I hope that the April newsletter finds everyone well. We have our first four schooling shows this month, and of course the first licensed show of the season in our area at Morven Park and the “C” session of the L program. This year, we will be showcasing a new facility, Loch Moy, in Adamstown, Md., for a licensed one-day show in September. This lovely facility is a special addition to our area, so we hope you will plan ahead to attend.

Plan to get your entries in early for our May Memorial Day PVDA show and please think of ways to participate in our breast cancer benefit show, Ride for Life, at the end of June. The Saturday night Dancing Horse Challenge will be an exciting event and fun for the entire family! Our Web sites

---

By Dr. Rebecca Yount, Ana E. Diaz, and Mary Stydnicki Johnston

USEF Proposed Rule DR119.3 had the stated intent of introducing a “timeline for dressage performance standards system.” After considerable concern was voiced by members of the dressage community as a whole, this rule change was tabled by the USEF Board of Directors until 2009. The USEF Dressage Committee is developing more details on the proposed performance standards, which will be released shortly to GMO presidents and participating member delegates for distribution to members for comment.

The proposed rule change created much concern and confusion among dressage riders across the country. Three PVDA members (Yount, Diaz, and...

Continued on page 24
Cheshire Horse Hills

Where your horse is not just cared for, but cared about.

April Showers bring May flowers, but don’t make for a pleasant ride. Check out Cheshire. We have a terrific indoor arena with footing you won’t believe. Located minutes from the Wilson bridge. A picturesque dressage facility designed for riders by riders. Stable and indoor arena under one roof along with many other amenities that include an outdoor dressage arena, trails and parklike pastures. Now taking applicants for April. Farm tours welcome, by appointment only. Ask about our Introductory Boarding Special.

FREE Seminar with Gwen Edsall!
Soundness of the Performance Horse. April 27th - 2pm

Gwen is an Equine Practitioner, specializing in the structural soundness of the performance horse. Rebalancing techniques will be demonstrated and explained to help your horse achieve it’s full potential!

Contact Kathy or Mike @ 501-372-6302 or thealphamare@aol.com
www.cheshirehorsehills.com
Session C for USDF “L” Program in April
USDF “L” Program, Session C, is April 12-13; registration due April 4. See application on page 11. For information on the “L” program, check the PVDA Web site or USDF Web site at www.usdf.org/Programs/LProgram/index.asp. Any questions, please contact Alyssa Dragnich, adragnich@comcast.net or 814-206-6208. Alyssa has moved—note new address on application.

‘Tis the Season—Join the Ride for Life!
Spring is here and the hum of energy is loud and clear. The event which stands out, loud and clear, is the PVDA Ride for Life benefit show (R4L), June 28-29, Saturday and Sunday, at the Prince George’s Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, Md. This five year old event has raised more than $70,000 for breast cancer research. The show has grown exponentially, and this year promises to be even better!

The facility is fabulous—top riders perform at the Saturday night extravaganza, and a fun twist involves the audience. Funds are raised by sponsorship, donations, and just plain filling the seats. How simple is that? Just fill the seats in the indoor, air conditioned stadium!

This year I have volunteered to fill those seats. Because it is a drive for most (but so worth the trip), I am coordinating to fill buses for this fun evening to transport people to and from this dream competition location. Stay tuned! The grounds are a joy to explore; there is permanent stabling and several outdoor rings and track. Silent auction items for riding enthusiasts will be available for viewing and bidding (including gifts, private lessons from top instructors/coaches, supplies, and logo items for purchase). Wait until you see the logo items! A page outlining the logo products available for purchase will be coming very soon—everyday riding/horsey items just for you that support this worthy cause.

Mark your calendar with www.pvdarideforlife.org as your link. Food and vendor shopping will be available onsite for the weekend. Get your barn to fill a bus! Ride in this event!

Volunteer at this event! Be at this event! Support this cause, as one in seven women will have this disease. Contact Eileen at johnsonec@netzero.com for more information or if you would like to coordinate transportation in your area.

Rita Boehm Photo Is A Contest Winner
PVDA Member Rita Boehm, Olney, Md., was a second place winner in USDF Magazine's Adult Art Contest in the Photography division. Her winning photo of Courtney Swartz with Mocha Java and Spellbound at a Schooley Mill schooling show will hang in USDF headquarters in Lexington, Ky., for the next few months. Congratulations Rita!

Volunteers Needed for Ride for Life
This year’s PVDA Ride for Life, June 28-29, at the Prince George’s Equestrian Center, promises to be greater than ever, but we need your help to realize that promise. Much work goes on behind the scenes and not just on the days of the show. Volunteer hours (and service hours for junior members) are available to those who step forward. Some of the volunteer opportunities we have are listed on page 15. For information about how you can help, check out the listings and/or contact Jocelyn Pearson at jpearson@erols.com.

Schooley Mill Open Show Date Changed
The June 8 Schooley Mill Open Show HAS CHANGED to June 14. The opening date is 5/19/08 and the closing date is 5/30/08. Any questions? Please call show manager Karen Jacob at 410-489-6083.
## 2008 PVDA Show Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Show</th>
<th>Opening</th>
<th>Closing</th>
<th>Manager</th>
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<td>Carol Kosary/</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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*2008 Show Schedule subject to change. Prepared by Bonnie Vaden. See Omnibus for exact locations of the farms.
April 2008

2-6 Erik Herbermann Dressage Clinic at Equilibrium Horse Center, Gambrills, Md. Contact Karen Poxon, 410-721-0196 or kpoxon@verizon.net. Visit our Web site at www.equilibriumhorse.net.

3-4 Cesar Parra Clinic at Chimney Hill Farm, Upper Marlboro. Contact Sharon Myers, 301-627-8873


6 Schooling Show at Columbia Horse Center. Judge: Ingrid Gentry. Contact Kate Miska, www.columbiahorsecenter.com

7 PVDA Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. Contact Deanna Beal, 410-833-3321.

9 & 23 Dressage Clinic Series with Jean Paul Pare at Windhorse02@siteone.net or visit our Web site at www.windhorse02@siteone.net. For information contact jane@reddemae.com.


12-13 VADA/Nova Spring Competition at Morven Park. See www.vadanova.org

19 Dressage Schooling Show at Evergreen Farm, Berryville, Va. Contact Pam Dors at evergreenfarm@juno.com

20 Fix-a-Test with Hallie Ahrnsbrak at Fresh Meadows, Huntingtown. Contact Cindy Marquardt, 301-775-5636 or marqfam1@comcast.net

20 Dressage Schooling Show at Equilibrium Horse Center, Gambrills, Md. Contact Sandy McGuire, 410-721-0885 or MorganEQ@aol.com. Visit our Web site at www.equilibriumhorse.net.

23-28 Conrad Schumacher Clinic at Pleasant Ridge Farm. Contact Brittany Tobery at 301-898-7396 or pleasantridgefarm1@comcast.net.

