

Dedicated to Promoting the Equestrian Sport of Dressage in USDF Region 8



Come Grow with Us!

# The Central Vermont Dressage Association

www.cvda.org

## The Half Halt

February 2011 Newsletter

CVDA, Inc. is a USDF Group Member Organization

All CVDA members are USDF Group Members

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year CVDA!!

The new year brings many "new" things for CVDA: New tests, the new USEF rule regarding protective headgear, new award division constellation, new members and a new Grant Program (replacing the Scholarship Program) and, of course, a new Omnibus of CVDA events coming to mailboxes soon. 2011 Promises to be a wonderful new year for CVDA and its members. The feedback from the member survey has been an asset to the planning process for the Board. Camp is back for 2011, and we are currently working out the details of our clinic offerings. This year will be the 10<sup>th</sup> and last Kathy Mann Memorial Clinic which will be structured to be very cost friendly, with the goal that all adult amateurs interested apply to ride.

The year 2011 will also be the year of CVDA hosting clinics geared to establishing and reestablishing "the basics." The membership survey really spoke to us about the need to have affordable events for our members with an emphasis on learning "the basics" as the springboard for future learning. CVDA will be holding 2 *Back to Basics Clinics* especially geared for those who have never ridden in a clinic before, are new to the sport, are ready to move up the training scale or may be having training issues. These clinics will not be just for the novice rider, but all novice riders are encouraged to apply to ride as both of these clinics will be a great and affordable opportunity.

Another new change for CVDA will be to offer auditing at most of our educational events at no cost to the membership (camp is one exception). The ability to audit at no charge will hopefully make the educational events we offer even more accessible to you. So pay close attention to the Auditing Fee information listed for each event in the Omnibus, as most events will no longer charge a fee for auditing.

To prepare you for show season, we will be hosting a new test educational event on the weekend of April 2-3 with more detail to follow. This event will be geared for the full circle of participants--riders, trainers, instructors and judges.

So in wishing everyone "A Happy New Year" ... Here's to "renewed" appreciation for all of our CVDA friends and volunteers, our horses, and for the ability to be a part of this sport. Cheers!

Terri Satterlee, President

### CVDA Dates:

May 7 Critique Day

May 8 Spring Schooling Show

June 14-15 Dressage Camp

July 9 Summer Schooling Show

August 27-28 Kathy Mann Clinic

September 25 Fall Schooling Show

November 5 Annual Dinner & Auction



### Other Notable Dates:

March 5 ENYDCTA Margaret Freeman Clinic

April 9-10 ENYDCTA Kathy Rowse Clinic

April 30-May 1 ENYDCTA Lendon Gray Clinic

May 14-15 NEDA Spring Dressage Show

June 17-19 GMHA June Dressage Show

July 22-24 GMHA Dressage Days

September 13-18 NEDA Fall Festival

October 1-2 GMHA Fall Dressage Show

## Lost in Region 8--A Trip to the USDF Convention

by Mary S. Piro

I wasn't supposed to go to the convention. Normally, the President of CVDA is our official delegate, so as Vice President, I didn't expect to be in attendance. Unfortunately, family matters made it difficult for our President (Terri Satterlee) to be out of town, so I offered to go in her place. I had been to one USDF Convention, when my daughter received her Silver Medal at Disney World, and I expected this to be every bit as "magical." I was wrong.

Instead of Mickey Mouse, I was greeted in Jacksonville by a sea of strange faces. It was disconcerting to realize that I knew no one at the convention. I ate my first dinner and breakfast alone, staring at the other tables for any hint of recognition. Although some people looked vaguely familiar, I couldn't match a name with a face.

After registration, at least we all had name tags, which were just small enough to be unreadable for my 50-year-old-plus eyes without getting awfully chummy with the wearer's chest. I looked forward to the Region 8 meeting, where I hoped to see people I knew through many years of being a NEDA member and attending dressage shows in New England. When I reached the room, there were a few people in the back rows, all of them strangers. At first, I was afraid I was in the wrong room, but I just sat down and waited to find Kathy McHugh, our new NEDA President.

