



The Centaur

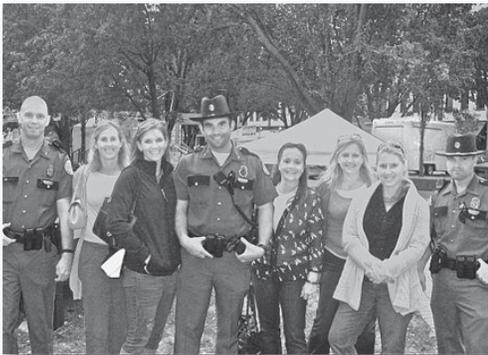
Educating Horse and Rider as Partners.

An RMDS Publication

November 2010

Downtime at the World Equestrian Games - Suzie Hallé

Probably most of you have been to an international dressage event by now. I'd never been. For me it meant five days away from the obligations of home, sharing a house with four other women from Colorado who love dressage, horses, and telling stories about them; laughing hard and often, eating every meal out, no international travel, bumping into loads of other Coloradans, and seeing up-close the best riders and horses in the world. Really? It couldn't have been better in any single way. Here are some photos from the Kentucky Horse Park and downtown Lexington to give you a feel for what it was like if you didn't get the chance to go. Or, if you did go, maybe this will spark a memory and make you smile.



The Mounted Patrol in Lexington on break. A few had clip-clopped down main street while we dined.



Driftwood mamma and foal.



Horse sculptures were everywhere. 150 were decorated by local artists and school children, and placed on almost every street corner throughout downtown Lexington and in the Horse Park. All will be auctioned at the end of the year to raise money for local charities. The sculptures were truly spectacular.



We toured Three Chimneys, a 2,000 acre thoroughbred breeding farm that's home to Seattle Slew and Smarty Jones, among others. The highest stud fee is \$150,000 per mare. Pictured here is a monument to Seattle Slew in front of one of the stallion barns. All famous stallions from this farm are buried right on the site.



Smarty Jones.



Our awesome group of Colorado girls in front of a stallion on his way out to the fields at Three Chimneys. The fields are behind the hedge.

See Page 2 for RMDS Special Business!

Region 5 Report

A very dear and distinguished Region 5 dressage member has left this life. Dr. Rudolf Vlatten, surrounded by his family, peacefully passed away in his Sierra Vista home October 10th. He was born in Germany in 1923 and began riding at the age of 10. He advanced through the German training system and earned the silver riding medal. After immigrating to the United States in 1952, he participated in hunter/jumper shows. In the early 60s he resumed dressage training and qualified for the Senior Dressage Finals. Dr. Vlatten trained and competed on the Lipizzaner stallion, Favory Dubowina, and Thoroughbred geld-

ing, Academy Formal, to Grand Prix level, and several other horses to Prix St. Georges and Intermediare levels. In 1981 he founded the Central Arizona Riding Academy (CARA), now owned by his daughter Dorie, and her husband, Uli Schmitz. Dr. Vlatten was an AHSA (now USEF) "S" judge beginning in 1984. As a judge he was very encouraging, and he also wrote short bits of advice for the Arizona Dressage Association newsletter. His motto was "Don't go too fast. Take it easy. Be patient with your horse and it will pay back with interest." He earned the respect of those who met him and was loved dearly by those privileged to have known him.

Remember to renew your memberships to USEF, USDF, and local GMO. You can print out a single sheet with all six memberships: USEF/USDF, horse/rider/owner for the show season. It's very simple and easy – it took me just a few minutes. You can access the info on usdf.org after following the links.

New dressage tests for 2011 go into effect December 1, 2010. You can go to the USEF website as a user (you'll need your USEF member number) to download the new tests.

Happy Riding!
-Theresa Hunt, Region 5 Director

RMDS Special Business

- **Membership Renewals** received before December 31st are **\$55**. Renew Early!
- **2011 RMDS Scholarship Amounts and Applications**
Scholarship awards will be \$500.00 for 2011. The application period begins October 1 and ends November 30. Application instructions are online at rmds.org. We look forward to your applications! Loni Gaudet (Chair, 2008-2010) and Elaine Haberman (Chair, beginning 2011).
- The **RMDS Membership card** is now available online through the RMDS website, rmds.org.
- The **December Centaur** will be devoted to *Thank You's*, *Appreciation*, and *Congratulations*. Ad submission and payment deadlines are November 10th.

Arkansas Valley

The Arkansas Valley Dressage Association had a successful schooling show October 16th at Pathfinder Park outside of Florence. The weather was great and we had a group of delightful riders (especially those from Leslie Harrison's barn in Salida) ranging from Intro-A through Second level, riding before judge Julie Burt. Unfortunately one of our most enthusiastic competitors, Arianne Armstrong, a young junior rider, was unable to attend due to an unexpected hospital stay. The ever popular "Cowboy" dressage, which allows riders to ride Intro and Training level tests in western tack and attire, attracted quite a few competitors. This division is drawing more interest in dressage as the riders can learn dressage principles without investing a lot of money in tack and attire until they are more knowledgeable about the discipline. The show also attracted quite a few individuals who were interested in joining the chapter and learning more about dressage.

Two remarkable members competed in all three schooling shows: Ginny

Wegener, who is eighty-seven (never say you're too old to ride!), rode First level Test-1 on her feisty RT Loki, who bucked several times in the warm-up; and Sis Harman, seventy, who rode her first Second level test on her horse Bright Eyes.

Our monthly meeting was held the week prior to the show at the same location. Members were invited to bring their horses and ride. Half the members remained on horseback during the meeting. Brenda Haley was presented an arrangement of flowers as a thank you for her dedication to the chapter and her years as serving as president.

Last minute show details were also discussed – primarily creative ideas to make a dressage arena using available materials donated by members because the previous arena was no longer available. We were able to fashion a nice arena out of blocks and PVC pipe while using a four inch chalk line to fill in the residual spaces. Fall flower arrangements completed the arena and lent a festive air to the show.

Members are now looking forward to activities in the weeks after the show. Sis Harman was appointed official trail ride director since she is extremely knowledgeable about the many trails available in our area. She will organize a weekly trail ride and members will be notified by e-mail of the time and location.

Marlene Coonradt will be in charge of organizing our quadrille activities, including the selection of patterns, times, and location.

The chapter voted to have meetings on the second Saturday of the month at one o'clock to allow for horse activities in connection with the meeting. Preferably, the location will be at Pathfinder Park but will be announced each month as the weather influences our choice of meeting places. We have several indoor programs in mind for the winter months so our activities shouldn't slow down. For more information or to join in the activities, contact me at marraelambs@hotmail.com.

-Mary Rae, Chapter President

Through the Grapevine

What's happened lately in your life or with the friends you hold dear? Let us know "Through the Grapevine" at vanbergc@yahoo.com.

- Dr. Barbara Page, DVM, of Colorado Equine Clinic was chosen by Cavalia to serve as their on-call veterinarian. She hopes not to be needed!



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AQHA Blue Roan
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President's Message

Fall is upon us and the show season is over. I hope you had a wonderful summer, whether you were showing or just having fun with your horse. Fall and winter are a great time to work on some new skills and hone your existing ones. In horse training, as much as we would like progress to be linear, I often find I take two steps forward only to take three steps back. In the long run though, training improves what you want to do and "today's highs will be tomorrow's lows." So don't give up on your training, but keep on, and after a few months you will see results.

To give you a head start on training this winter season consider attending one of the great clinics in the area. The High Plains chapter is bringing

in Hilda Gurney on Nov 6th and 7th, and I am certain it will be an outstanding experience. If you need more information on the event, contact the president of High Plains, Cindi O'Shea, at (720) 951-3517, or cindioshea@yahoo.com.

The High Plains chapter will also host the Board of Governors' meeting and the banquet this year. More information is in this edition of the Centaur. We hope that many of you will come to the banquet and celebrate your achievements for the year.