24 Midweek Mingle Dressage Schooling Show at Merry-Go-Round Farm in Potomac. Good opportunity to get your horse out for a relaxed casual, fun time. Contact Susan Donohue at info@donohueconsulting.com

27 Schooling Show at Beginning Again Farm in Leonardtown, Md. Contact Michele at BeginningAgainFarm@aol.com or 301-475-5013.

27 Fix-a-Test Clinic sponsored by the Mountain Harmony Chapter at Celebration Farm with Judge Betty Thorpe. See www.celbration-farm.com for more info.

29-30 Walter Zettl clinic at Reddemae. For information contact jane@reddemae.com.

May

3-4 CDCTA Dressage at Morven Park. See www.cdcta.com.

4 Schooling Show at Columbia Horse Center, Judge: Aviva Nebesky. Contact Kate Miska, www.columbiahorsecenter.com

5 PVDA Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. Contact Jen Funk, 410-521-0121.

8 Midweek Mingle Dressage Schooling Show at Wyndham Oaks in Boyds, Md. Work on your show nerves in the middle of the week. Contact Susan Donohue at info@donohueconsulting.com

11 Dressage Schooling Show sponsored by the New Market Chapter, Ship’s Quarters Farm, Westminster, Md. Contact Dorie Forte at rival1farm2@aol.com or 410-795-2491.

13-14 Cesar Parra Clinic at Chimney Hill Farm, Upper Marlboro. Contact Sharon Myers, 301-627-8873.

15-19 Sherry Ackerman Clinic at Brookfield Farm, Finksburg, Md. Contact Tiffany Moritz, 410-552-3792 or tmoritz@medicine.umarvland.edu

17-18 EEMI Too Hot to Trot Breed Show at Morven Park. Contact Shannon Pedlar, 703-777-2890

24-25 PVDA Annual Competition at Morven Park

25 Calvert Chapter Schooling Show at Kings Landing Park, Huntingtown. Contact Christina Dale, 301-928-4225 or Calvert-PVDA@phyziusphotos.com.

29-June 2 Erik Herbermann Dressage Clinic at Equilibrium Horse Center, Gambrills, Md. Contact Karen Poxon, 410-721-0196 or kpoxon@verizon.net. Visit www.equilibriumhorse.net.

June

2 PVDA Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. Contact Leslie Raulin, 301-620-2172.

21-22/28-29 U.S. Olympic Dressage Selection Trials/USEF Grand Prix Grand Prix Championship

22 Schooling Show at Beginning Again Farm in Leonardtown, Md. Contact Michele at BeginningAgainFarm@aol.com or 301-475-5013.

28-29 PVDA Ride for Life at PGEC

July

14 PVDA Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. Contact Shari Packard, 240-353-6739.

15-17 Cesar Parra Clinic at Chimney Hill Farm, Upper Marlboro. Contact Sharon Myers, 301-627-8873.

20 Schooling Show at Beginning Again Farm in Leonardtown, Md. Contact Michele at BeginningAgainFarm@aol.com or 301-475-5013.

August

4 PVDA Board Meeting, 7 p.m. Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. Contact Bonnie Vaden, 301-942-2876.

10 Schooling Show at Beginning Again Farm in Leonardtown, Md. Contact Michele at BeginningAgainFarm@aol.com or 301-475-5013.

17 Dressage Schooling Show sponsored by the New Market Chapter, Carroll County Equestrian Center, Mt. Airy. Contact Dorie Forte at rival1farm@aol.com or 410-795-2491.

Send Your 2008 Calendar Items to calendar@pvda.org.

May Deadline: APRIL 10

Calendar Editor: Jocelyn Pearson

www.pvda.org for complete calendar
Bayside

Breezy Run Farm, on the eastern shore in Churchill Md., had the last of three winter schooling dressage shows on March 2. The weather cooperated once again. Our judge was Janet Conlon (R). Champions for this three-show series are: Barbara Edwards on Awesome–Intro (CT), Lisa Ritter on Newton’s Law–Intro, Kevin Fidgeon on Patton–Training. Reserve also was Kevin Fidgeon on Windgator–Intro. Series end jewelry prizes from Tempi Design Studio were awarded to the three. High point rider for the a.m. was Betsy Brawner, and for the p.m. was Eileen Johnson.

Thank you to the volunteers of PVDA Bayside Chapter for help in making this series a great success. A special thank you goes to The Narrows Restaurant for sponsoring our scribe, Martha MacDonald.

Stay tuned! Bayside is a new and active PVDA chapter. We meet the second Friday of each month at 7 p.m. at Breezy Run Farm starting with a potluck. Upcoming meeting dates are March 14, with one of our state vets, Dr. Higgins, presenting, and April 11 we have a video presentation of the March 2008 Danish stallion licensing taken by Jackie Kinney. Contact www.breezyrunfarm.com for information.

A Breezy Run Farm schooling show competitor, FRIDSE 423, with head trainer Julio Mendoza.

A Review of the Whip Rule

Several people have expressed confusion about the whip rule for Dressage. When this rule was changed, it was unclear what was intended and it inferred that no pieffe whips were allowed. There was much discussion at the annual Technical Delegate Forum at the USDF Convention in Los Angeles regarding this rule. Unintentionally, mention of the use of pieffe whips was omitted even though they had been mentioned in prior rule books. In a letter to Technical Delegates, dated August 18 2005, Jan McKinney, Clinics and Education Coordinator, specifically stated that ‘the use of whips for in-hand work is not addressed in the current rule therefore, there is no restriction on the length of whip that can be used for in-hand work.’ As far as a rider carrying a whip, it must be no longer than 43.3 inches (110 cm) including the lash. This length was decided to coincide with the FEI rule which allows this length for warm up only. An adjustable-length whip may not be carried by a mounted rider. One lunging whip is allowed for lunging the horse. There is no specification regarding the length of the lunging whip. See Dressage Rule 121 for any additional questions, but remember this little rule that is quite important. Dressage Rule 124 lists the reasons for Elimination and the very last item states, ‘Where a violation cannot be cited, a competitor is not eliminated.’

If you make it to the Championship, you may not ride with a whip unless you are riding sidesaddle. There are also waivers allowed for riders with dispensation certificates from USEF which state what equipment beyond the norm is allowed. I think the whip manufacturers will be happy to know that as of the 2009 competition year the whip length will change for mounted competitors. It will go from 110 cm to 120 cm. This was passed at the USEF convention in January and went into effect December 1, 2008. I hope this clears up any uncertainty about the use of whips in Dressage classes. Please send your questions to me at pegasusdt@verizon.net.

—Elise Shelton, Your Local USEF Technical Delegate (retired)
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              Sun — 12 noon to 5 pm.