I was under instruction (by both Terri Satterlee and my daughter) to introduce myself to Kathy and join the NEDA group. It was a great plan, except I couldn't recognize Kathy, and there were no introductions at the meeting. By the time Fern Feldman, Region 8 Director, entered the room, many chairs were filled and the discussion began immediately. Fern asked many questions: Did we all understand the new "Director-at-large" issue which was coming before the BOG? Which committee meetings were we going to cover? Were we ready to

meet the candidates opposing Beth? Raise your hands if you're a PM!

My head began spinning. BOG? I could guess that meant "Board of Governors," but which meetings should I attend? Who were all these people? Who is Beth, and what is she running for? At least I thought I knew one answer: OF COURSE I was a PM, as I've never been a morning person!

Over the course of the meeting, I slowly realized that I was a PM (Participating Member) of the USDF, but not at the convention, where I was actually a GM (Group Member). And really, I was only a GM delegate by proxy. And although I am also a GM of NEDA, I was really only a GM of CVDA at this convention. By the time I left the meeting, I felt like I had been plucked out of my comfy, horsey existence and deposited in an advanced physics class at MIT. My eyes must have been spinning around in my head and sweat appearing on my brow, when the woman seated next to me asked, "Are you new here?"

Thank you to Elaine Donoghue of the Charles River Dressage Association (CRDA) for recognizing panic when she saw it. Over the next few hours, Elaine explained that the convention used to have an orientation for new delegates, but there was nothing like that on the agenda this year. She asked me if I had gotten my official delegate designation, which of course I knew nothing about, and explained what it was and where to get it. Then she went over the committee meetings with me, helped me choose which ones to attend, and invited me to lunch. What a life saver!

Elaine also helped me find and introduce myself to the real Kathy McHugh, who then took me under her wing and brought me into the NEDA nest. Once I met the whole NEDA crowd, I got the opportunity to ask many questions and begin to really understand what was happening at the convention. I learned that as a GM delegate I would represent the members of CVDA and be assigned a certain number of votes, which would be tallied by computer at the BOG meeting.



(Photo: Bruce Lawrie)

I also got the chance to attend meetings which addressed some issues we are struggling with in our home regions. Mandatory helmet use, which is causing much debate on-line and in the equestrian media, was nearly unanimously supported at the convention. I actually only met one man who voiced his opposition to a new helmet rule, and he was an older adult amateur who said he only rode schoolmasters.

Several other meetings yielded surprises as well. The Adult Programs Committee discussed the success of the Adult Team Competitions which were held in every region except Region 8. In fact, Region 9 had TWO such competitions in 2010. When I inquired why we didn't have such an event, no one seemed to know. Perhaps this is something we can add to our regional roster in the future.

One of our regional treasures, Lois Yukins, spoke at the Judges Committee meeting and encouraged people to send in their score sheets from competitions if there are concerns about judging. For example, if there are no comments given for scores below a "6," or if the scores are not representative of the comments given, or if a score sheet has any comments which a competitor feels are highly inappropriate, he or she should send them to the "Licensed Officials Committee" of the USEF. It is only through this written proof that officials can be sanctioned.

After these meetings, it was on to the Board of Governors. The BOG is the meat and potatoes of the convention, and it was fascinating to be a part of it, especially in the NEDA front row, center seats! I was amused to be sitting next to Beth Jenkins as she nervously revised her speech for the office of Vice President, and I was thrilled when she eloquently delivered an excellent speech which led to her decisive victory. Region 8 members should be very proud of her election.

I understand this convention was much less contentious than 2009, when the USDF was considering performance requirements for moving up the levels. There were only a few tense moments over budgetary issues, such as what to do with the two dollars, out of the ten dollar regional qualifier fee, which has been designated for a non-existent National Championship. Most of the voting was nearly unanimous and passed on voice vote alone.

I learned a great deal about how the USDF functions at this convention. I was surprised at how few attendees were young or high performance riders. Most of the people at the convention were USDF committee members and delegates from GMOs. In fact, none of the riders from our WEG team was present, which I found rather disappointing, as all the event riders from the WEG gave a panel discussion at the USEA convention.