Some of you will travel south with your horses for the winter and stay there for a while. Lucky you. Personally, since I am a skier, I'm looking forward to winter and snow, however

I do agree that riding at 20 degrees and below is really not much fun. However, if you are going to be on the road, here is a great website for you: <http://sites.google.com/site/eeausa1/>.

This is a new emergency equine assistance site and it's free to join. Basically as you travel with your horses you'll be able to access a network of other horse owners to call upon for assistance. So if you need to have a fellow horse owner come and collect your horses because your truck broke down – you now have a way to find someone and get help.

Wishing you a great fall and many warm and sunny rides,

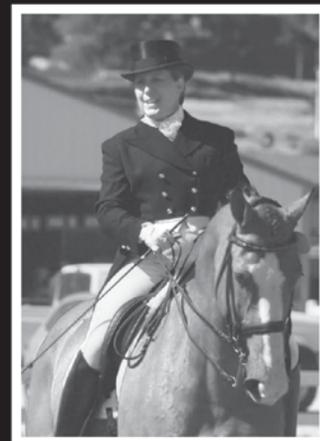
-*Simone Windeler*, RMDS President



8th Heaven Farms A Friendly, Fun Environment for the Horse *and* Rider

Upcoming Events

- Hilda Gurney Symposium,
November 6-7, 2010
Sponsored by the High Plains
Chapter of RMDS
- Patrice Edwards Clinic
November 13-14, 2010
Check out our website for
registration information



For more information on boarding, training or clinics call 303-688-5727

or visit our web site at www.8thheavenhorses.com

Master Card and Visa Accepted

Prix St. George Comes of Age at the 2010 RMDS/USDF Region 5 Championships

-Kristi Wysocki, USEF 'S' Judge, and 'r' Sport Horse Breeding Judge

This year's RMDS/GAIG USDF Region 5 Championship show was held at the Colorado Horse Park in Parker, Colorado over Labor Day Weekend. The weather was beautiful despite some big temperature swings from chilly (OK – cold) to downright hot. It was exciting to see how this region has progressed over the years. The Open Prix St. George competition this year was the most obvious and exciting example of this progress. The PSG competition was big in numbers, quality, and fun. It was very exciting to be a part of it at Championships. There were 12-13 horses competing in the Open division of PSG for both RMDS and Region 5 Championships. All of the horses were competitive and there was great anticipation waiting for scores to be posted for these historically large classes. The solid competition required that every team perform its best. It was very exciting to see so many horses ridden at this high degree of accomplishment deserving of Championships. As a result it really wasn't clear who the winning horse was until the very last horse executed its very last halt. When in the history of Championships have we seen so many horses competing at PSG where any one of them could "take the class?"

The first day of competition was RMDS Championships. The difference between first place and fifth place was a mere 2.7%, with Susan Schneider winning on Sir Sherlock JSS with a 67.368%. On the second day, during Region 5 Championships, Petra Warliamont stepped up and commanded a solid lead with Rohmero as her partner, scoring a 69.342%. The

difference between second and fifth place was only 0.683%, and all the horses in the class placed in the 60th percentile. Now that is exciting.

The competition was so close in both classes that the judges didn't always place the horses the same. This is not especially uncommon at the PSG level. The expectations at this level for individual judges can vary a bit. Think of it as the "training level" of the FEI levels. Some judges are more lenient than others about the collection shown, cadence, power and engagement. An example would be the canter pirouette. For example, if a rider were to ride a half-pirouette that was somewhat large but the right idea, one judge might give the pirouette a 6 where another judge might be stricter and give it a 5. If this rider performed both pirouettes the same and got two 6s from one judge and two 5s from the other judge, with the double-coefficients involved, a total of 4 points difference could occur in the scores. This results in a 1.05% difference for just two movements. So even though both judges are justified in their opinion, it does result in a different score from each. This test can also look very different from the different judging positions. A big difference of "view" that can occur in this test is during the lateral work, which involves 8 movements out of 26 (or 31% of the total test – without considering the double-coefficients). From C, the bend (or lack thereof), is very obvious. To the judge from the side this is not as easy to see. If a horse never bends right during their test the C judge will be fairly tough. But the judge on the side will not be able to tell this is happening. With more

than 30% of the test involved in these movements this difference can really add up. So even though the judges don't always score or place the horses exactly the same, they are positioned at different vantage points to pick up on the different "issues" of each ride so that the final score will come out where it should be.

Consider if the judges all had the same score or placing for every ride. That would mean multiple judges in different positions weren't really needed. In fact, the FEI Dressage Committee just announced that at the Olympics, WEG, World Cup, and other top world competitions, they are going to increase the number of judges to 7. This decision comes after over a year of evaluations at major international competitions while evaluating the effect of numbers of judges. The two new positions will be placed on the quarterlines of the short side around A.

I think the results of the PSG classes at our Championships this year really point out how much improved the quality of riding at this level has become compared to a few years ago. Kudos to all for the progress made, and the great competition that resulted in such an exciting weekend. All-in-all I think everyone who participated in these classes had a wonderful time and felt great about the competition. Although I have to admit we were not as "top notch" in the victory gallops as the juniors were. We opted for flying "low and slow" at that point. It was a fun and challenging way to end the show season and was a high note for this region. 🐾

Kristi Wysocki is a native of Colorado. She is a USEF 'S' Dressage judge and 'r' Dressage Sport Horse Judge. She owns and trains dressage at *Somewhere Farms* in Elbert, Colorado. She has successfully competed through Grand Prix, and holds her Bronze, Silver and Gold medals with USDF.

Proposed Bylaw and Standing Rule Changes, 2010

Discussed and Voted on at the Board of Governors' Meeting, November 13th, 2010.

Open to all to participate. Location:

The Sheraton Denver Tech Center Hotel
7007 South Clinton Street
Englewood, Colorado 80112

RMDS Constitution & Bylaws

(Approved by 2/3 vote in favor)

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the organization shall be ROCKY MOUNTAIN DRESSAGE SOCIETY, INC.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES: **Page E-3**, introduced by the RMDS Board, Marketing

A. Purpose: Mission Statement

The Rocky Mountain Dressage Association exists to maintain a high standard of accomplishment in the region through educational support in Dressage. As a USDF Group Member Organization, RMDS is dedicated to providing educational programs to encourage the best horsemanship throughout our membership.

2. The activities of the Society are limited to those activities consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

A. Membership: **Page E-4**, introduced by Sharon Soos

3. Upon joining the Society, members shall select a Chapter to represent their interests in forming Society policies and in managing the Society *or may select to be a member-at-large*. Should a member fail to select a Chapter, he/she shall be *considered a member-at-large*. Members may change Chapter affiliation by notifying the RMDS Central Office in writing of their desire.

B. Chapters:

6. A Chapter shall annually elect from its membership delegates to the Society's Board of Governors. At a Board of Governors meeting, each Chapter shall be entitled to one (1) vote for every twenty (20) members or fraction there-of. Each Chapter shall notify in writing the Secretary of the Society as to how its voting rights are distributed amongst its delegates. *Members-at-large may attend the Society's Board of Governors meeting in accordance with Article VI (D).*

Standing Rules

(Approved by majority vote in favor)

SECTION III. RMDS RECOGNIZED/APPROVED COMPETITIONS: **Page E-12-14**, introduced by the RMDS Board

A dressage competition shall be recognized by the Society if the following requirements are met:

C. *A recognition fee, set by the Executive Board*, must accompany the application for recognition of each competition. USDF Region V Championship, JR/YR Team Championships, Adult Amateur Team Championships, and the RMDS Championship Shows are exempt from this fee.