7408 John Marshall Hwy  Marshall, VA
540-364-1891  www.tricountyfeeds.com
By Nancy Schechtman

It took a bad fall to remind me that dressage is the foundation for all riding.

A few years ago I decided to turn the focus of my riding to eventing. I felt that dressage would be something I could pursue for my entire life. So, while I was still relatively young and sound, I wanted to find out if I had the skill and the nerve to do some lower level eventing. I purchased a young thoroughbred who, while inexperienced, was within my riding abilities and my price range. His potential for moving up the levels was actually beyond what I needed, so I knew that I wouldn’t get bored.

His barn name, Vanya, is the diminutive for Ivan. On bad days he becomes Ivan Grozny, “Ivan the Terrible,” but most days were not bad days. At the Beginner Novice Level he always won the dressage element. While Vanya is not the flashiest or most balanced horse, I warmed him up with hacking and stretchy circles. The result was a lovely relaxed horse, and even with his unbalanced race horse canter, his trot and walk scores always put us at the top of the division. (If you are unfamiliar with eventing, most people at horse trials just want to get through the dressage to get to the jumping. Relaxation is rarely a concern).

With the fences maxing out at 2’7” at this level, Vanya breezed through his stadium and cross country at his first five shows. When we moved up to Novice things continued to go well, though his dressage scores were mixed. I had to ask for a bit more engagement and sometimes forgot about the relaxation. His weak unbalanced canter also began to catch up with us, but the fences continued to go well. After all, 2’11” is nothing for a talented jumper.

But I got bored with Novice—actually I just got tired of having to explain to non-riders like my husband that the label Novice doesn’t mean that I am a beginner rider! So the fences got bigger. Training level eventing maxes out at 3’3” so I was schooling regularly at 3’3” and 3’6”. That’s when things started to go downhill. This honest horse was now stopping and I started falling off. The stops were frequent and the falls were no big deal. He would throw on the brakes and I would grab his neck and land on my feet. People complimented me on sticking my landings and I was not fazed. I was naive, however. What I didn’t realize was that Vanya’s lack of balance in the canter was catching up with me. I was just chasing him around while he was completely on his forehand, balancing on the reins and my tension.

Then last summer I received my “kick in the head” in the warm-up ring at a horse trial. Things were not going well. Vanya was stopping. Someone even suggested that I retire, but I just knew we could do it. So I galloped him at a fence to get him over it. As he had the previous time, he stopped, but I was going too fast to manage landing on my feet. Instead, I was “lawn-darted” over the fence. The result was several broken bones, lost confidence and a good deal of healing time to reflect on what had happened.

My dressage instructor and I talked a great deal about my fall. I also watched videos of my previous rides in a new way. I noticed how fast I was riding my stadium rounds. I looked at how awkward my turns were. He wasn’t balanced. I rode him completely off tension. No wonder he was stopping when the fences became bigger! They were not too big for him. He just needed to jump more from his hind end. Using the hind end more....where had I heard that before?

Months later when I returned to riding, my dressage instructor had a new plan. It was back to basics for Vanya and me. We continued to work on the flat under saddle and on the longe line. Then we started adding jumps, right in the middle of our flat lessons. The goal was to teach Vanya (and me) that jumps were nothing to stress over. He had to trot over cavallettis without changing anything in balance or rhythm. Then the cavallettis turned into jumps, which had

Don’t Forget the Dressage!
to be ridden in the same slow engaged trot. After the fence, we immediately returned to the trot and worked as if the jump hadn’t happened. Slowly, the fences became bigger.

Now we regularly ride walk/trot/canter in a dressage saddle and trot over fences up to 3 feet. His balance and confidence have improved exponentially. My confidence is coming back, too. I am still a bit fearful of cantering the larger fences, but we are working on that. In the meantime my goal is to take Vanya to First Level dressage this year. I also hope to do some Prix Capelli tests (dressage tests with jumps in them).

I am not sure when I will take Vanya into another horse trial. It is somewhat frustrating because I have lost some of the confidence that I had. Sometimes it feels like I am starting all over again. But maybe I traded some of that confident ignorance for some much needed knowledge and understanding of riding. As in every aspect of riding, things take longer than we expect, but at least now I am doing right by my horse and creating the correct foundation.
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Open to ALL Breeds – Indoor Arena, Excellent Footing
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Sport Horse In-Hand Classes: Yearling, 2 & 3 Year Olds, 4 & Older,
Mares, Geldings, Novice Horse or Novice Handler

Dressage Classes: Intro Level A&B, Training Level 1-4, First Level 1-4,
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Each test will be followed by personal discussion with the judge to
provide a mini-clinic opportunity. The show will follow USDF, USEF, and
AHA rules.

Further information, prize list, and entry form
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What I learned at the USDF Young Rider Graduate Program and FEI Trainers’ Conference: Part II

The Generations of Dressage

By Hilary Moore

There was something surreal about attending the FEI Trainers’ Conference and Young Rider Graduate Program weekend, November 28-December 2, 2007. It was an incredible opportunity to watch riders like Carol Lavell work through perfect canter pirouette steps, but the weekend was about more than just great riding.

It was about the generations of dressage—how people and horses at different levels of mastery affect each other in this sport.

Even Carol Lavell had to learn the canter pirouette at some point. The long process she went through to master this, and other movements, made her the trainer that she is today.

“Teaching connects the generations,” George Williams told us that weekend. “It takes us into our past and future. Always ask yourself, who taught you what you are teaching? And, remember, teaching helps you learn your subject.”

This can be applied to all people and horses in dressage, not just trainers. Every rider has learned movements from a skilled horse and instructor, but they have also passed this information along to other horses and riders. The more you learn, the more you can pass on.

When we have mastered any of the countless skills needed in this sport, from braiding to half-passing, we can give back in our own ways—as a trainer, judge, barn owner, a show volunteer, groom, sponsor.…

That sharing of skills is what makes dressage possible and we are lucky to be in a sport that understands the value of each of its generations. They say, “It takes a village to raise a child.” In the case of dressage, we have the privilege of being both the child and village every day. It is important that we take advantage of this gift.

Carol Lavell told the Graduates that we should never be afraid to be seen as learners and it is important that in addition to giving back to our sport, we always remember to expand our own skills.

Todd Flettrich agreed, telling us that in the horse industry you must never forget your own education. He gave the example of horse trainers, noting that it is all too easy to create a career that is about making a living, but you must keep your education going in order to both progress your own development and improve as a professional.

Consider these words that Carol Lavell wrote and read to the Graduates:

Give credit where credit is due,
Don’t take credit when it’s not about you.
Remember the dressage world is very small,
Fame comes to those who stand very tall.
Honor those who give you their time,
Boosting you so your star can shine.
When and if you climb to glory,
It’s now time to write a new story.
About sharing, giving, helping, support,
It’s now your time to give back to your sport.