I would encourage all CVDA members to become more involved with our GMO and Region 8 in general. Although NEDA is a real powerhouse in the USDF, it is important to note that Region 8 is made up of 17 GMOs, and only CVDA, CRDA and the Maine Dressage Society sent delegates to the convention. It is unfortunate that much of Region 8 abdicates its authority and representation to NEDA. In fact, Region 8 does not even have an updated website or listing of the GMOs in the area. I hope that CVDA and the other GMOs can encourage a more viable Region 8 in the future, and that we can someday all sit together at the "Region 8" section at the USDF Convention. ❖



## USEF Protective Headgear Rules for Dressage

Effective March 1, 2011

**Protective headgear is defined as a riding helmet which meets or exceeds ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards for equestrian use and carries the SEI tag. The headgear and harness must be secured and properly fitted. Any rider violating this rule at any time must immediately be prohibited from further riding until such headgear is properly in place.**

**Recommendation to competitions:** In order to distinguish riders who are required to wear protective headgear from those who aren't, it is suggested that entry numbers in a different sequence be assigned to the entries in each group (e.g. use numbers from 1-700 for entries where riders must wear protective headgear and use numbers from 800 and above for entries where riders are not required to use protective headgear).

**Short summary statement for use in prize lists:** Effective March 1, 2011, for dressage: Anyone mounted on a horse must wear protective headgear except those riders age 18 and over while on horses that are competing only in FEI levels and tests at the Prix St. Georges level and above (including FEI Young Rider Tests, the USEF Developing Prix St. Georges Test and the USEF Brentina Cup Test).

**Effective March 1, 2011, the following rules apply to Dressage Competitions and Regular Competitions holding Dressage classes:**

1. Riders under age 18 must wear protective headgear, as defined by DR120.5 and in compliance with GR801, at all times while mounted on the competition grounds. This includes non-competing riders as well as those competing at any level.

2. While on horses competing in national level tests (Fourth Level and below), riders must wear protective headgear as defined by DR120.5 and in compliance with GR801, at all times while mounted on the competition grounds. This includes non-competing riders on horses competing in national level tests.



Deb Smith (trainer) and Leslie Thorsen (rider) wearing helmets at CVDA camp last summer.

3. While on horses competing in USEF or FEI Young Horse Tests, and FEI Junior Tests, riders must wear protective headgear as defined by DR120.5 and in compliance with GR801, at all times while mounted on the competition grounds.

4. All riders competing in Para-Equestrian tests must wear protective headgear at all times while mounted on the competition grounds. Riders who compete in PE tests must wear protective headgear on every horse they ride, no matter the level or test.

5. All riders of any age while on non-competing horses must wear protective headgear at all times while mounted on the competition grounds.

6. All riders under age 18 and all riders while on horses competing in national level tests, who

choose to wear Armed Services or police uniform, must wear protective headgear as defined in DR120.5 and in compliance with GR801 at all times while mounted on the competition grounds. Riders age 18 and over who wear Armed Services or police uniform on horses that are competing only in FEI levels and tests at the Prix St. Georges level and above must wear either protective headgear or the appropriate military/police cap or hat for their branch of service.

7. When a horse is competing in both national and FEI levels or tests (e.g. Fourth Level and PSG), the rider must wear protective headgear at all times when mounted on that horse on the competition grounds and during all tests.

8. While on horses that are competing only in FEI levels and tests at the Prix St. Georges level and above (including FEI Young Rider Tests, the USEF Developing Prix St. Georges Test and the USEF Brentina Cup Test), riders age 18 and over are not required to wear protective headgear in warm up or during competition. However, these riders may wear protective headgear without penalty from the judge.

9. In FEI-recognized (CDI, CDI-Y, CDI-J, CDI-P, etc.) classes, FEI rules take precedence and protective headgear is permitted but not required.

10. All riders while on horses competing in national level classes such as Equitation, Materiale and DSHB Under Saddle are required to wear protective headgear at all times when mounted on the competition grounds.



**CVDA Protective Headgear Policy**

**At any CVDA event, it is compulsory that all riders mounted at any time or anywhere on the competition/event showgrounds,**

**competing at any level, wear properly fitted protective headgear** which meets or exceeds current applicable ASTM/SEI (American Society for Testing and Materials/Safety Equipment Institute) standards for equestrian use and carries the SEI tag "Protective Headgear," with chin strap secured.

**For riders under 18 years of age, it is the responsibility of the parent, guardian or trainer** to insure that the protective headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, and is properly fitted and in good condition. **Riders over age 18 are responsible for their protective headgear complying with the standards.** Central Vermont Dressage Association and the facility hosting the CVDA event are not responsible for checking equestrian helmets for such compliance.