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

E. Applications for recognition of all previously approved competitions for the next competition year are due to the RMDS Central Office no later than November 1 of the current calendar year. Applications for recognition from previously approved competitions that are postmarked after November 1 will be assessed a late fee **of \$25**. All late fees will be assessed based on the postmark of the application.

O. Show management must submit legible dressage scores or USDF Dressage Sport Horse Breed (DSHB) show scores for RMDS recognized competitions to the designated address within fourteen (14) days following the competition. All scores submitted must include horse name and RMDS number, rider name and RMDS number. If scores are not received within thirty (30) days of the last day of the competition, a penalty charge **of \$50.00** will be assessed. All violators will be published in the Society's newsletter.

SECTION IV. RMDS SANCTIONED EVENTS: **Page E-14**, introduced by the RMDS Board

C. Requirements:

1. Application and fees (**set by the Executive Board**) must be submitted to the RMDS Central Office at least 4 weeks prior to the event.

SECTION V. AWARDS - YEAR END: **Page E-19**, introduced by Kristi Wysocki

F. Sport Horse Breeding Show Year End Awards

4. Horse Awards

h. Year end Awards will be awarded to the horse with the highest median from at least **Three (3) scores, two (2) shows, and two (2) judges** from any of the following categories:

- i. Current Year Foal (fillies & colts)**
- ii. Fillies (1-3 year olds)**
- iii. Colts & Geldings (1-3 year olds)**
- iv. Mares (4 years and older)**
- v. Stallions (4 years and older)**

SECTION VI. RMDS TECHNICAL DELEGATES PROGRAM: **Page E-20**, introduced by the RMDS Board
 RMDS has established a Technical Delegate Program to provide members with the necessary experience and training to officiate as Technical Delegates at RMDS only recognized shows. The program is administered by the RMDS Central Office.

A. RMDS Technical Delegates Training Program

1. d. The candidate must **pay all required fees** at the time of application. **The RMDS Executive Board shall determine the fees.**

SECTION VIII. DUES AND ASSESSMENTS: **Page E-22**, introduced by the RMDS Board

A. Membership classes are defined in the RMDS By-Laws. The membership application and dues should be sent to the RMDS Central Office. The Society's membership fees shall be as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Individual | 55.00 |
| Additional Family member | 40.00 |
| Life | 650.00 |
| Business | 75.00 |
| Business Life | ???? |

C. There will be a **\$50.00** charge plus bank fees if applicable on all returned checks. Section XII, B of these Standing Rules provides other penalties, which may be applied for returned checks.

D. The lifetime horse registration fee is **\$40.00**. There is a **\$15.00** fee for any changes to the registration (i.e., horse name change, owner change, etc.).

E. Communications (Centaur & emails only) are available as a separate subscription for an annual fee of **\$35.00**.

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RMDS Business

Continued from page 7

SECTION IX. MEMBER BENEFITS: **Page E-22**, introduced by Sharon Soos

RMDS members in good standing shall receive the following benefits unless otherwise indicated:

A. General Benefits:

5. A Chapter basic membership, to be determined by the RMDS Executive Committee to pay for the Directors & Officers insurance, shall be paid by RMDS to the Chapter selected by the member. (Note: Chapters may charge a supplemental membership fee at their discretion in accordance with Article V, Section C of the RMDS By-Laws.). ***The basic membership fee for Members selecting to be a Member-at-Large shall remain with RMDS.***

SECTION X. CHAPTER INITIAL FEES: **Page E-23**, introduced by the RMDS Board

Each new RMDS Chapter will be required to pay an initial organizational fee of **\$100.00** to RMDS upon application for RMDS recognition. This fee must be accompanied by (1) an approved and current copy of its procedures or By-Laws, (2) a roster of its membership and (3) a list of elected officers

SECTION XII. PROTESTS, CHARGES, HEARINGS, and WARNINGS: **Page E-24**, introduced by the RMDS Board

Violations: A violation is any act by any individual member or group prejudicial to the best interests of RMDS and its Chapters as outlined in the current US Equestrian Federation Rule Book. Should a Chapter experience the need to expel members due to actions which it may deem improper, dishonest, or unsportsmanlike, it may request that the RMDS Executive Board hold a hearing, according to the procedures set forth herein, for the purpose of warning, suspending or removing the violator(s) from all organizational benefits and, in the case of financial fraud, until all debts with RMDS and/or its Chapters are settled

A. ***A non-refundable fee of \$150*** needs to be paid at the same time as a written request is submitted for regarding a hearing, protest, charge etc. Must be filed within 30 days of the event.

SECTION XIII. COMPENSATED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: **Page E-25**, introduced by the RMDS Board

C. Contracts that the Society awards on a yearly and /or bi-yearly basis may include the following:

4. Managers for the following yearly competitions and events:

a. RMDS ***Owned Shows – Winter Wake-Up & RMDS Championships***

b.

c. USDF ***Region 5 Adult & Junior Team Competition***

d. RMDS Junior/Young Rider Camp

e. ***Other event(s) as approved by the RMDS Executive Board***

SECTION XIV. RMDS CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW: **Page E-27**, introduced by Heather Petersen

B. Qualification For Dressage Championship Classes:

5. Horse/rider combinations may qualify for Championship Classes by submitting scores meeting the following criteria:

b. Horse/rider combinations may qualify for Musical Freestyle Championship Classes by submitting ~~one~~ **two** scores of **60% or higher from a recognized musical freestyle class at the same level.**

SECTION XIV. RMDS CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW: **Page E-28**, introduced by Kristi Wysocki

C: Qualification for Sport Horse Breeding Championship Classes:

1. General

c. The horse with the highest average score, if judged by more than one judge, in each class will be the Champion of that class. The Young Horse Champion will be determined by calling back all of the Champions in the Young Horse categories. The Mature Horse Champion will be determined by calling back all of the Champions in the Mature Horse categories.

Current Year Foal

Fillies

Colts

Mares

Stallions



RMDS AWARDS BANQUET 2010

**Hosted by the High Plains Dressage Chapter
Saturday, November 13, 2010
The Sheraton Denver Tech Center Hotel
7007 South Clinton Street
Englewood, Colorado 80112
303.799.6200**

**5:30 PM Cocktails (cash bar)
6:00 PM Dinner Service Begins
6:30 PM Awards Presentation Begins
9:30 PM Prize Drawing (must be present to win)**

Please RSVP by November 3, 2010. Reservation and payment must be received by this date. A completed form with payment constitutes your reservation. No phone reservations-no exceptions! Late reservations will be accepted until November 12th with an additional \$10 fee.

Make check payable to RMDS and mail to:

Cindi O'Shea, 18249 E. Mainstreet, #8-101, Parker, CO 80134

Directions:

From the North or South: Take I-25 to Arapahoe Road (Exit 197). Head East on Arapahoe. Turn right on S. Clinton Street, heading south. The hotel will be on your right.

Reservations at \$34.50 per person:

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Select one entrée choice per person and indicate the number of persons per entrée:

- ___ Cilantro Grilled Chicken – grilled and topped with a chunky avocado salsa
- ___ Pasta Primavera – penne pasta with assorted vegetables in a marinara sauce topped with parmesan cheese
- ___ Flank Steak – marinated flank steak served with a caramelized onion jus

All entrees are served with Chef's choice of vegetables and starch and a garden salad with assorted dressings, fresh baked rolls with sweet butter.

The Sheraton has a block of rooms under the RMDS name. Room rates are \$69.00 (not including tax) and will be held until November 1, 2010. Call the hotel at 303.705.6636 Monday – Friday or toll free at 800.325.3535 at any time 24/7 to make reservations.