My Own Generation

The weekend transition from the Young Rider Graduate Program to FEI Trainers’ Conference seemed like a right of passage for me, as it represented my own move in the past few years through the generations—from Young Rider to a professional trainer and “Open” level rider.

There I was, sitting with my own trainer (Barbara Strawson), learning from masters, knowing that I would be passing it on to my students.

How incredibly fitting that, at that moment, I saw my former Young Rider trainer. The last time I saw her was as her working student. My strongest memory of her was when we had gone on a European buying trip—I found my Young Rider mount, and she got a 4-year-old named Nibbit.

In retrospect it was both extraordinary and expected that at our next meeting Jane’s former young students would be in the next phase of their dressage careers—Nibbit was now doing the Grand Prix and I was a professional trainer.

So there I was with my former and current trainers, watching Jan Brink and Carol Lavell work with her new FEI mount. All around me was the past, present and future of dressage. In retrospect, I am sure that moment is what made the weekend so incredibly surreal. I finally understood it…this whole generation thing.
USDF "L" Education Program
Sponsored by the Potomac Valley Dressage Association

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David Linn and Fleur Rouge, USDF Horse of the Year
photo by David Mack
Horses for Sale

✦ Lipizzan geld., 4yrs, 16H, powerful incredible mover, but green. Needs more then I can give him, $12,000. Nancy Madison, 410-991-5739 or 410-353-3681

✦ Olden. bay geld. by Riverman o/o TB mare, 7 yrs, 16.1H. has tried lower level eventing but prefers flatwork, $4,500/obo, Sharon Rayne, DVM, 410-726-2440

✦ 1) SWB mare by Baltic Inspiration o/o Electron Granddau., 8 yrs, wins at a level 1, ready to show 2nd this Spring, & schooling 3rd. Perfect for AA—the same gentle horse every day. Loves to work and trail rides, too, $23,000. 2) SWM ches. mare by Prgeo, 9 yrs, very well bred & lots of chrome. Lovely mover, naturally forward, very light on her feet. Correct lateral work & solidifying her changes. Easy keeper, no health issues, no maintenance, $25,000. Pic/video of both mares at: www.blueclovereventing.com or call Valerie Vizzarrondo, 410-353-3813 or email: va@blueclovereventing.com

✦ TB/Appy 4 yrs, 15H bay geld., cute as a button, w/a lovely face and great attitude. Three good gaits, longues well and has been going well u/s. in dressage & jumping. He will make a perfect PC mount. Red Revelle has given him handling basics and his dressage education continues with us. Very reasonably priced at $4,000, Libby Anderson, 703-754-1010 or email: JillBadressage@verizon.net

✦ WBx, 16H & big-bodied, trained to 3rd level. Suitable as a schoolmaster for lower level riders. Quiet, kind & confident. Loc. in FredCo., AnneMichelle Johnson, 301-515-8305 or 301-461-3327 for more info

✦ ‘02 Reg. (unraced) TB bay mare, 15.3H, nice mover who would make a great Children’s Hunter prospect. W/TC & started off. Has free jumped 3’+ w/ease. Quick learner, but still green, asking $4,500/obo, Dawn Blanchard, 410-952-2785 or email: dablanc2@vt.edu.

✦ 1) Old dk. bay geld, 5 yrs, 16.3H, lovely mover, curr. training level w/lots of potential. Sound, no vices, or DVD avail. for serious inq., $25,000. 2) Old NA MBA-approved TB mare in foal to Scimitar-date early July. Easy to breed and foil out. Offspring consistently mature at 16.1H, $5,000 See photos on www.breezyrunfarm.com, Vicky Meyer, 410-849-5436

✦ 92 DeWB gray geld., 16.1H, in 07 competed successfully at I-I w/scores to 68% and quality. For Dressage at Devon. Curr. in prof. training. Sound, no vices, was even the “star pupil” in Bombproofing Your Horse Clinic with Rick Pelicano in 12/07! For more info and photos, see www.chesapeakeedressage.com, Cheryl Wyllie, 443-220-4556 or email: Trainer@ChesapeakeDressage.com

Horses for Lease

✦ Half lease of Appy geld., 12 yrs, 15.3H, 1st level dressage, boarded near Hagerstown, MD. Oppty to show as well. Great movement and judges love him. Confidence builder u/s w/smooth, easy canter departers, but can be challenging on the ground. $350/mo for half lease (incl. one lesson/wk) or $40/lesson. Channa Moore, 301-733-1815 or email: lipizzan mare, 10 yrs, 15.3H working at 1st level dressage or could be a brood mare as she has had two foals. Very nice movement. Nancy Madison, 410-991-5739 or 410-353-3681

Equipment for Sale

✦ Amerigo CC dressage saddle, wide tree (+2.5cm) x-wide, med. tree. well cared for and in exc. cond., $2,000 1) 17” Prestige Red Fox jumping saddle, w/34 cm tree, in great cond., $100. Lisa, 410-489-4730 or email: lmlinardi@friend.ly.net

✦ 1) 17” Albion blk. SLK dressage saddle, x-wide tree, in exc. cond., asking $1200 2) 18” Albion brown Original Comfort dressage saddle, wide tree, in exc. cond., asking $800 3) Otto Schumacher brown snaffle bridle w brass inlaid chain flash noseband and brow band, web reins w/leather stops, in good condition, asking $75, Debbie Purvins, purvins@verizon.net

✦ 1) 17” Albion buffalo hide saddle; med tree, in exc. cond., $3,000 2) 17” Prestige Red Fox jumping saddle, 33 cm tree. In exc. cond., $1,200 Cindy Buckland, 410-275-1999 or email: cbuckland@baybroadband.net

✦ 17” Albion North Star, Eng-made, dressage saddle, med. tree. well cared for and in exc. cond., $2,500, Mike Linardi, 410-820-4757 or email: mlinardi@friend.ly.net

✦ 1) 17.5” County WB dressage saddle, wide tree, very comfy., and in good shape, $1,400 2) 17.5” Amerigo CC dressage saddle, wide tree (+2.5cm) w/short panels for the very broad horse, in good Boarding

✦ Stall avail. in pvb barn in Dayton MD (Howard Co.) w/20’ x 60m outdoor arena w/all-weather footing. Ideal for an adult person who likes a quiet relaxed atmosphere and can ride during the day. “R” judge avail. for dressage instr. Ingrid Gentry, 410-531-2374

✦ Two stalls avail. in Lovettsville, near PVEC: 5m. pvt. farm offers exc., indiv. care and 12 x 12 stalls, lush pasture, lighted outdoor ring, Cathy Meier, 410-867-2868

✦ Lovely dressage facility in Fred. Co., MD w/regulation ind. arena w/Euro-felt footing and mirrors, restroom, tack lockers, 2 H/C wash stalls, 12x12 matted stalls, owners do all care and handling, quality grain and hay, pvt. t/o avail. outside trainers welcome call, Janice Tobery, 301-898-7396 or 301-676-6874

✦ Stalls avail. at By Chance Farm just outside of Libertytown, MD. Ind. arena, new outdoor arena, plenty of 1/0, stadium jumps and dressage arena. Hosting 2 PVDA schooling shows in ’08. Quality grain, hay and care. Great atmosp., trainers welcome. Please stop by or call for all our amenities. PT help needed for turn in/out both AM and PM shifts, weekdays and weekends. Salary or exchange for board, your choice, Michele Wellman, 301-898-0008 or 301-873-3496
A Call for Volunteer Help at the Ride for Life

• We need one person who can assist our chair and Benefit Volunteer Coordinator, Carolyn Del Grosso, in finding and organizing volunteers, and tracking volunteer hours to work on the part of the Ride for Life other than the horse show positions. Experience with horse show volunteers preferred, but not absolutely necessary. Candidate should be organized, cheerful, patient and available a few hours every week during normal working hours.