**Any rider without protective headgear will immediately be prohibited from further participation in the CVDA event** until such headgear is properly in place and/or, at CVDA's sole discretion, may be prohibited from participating further in the CVDA event.

Central Vermont Dressage Association and the host facility make no representation or warranty, express or implied, about any protective headgear/equestrian helmet, and cautions riders that death or

serious injury may result despite wearing such protective headgear as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risk and as no helmet can protect against all foreseeable injuries. Dressage Association and the facility hosting the CVDA event are not responsible for checking equestrian helmets for such compliance. ❖

*There is  
something about  
the  
outside of a horse that is  
good for the  
inside of a man.*

*~  
Sir Winston Churchill*

## Horse & Barn Tips from Our Membership

**From Heidi Hauri-Gill of First Choice Riding Academy:** If you want to make a schooling show count.... Braid your horse's mane! Treat it like a REAL show. Without braiding, it is only "half way" schooling. Do you have "half way" practice?? Do you want the judge to "half way" judge you?? Do you want to ride with only half of the show experience? Take the time to really "school!" You will find it works wonders, especially for your photos and pride when you do well! Now about the riders' hairdos...

**From Lisa Geovjian:** I've discovered that "Excaliber" sheath cleaner works well to clean my mare's mammary and external vulvar area, where heavy black smegma accumulates. I just apply a coating of the gel to the area, let it sit a few minutes, then gently peel and scrub the area, followed by rinsing with water.



**From Penny Hoblin:** My motto is "ten minutes is better than no minutes." If you are busy, sick or discouraged, spend 10 minutes with your horse at the walk doing simple things: marching walks on a long rein, leg yield, turn on the forehand, etc. Drop your stirrups and check your position. If weather allows, take your horse outside for a sightseeing walk. If it's an unbacked youngster, take them out to watch the traffic and see the world.

All in all, as Kyra Kirkland says, "Keep it simple." Chances are your 10 minutes will stretch out longer, and both you and your horse will feel refreshed.

## Lightness: An Elusive Quality, by Heiner Jeibmann

Submitted by Lisa Geovjian

The following is information that the German rider, trainer and dressage judge Heiner Jeibmann provides to all his new students. I found it a very practical description of "lightness."

Let me identify what I mean by lightness. I am defining the weight of the connection between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth. We want it to be light, but not so light that we are disconnected. We cannot measure the contact in grams or kilos. It is a feeling in the rider's hands that may differ from day to day with the same horse, and this may even vary during a single training session. The weight should become less as the ride progresses, as long as you do not increase the degree of difficulty; and I certainly do expect the contact to become lighter as the training of the horse advances....Of course, there are moments in which a correction is needed to reestablish balance, or an improvement of the gaits is required that calls for a short but stronger connection than the ideal.

We want our horses to maintain their individuality and their personality along with their spirit of pride. We also expect them to work on their own, yet to be obedient. Such a horse needs to be guided and corrected, and if its intentions and those of the rider are allowed to drift too far apart then the rider must use a measure strong enough to establish that obedience takes precedence over individual expression. At such a half-half, the connection may be very strong. This does not, however, mean that the pair has lost lightness as long as the correction was only momentary and resulted in an improved connection.

The first three steps of the training scale—namely, a steady rhythm, suppleness and connection—give us balance and throughness. Then we add impulsion and we have all of the ingredients to achieve

lightness. Straightness and collection will improve and confirm it even more.

"So" you ask, "since I cannot use a scale to measure the weight in the reins in order to determine whether or not my horse is light, how can I decide that I have reached that Magic Moment?" The instant your horse has moved into self-carriage and throughness, the weight you feel in your hands measures what is lightness for your horse at that stage in his development. As I said earlier, this is not the same for every horse. It even varies with each horse every day or with different movements. Self-carriage indicates that the horse carries itself, and none of its weight is in your hands.

There are, however, other factors that play an important role in the strength of connection. Balance, throughness and impulsion are not exact values. They change from one situation to the next. For example, footing can affect balance, as can the rider. Any outside distraction will change through-

ness, and impulsion may alter from day to day. These are all influences that tend to negatively shape lightness in the connection between horse and rider. The main factor to positively influence the link between the two personalities is the rider herself. It is up to her to establish and maintain balance and throughness and create in the horse the desire to move forward.



