

COLLECTIVE REMARKS



Editor Fran Kehr franwkf@gmail.com

THE HDS DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

Are We Too Apathetic to Take Advantage of Financial Opportunities??

Dressage, and equestrian sport in general, is ridiculously expensive! If only financial help from HDS could be available....Oh wait... **there is!!...But NO ONE applied in 2023!!!** "Ridiculous", you say! Yes, but it's true! (below straight from the HDS Website)

Joe R. Bushager Grant (from HDS yearly, has been \$500 - \$500++)

On July 11th 1989 the Houston Dressage Society established the "Joe R Bushager Memorial Grant" to encourage talented, promising, and dedicated riders in their pursuit of training in dressage. The scholarship is intended for any activity involving both horse and rider that will make a significant impact on the horse/rider's level of understanding of the principles of dressage, as well as their level of achievement. **Applications accepted September 15th through December 31st and can be found on the website under Grants and Scholarships.**

Joe and Laurelyn Bushager were parents of super successful jr/yr competitor, Ellen Bushager. Joe and Laurelyn have long passed away, but were huge contributors to HDS and the dressage community in general. Besides being on the HDS Board in the late '80's, Laurelyn was a founding member of the small group that established The Southwest Dressage Championships (SWDC) for the states that made up Region 9 before there ever was a "Region 9"!!!

The Dressage Foundation has multiple scholarships and grants available to young riders, adult amateurs, and open riders. These include the Evie Tumlin Memorial Fund for Region 9 adult amateurs, The Cynthia Aspden Youth and Young Adult Development Fund and the Major Lindgren Instructor Grants and many, many more... Check the HDS website page for application information.

Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award The vast majority of prizes and awards are won at horse shows by top competitors, occasionally a trainer/instructor can apply for and receive a scholarship or grant for continuing education purposes. It's time to recognize those who teach well!! Recipients of the \$5000 region 9 Teaching Excellence Award will have many, if not all the following attributes: a USDF region 9 member; a teacher of dressage with adherence to sound dressage principles; the ability to communicate those principles of training; a reputation of honesty and integrity; and a USDF certified instructor certificate is encouraged, though not required. **All of the above information is on the HDS website, as are the applications for these grants. Take advantage of them!! APPLY!**

Breaking News:

At the end of June, HDS members will vote on the fate of the CDI portion of the HDS Spring Show for 2025. On page 33 of the Newsletter, there is information concerning the CDI. The info will explain what a CDI actually is, its purpose, its practicality, who is benefiting from this competition, plus additional pros and cons of hosting a CDI in Region 9. Read this information carefully. The membership will then be asked to vote yay or nay (Should HDS continue hosting a CDI?) at the end of June in an individual email.

This is your club and your money.....therefore the HDS Board thinks the membership should vote and make the decision.

HOUSTON DRESSAGE SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

May 13, 2024 - via Zoom

7:03-meeting called to order

Guests: Leslie Cummings, Flo Edelman

In attendance: Fran Dearing, Cate Schmidt, Angel Gunn, Sarah Denham, Jody Destefanis, Diane Dougherty, Dawn Morris, Jane Holman

Not in attendance: Jessica Jemison, Trish Henderson, Madison Smith, Ashley Shaw

Treasurer via Angel: Waiting for credit card statement to finalize costs. CDI probably lost about \$6K.

Recognized Shows: CDI discussion: fewer riders than previously consistent with downward trend. Is the CDI worth the effort and expense? Need to prepare an information outline to send to the membership explaining what the CDI is along with the pros and cons specific to our region. Jane will prepare and send outline for Board review and augmentation by May 22. Final document due for presentation to HDS membership by May 31. Flo will email and Fran will include in June newsletter requesting response by end of June.

Special Events HDS will host the next L program in Winter 2025. Angel is lead.

Advertising/Sponsorship - looking for new ideas to raise money or reinstate old programs such as pet sponsors. Diane mentioned Laura's Saddlery in Magnolia. Jane will visit Dover since they have indicated interest but not committed.