• Computer/Web Skills: We need people with strong computer skills to enter data in an Excel-compatible SharePoint database and to help maintain our Web site. Experience in SharePoint as well as other web applications is very helpful, but a willingness to learn SharePoint also will do nicely.

• Graphic Design and Layout: Do you have experience in graphic design/ad layout? We need people to design acknowledgments of sponsorships and advertisements for our program, notices about the show and know how to design to specification for major publications and some web design in applications that can be hosted on our SharePoint site. Skill in the following applications is especially helpful: InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator. Needed now to June 10.

• Sponsorship/Fundraising: It takes money to raise money! We need people to approach businesses and individuals to sponsor PVDA’s Ride for Life benefit costs (the marketing and promotion, program and costs of the Saturday exhibition). Do you have experience with fundraising—either volunteer or professional? Do you have good organizational skills, enthusiasm for the cause of raising money for breast cancer research and the promotion of our sport, and have time to approach between 10 and 30 local or national businesses or individuals, using prepared cover letters and forms, and send thank you notes and tax receipts afterwards?

• Marketing Do you have any experience or want to help out with promoting the Ride for Life Horse Show and Benefit? We need people who have media relations experience who can help with marketing and publicity and also to pitch the local broadcast media. If you have good people skills, ability to write and edit, place calls and do media research, and are resourceful with good follow up and follow through, we can use your help. Established media contacts are desirable, but not absolutely necessary—enthusiasm and ability to meet commitments are.

• Logoware: We will need people to help follow up on vendor quotes under the direction of our logoware chairs, store, inventory and, on the days of the actual show, help us sell items marked with the PVDA Ride for Life logo. If you have organizing skills, experience with merchandise sales, keep accurate records and have a friendly outgoing personality, we need you!

If you can help or have questions, contact Jocelyn Pearson, jpearson@erols.com
www.pvda.org and www.pvdarideforlife.org are packed with information, including forms and recent press releases. We still need volunteers for both shows (hint, hint!).

On the Web site, you also will find the recently posted referendum on performance standards for you to vote online and make comments. (We thank Allie Packard for our updated Web site faculties and other technological improvements.) Rebecca Yount, chair of the Education Committee, presented an empirical study on the 2007 data at the Region 1 USDF meeting in March, and we will have updates posted on the Web site of current developments. We need your participation in order to know your views, so please go online and comment!

We are moving forward to prepare a new member survey that will be featured in the May newsletter and on the Web site. Feel free to e-mail me with your thoughts on what questions and material you would like to see covered. Have a great month!

Marne Martin-Tucker • PVDA president • president@pvda.org

President’s Window continued from page 1

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Close Date: May 16, 2008

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17
On February 17, 2008, PVDA: “Tea Is for Training” seminar was held at Stonebrook Farm in Clarksville to train volunteers in various show duties. The following members attended the sessions and offered to share their experiences. PVDA hopes to have more of these sessions in the future. Please consider taking advantage of these opportunities to become a knowledgeable and confident volunteer, while also having a great time making new connections!

“T” is for Terrific!

from Lorraine Mottola

On a cold Sunday in February, delectable desserts and hot tea greeted participants in the PVDA “Tea is for Training” seminar held at Linda Speer’s Stonebrook Farm in Clarksville, Md. Prospective volunteers had assigned classes in most or all of the following topics: arena setup, scoring, ring stewards and equipment check, runners, scribes, and technical delegate. PVDA also provided comprehensive packets of information on all of the classes, led by well-prepared and friendly instructors, to help volunteers understand their roles in dressage shows.

The most time spent involved ring setup—Carolyn Del Grosso explained how PVDA’s magnificent “triangulator” helps volunteers accurately measure out the arena. The pre-measured wire, with markings to indicate cone and letter placement, saves time once the volunteers finally understand how to use it! With up to seven of us working together under Carolyn’s guidance to measure the ring and place cones and letters appropriately, we managed to successfully set up a dressage arena in less than 15 minutes.

We learned the responsibilities of a ring steward and technical delegate as well as the essentials of scoring. Betty Thorpe briefed us on the finer points of scribing and even provided us with the opportunity to scribe an actual dressage test that she judged while the videotaped version played in real time. Pat Artimovich explained the importance of being a runner, and that even though it may be a volunteer’s first show job, it is an extremely important one.

I had the pleasure of attending thanks to Pat Artimovich who graciously allowed this mother of a Seneca Valley Pony Clubber (SVPC) to participate. My thanks also go out to Nancy and Andrea Jones for connecting PVDA with SVPC. I now feel more prepared for my role as a volunteer and have signed on with my daughter as new PVDA members.

from Eileen Johnson

I anticipated an afternoon of informal discussion and hot tea to keep me warm...never expecting a “proper tea” complete with scones, quiche and desserts! I am a new PVDA member and finally at a point in my life where I am available to volunteer. When I read about this event that prepped volunteers for the tasks needed, I was ready and willing!

I arrived at the host farm seeing various groups huddling into sessions. The designated coach for each group had printed handouts and chimed through the process for their particular expertise. The unknown quickly became familiar, and “for examples” were shared and questions asked. After a quick 30 minutes it was Tea Time!

But it was so much more than tea. A table fit for a queen included scones, cakes, cookies, quiche, brownies and more. Food and chatter was plentiful, as was warm drink. After a break we were off to our next session.

My three topics, out of the five covered, were scoring, scribe, and ring steward. A print out with great photos and information went to each attendee, making it easy to follow along and handy for future reference. From 1:15 to 3:30 the sessions continued and repeated in the indoor, comfortable lounge, or upstairs office. The afternoon was informative, energizing, and fun filled with horsey chatter and tasty treats. A great effort was made to engage all who attended. It was a wonderful success!

