sat. & Sun. @ Autumn Hill - Terri Gallo Clinic - Breakfast & Lunch concessions

April 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>, Sat. & Sun. @ Cactus Creek Ranch - Dressage at the Peak Horse Show –  
Breakfast & Lunch Concessions

May 10<sup>th</sup>, Saturday @ 3<sup>rd</sup> Heaven Farm - RMDS Show – Lunch Concessions

A special "Thank You" to all of the facilities and event management  
for allowing the Jr/YR's the opportunity to raise funds!

Also, "Thank You" to all of the Jr/Young Riders that have already volunteered:

Morgan Heinrichs, Devon Wycoff,  
Hannah Lewis, Jessica Sheppard,  
Rachael Motsinger, Kailey DeVore,  
Lauren Rudman and Caroline Schenk .

Please call Susan Rudman, 303-697-8528 to volunteer. Enjoy your time volunteering and appreciate the opportunity to come to know everyone. You don't need be a Jr/YR intending for the NAFYRC in 2008. This offers a great opportunity to become aware of what it means to be involved such a prestigious Championship!

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WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM ALL OF YOU!!**

# RMDS To Host Premier Freestyle Designer TERRY CIOTTI GALLO

April 12-13, 2008 Autumn Hill International Equestrian Center, Longmont, Colorado

Mark your calendars and save the date! World Class Freestyle designer Terry Ciotti Gallo will be coming to Colorado April 12-13, 2008 for a weekend of lectures and "hands-on" freestyle work.

Terry's broad and colorful history in sports, dance, and music stretches over 30 years. She started as a theatrical choreographer where her works were seen on stage, film and on video, but with a background as a competitive gymnast, she also acted as a dance instructor, choreographer, coach, and judge for international-caliber gymnastics. Terry coupled the sports world with her dance and music knowledge to help a variety of athletes with the total development of their freestyle performances. This led to the establishment of her company Klasic Kur in 1989.

She has had the privilege of seeing her designs competed at the Olympics, World Equestrian, World Cup, and Pan American Games, as well as the North American Young Rider Championships. Because she believes that volunteerism and philanthropy are an important part of being a member of society, she donates her time to raise money for breast cancer research. She also serves as the chair for the United States Dressage Federation Freestyle Committee. Terry works with Steffen Peters, Debbie McDonald, Guenter Seidel, George Williams and many others of the top US Dressage competitors.

The lectures and riding session will be open to auditors and the participating riding spots will be open to all levels of riders and all divisions of riders. We hope to offer Terry the chance to work with riders from First Level through Grand Prix. This will also give the auditors and participants the chance to work with and see freestyle design for a large variety of horses and riders.

#### Clinic Pricing

RMDS Clinic Auditors	\$60 2 days (includes all lectures and handouts and auditing of all rides)
	\$35 1 day
Non-RMDS Clinic Auditors	\$80 2 days (includes all lectures and handouts and auditing of all rides)
	\$45 1 day

All auditing rates will be \$15 more if reserved after April 10th.

#### Auditor Sign-up:

Rider Name \_\_\_\_\_ RMDS # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Auditing (Please circle one):      BOTH      Saturday      Sunday

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Send All Auditor Registrations to: Heather Petersen, 12395 Gull Lane, Peyton, CO 80831

Questions: 719-683-8435 or slush@drgw.net

# A Training Scale for Riders

continued from page 25

to energy into better posture, rather than more rapid transportation is essential to collection. (The Athletic Development of the Horse, p.36). In order for the rider to influence the horse in this manner, she must be able to engage her stomach muscles and almost lift the front of the horse up, while sitting softly and deeply to encourage the haunches down. The timing between the driving and restraining aids needed to create the perfect ratio of balance to engagement must be so perfect and natural, that it is almost internalized beneath the rider's skin like a pulse.

## An Example of Use

The following is an example of how both training scales could be used to help the rider. Suppose I am giving a lesson and the rider tells me the quality of her horse's working canter needs to be improved. When I watch the canter the horse's hind legs and back looks stiff and the horse does not look like it wants to go happily forward. The horse is also using the bottom muscle of its neck to lift its withers. I conclude that the problems in the canter starts with the horse's RELAXATION (with elasticity and suppleness). Because the RE-

LAXATION is limited, both IMPULSION AND CONNECTION are adversely effected. Of course there are a myriad of exercises I could use to help the quality of the canter, but before I do this, I quickly run through the training scale of the rider. Is there something in the rider's position that could be changed to positively affect the degree of RELAXATION IN THE HORSE? The corresponding building block in the rider is his VERTICAL AXIS (with shock absorption). When I look at the rider I notice he is sitting slightly behind the vertical. The ear, elbow, ankle line is broken. He is leveraging the horse's front end up by leaning back when the horse's inside foreleg hits the ground. The rider's elbows are also locked. Rather than positively absorbing the shock of the horse hitting the ground, the rider is muffling the horse's movement with his own stiff joints. Everything about his positions tells the horse not to articulate his joints, not to be elastic through its topline, and to lift itself through the chest, rather than by lowering the haunches. So before we do an exercise to improve the horse, I explain to the rider how the horse is

simply mirroring his position. Then I put the rider's body into proper vertical alignment with supple elbow, hip, and ankle joints. The rider is instructed that rather than shoving his tailbone towards the horse's ears, leaning back and locking his hips, he needs to maintain the vertical axis and absorb the concussion of the horse up his stomach and down his back with positive tension. Once the Vertical Axis achieved and maintained, the rider is then able to open the elbow towards the horse's mouth in the rhythm of the stride just as much as she wants the vertebrae in the neck to be able to open and close. At this point, the horse will almost invariably offer a softer more elastic Connection and their will be a visible improvement in the horse's gait that will ultimately lead to improved collection. This approach, coupled with appropriate gymnastic exercises can accelerate the training of both horse and rider while promoting kindness and limiting force.

*Jill Cantor Lee is a USDF-certified instructor and USDF Silver and Bronze medalist from Colorado. She trains and teaches at Sextan Farms in Longmont.*

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AHDF III & IV, JULY 26<sup>TH</sup> & 27<sup>TH</sup>

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