



# The Half Halt

## Central Vermont Dressage Association, Inc.

February 2010 Newsletter

CVDA, Inc. is a USDF Group Member Organization

All CVDA members are USDF Group Members

---

### 2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### CVDA:

|            |                            |
|------------|----------------------------|
| May 1      | Seat Clinic                |
| May 8      | Critique Day               |
| May 9      | Spring Schooling Show      |
| June 15-16 | Dressage Camp              |
| July 17-18 | Kathy Mann Memorial Clinic |
| August 21  | Summer Schooling Show      |
| Sept 26    | Fall Schooling Show        |

#### Other:

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| May 15-16   | NEDA Spring Dressage Show |
| May 29-30   | Dressage at Saratoga      |
| June 18-20  | GMHA June Dressage Show   |
| July 23-25  | GMHA Dressage Days        |
| Sept 14-19  | NEDA Fall Festival        |
| October 2-3 | GMHA Fall Dressage Show   |

*(The Omnibus - which is coming out very soon - will have complete details on all CVDA events)*

---

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To all you hardy Vermonters....spring is just around the corner! And while you may think, "easy for her to say, from sunny Florida", please know that nothing beckons like the warmth of my friends, my farm, and the promise of spring in Vermont.

The CVDA board has been hard at work planning the 2010 calendar, which you will see reflected in this newsletter. The Omnibus of Events will be in your mailbox by March 1, and will detail the shows and educational events offered. In response to your urging, we are bringing back CVDA Dressage Camp, with education, entertainment and opportunities to ride and/or audit for all. "And as a part of our continuing efforts to listen to you, our membership, we will be emailing you a survey of your thoughts and opinions within the next few months. Please help us by taking the time to respond thoughtfully. Stay safe. Stay warm. Ride and be happy.

Lisa Geovjian, President, CVDA

## CVDA Scholarship Application Guidelines

As part of CVDA, Inc.'s mission to "promote the art and sport of dressage," educational scholarships are made available to CVDA members who wish to pursue their training and personal goals in dressage.

### Qualifications:

- 13 years of age or older.
- Active, dues-paying & participating member of CVDA for 3 years or more. (Juniors must have been dues-paying members for 1 year or more.)
- Willingness & desire to share the knowledge gained by the use of the scholarship with CVDA members.
- Preference will be given to members who have made a significant contribution as a volunteer to CVDA.
- Submit written application to CVDA Scholarship Committee Chairman by April 1, 2010 and/or August 1, 2010.

### Applications must include:

- Name, address, phone, and e-mail (if available).
- Applicant's prior experience with horses, dressage, and/or training.
- Applicant's plans for use of the scholarship to secure further dressage training, including time, place, instructor(s), and an estimate of costs.
- Applicant's goals and how the above plans relate to those goals.
- Applicant's previous contributions to CVDA (specific dates, events, etc.).
- Two or more letters of recommendation submitted with your application.

While there are no specific requirements regarding financial need, it is the objective of this program to fund dressage education which would not otherwise be financially possible for the applicant. Please do not apply for funds to support learning opportunities which you are already doing.

Submit written application to CVDA Scholarship Committee Chairman by **April 1, 2010 and/or August 1, 2010.** Contact Sue Schwaiger with questions.

CVDA Scholarship Committee  
Attn: Sue Schwaiger  
3043 Middle Road  
N. Clarendon, VT 05738  
802-773-4352  
Email: [suzschw2@aol.com](mailto:suzschw2@aol.com)

The CVDA Board will choose the recipients(s) and the decision(s) will be final.

# What I Learned at the 2009 USDF Annual Convention and Symposium

By Lisa Geovjian, DVM

USDF held their annual gathering of delegates this past December in Austin, Texas. I had never been to Austin, so this first responsibility of mine as president and representative of CVDA did not seem like it would be a chore. And indeed, in spite of record low temperatures and an unheard of sprinkling of snow, it was a real learning experience for me. I'd like to share some of the nuggets of knowledge I gathered from various dressage luminaries at the convention.

Lois Yukins, on 'Santa Claus' judges: "Judging score discrepancies are as much an ethical issue as a knowledge issue." Overly generous scores are as unacceptable as bad or cruel written comments, and complaints can be sent to USEF for review.

George William, new president of USDF and chair of the USEF CDI Task Force: 20 CDI's (which include one five star) are planned for approval for 2010.

Janet Foy, Co-Chair, Young & Developing Horse Committee of USEF: A new competition category has been added to this program called "Green Grand Prix". It will be an I2/GP test for 8 and 9 year olds.