Heiner Jeibmann coaching Robert Dover

Next month: Lightness and How to Achieve It

Heiner Jeibmann, of Cologne, Germany and Wellington, Florida, has ridden, judged and trained dressage and jumpers for over 30 years. He was trained by Herbert Rehbein and Hubertus Schmidt, and is currently an S dressage judge in the US, and judges up to Grand Prix in Germany where he has received the Gutachter (Expert) Star. His focus lies in the mental balance of the horse as it relates to the supple seat of the rider and the training scale. ❖

# EPSM

## A Troubling Disorder in Warmbloods

by Lisa Geovjian, DVM

**E**quine Polysaccharide Storage Myopathy is a muscle disorder seen commonly in draft horses, Quarter Horses and warmbloods, as well as other breeds. The disorder has played a large role in my life, because I have had to retire two very talented horses from dressage because of it. And while my "luck" has been unusually bad in this respect, this malady is one that we all should know about and respect.

You've heard it by many names...PSSM, stringhalt, shivers, tying up.... What is it, really?

EPSM and PSSM are two different names for the same phenomenon...based on which laboratory or university has made the diagnosis. It has been around for hundreds of years, but has received much interest in recent years as more and more veterinarians are recognizing it. In fact, approximately two-thirds of all draft-related horses (which includes warmbloods) show evidence of EPSM in their muscle biopsies, according to Beth Valentine, DVM, Phd, who is involved in EPSM research at the University of Oregon.

**Symptoms:** Classic EPSM symptoms in warmbloods, often not recognized until they are old enough to begin work, are:

- Muscle weakness and subsequent poor muscling, especially in the hind quarters
- Gait abnormality or lameness
- Exercise intolerance
- Poor performance
- A peculiar 'hitch' in a rear leg while walking
- Discoordination when backing
- Twitching tailhead
- Difficulty holding up rear legs for shoeing or cleaning feet

**Related disorders:** "Stringhalt" is a related condition which produces abnormal hind leg action, especially when the horse backs or turns. This has been described as a "hitch" or "cramp" in which the horse pauses with its hind leg in the air before

stomping it down. It occurs most often when the horse backs or turns in a tight circle. According to Dr. Valentine, horses thought to have "stringhalt" actually have a form of shivers.

"Shivers" is a condition that looks like stringhalt but may progress to muscle wasting and weakness. These more severe signs may not show up for years. Classic symptoms of shivers are trembling, quivering and abnormally elevating the tail. Dr. Valentine believes that this abnormal action may be caused by a lack of energy to the powerful hind limb muscles.

**Nature of the Condition:** EPSM is a genetic predisposition to fail to digest grains properly resulting in a buildup of glycogen in the muscle of the horse. This leads to damage to muscle tissue during exertion. It is the sugars and starches in grain that cause the problem (i.e., carbohydrates), and this is what leads to the current treatment.

**Treatment and Prognosis:** Therapy involves diet change. By decreasing the amount of dietary carbohydrates and replacing them with fat as an energy source, it is possible to see great improvement within 4-6 months, especially if therapy is started early. It is also possible to see little or no improvement, as was the case with my two horses.

**Diagnosis:** A biopsy can determine whether the horse has EPSM. An endocrine test after exercise may detect EPSM-related muscle damage. Response to proper dietary change is also a means of diagnosis.

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### Real Life Stories . . .

#### Mad Max

by Betsy Siebeck

I bought Max knowing that he had EPSM. Max was extremely stressed by the trip from Holland, to the point of refusing food and water, and six weeks after he arrived he started to show symptoms. Stress, it seems, can bring on clinical signs of

EPSM. It took a while to come up with a diagnosis, but eventually he had a muscle biopsy and responded well to diet change.

After long conversations with Dr. Beth Valentine, who knew his history, I decided that he was a reasonable risk, especially because he had stabilized on the high fat, low carb diet. Risk for me: buying a horse with a known medical problem. Benefit for me: a quality of partner that I could not otherwise afford, with excellent classical dressage training through third level.

I researched the diet possibilities, discovering that there are many possible combinations that can work--tweaking the variables in many different ways. I think there has been an increased understanding about feeding horses too many carbohydrates and there are even more choices now. Max had higher-than-average fat needs, and I also discovered that there is no substitute for oil when trying to add fat to an EPSM horse's diet. This led to challenges because the feed easily became unpalatable.