2010 RMDS Executive Board

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| President | Simone Windeler | 719-540-2000 | simonedressage@gmail.com |
| Past President | Laura Speer | 970-371-2934 | riversidestables_evans@yahoo.com |
| Vice President | Mary Jo Hoepner | 719-495-3648 | vicepresident@rmds.org |
| Secretary | Susan Rudman | 303-697-8528 | sewrunred@msn.com |
| Treasurer | Sharon Soos | 303-904-7534 | sksoos@mesanetworks.net |

Permanent Committees

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Adult Amateur | Lori Mitchell | 303-816-2375 | bandwdressage@aol.com |
| Awards | Shannon Lemons | 719-686-0064 | lemons_shannon@yahoo.com |
| Results | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Championship/March Show .. | Laura Speer | 970-371-2934 | riversidestables_evans@yahoo.com |
| Communications | Nicole Bizzarro | 303-447-0993 | nicoleb@burkedes.com |
| Centaur Production | Cathy Van Berg | 303-916-6136 | vanbergc@yahoo.com |
| Omnibus Advertising | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Omnibus Production | Burke Design | 303-447-0993 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Webmaster | Michael Petersen | 719-683-8435 | webmaster@rmds.org |
| Constitution, By-laws | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Education | Heather Petersen | 719-683-8435 | slush@drwg.net |
| Insurance, Show Standards | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Junior/Young Riders | Colleen McFadden | 303-665-2631 | Mcfadden_colleen@hotmail.com |
| Junior Camp | KC Parkins-Kyle | 303-841-9953 | murphyhors@aol.com |
| Marketing | Heather J. McEntee | 719-338-9913 | heather@hjmcdressage.com |
| Membership | | | |
| Horse Registration | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Registration Officials and | | | |
| Show Standards | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Scheduling | Central Office | 720-890-7825 | rmds@rmds.org |
| Scholarship | Loni Gaudet | 970-532-0852 | lonigaudet@earthlink.net |

Chapter Presidents

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Arkansas Valley | Mary Rae | 719-784-6853 | marraelambs@hotmail.com |
| Boulder Valley | Nicole Donohue | 303-827-6150 | hobbyhorse6789@yahoo.com |
| Colorado Springs | Elaine Haberman | 719-358-1577 | stabiledicavallo@gmail.com |
| Foothills | Dolly Hannon | 303-919-4112 | dollyhannon@msn.com |
| Grand Valley | Lisa Binse | 970-243-8543 | lbpawprints@yahoo.com |
| High Plains | Cindi O'Shea | 720-951-3517 | cindioshea@yahoo.com |
| Northern Colorado | Laura Speer | 970-371-2934 | riversidestables_evans@yahoo.com |
| Wasatch Mountains | Sally Shaffer | 435-640-8797 | wasatchmntndressage@yahoo.com |
| Western Colorado | Judith Family | 970-923-8832 | dns@rof.net |

Governing Bodies

UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION

USDF

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 859-971-2277 | www.usdf.org |
|--------------------|--------------|

4051 Iron Works Parkway, Lexington, KY 40511

USDF Region 5

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Director | Theresa L Hunt | huntery@mindspring.com | |
| FEI JRYR Coordinator | Susan Rudman | 303-697-8528 | sewrunred@msn.com |
| Website | | | www.usdfregion5.org |

US EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION, INC

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 859-258-2472 | www.usef.org |
|--------------------|--------------|

USEF

4047 Iron Works Parkway, Lexington, KY 40511

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

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RMDS CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE

Arkansas Valley: 2nd Saturday, 1 pm, location TBD. Mary Rae, 719-784-6853, marraelambs@hotmail.com

Boulder Valley: 2nd Mon., even months, location TBD, Nicole Donohue, 303-827-6150, hobbyhorse6789@yahoo.com

Colorado Springs: 3rd Tues., For location information contact Elaine Haberman, 719-358-1577, stabiledicavallo@gmail.com, www.CSDressage.org

Foothills: quarterly meetings, location TBD, Dolly Hannon, 303-919-4112, dollyhannon@msn.com

Grand Valley: 1st Thurs. each month, location TBD, Lisa Binse, 970-243-8543, Lbpawprints@yahoo.com

High Plains: 3rd Tues. each month, 6:30pm, location TBD. Cindi O'Shea, 720-951-3517, cindioshea@yahoo.com, www.highplainsdressage.com

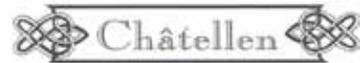
Northern Colo.: 3rd Tues., each month, location TBD, Laura Speer, 970-330-7233, riversidestables_evans@yahoo.com

Wasatch Mountains
Sally Shaffer, 435-640-8797, Location TBD

Western Colorado: Judith Family, 970-923-8832, dns@rof.net

Meeting Schedule of the 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 details.



*We would like to congratulate
Brook & "Shu" for their
Championship at 1st Level
&
Connor & "Shawn" for their
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You both should be proud of your
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*Also, a big thank you to all our wonderful
boarders and members
of the Châtellen family for your support and
dedication throughout this year.*



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Graphic: Design Beth Baymer

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, Cathy Van Berg, 1767 Rose Petal Lane, Castle Rock, CO 80109, Phone: 303.916.6136, email: vanbergc@yahoo.com

ADVERTISING

RMDS Office, Beth Geier, 2942 Park Lake Dr., Boulder, CO 80301, Phone: 720.890.7825, email: 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. Acceptable forms include: jpeg, pdf, tiff, eps, and doc. IF UNSURE ABOUT AD FORMATTING, please contact the editor (contact info above) for consultation. 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 \$50, 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 email 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

Email ads to: rmds@rmds.org, and cc the electronic copy to vanbergc@yahoo.com. Send payment and hard-copy to the 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\$1507" x 9.5"

Half Page\$907" x 4.5"

Outside back half\$1057" x 4.5"

1/4 Page (Vertical Only) . \$553.25" x 4.5"

1/8 Page (Business Card) \$303.5" x 2"

(horizontal only)

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

Payment for ads is due on the 10th of the month. If not received by the following 10th of the month, the person will be listed on the RMDS website under the suspended category.

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, and not necessarily the RMDS, its officers or employees.

Utilize the RMDS Network:

Trainers and Instructors:

Use the RMDS Website to 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: RMDS Central Office, 2942 Park Lake Dr, Boulder, CO 80301, Phone 720.890.7825, or email: rmds@rmds.org (note on subject line "Trainer Info".) Please include your name, phone, address, email, training locations and other pertinent info such as awards, certifications, lesson types, schooling horses, etc.

The website averages 200 hits per month on the trainer page and RMDS receives 25-30 emails per month requesting names of trainers 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 RMDS Central Office is notified in advance (rmds@rmds.org), the ad will be removed from the website once the date of the event advertised has passed.

Please limit content of the ad to 20 words. Your email and website addresses will be displayed as links.

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

- Refuse any ad.
- Edit ad content.
- 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 mailing 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, and 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.

Technical Delegates, Judges, and Certified Instructors

Dressage Judge Ratings and Levels Qualified to Judge

Any class ridden before a judge not qualified to judge at that level must ride "Hors d'concours" where the score does not count.

| Status | Status | Levels | Status | Status | Levels |
|--------|------------|----------------------------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| "L" | Learner* | Training - Second (RMDS only) | "S" | Senior | All |
| "r" | Recorded | Training - Second | "I" | International | All |
| "R" | Registered | Training - Fourth | "O" | Olympic | All |

*may only judge at RMDS recognized shows.