PVDA now has a new group of trained, novice but confident, assistance for the upcoming show season. We need to do this again! Perhaps PVDA could hold similar sessions at other locations. The print outs for each subject make it easy to pass.
on the basics. Now you can help, too! Let the shows begin!

from Dawn Richards

As a relative "newbie" to volunteering at PVDA shows I was delighted to train under the tutelage of experienced, in-the-trenches experts who could give me the knowledge and confidence to volunteer at PVDA shows. A smorgasbord of seminars was offered. While all of them were tempting, we were limited to three, so I chose technical delegate, bit check and scribing.

Technical Delegate (TD): While I will most likely never attain the tremendous knowledge, artful diplomacy and show savvy required to be a TD, I gleaned many useful facts from Elice Shelton. For instance, “Can I forgo my wool coat during days of high heat and humidity?” I now know to inquire whether the show manager will be dismissing jackets, as opposed to the judge, as I’d previously thought. Who knew? In addition, Elice covered the process of becoming a TD, the different classifications, and the general duties required. One of her tips was to read DR 121 and 124, covering saddlery and equipment and elimination reasons. She also stressed the importance of e-mailing the show schedule to the TD before the show.

Bit Check (You Want Me to Put My Fingers Where?): After donning latex gloves, we were given hands-on instruction in the bit check. Jan Denno ably instructed us in the new rule changes concerning spurs and bits (DR 120 and 121). Knowing how many bits are now approved, I feel more confident in sliding my finger in the horse’s mouth. Jan also stressed checking for blood while simultaneously checking the bit and spurs. As far as measuring shank length, we discussed investigating the idea of a small ruler that would be easy to carry with us. We learned that if an equipment problem is found and the horse or rider is not being cooperative—call the TD.

Scoring (Not to be Confused with Math Anxiety): Though I had previously scored for one show, I came away with a plethora of tips for recording, posting and storing score sheets. Leslie Raulin offered practical advice for organizing the score sheets before and after posting the scores, and handling the higher level tests. One of the new tips I learned is that when there is a tie, add up the “raw” scores for collective marks. While doing the math isn’t difficult, it is easy to make mistakes, so the need for extra scorers to check each others’ work is paramount.

Scribing: During a break in between seminars, I went and eavesdropped on Betty Thorpe’s discussion on scribing. Although I have scribed quite a few times, it was interesting to hear what a judge needs from her scribe, and what the scribe can do to facilitate the judge’s job. An inexperienced scribe can hinder the judge and delay getting information to the scorers. One of the best things a scribe can do is to familiarize themselves with the USDF approved abbreviations. It makes the task of writing remarks much more efficient. Those who are showing also will find the abbreviations helpful in deciphering the scribe’s handwriting (often distressingly similar to the handwriting of physicians); for example, “lacks 4ward NRG.”

Equally important to the Training portion of the “Tea for Training,” was the tea. A lovely spread, complete with silver tea service, nourished us in between seminars. In addition to the many types of tea (accompanied by lavender honey) and coffee were homemade scones with whipped cream, fresh fruit, quiche, sandwich wraps, cookies, nut breads, brownies... Pat Artimovich and her daughter, Linda Speer (and anyone else I missed) set up the beautifully arranged tables with flowers and scrumptious food, and they kept the seminars running on time. Other members who organized the event were Jocelyn Pearson, Betty Thorpe, Carolyn DelGrosso, Jan Denno, Leslie Raulin, Elice Shelton, and Carolyn Akin.

“Tea Is for Training,” was an excellent way to inform and train potential volunteers. I especially enjoyed all the “war stories”—unusual occurrences, unlikely events and humorous remembrances. This type of information was really helpful. Thanks to everyone involved in this tremendous event. I hope there are more to come!
Training Young Horses: 
An Interview with German National Champion Nicole Holzer Casper

Article courtesy of Stephanie Law/The Oldenburg Horse

Stephanie is a friend of PVDA President Marne Martin-Tucker. She handles the newsletter and website for the Oldenburg Horse Breeders Society, the North American division of the German Oldenburg Verband. Stephanie was competing in Florida, and then moved to Germany a number of years ago to compete, and also has her horses there.

Nicole Holzer Casper started her successful dressage career at a very young age. In 1990 she was the individual silver medalist and team gold medalist at the Young Riders European Championships in Kaposvar, Hungary. She rode Ricardo, who she later went on to many Grand Prix victories with, in the following years. Having 50 to 60 placings at S level, and the wins at Grand Prix, she easily earned her Gold Medal Riding Badge from the German Riding Federation.

During these years she met and married Thomas Casper who owns a large breeding farm and stallion station called Gestüt Birkhof near Stuttgart. The history of the Gestüt started when ‘Thomas’ father, Alfred Casper, escaped from the war torn area of East Prussia as a young man during World War II. His mother had been killed, and after searching for a long time he managed to find work at the large breeding farm of Graf Rechberg near Stuttgart.

In 1962 the Graf decided to break the farm into pieces and sell it due to its declining state. He gave a small part of the farm with a house on it to Alfred Casper and his family. Wanting to have a mare of his own Herr Casper had just enough money to save one older mare who was supposed to be sent to slaughter. He knew she had been a good mare so he bred her, and then went to the Riedlinger Foal Market to buy a filly to be a friend for the foal that was on the way. The filly from the foal market was Hiva, a great mare who later with Thomas was the Junior Reserve Champion for Baden Wuerttemberg in jumping. She became one of their foundation mares for what has become a very successful breeding program. Slowly but surely Herr Casper was able to buy back all of the pieces of the farm and renovate it himself turning it into what is now Gestüt Birkhof.

Thomas has had great success as a jumper rider, and was responsible for developing stallions such as Grafenstolz who in 2004 broke records by qualifying for the Bundeschampionate in dressage, jumping and eventing. He went on to win the Bundeschampionate for the 6 year old event horses under rider Michael Jung with a resounding 9.7, and then won the World Championships in the same category.

Although Gestüt Birkhof is in the Baden Wuérttemberg region, they have had a long standing relationship with the Oldenburg Verband, and own a number of branded and approved Oldenburg stallions such as Sir Alfred (Sandro Hit x Dream of Heidelberg), Royaldik (Royal Diamond x Caramel xx), and Wolkenstern (Wolkentanz II x Rubinstein I). All of their top stallions are also licensed and approved for Oldenburg breeding.

Nicole has done exceptionally well training and riding their young horses. At the 1997 Bundeschampionate she won the championship of the 4 year old mares and gelding with the mare FBW Lettina. She went on to be reserve champion

Nicole Casper continued on next page
of the 4 year old stallions in 2006 with Alassio’s Boy, and then won the championship of the 4-year-old stallions once again this year with Denario. She also placed 3rd in the second round of qualifiers at this year’s Bundeschampionate in the 5-year-old dressage horse test with the stallion Meraldik, and ended up 8th place in the finals out of a very large group of horses. All of these young horses were either bred by Gestuet Birkhof, or were purchased as foals. Nicole has been working under Grand Prix rider and trainer, Peter Mertins, who was also present for the following interview with Nicole:

**Q:** Do you recommend handling newborn foals, and if so to what extent?

**A:** Yes, making sure that they develop some basic trust and understanding is very important. They should be used to the halter, be able to pick up their feet, and simply be used to people. It helps a great deal when they are to be started as a 3 year old, but I will say that not handling them at all is better than handling them badly. If they are traumatized through mistreatment, that can be much harder to overcome than not having been handled at all.