After some false starts with some not-so-good results, I found a good diet for him that he was willing to eat completely in a 24-hour period. This was key. Along with exercise six days a week, supplements (horses with EPSM need increased vitamins, especially vitamin E and selenium), chiropractic, massage and weekly doses of RVI (which helps with muscle soreness), Max did very well. I think that all of these things helped him, but I don't think they were all necessary to his ability to work comfortably. I was committed to doing anything I could to make life easier for him.

I found that it was important to be vigilant. I learned that EPSM horses need to carry slightly more weight, and I learned what Max looked like if things were not going well with the diet. I had to be aware of the amount and level of work he was doing so that his diet had enough fat to give him the needed energy. I had to keep him off grass in the early spring and fall because that's when the grass has the highest sugar content. He almost never had more than one day off at a time, and he had as much turnout as possible. This sounds like a lot, but it just became second nature after a while and it was just what we did. No big deal, especially since I had such a supportive team at Rivendell.

I had to put Max down because of an entirely different reason. If EPSM were the only problem that he

had, I would do it again. He was a great friend who also happened to be a beautiful, talented horse.

\* \* \*

## Gerlinde

by Lisa Geovjian

When I first learned that my dream horse, Gerlinde, had EPSM, I had never heard of such a thing. I bought her as a three year old, and she was big, black and beautiful with a huge floating trot. She started showing a twitchy tail, quivering hind legs, difficulty backing and holding her rear legs for the farrier, at about four years old. I ignored it, and then denied it, and finally realized that something was wrong. In spite of her talent, she would not muscle up in her hind quarters or her neck, and she even stumbled occasionally when I turned her sharply on her hind legs. A journey through several equine veterinarians finally led me to a muscle biopsy and diagnosis. I embarked on the fat vs. carb journey, but after several years of disappointment I finally admitted to myself that she was not a happy dressage horse and, at eight years old, I found her a new home.

My next dream horse, Fabian, was another big fancy horse who moved like a dream. He was my foal, and from a completely different blood line than Gerlinde. When he first started showing the exaggerated lifting of his hind legs at backing as a two year old, I knew exactly what to fear. A muscle biopsy showed only mild EPSM lesions, so I immediately started him on the high fat/low carb diet and entered a phase of determination and denial. THIS time would be different. Fast forward to six years of age, when in spite of proper diet, exercise and



Fabian: Note the underdeveloped hind quarters.

training, this big boy had a lean, underdeveloped musculature. His lack of response to diet, exaggerated shivering of the hind legs and almost scary inability to support weight when one back leg was lifted to clean feet or be shod led to a fine tuning of the diagnosis to "shivers." Shivers can have a poorer prognosis and does not seem to respond well to diet. Finally, my previously mild and well mannered Fabian began to show training issues as the work started demanding collection and a smaller frame. He couldn't and wouldn't do it, and after many scary sessions with rearing and a refusal to go "forward," I found him a home in the hunter world, where he seems to be thriving in a long, loose frame.

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### Thomas

by Lisa Mair

My horse, Thomas, was diagnosed with "moderate type II PSSM" in October 2010, after more than three years of unexplained poor performance issues. He is currently adjusting to the new low-carb diet, and I am approaching his schooling in a different light. Previously, my trainers would tell me he was "behaviorally challenged," but now I know that he's suffering from a physical condition. I accept that he has good days and bad days, and I try hard to work him in a way that minimizes the bad and accentuates the good. We'll see how that's working this summer!

\* \* \*

### Royal Jazz

by Louise Duda

For Jazz and me, EPSM has been a heartbreaker. I found Jazz when he was coming four. He was a brilliant mover and like a powerful floating dream come true. In hindsight the EPSM signs were already there but were not picked up in the pre-purchase exam.

I took Jazzy to one show at the end of that first summer, and he won every class with scores in the 70s and low 80s; but when winter set in, it was clear that something was increasingly wrong. His movement became stiff and short, back sore, hind legs often held out behind him when his feet were cleaned, unable to back without dragging his feet,

quivering tail, and perhaps most importantly, four sore feet. It took many very good veterinarians and lots of puzzling search before the muscle biopsy confirmed what I suspected as the cause of his problems: EPSM. He had already been placed on a low starch/high fat diet - with no improvement. Dr. Valentine said to just keep adding more oil to his diet, but that just eventually pushed him into insulin resistance.