FEI 4*

Janet Foy 719-260-1566

FEI ParaEquestrian Dressage 'O'

Anita Owen 303-953-9904

USEF 'S'

Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez ... 303-642-7708

Sandra Hotz 303-817-2030

Anita Owen 303-953-9904

Janet "Dolly" Hannon 303-919-4112

Kristi Wysocki 303-648-9877

USEF 'r'

Loni Gaudet 970-532-0852

Amy Jablonovsky 970-493-2833

Suzanne Zimmer 303-478-8325

Gwen Ka'awaloa 303-646-4363

USDF 'L' Graduates (Schooling and RMDS Only recognized shows)

Simone Ahern* 719-749-9274

Barbara Bell (WY) 307-548-7079

Gigi Brittain* 303-646-1506

Julie Burt 719-372-6270

Alison Child* (UT) 435-640-3287

Linda Coates-Markle 303-469-0279

Kathleen Donnelly* 970-310-8729

Beth Geier 303-673-9840

Jan Goodrich-Spear 303-664-0152

Jessica Greer 970-581-5613

Sarah Martin* 719-379-3716

Linda Ohlson-Gross* 303-840-9818

KC Parkins-Kyle 303-841-9953

Kathy Simard* 720-981-4448

Patti Thurman* (UT) 435-640-1362

Maria Wasson 303-682-9594

Simone Windeler 719-540-2000

*Denotes Graduation with Distinction

Dressage Sport Horse Breeding Judge

Janet Foy 'R' 719-260-1566

Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez 'R' 303-642-7708

Kristi Wysocki 'r' 303-648-9877

FEI Chief Steward

Veronica Holt 303-646-3829

Technical Delegates USEF

Eva-Maria Adolphi (UT), r. 801-254-3247

Rusty Cook (NM), r 505-877-1456

Veronica Holt, R 303-646-3829

Laurie Mactavish, R 970-390-5160

Heather Petersen, r 719-683-8435

Deeda Randle (WY), R 307-638-6737

Catherine Siemiet, r 719-942-5311

Dianne Stanley (MT), r 406-652-4061

Libby Stokes, r 303-688-2795

Technical Delegates, RMDS sanctioned shows only

Joan Clay 970-420-0887

Jeannette Hillery 303-494-7718

Mindy Maguire 720-301-0089

Susan Selby 970-227-9530

M. Elaine Thomas 719-495-1510

USDF Certified Instructors

Training - Second

Julie Burt 719-372-6270

Jill Cantor Lee 970-209-8491

RaeAnn Cook 970-225-1408

Janet "Dolly" Hannon 303-279-4546

Ellene Kloepfer 303-828-3879

Clayton Martin 719-379-3716

Kathryn Meistrell 303-550-5130

Bridget Milnes 303-660-4986

Kristi Wysocki 303-648-9877

Training - Fourth

Simone Ahern 719-749-9274

Nancy DeVaney 303-681-2516

Loma Fowler 303-841-0417

Sarah Martin 719-379-3716

Kathy Simard 720-981-4448

Melinda Weatherford 970-484-5218

"Some folks get credit for having horse sense that hain't ever had enough money to make fools of themselves."

-K. Hubbard

Shows and Events

All shows are RMDS recognized except schooling shows.

NOVEMBER 2010

- 2 **Janet Foy Clinic, Reiterhof Ranch, Franktown, CO**
Contact Jody, 303-646-9520, jbdrrsj@hotmail.com
- 6-7 **Hilda Gurney Symposium, 8th Heaven Farms, Castle Rock**
Contact Cindi O'Shea, 720-951-3517, cindioshea@yahoo.com
- 13 **RMDS Board of Governors Meeting and Awards Banquet, Sheraton Denver Tech Center Hotel, Englewood, CO**
Contact Cindi O'Shea, cindioshea@yahoo.com, 720-951-3517
- 14 **Ft Collins Equestrian Center Schooling Show, Ft Collins, CO**
Contact Lisa Oppenheimer, 970-567-8619, fceinfo@aol.com
- 16 **Janet Foy Clinic, Reiterhof Ranch, Franktown, CO**
Contact Jody, 303-646-9520, jbdrrsj@hotmail.com

DECEMBER 2010

- 7 **Janet Foy Clinic, Reiterhof Ranch, Franktown, CO**
Contact Jody, 303-646-9520, jbdrrsj@hotmail.com
- 11-12 **USDF L Program, Session B, Central Arizona Riding Academy, Arizona**
Contact Dorie Vlatten Schmitz, dvschmitz@msn.com

JANUARY 2011

- 29 **Judges Continuing Education**
Contact Heather Petersen, 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 29-30 **USDF L Program, Session C, Central Arizona Riding Academy, Arizona**
Contact Dorie Vlatten Schmitz, dvschmitz@msn.com

FEBRUARY 2011

- 12 **Show Managers Training & TD Clinic, Comfort Suites, Castle Rock, CO**
Contact Heather Petersen, 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net

APRIL 2011

- 2-3 **USDF L Program, Session D1, Central Arizona Riding Academy, Arizona**
Contact Dorie Vlatten Schmitz, dvschmitz@msn.com
- 16 **RMDS Show at Sun Prairie I, Peyton, CO**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com
- 24 **Boulder Valley Spring Fling, Singletree Farm, Boulder, CO**
Contact Beth Geier, 303-673-9840

MAY 2011

- 27 **Dressage in the Plains I, Sun Prairie Farms, Peyton, CO, USEF**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com
- 28-29 **Dressage in the Plains II, Sun Prairie Farms, Peyton, CO, USEF**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com

JUNE 2011

- 3 **High Prairie Dressage I, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO, USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com

- 4 **High Prairie Dressage II, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO, USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com
- 5 **High Prairie Dressage III, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO-USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com
- 18-19 **USDF L Program, Session D2, Central Arizona Riding Academy, Arizona**
Contact Dorie Vlatten Schmitz, dvschmitz@msn.com

JULY 2011

- 2 **RMDS Show at Sun Prairie II, Peyton, CO**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com
- 3 **RMDS Show at Sun Prairie III, Peyton, CO**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com

AUGUST 2011

- 5 **High Prairie Dressage I, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO-USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com
- 6 **High Prairie Dressage II, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO-USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com
- 7 **High Prairie Dressage III, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO-USEF**
Contact Glenda McElroy, 818-841-3554, glenda@glenroys.com
- 6-7 **Cheyenne Dressage & Eventing Dressage Show, Cheyenne, WY, USEF**
Contact Rowena Heckert, 307-632-4151, rlheckert@msn.com
- 13-14 **Dressage at Sun Prairie-Peyton, CO, USEF**
Contact Simone Ahern, 719-749-9274, simone@sunprairiestables.com
- 28 **Boulder Valley So Long to Summer, Somerset Farm, Longmont, CO**
Contact Beth Geier, 303-673-9840

SEPTEMBER 2011

- 22 **RMDS Sport Horse Open Show & Championships, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO, USEF**
Contact Heather Petersen, 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net
- 23-25 **RMDS Championships, Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO, USEF**
Contact Heather Petersen, 719-683-8435, slush@drgw.net

NOVEMBER 2011

- 4-6 **USDF L Program, Final Exam, Central Arizona Riding Academy, Arizona**
Contact Dorie Vlatten Schmitz, dvschmitz@msn.com
- 12 **Board of Governors' Meeting and Awards Banquet**
NCDA Chapter host

For updates to the calendar, go to www.rmids.org
THESE EVENTS ARE DEPENDENT UPON VOLUNTEERS. IF YOU
CAN HELP, PLEASE CONTACT THE EVENT ORGANIZER!

RMDS SPONSORED EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

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

2011

| | |
|------------|--|
| Jan 29 | Judges' Continuing Education with Sandy Hotz |
| Feb 12 | Show Management & TD Training-Comfort Suites |
| Sept 22 | RMDS Breed Show |
| Sept 23-25 | RMDS Championships |
| Nov 12 | Board of Governors' Meeting & Awards Banquet-NCDA host |

For details on these and other RMDS events:

Contact Heather Petersen (Education Chairman), 719-683-8435, slush@drwg.net, read the Centaur, go to www.rmids.org, or contact the RMDS Central Office at 720-890-7825, rmids@rmids.org.