Axel Steiner: Chair, USEF Test Writing Committee: New dressage tests are being written, to be effective December 1, 2010.

- There will be a maximum of three tests for each level.
- Length of time of tests will change. Training Level 1 will be a maximum of five minutes, all other tests will not run longer than six minutes.
- It will be acceptable to use rising trot though First Level.
- It will be acceptable to ride in a snaffle all the way through Grand Prix.
- An effort has been made to create a more clear difference between the levels, which may be seen most dramatically in Fourth Level vs PSG. Fourth will only contain preparatory pirouettes, and won't contain counting of flying change strides till Fourth 3.

Dr. Hillary Clayton, Equine Veterinarian, Michigan State University, presenting research conducted on force plates by stabilography:

- The horse's center of gravity is underneath us in the saddle. A plumb line dropped from his exact center of gravity puts 58% of his weight on the front legs, and 42% on the hind legs. Consequently, the closer you sit to the withers, the less your horse will hollow his back.
- Side to side stability in your saddle is important because of your horse's relatively narrow base of support.
- Foals develop their "adult" sense of balance by the time they are one month old.
- All horses, at any level, move off from a halt using their front legs. You can help them use their hind legs by thinking of rocking back slightly before the transition from halt.

Jane Savoie, speaking on her Rider Training Scale:

- Goal setting: Don't put a lid on your belief of what you can accomplish
- Belief: Saying "I'll try" indicates a lack of commitment.
- Attitude: 85% of success is attitude, 15% is skill. This is good news because many things concerning horses can't be controlled, but attitude can.
- Self-Talk and Visualization: always use high quality questions, where the answer is a positive thought. Questions that start with "why" or "how come" set you up as a victim.
- And the million dollar thought for me: **Access a sense of gratitude before EVERY RIDE—before you enter the ring.**

## Tips from an Olympian, 2009 USDF Symposium with Jan Brink

by Lisa Geovjian and Jane Savoie

- Always ask yourself these three questions as you ride any movement or any exercise:
  1. Is my horse moving too fast or too slow?
  2. Is his neck too high or too low?
  3. Is his frame too open (long) or closed (short)?
- When warming up, don't forget to use the center line. Can you ride straight @ walk, trot, and canter? Push a little bit forward if your horse wanders. Work on the inside track ("second track") to determine if your outside aids are in place and you aren't drifting to the wall



*Jane Savoie and Lisa Geovjian at 2009 USDF Symposium*

- When warming up, it is OK to let your horse "run" a little bit in order to get into the contact rather than riding backwards to find it. Next step is to capture that forward energy into proper rhythm.
- Good exercise to help get your horse on the aids (rubber band): begin with a 20 meter circle, leg yield to 15 m. with smaller stride, then 12 m. with even smaller stride and back out again. Both directions. Keep the same rhythm.
- To prove straightness and get the hind legs under, leg yield off center line after a 20 m circle, starting with a very shallow diagonal and then getting more aggressive.
- Remember to use each and every corner to "round" your horse
- Use your "underleg" (lower leg, with soft, non gripping knee and steady, soft contact of the lower leg) so that you are always ready to ask for more
- Early trot half pass work: leg yield across the diagonal with shoulder leading and a slight look to the inside. Flow and forward is more important than angle early on.
- Early flying change work begins with a very balanced canter that is adjustable. If you are doing 4 out of 6 changes correctly, you are on the right track. If you are doing 2 out of 6 correctly, you are not on the right track and need to rethink your training.
- At the end of your schooling session, your cool down stretch should be with contact (don't just drop the reins) to always continue the gymnasticizing.
- Jan's opinion on gelding vs. mares:
  - You tell a gelding.
  - You ask a stallion.
  - With a mare, you fill out an application!

---

## Request from the USEF Dressage Committee

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Dressage Committee would like feedback from all involved in our sport showing at sanctioned shows to best assess the status of dressage judging in our country. While most judges remain dedicated to self-improvement sometimes problems with judging may sometimes occur. All USEF members are invited to fill out Members Confidential Evaluation Forms, available at show offices and downloadable at [usef.org/documents/competitions/LicOffEvaluation.pdf](http://usef.org/documents/competitions/LicOffEvaluation.pdf). As some of the questions may not be pertinent to you, you may write a note on the form or attach a letter. If you comment on the scoring or the judge's remarks, please attach a copy of the test sheet, including the cover with the judge's signature. While judge's comments do not need to be positive they should be constructive and diplomatic.