**Q:** At the 2006 Global Dressage Forum, Dr. Andrew Maclean explained that a large part of the behavioral patterns are formed in the young horse’s brain by age 3. How much do you work with horses under the age of 3, and what type of work do you do with them?

**A:** I believe very much in working with young horses and handling them, but I simply don’t have time to do very much of that myself since we have so many young horses. Thomas and our staff do work with them, especially the stallions that are going to be prepared for the licensing. They are brought in from the fields and kept in a large area together called a laufstall (run stall). They are kept as a group because the social contact and herd dynamics are important for their development.

They are only taken in from the fields when we want to work with them. Otherwise they live in the large pastures all year round. It is very important for the physical development that young horses can always have the opportunity to move and live as naturally as possible.

Once we do bring them in to work with them we take them out individually one or two at a time and work with them for a short time, either simply being lead, or when they are ready we start with lunging for short periods. After this, they are taken back to the group. It is not good to work with them too early, and the work must be started slowly so that they do not get stressed physically or mentally. The young stallions that are more developed physically are started around the age of 2 to 2-1/2 and the mares and geldings a little later.

**Q:** At what age do you feel a horse is ready to be started under saddle, and what do you look for to determine that they are ready?

**A:** This varies based on the individual horse. With the stallions we don’t have as much choice because of the demands of the licensing and stallion tests. We never ride them before the licensing. Some do this, but we don’t believe in that. It’s important that they are lunged and free jumped just enough to be in good physical shape and to learn to balance themselves, but that is enough.

With the mares and geldings I typically wait longer. Their bodies should be physically developed, and they should be able to naturally balance themselves at a basic level without problems. For instance, if they are very high behind and losing their balance, then it’s better to wait. One really must decide based on the individual horse. Many of the horses that are half thoroughbred need six months to a year longer to come into their bodies and be strong enough.

**Q:** How much lunging or handwork do you do with a young horse?

**A:** I’ve just started working with Ulrike Stadelmeyer who along with her father, Fritz Stahlecker developed the “Hand – Saddle – Hand” method here in Germany. It’s very interesting work that I didn’t feel I had time for before, but I made the decision to take a few of the young stallions to work with her. I like it so far, but since I’ve just started this, it’s difficult for me to comment much on it yet.

We do of course start the young horses on the lunge before riding them. With the mares and geldings we do this for 6 to 8 weeks before putting them under saddle. With the stallions it can be longer because they need to be more fit. We vary the lunging with free jumping as well to break up the routine and give them something new to do.
Nicole Casper continued from previous page

Q: What type of equipment do you use when lunging a young horse?

A: We use a cavesson and normal side reins with the young horses. It’s important to use the cavesson and not the snaffle in lunging so that you do not pull on their mouths, but we do introduce the bridle underneath the cavesson, and use the saddle fairly early so that they can get used to it.

Q: When you sit on the horse for the first time, do you use an assistant, and if so what is their role?

A: Always. The person on the ground should be the one that has lunged the horse and done most of the ground work. The rider should be light and have a positive body language. They should be relaxed, flexible, balanced, and cannot be afraid because they will communicate this to the horse. It’s normal to have respect and care about sitting on a horse for the first time, but real fear will cause problems.

This process should go slowly. Laying over the horse and then progressing to sitting on them while patting and reassuring them is the best. Once the rider is in the saddle they can lead the horse in walk a bit, and then quit for that day. The next time they can do a little more progressing up to lunging the rider on the horse. It’s important to take time with this, but if the horse has been prepared well with the lunging, and trusts and knows the people it can take just a few days.

Q: Since a young horse just being started isn’t doing very much in their riding sessions is it alright for an amateur to ride them, or should a well educated professional always work with them?

A: This varies based on the individual horse and rider. Ideally the rider should be a good rider, but it is possible that if a horse is uncomplicated the two can grow together. Many of the offspring of our thoroughbred stallion, Heraldik, do very well with amateur riders because the amateurs tend to let the horses go on their own more, and don’t ask too much of them too soon.

Of course I used to believe the old rule that amateurs should never ride young horses, but now I think, why not? It just depends on the individual horse and rider.

Q: Once the horse understands the basics of stop and go what is generally your focus when you ride a horse that has just been started?

A: The focus for me is the Durchlassigkeit (submission). I do a lot of transitions in order to tune the horse into my aids, and develop harmony between myself and the horse. I do transitions between gaits and within the gait to have control over the tempo.

Another point which is very important is maintaining the correct lines. When you are riding a 20 meter circle, that circle should be clear and consistent. This is what develops the straightness which is essential. If the rider is focused on the correct line the horse will not be wandering around losing his balance. You can really avoid a lot of mistakes this way, and give the horse more confidence in the work. The horse doesn’t want to be thinking, “Where am I going?”

Q: How often and long do you ride a horse that has just been started?

A: I ride them on average around three times a week, but with the stallions possibly four times a week. I try to vary the work and make one of these sessions a ride in the woods so they don’t get bored. The length of the session depends again on the individual. I like to give them time when starting, and try to walk them quietly for 10 to 15 minutes before and after the work. The total time including the walking is around 45 minutes.

Working them for too long is worse than too short because you don’t want them to feel drilled. They should be excited to see the saddle, not stressed or bored. Their spirit must be maintained.

Q: When do you introduce the concept of lateral work, what are some of the most common mistakes that you see people making when training a young horse to do lateral work?

A: I start with the lateral work when I can ride the line that I want, the horse understands he should move away from my leg, and the contact is balanced and light in both

Nicole Casper continued on next page
reins. Lateral work is a part of developing straightness, but it is important that the forwardness is not lost and that the horse does not fall over to the side. Therefore I don’t start with it too early.

Q: What do you feel is necessary for the horse to know or be doing before you start work on flying changes?
A: I start with flying changes relatively early. One can simply try and see, why not? With some horses it is easy and others have more problems. Again, it is important that they stay on the straight line that I want without losing their balance. I also usually do this before I work on the counter canter because it gets confusing for the horse. Just make it easy and playful, but if the horse is having problems one must go back and work on the canter.

It should be noted that in approaching the changes this way it is very important that the rider has a lot of experience, and is able to sense and feel immediately when the horse isn’t ready for the changes. If they continue doing them incorrectly over and over it can be difficult to fix them later.