*"The horse symbolizes beauty, grace, and power,
and a rider feels part of that spirit."*

-Unknown



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Merlin's Story -Dee Kirby, Spoiled Rotten Sporthorses @ Hidden Ridge Farm

PART I, April 10th, 2007

I always dread Monday mornings at my job as manager of KC Kyle's barn, *Hidden Ridge Farm*. Mondays always bring extra work that didn't get done over the weekend. As I went about my feeding routine, I was mentally taking note of the extra chores that needed to be done. I climbed up the hill behind the house to finish feeding when I noticed my horse Merlin standing at the back of his run with his head down and his hip cocked. I thought, "that's weird," he usually has his head over the panel looking down the hill at me as I come to feed. However, I didn't think any more of it and proceeded to feed all the other horses in the shed-row.

I came around the corner to feed Merlin and then I saw it: the entire 10x30ft. run was covered in blood, and he was holding his left hind leg up. He was obviously bleeding from this leg, but I couldn't tell from where. I heard KC come out of the house and I hollered at her to come help me. She came around the corner, saw the blood, and ran to the tack room to get bandage supplies while I got a halter on Merlin. As KC tried to get a bandage on the leg, Merlin tried to pick that leg up and promptly fell over. Luckily, KC was able to get out of the way in the nick of time. She proceeded to finish bandaging him, then I attempted to get him down the hill to a stall in the main barn.

There was so much blood we couldn't really tell how Merlin was injured. KC went into the house to try to contact any local vet while Merlin and I crept down the hill. We made it to a stall and I tried desperately to get the bleeding to stop. I applied 12 vet wraps (yep, 12) to the bandage, and blood was still pumping through the bandage. KC came down to the barn to report that no vet was within 1

hour of the barn. I don't remember why, but I happened to have arrived at the barn that morning with my own truck and trailer already hooked up. KC told me to get him on the trailer and head to Littleton Large Animal Clinic as I was closer to the clinic than any other vet was to me, and we weren't sure how much longer Merlin was going to survive because so much blood had been lost.

Being the well-mannered boy that he was, Merlin trustingly hobbled up onto my stock trailer. I didn't dare tie him in case he collapsed on the way, so I turned him loose and jumped in the truck. I proceeded as quickly but as carefully as I could to LLAC, which is normally a 45 minute drive from the barn. On the way I made two phone calls; one to my sister and the other to my good friend, asking them both to start a prayer chain as I thought I was losing Merlin.

I arrived at LLAC and backed up to the examining room door. They had been alerted to my arrival by a phone call from KC. Merlin had survived the trip and we finally got him into the exam room. Dr. Storey was the vet available to look at him along with several assistants. (I will always remember the professionalism of the staff at LLAC.) Merlin was difficult to examine as he kept lifting that hind leg and kicking out. It was a symptom of a much larger problem we were later to learn.

LLAC immediately started fluids and took a blood count. While waiting for results, the blood-soaked bandage was removed and the injury cleaned and examined. It was determined that he had sliced through two veins below the fetlock. I waited to hear if the joint or any tendons/ligaments had been compromised. If this had been the case, I would have put him down on the spot. Praise God, it ap-

peared that only flesh and the two veins had been cut. Dr. Storey put a few quick stitches in to stop the bleeding.

Merlin's blood test came back showing a PCV (Packed Cell Volume) of 35 which is quite normal. However, Dr. Storey informed me that the spleen has an amazing ability to squish itself flat pumping out every available red blood cell in times of acute trauma, and that she expected this number to drop rapidly. I was asked if he was insured (he wasn't) as a blood transfusion was likely to be needed. This costly and risky procedure was not something I was willing to do. I believe in giving horses the best chance at survival, however I draw the line at certain things, and a blood transfusion is one of them. Merlin was stabilized and taken down to the barn and I basically went back to work to wait. He would need to stabilize his blood count before he could be laid down to suture the hind leg. His PCV value dropped all the way down to 11. I believe anything under 12 should have required a transfusion, especially considering his 16.3-hand frame. This was to become the least of his problems.

I was called later that day around 5:00pm to say that Merlin appeared to be colicking. They originally thought that his kicking out at his belly was because he was uncomfortable from the injury and pain in his leg. They later figured out that colic was the source of the kicking. Apparently what happens with major blood loss is that the large organs start to shut down to preserve as much blood for the vital organs as possible. It was determined through further examination that Merlin's large colon had shut down and was impacted. The large colon is the first organ to shut down in traumatic blood loss.

I came back to the clinic where Merlin had been moved to the ICU barn. He was in extreme pain and it was terrible to watch. Drugs were applied judiciously due to his compromised vascular system, and a sedative that should have provided at least 30 minutes of pain relief was only lasting around 10 minutes. He was not a candidate for surgery due to his blood loss, and he would never survive anesthesia. An ultrasound was performed to determine if the large colon was viable. It was hard to tell, but it did look like part of the large colon had died. I asked them to “throw the kitchen sink” at him with regards to painkillers as he was either going to die from pain or die from an overdose. I voted for the overdose!

I expected to lose my horse that night. I left the clinic at 10:00pm and stayed at my sister-in-law's house near the clinic. I laid on the couch with my cell phone on my chest waiting for the phone call that would end Merlin's life.

PART II

I dozed fitfully through the night surprised and relieved that my phone still hadn't rung. I went to the clinic at 6:00am and snuck into the ICU barn. Merlin was standing quietly in his stall attached to an IV and fluids. There was no poop in his stall. I was relieved but concerned that he might still be in trouble. When the vet tech came into the barn she joyously announced that he had made it through the night. I agreed, but mentioned there was no manure yet. She said that he had passed the impaction and that it had already been cleaned up! Hallelujah! He was on his way! God is amazing and gracious.

Another miracle occurred when Merlin appeared to be surviving in spite of a PCV of 11. It was determined that if he could bring his PCV up a little they would try to repair the laceration on Wednesday. So Wednesday came and he was brought into the recov-

ery room to be laid down with drugs that would put him out long enough to get the wound sutured, but hopefully not long enough to cause further duress to his system. We were also concerned that we might find joint or tendon/ligament involvement upon further examination.

He was laid down without incident and Dr. Storey removed the bandage and cleaned up the wound. We decided to tap the joint and we were both relieved to confirm that the joint had not been compromised. Dr. Storey sutured up the injury and applied a cast from the hoof up to the bottom of the fetlock. She said the cast would immobilize the area and hasten healing. In two weeks he should be totally healed. Merlin had other ideas.

The next ordeal was very hard to watch. It took him 45 minutes to finally stand from the sedation. He was so weak that several attempts to stand failed. The crew at Littleton was amazing in assisting him in getting up yet allowing him to sit back down when he couldn't make it. What a terrible thing to watch! Having worked at LLAC years ago as an assistant, I was very aware of the horrible things that can happen when a horse comes out of sedation and tries to stand. Praise God again, Merlin was very sensible, did not thrash or panic, and finally stood on all fours.

Merlin was led gingerly back down to ICU to start his full recovery. Upon further discussion with Dr. Storey we decided to scope him for ulcers. Merlin has always been a little bit of a stress bunny, and in hindsight he had been displaying the classic signs of ulcers: mushy manure, minor little colics, hard to keep weight on, and poor hoof health.

We scoped him and determined he had moderate to severe ulcers. UGH! It all made sense. We figured he was having another mild belly ache the night he got hurt. As he was kicking out he had put his foot through the sheet metal wall of his shelter.

We started him on the very expensive treatment of a month of Gastrogard. So we were dealing with low blood count, ulcers, and a severe laceration to the left hind pastern. Miracle Merlin appeared to be surviving it all! He was still not eating a whole lot, but not showing any more signs of colic.

Friday came and due to his low PCV count, it was determined that he should stay the weekend and come home on Monday. I got a call at home Saturday morning asking if it was at all possible for me to come get Merlin that day. Apparently he went from bright-eyed and bushy-tailed to depressed and grumpy. They decided he was done with clinic life and needed to come home!