The sore feet proved to be a puzzler. Was it the result of the EPSM or something else? No one seems to know, and various excellent farriers, bare-foot trimmers and veterinarians have tried to resolve the soreness with no success. The only thing that gave instant but temporary relief was the addition of magnesium to his diet. After I noticed this, I worked with the equine nutritionist Dr. Eleanor Kelton to balance his diet carefully by testing his hay and adding the vitamins and minerals needed. I tried keeping him off all pasture, then limited pasture, then full turnout. I hand walked or longed him daily to keep those muscles working to remove the buildup of polysaccharides.

I had one fairly good summer with Jazz and took him to 3 shows, including the regional championships in first and second level. He won almost every class with high scores, but his back remained sore and it was a downhill battle for us. He could be an effortless, engaged, and supple ride one day, but the pattern became clear that subsequent schools would be tight and crampy. His generally generous disposition would become spooky to avoid work and increasingly belligerent if asked for more engagement. After six years of constant effort to find the way to keep him comfortable, I gave up and Jazz is living relatively happily as a pasture ornament. He does not move around in the pasture much and moves with a short choppy stride, with occasional moments of brilliance that break my heart. I will continue to keep up with new developments in the research and may try yet again to take him off pasture and refine his diet in a slightly different way, but it makes me less crazy to just enjoy him as my very sweet pet. ❖

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## HELP US IMPROVE AND EXPAND YOUR NEWSLETTER

Submitted by Lisa Geovjian, Content Editor

Before I extend the Board's sincere invitation for your contributions to The Half Halt, I'd like to take the time to thank retiring editor and publisher Patrice Vidal. Patrice collected, edited and formatted the many components that make up the newsletter including feature stories, reports on educational events, show results and photos. She has been in charge of The Half Halt for almost seven years, and in the early days, the job included hard copy printing and mailing. In more recent years, of course, most of us receive The Half Halt online, but there are a few hard copy holdouts as well. In all, The Half Halt is sent to more than 150 members. Patrice is passing the baton to Shelly Marquise, who has graciously offered to take on this job in addition to her role as CVDA Board member. Thank you, Patrice. Your contribution to our organization is much valued and appreciated.

The Board invites you to submit articles in any of the following areas for publication in The Half Halt. If you have other ideas, please let us know! Shelly Marquise puts the newsletters together for us every other month (February, April, June, August, October, December) and the deadline is the 20th of the preceding month. Submit your articles to me, Lisa Geovjian, at [quincymsu@gmail.com](mailto:quincymsu@gmail.com).

**What's up in our membership?:** Information on achievements, acquisitions or noteworthy successes of members.

**Information about CVDA, both promotional and educational:** Answers to other questions about CVDA governance and function that may arise. Feel free to submit questions, for example....: What goes into running a dressage show? What does the Board actually do? How does the Board pick clinicians?

**Articles (and photos) recapping every CVDA sponsored clinic, show and educational event:** Please volunteer to be a "reporter" or submit photos.

**"Passages:"** What have you learned in your dressage life? Where have you been, and where are you going? We hope you'll share your own thoughts on the challenges and efforts to surmount them that are inevitable in the "journey" with our horses.

**"Tip of the Month:"** This column will be entirely dependent on you, the membership. Please send your great ideas!

**"Focus on Volunteers"** as a way to highlight different jobs and to praise members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty—either as an official CVDA volunteer, or in helping a horse friend in need. Please catch your friends doing something good, and let us all know about it.

**"Spotlight on Membership"** which will highlight one of our members each issue, to help us learn more about each other and to share our lives, both horsey and otherwise. Please feel free to send your own bio for publication.

**Other ideas.....please share....**

**Submit articles and photos to Lisa Geovjian at [quincymsu@gmail.com](mailto:quincymsu@gmail.com) or 2643 Sugar Hill Rd., E. Wallingford, VT 05742 (May-October) or 3 Bayview Terrace, Tequesta, FL 33469 (November—April). Every effort will be made to publish articles, but they may be edited for length or clarity.**



# The Half Halt

c/o Shelly W. Marquise  
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**March 20, 2011**