It really depends on the individual horse, and this is a movement that happens very quickly so the corrections have to be in the canter before and after. It isn’t like a pirouette where one has time to make the corrections within the movement. The changes are dependent on the straightness and the balance of the canter.

Q: Do you feel it is necessary for a young horse to be on schedule with the FEI requirements for the Young Horse tests in order to have a successful career later at Grand Prix?
A: No. That is my experience, simply no. However, when the FEI tests are followed and really ridden correctly then you will be on the right path. You have to take it seriously though and concentrate on the basics of riding the correct lines of the test, not just go through the motions.

The reason I said no, however, is that many 4-, 5-, and 6-year-old horses don’t have the balance, power, and coordination developed at their age for the FEI young horse tests, but may easily develop it later. Doing well in these young horse tests is not a criteria for later success. Some trainers also take different approaches, and if that approach focuses on developing different movements at different ages from the FEI tests, it doesn’t mean it is wrong.

Q: Do you feel that pushing a horse to be successful in the Young Horse tests could ever cause a problem for the longer term goal of making it to Grand Prix?
A: If you have to push, it is never good. With the horses who are ready for this work, it is never necessary to push them.

In the young horse tests the tendency has been to reward big movement, however this past year that trend was changed. Dr. Plewa who was the head judge for the National Championships rewarded Denario with the championship title not because he has spectacular movement, which he doesn’t, but because he showed that he was truly ready and able to do what was being asked of him. Of course he has very good gaits, but more importantly he moves forward in a light, harmonious way with his ears forward showing that this is natural and easy for him. Dr. Plewa said for him, that is spectacular.
Performance Standards
continued from page 1

Johnston) undertook an analysis of a statistically representative number of competition scores to determine the extent of “poor riding.” This article provides a brief summary of those studies.

This analysis was done on 6,065 rides from “open” dressage performance shows from all USDF Regions (except Region 6, which did not have any competitions in this time frame) between October 1 and November 30, 2007. The data was “normal” (e.g., bell curve) for all levels, which makes it well suited for statistical analysis. The authors are presently attempting to obtain data for the entire 2007 competition year so that we may extend the analysis.

The Findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Level</td>
<td>62.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Level</td>
<td>61.739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Level</td>
<td>60.591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Level</td>
<td>60.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Level</td>
<td>61.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSG</td>
<td>60.339</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermed</td>
<td>60.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>59.116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Only 0.02% of all scores were in the 30-39% range (all were at Training and First Level)
- Only 1.78% of all scores were in the 40-49% range
- Only 1.1% of 2nd4 riders scored below 50%
- 10.8% of 2nd4 riders scored below 55%
- 43.1% of 2nd4 riders scored below 60%

Since the Dressage Committee proposed using a system of scores at preceding levels (including the highest tests at 2nd Level and 4th Level) to qualify riders to ride at 3rd Level and then at PSG, we also looked at this issue. To determine whether lower-level test scores could reasonably be used to predict upper level performance, a regression analysis was run on the 2nd4 versus 3rd Level average scores and 4th3 versus PSG scores. This analysis showed that no strong linkage exists between scores earned at 2nd4 versus average scores at 3rd Level. A stronger connection was found between scores at 4th3 vs. PSG, though it was between the LOWEST scores earned at 4th3 and the LOWEST scores earned at PSG.

Conclusions:

The high average scores earned at each level, the very small percentage of scores at all levels below 50%, and the distribution of scores suggest that if judges feel they are seeing “poor” or “abusive” riding, they are not documenting this on score sheets. Also, 2nd Level Test 4 has little predictive value of success at 3rd Level. The 4th Level Test 3 scores have a higher predictive value for future scores at PSG.

Opinions:

The authors note the following items extracted from the USDF 2007 Strategic Plan:

- USDF needs to have strategic focus and there is more work to be done for members than there are resources to accomplish it.
- Financial issues facing members were identified as a major challenge for people involved in horses.
- There is a declining trend in accessible training.
- Finally, and most important to the qualifying rule question, the Strategic Plan recommends that the USDF should create a more “inclusive” culture.

A system of recording and reporting qualifying scores at one level before being allowed to compete at the next imposes a burden of cost and time on show managers, secretaries, and USDF staff—and these are costs that will be passed on to already burdened riders. Devoting resources to implement and manage a “qualification rule” will dilute and detract both human and financial resources that would be better directed towards furthering the USDF’s Strategic Plan.

Suggestions:

- Simplify systems to make competition more “user friendly.”
- Instead of adding complexity, a way should be found within the existing rules to empower judges to appropriately score poor riding, to separate poor, marginal and satisfactory riding, and to protect them when they score according to their conscience and the existing rules. Comments by judges during the process of examining this rule change proposal suggest that such protection would be welcomed.
- Instead of adding complexity, reconsider or improve the existing systems to permit Technical Delegates to address abuse without personal repercussions.
- Should the proposed rule change be adopted at the 2009 USEF convention, it should be for a finite trial period, with benchmarks established for re-evaluation of the impact on scores and show entries at the end of the trial. If an analysis of the scores indicates there has been no significant change in the overall pattern of scores earned or there is a decline in the numbers of show entries, the qualifying requirement should be withdrawn.
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June 2008

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Send materials to the appropriate editor below. Late materials may be published in a subsequent newsletter as deemed appropriate. Editors reserve the right to edit all material. All submissions are subject to editorial approval.

Send your submissions to the appropriate editor:

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✦ Show Results: showresults@pvda.org (Lindsay Jensen, Show Results Coordinator)

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✦ Change of Address/Membership Renewal & Information: membership@pvda.org (Shari Packard, Membership Coordinator, 16105 Bond Mill Rd., Laurel, MD 20707; 301-498-4972)

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For more information about becoming a member, contact Shari Packard at membership@pvda.org or 301-498-4972. For chapter information, contact chapters@pvda.org.
By the Board

The Minutes

Board Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. and are open to all PVDA members.

Linda Speer will get the tableclothes cleaned. Rule change coming up to do away with chain arenas by 2010. Linda Speer will start to look into pricing for new rings.


Shows Recognized: (Carolyn Del Grosso and Linda Speer) Spring and Ride for Life shows going well and moving along.

Web Site: Lots of good feedback on the new design by Almon Packard.

Old Business: Rebecca Yount and Mary Johnston presented a statistical analysis of actual data of 20% of open rides from 2007 and found the data does not support the assertions of the performance standards committee. Data shows there were few very low scoring rides. The USEF dressage committee new proposed rule changes to come out in April. Original performance standards were tabled and to be reassessed for a year because of the uproar. Rule Change Liaison, Rebecca Yount, will watch for updated proposal.

NEXT MEETING: April 7 at 7 p.m. (all board meetings now at 7 p.m.), Linda Speer’s Farm, Clarksville, Md. For more information: Deanna Beal, 410-833-3321.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.
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