I jumped in the truck and headed into town, picked him up, and brought him back to the barn. He was acting a little restless and of course I was watching him like a hawk! I rejoiced at every piece of manure he deposited in his stall! The plan was to bring him back in two weeks to have the cast removed. I was told that by June, he should be back to normal work. Again, Merlin had other ideas.

Merlin decided on that Tuesday that he could not tolerate the cast any longer. It was rubbing against his fetlock and making the skin raw. He was kicking out with that leg every few minutes and I was afraid of colic. I took him back to the clinic and it was decided to remove the cast at that point. Due to the fact that the wound was not totally healed, I was in for many bandage changes. The bandage was super huge to try to immobilize the joint so the stitches wouldn't pull out. And of course all the bad things that can happen did.

A large portion of the sutured skin died and sloughed off. That is a disgusting and smelly event, I can tell you! Proud flesh followed that. I was entertained with many home remedies of proud flesh concoctions from anyone and everyone who heard about my predicament. And then

Continued on page 21



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there was the fact that Merlin was not too thrilled having this leg messed with continuously and protested with several swipes at my head during the bandage changing process! Can you blame him?

Six weeks, and many, many bandage changes and checkups later, he was given a clean bill of health. The wound was healed as best as it was going to heal and he was sound on it. He had spent 3 months in a stall and had handled it all like a sane, calm, trooper! He was ready to go back to work, right? Wrong.

PART III

I started hand walking Merlin to try to redevelop some stamina. We hand walked and grazed for awhile and then I started turning him out by himself. He seemed to be handling that all quite well so I started riding him just at the walk. He would get so out of breath with this that I decided to give him some more time off. June came and went. I decided to take him out to my friend's house who has several large pastures and many horses that Merlin was already familiar with from prior jaunts in her fields. I thought he would be able to take some mental time off as well as physical, and romp around the pasture.

WRONG! Merlin was so stressed at being back at Jacque's that he panicked and jumped a 4-strand wire fence. He didn't quite make it and ended up cutting the same hind leg across the hock! Go figure the luck! Amazingly, God was watching again and this wound was not deep or severe enough to require stitches. I decided to bring him back to the barn as it was apparent my idea of giving Merlin a pasture vacation was not on his agenda of fun things to do!

He came back to the barn and to a stall with daily turnout. I tried starting him back to work several times over the summer and fall only to dis-

cover he just didn't have the physical stamina. Even though his blood work showed normal PCV counts at this point and everything else seemed normal, he was just not ready to be back at work. Finally, in March 2008, almost a year after his original injury, I started him back very slowly and was relieved to find that he could walk up the hill from the outdoor arena to the barn and not be panting!

I very carefully started him back to work, and in July 2008 we went to our first show at 1st level. We attended one more show and qualified for Championships, then went to Championships and placed a respectable 10th in the open division. Merlin came home to my house this time with a buddy of his and spent the winter in pasture at my house. I brought him back to the barn in February 2009. We showed 2nd level and placed 4th at Championships that fall.

We are in the process of mastering changes with our eyes on completing our Bronze medal this summer. It's amazing how quickly Merlin came

back once he decided he was ready. I monitor his environment and feed to help keep ulcer attacks at bay, and I thank God every day I get to ride him and every day that he is alive. I was later told by Dr. Storey that he should not have lived. Medically he was a goner! Apparently he was meant to live, and to what end is still to be determined. In the meantime, when you see a short rider on a big black and white pinto this summer, you'll know that you are in the presence of a real miracle; Miracle Merlin!

Merlin and I would like to thank Dr. Storey and all the staff at LLAC for their professionalism and compassion during this ordeal. And to all my friends, family and others who prayed for Merlin's recovery, we thank you as well. And finally, praise God for showing his awesome power and mercy in saving Merlin.

UPDATE

Merlin earned his final score at 3rd level for his Bronze at the July Somerset show! 🐾



Dee Kirby and Merlin. Wishing them all the best!



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Dr. Gerd Heuschmann Meets Susan Harris

-Mary Rae, President, RMDs Arkansas Valley Chapter

I looked forward to attending the *Dr. Gerd Heuschmann Meets Susan Harris* clinic ever since I received an email flyer about it. I have admired Dr. Heuschmann (an accomplished German veterinarian and rider) since I learned of his efforts to curtail the detrimental training of sport horses, and rewarding improper and harmful dressage movements by judges in the show ring. My budget did not allow me to attend the entire weekend so I decided I would get the most from Dr. Heuschmann's lecture on biomechanics of the horse, and Susan Harris's presentation on the *Visible Horse*. I have been a literal student of dressage for over twenty-five years as I really learn best through understanding the mental side of dressage. I do research through articles, books and videos, and then apply what I learn to my riding (aka geek riding – a pathology common to scientists who ride). I also had my doubts about how much I would benefit from auditing other people's rides. How many people would have my type of horse with his particular conformation and temperament?

Fortunately for me, there was a mix-up in my registration for this event and I missed the lecture presentation. The only alternative was to attend the audit session. I say fortunately because it turned out to be a great learning experience and I didn't miss Ms. Harris's presentation because it was moved to the audit session due to a cancelled flight. Also, I had viewed Dr. Heuschmann's video *Tug of War* so I was familiar with some of his basic concepts. Still I questioned how much could be gained by watching riders struggle to incorporate new knowledge applicable to their horse.

Although initially disappointed, a fellow club member was encouraging when she said she liked to see how he had riders correct their horses. So I cancelled other plans (attending the

Rockies game) and went to the clinic hoping to learn as much as possible. I was amazed how much useful information I learned, and now my challenge is to condense all the knowledge gained into a short report.

The format of the ride sessions was very conducive to the education of both riders and auditors. Handouts introduced each of the riders, gave a brief background of them and their horses, plus problems to be addressed, if any. The rider would ride briefly for about ten minutes, and Dr. Heuschmann would evaluate the pair. Dr. Heuschmann would then get on the horse. What a bonus for the rider!

This soon proved to be a very efficient process. Since most of the horses had various problems with tension in multiple parts of their body (which greatly interfered with their performance), it would have been very ineffective to try to train the rider in the time allotted, and at the same time, to relax the horse.

Dr. Heuschmann would use various mild aids such as lifting the inside rein, which resulted in the horse mouthing the bit (or talking); the leg without any spurs; mild touches of the whip; and exercises like turn on the forehand, shoulder-fore, and shoulder-in to supple and relax the horse. He was careful to note that if a horse was tense in the back the rider should stay off the back and use the two-point position until the horse relaxed. Any artificial and premature raising of the head and neck (including bending at the C2, C3 vertebrae), incorrectly interpreted by many to be a sign of collection, would also produce detrimental tension in the back, plus other problems. Therefore, he encouraged the horse to move very forward in both the trot and canter allowing them to relax in the back, and soon the horse became willing to stretch down and forward.

According to Dr. Heuschmann "you do not take contact, you accept it." "Anything in front of the saddle is a gift." He maintains if you have to take contact, it is worthless.

Another priority was to get control of the hindquarters. His riding was a fantastic exhibition of riding the horse from "back to front." He would ignore the horse's head and neck position until he had the horse responding correctly with its hindquarters and stepping in under its center of gravity. Horses who were stiff in their hindquarters "protested loudly" through various antics like kicking and refusals to move, with one horse insisting on backing while bracing her front legs forward. His aids were perceptibly mild yet the horses responded rather quickly.

Once the horses were traveling relaxed and balanced, they were returned to their riders. All the riders noticed a remarkable difference with one rider exclaiming with delight how light her horse was and how she had worked for several years trying to get this feeling from her horse. This format allowed riders to immediately experience the results of his methods and was also a great demonstration to the auditors how it was achieved. It was remarkable this lightness was achieved at all because his aids were so mild. It was difficult to comprehend how his understated methods could make such a big transformation. I had to actually ask him to describe his hand movements and he showed me what light tension he applied to the reins.