Completed evaluation forms should be sent to the USEF Licensed Officials Dept. Forms are placed in the respective judges' files and are discussed at USEF Licensed Officials Committee meetings. Senders' identities are kept confidential, even if an action is taken against a judge. This input will help the USEF Dressage Committee better identify issues and inconsistencies in the practice of judging and suggest potential solutions.

## ***A General Letter to GMO's, Delegates, Members of Region 8:***

### **PERSONAL THANKS**

First of all, I'd like to thank you for electing me as Region 8 Director for another 3 years. As I've said before, USDF has made great strides in many areas, but I also feel that the future will see some major changes. Again, I want to stress the importance of USDF's move to the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY as the signature event of the last 5-10 years. The fact that we have built our own building—the National Education Center—there is huge, especially with the World Equestrian Games coming in September, 2010. Our presence indicates that we are a major force in the equestrian world, and the exposure that we will get from our presence in the horse park is enormous.

### **TRANSPARENCY OF USDF**

There have been growing pains for USDF as well. (Why should the path of an organization be any different from that of any of ours?) USDF has grown over the last years, but it has also been subject to the same vicissitudes that we all have—especially because of the economic conditions. This has caused us to examine our budgets (how much do we have; how much can we spend) and our ways of doing business. A very positive result of this is the increased transparency that has evolved. Along with that, and really the positive side of that, are the communication avenues that have developed. Those who are involved in the governance of USDF are kept informed by information available on the website and with other forms of communication, such as e-mail. The Executive Board has been pushed to be more timely and thorough in our presentation of the business that we conduct. This is the business that is done during the convention in December, at our Executive Board meeting in KY in April, and during the year with our conference calls. Years ago, we would literally come to the convention, do our business, go home for half a year without much communication between those two times. Now, a great deal of business is conducted via conference calls, and all those minutes are posted on the USDF website in a timely fashion. All positive moves.

### **THE FUTURE -- THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

The future (really, the purpose of this e-mail): the **governance issue** for USDF and the **programs** of USDF and the **website** (and all it entails) of USDF. All three of these are related, so I'll be going back and forth as I discuss them. Whether or not we change the structure of the Board of Governors at some time in the future is still undecided. I'm not sure that the system is great as it is, but I also do not have any brilliant and definite ideas on how to make it better—at this point. So, I will wait for debate and suggestions on this issue.

### **COUNCILS/COMMITTEES/TASK FORCES**

The Council and the Committee structure, however, is in need of improvement, and I do support many of the ideas that have been put forth by the ad hoc Governance Committee. Most importantly, however, is the fact that this will be a work in progress. There is no way that all the ideas will work initially; there will be a learning curve; some things may very well backfire—BUT—the goal is to improve efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness.

A very active group, for example, is the judges. Some of us on the Executive Board may be very knowledgeable about what they do, what their issues are, and what they need. Others, not so. It would be helpful for the judges' "advocate" to be present when discussions occur about their issues, whether it be about judging at competitions, judges' education, or the L program. The relationship of judges' issues to so many areas speaks to the necessity of getting those people communicating one to another. Why are not the judges talking to the TD's; to the competition management people, and to the competitors themselves. I think the idea of ad hoc committees or task forces will prove much more beneficial than standing independent groups. Again, we are not sure how all this will work—but we do have a concept that provides for full discussion of issues from the various related constituencies. So, as we are already in January, 2010, the traditional assignment of council and committee chairs, coordinators for the councils from each region, and the committee members has been only started, and will continue to be developed.

I've already mentioned a couple of programs of USDF, mostly in their relationship to the Executive Board. However, USDF has developed some wonderful programs that still need to get stronger and more effective. USDF Instructor Certification is a good example. One of the goals of this program is to identify and "label" good instructors with a variety of titles (eg—Certified Instructor, Training-2<sup>nd</sup>

Level). However, education is REALLY the backbone of this program (as in the L program). This program should be popular in all areas of the country as all riders want to improve their knowledge of riding. We may not all be teachers—but, in a sense, any time we ride our horses, we are teaching them something. Why not make ourselves as knowledgeable as possible—whether we are on or off our horses.

USDF has many programs. They need constant analysis and evaluation to make them as effective as possible and accessible to as many people as possible. That is a responsibility of the Executive Board and those who are leading those programs.

The website: I rarely hear compliments on the website. If I get comments, they are usually negative. I find this so frustrating. I do use the website, and can generally find what I'm seeking. I know that USDF does see the potential for the website—not only for informational purposes, but also for educational ones. The latter, to me, is the area with lots of potential. If we offer videos, lectures, etc.—is that something our members want? Would it be a way to attract new members? As other organizations and businesses get more proficient, will it be possible for USDF to still stay on the cutting edge? (Or, will YouTube take over the world!) I don't profess to know the answers to these questions, but we need to debate them. I'm sure there are many other issues that will surface that I have not even thought of.