Auditors were treated to a bonus by Susan Harris's presentation on the *Visible Horse*. After viewing the rides during the day, it was great to view the horse's skeletal anatomy and muscle structure and to listen to her explain the movements of the horse. Although originally planned to be coordinated with Dr. Heuschmann's

Continued on page 25



RMDS Membership Form

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Individual Membership - \$55.00 (October – December) **(\$60 after January 1-late fee)**
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January, 2010

From the Horse's Mouth

An Interview with Cavalia Founder Normand Latourelle

Cavalia

- Julia McSherry

Continued from page 23

lecture, it proved very useful as her information corroborated and in some cases, expanded, the explanations given by Dr. Heuschmann during the day.

Another bonus was the guest rider/speaker, Mendolin Mendoza. An accomplished rider, he immigrated to Australia as a young man with a group of Andalusians he was in charge of. He voiced his support of Dr. Heuschmann's methods and proceeded to demonstrate them on his ride.

I have to admit I learned a lot by auditing, in some ways more than the riders themselves. I recognize it had to be a big challenge to try to change old habits, stay relaxed (a common comment to many riders), and still try to look good for such a renowned clinician. However, Dr. Heuschmann was very understanding of their situation and informed everyone they would have to deal with "not looking good" until they became comfortable with their changes.

I left Saturday's clinic and rushed home to ride for several hours utilizing the information presented. Yes, riding the two-point position in a very forward pace, both trot and canter, for a considerable length of time is tiring (Dr. Heuschmann assured me the next day it also has benefits for the rider as it develops a nice gluteus maximus.), but it is rewarding as the horse does relax and progress is made quickly.

The true test is the implementation of his methods. I have used them on six of my horses at various stages of training, and have experienced great results. Although Dr. Heuschmann campaigns against severe methods designed to accelerate a horse's preparation for the show ring, I have found his mild methods encourage rapid responses and a correct way of going, making a fit and happy horse. 🐾

Normand Latourelle, the Canadian cofounder of Cirque du Soleil, who went on to create *Cavalia: A Magical Encounter Between Horse and Man*, never rode a horse. But he realized the magic of horses when he added one to a performance and saw how he was stealing focus from the performers. He decided to bring in more horses.

His entertainment philosophy is to push the limits of what can be accomplished on stage through acrobats, high technology, music, and now... the magic of horses. He integrates the disciplines of acrobatics, dance, dressage, jumping, special affects, and trick riding. He is not concerned with how perfect the horse is but how artistic.

"We support giving what the horse wants to give," he explains, "We don't push them too much, we want them to be happy on stage." And off stage too, the horses have the best care and facilities, and of course a full team of trainers, grooms, stable manager, vets, and farriers. There are 20 grooms for 50 horses. Locally, an additional 80 people are hired during the performance. When living inside during performance time, they are hand walked outdoors for at least an hour a day. In between shows (they move five to six times a year), they are on pasture for ten days.

In the show, there are some moments when the horses are totally free. "All my life, I have been attracted to aesthetics," Latourelle says. "The horse is the most beautiful animal on earth. They don't need costumes or make-up."

Latourelle emphasizes that everything they have created is done for the horse. They are protected. For ex-



Normand Latourelle with one of the stars of Cavalia.

ample, they have their own mixture of safe, dust-free footing. During the shows, humans give cues rather than relying on digital cues. In Cirque du Soleil, for example, lighting and cues for music and performer entrance on stage are handled by computers. In Cavalia, everyone follows the horse. Sometimes the free horses are on stage for a shorter or longer time than anticipated. Performers improvise and show times vary 5-10 minutes depending on the actions of the horses on stage.

Cavalia's troop consists of twelve breeds of horses used in the show. This includes Spanish, Quarter Horse, Arabian, Lusitano, Paint, Appaloosa, Belgian, Canadian, Comtois, Criollo, Percheron, and Warmblood.

Oh, and regarding the acrobat on tip-toe on the head of a rider...special effects are a big part of the show too. "I like to dream big," says Latourelle. "For me, everything comes back to raw emotion in order to transport spectators to dream-like settings." That's why there are thrilling moments with acrobats on horses.

Cavalia, the spectacular equestrian multimedia odyssey, marks his most recent success. And, he is planning more shows with horses. Stay tuned; meanwhile don't miss the show. 🐾



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The **December Centaur** will be devoted to *Thank You, Appreciation, and Congratulations*. Ad submission and payment deadlines are November 10th. Thank your trainer, send a note of appreciation to your barn, congratulate your friend or client who did a spectacular job this year, and wish the RMDS membership and your fellow riders a joyous Holiday Season. Get your well wishes out there!

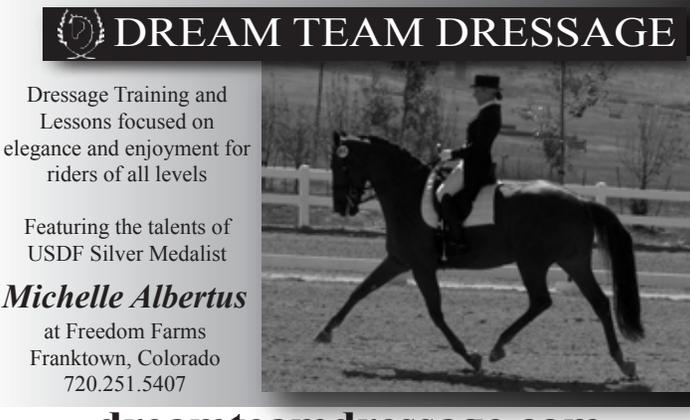


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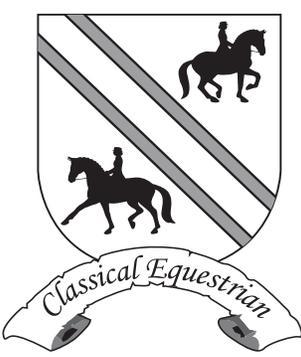
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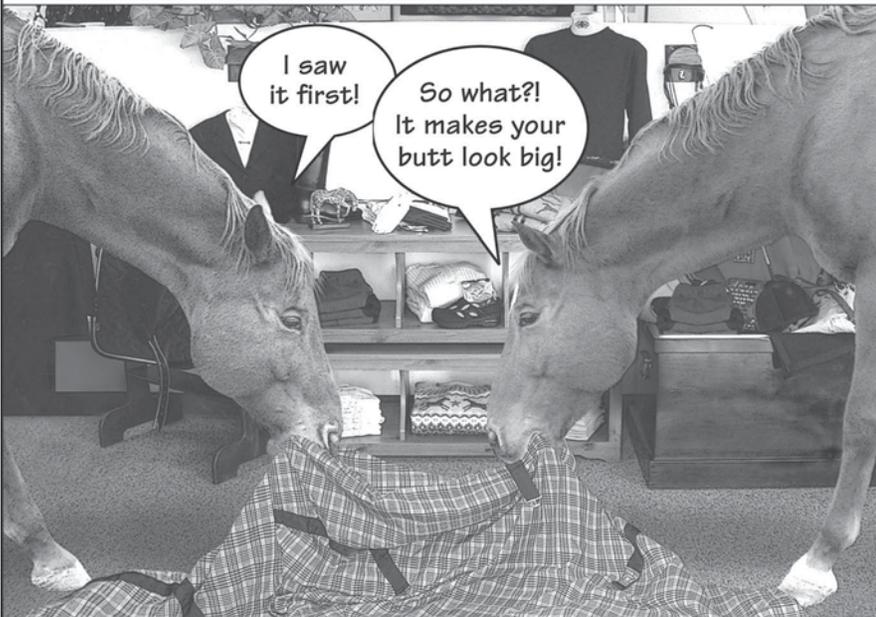


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