### A NEW ERA

January 1, 2010, we have a new president for the first time in nine years. George Williams will have to establish his own style of leadership and his own priorities. It will be exciting to share them with him and with the other members of the Executive Board (hereafter called the Board of Directors, I believe!)

Thanks again for your support. I look forward to three more years of working with all of you.

Fern Feldman

Coming to Appledore Farm in June:

## Arthur Kottas Heldenberg

Former First Chief Rider at the Spanish Riding School of Vienna

June 4-6, 2010

Call or write for riding or auditing reservations



**Arthur Kottas Heldenberg** joined the Spanish Riding School in 1960 at the age of 15, and remained there for 42 years, rising through the cadre until he was made First Chief Rider in 1980, and thus the youngest holder of this position in the school's 400 year history. Since leaving the Spanish Riding School in 2002, Arthur has devoted his time to training and instructing riders and horses at all levels up to the Olympics.

Arthur uses classical schooling methods, which emphasize the development of a strong bond of trust and respect between the rider and horse where the rider does not depend on the use of force to achieve the ease and beauty appropriate for dressage.



Small facility with personal attention for horses and riders  
Dressage training with German-trained FEI rider  
Clinics with experienced trainers  
Year-round boarding and training  
Heated indoor arena (20x40 m)  
Full-size outdoor arena (20x60 m)



Appledore Farm • 8 Garvin Hill Rd. • Hartland, Vermont  
mailing address: Woodstock, Vermont 05091  
www.appledore-farm.com • info@appledore-farm.com • 802 436 3121

B o a r d i n g • T r a i n i n g • D r e s s a g e  
i n t i m a t e • i n t e n s i v e • i n d i v i d u a l

## 2010 CVDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:

Lisa Geovjian, 2643 Sugar Hill Road, E. Wallingford, VT 05742  
802-259-2024 Email: quincymusu@aol.com

Vice-President:

Terri Satterlee, P.O. Box 286, Ludlow, VT 05149  
802-228-2103 Email: tfglover@tds.net

Secretary:

Wendy Hunter-Higgins, P O Box 3, South Woodstock, VT 05071  
802-457-4065 Email: w@horseink.com

Treasurer:

Cindy Catto, 32 Mansfield Lane, Barre, VT 05641  
802-476-3049 Email: CTCATTO@aol.com

Membership:

Jean Sangdahl, 209 Cross Road, W. Windsor, VT 05089  
802-484-5914 Email: jean.sangdahl@valley.net

Representatives:

Liz Julian-Tuggle, 47 Waterman Hill Road, Norwich, VT 05055  
802-649-2600 Email: WatermanhillFarm@valley.net  
Pat Tracy, 742 Orchard Hill, Pittsford, VT 05763  
802-483-9175 Email: squiresmom@hotmail.com  
Sue Schwaiger, 3043 Middle Rd. N.Clarendon, VT 05738  
802-773-4352 Email: suzschw2@aol.com  
Shelly Marquise, 339 Burnham Rd., E. Thetford, VT 05043  
802-785-2175 Email: shelly.marquise@dartmouth.edu  
Janet Schoeler, P.O. Box 287, Cornish Flat, NH 03746  
603-675-2241 Email: jcschoeler@comcast.net  
Linda Williamson, 85 Best Road, Windsor, VT 05089  
802-436-2868 Email: lwill01@vermontel.net  
Mary Piro, 96 Hogback Road, Norwich, VT 05055  
802-649-8810 Email: Mspiro1@aol.com  
Penny Williams, 137 Airport Road, Weathersfield, VT 05151  
802-263-5205 Email: zisley@tds.net

Video Librarian: Wendy Hunter-Higgins (see above)

**Ad Rates:** per issue - Photo ready advertisement

Full Page - \$50.00    1/2 Page - \$25.00    1/4 Page - \$12.50  
1/8 Page - \$6.00    Classified - \$3.00

**Copies of:** CVDA By-Laws, Show Prize List, Instructors List on CVDA website

**Send Ads, News Bits to:** Patrice Vidal, P.O. Box 431, Hanover, NH 03755  
603-448-1355 Email: Patrice.vidal@dartmouth.edu

**Website:** [www.cvda.org](http://www.cvda.org)

**Next Newsletter Deadline:**        **March 20, 2010**