Schooling Shows - 372 rides so far this year with 31 riders already qualified. 4 shows currently on the schedule. Haras, New Horizons and Sedonia have shows scheduled but have not paid the HDS recognition fee – Dawn will reach out to them. Dawn has distributed spreadsheets for reporting scores and Fran reports that her scorer is pleased with the format. Got tweaks the Eventing Dressage scoring. Prix Caprilli test is still blowing in the wind.....

Awards - Trish was unavailable but reports that she is going to be working with Angel to take on more responsibility in the Awards department. Fran has spoken with Olva Pharo who is eager to help with perpetual awards. Need to determine criteria for Volunteer of the Year, and Sportsmanship Award of the Year. Sportsmanship award will be based upon nominations.

Education – The last newsletter produced some interest in the summer camp so the idea still lives. Jody has offered WV to host.

Volunteers – Jody is back on the Board and actively looking for volunteers for the Summer Show.

Juniors – Cate reports that juniors love the CDI. Has had difficulty reaching Marsha Lewis for more details regarding the Youth Outreach program.

Membership – 233 current members – 162 amateur, 42 open, 29 youth

Old Business – Still need to revise bylaws. Jane needs to find an editable version to incorporate comments.

New Business – Jenna Ursone wants to sponsor "Small Horse Awards" – offshoot of Pony Cup. Need more information.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

HDS Board members:

President – Jane Holman
Vice President – Angel Gunn
Secretary – Jessica Jemison
Treasurer – Terri Harlan
Membership – Diane Dougherty
Education – Sarah Denham
Recognized Show Chair – Angel Gunn
Schooling Show Chair – Dawn Morris
Junior/Young Rider Chair – Kate Schmidt
Special Events – Ashley Shaw
Sponsorship and Advertising – Jane Holman/Madison Smith
Awards Chair – Patricia Henderson
Volunteer Coordinator – Jody Destefanis
Publications – Fran Kehr/Flo Edelman
Historian – Noel Lewandos

(Remainder) 2024 Recognized Show Schedule:

July 6-7 Haras-Magnolia, TX www.foxvillage.com
Aug 30 –9/1 DSHB in hand qualifiers and final Haras- www.foxvillage.com
Aug 10-11 Lemonade Daze-Athens, TX www.showsecretary.com
Aug 24-25 HDS Labor Day Show-Katy, TX www.showsecretary.com
Aug 30-Sept1 Sport Horse-Magnolia, TX www.foxvillage.com
Sept 6-8 Haras-Magnolia, TX www.foxvillage.com
Sept 7-9 Harvest Classic-Katy, TX www.showsecretary.com
Sept 20-22 Texas Rose Fall Classic-Tyler, TX www.showsecretary.com
Oct 3-6 GAIG/USDF and SWDC Region 9-Katy www.showsecretary.com
Nov 7-10 Nationals-Kentucky
Nov 9-10 Haras-Magnolia, TX www.foxvillage.com

(Remainder) 2024 Schooling Show Schedule:

[WKF Spring Dressage 2024](#) Jun 29, 2024
Snowdonia Sport Horse Complex June 29,2024 <https://snowdoniasporthorsecomplex.com>
[Sienna Stables HDS Schooling Show](#) July 21, 2024
[WKF Fall Dressage Show 2024](#) Sat, Sep 14
[2024 HDS Schooling Show Championships](#) Dec 07, 2024

Check HDS website for additional schooling shows added to the schedule!

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**EQUSTRIAN LIFE ...Australia's Premier
Equestrian Magazine**
ISSUE 94 OCT 2023 By Roger Fitzhardinge
Dressage Training



Not only is
the simple
change a
movement

that collects a lot of marks at Elementary level, the transitions walk to-canter and canter to-walk carry many marks right through to Grand Prix .

The simple change is an exercise that will be used so many times in preparations for pirouettes, half-pass canter, transition to halt and extended canter to collected, and is a basic extension of the half-halt in canter. At Elementary, this exercise shows judges the ability of the horse to sit, to carry weight in a true uphill manner, and is a true indication of submission, lightness, engagement and honesty in the communication in an empathetic way between rider and horse.

This is Equestrian Australia's rule book definition of the simple change:

2.5.7 Simple change of leg at the canter is a movement which, after a direct transition out of the canter into a walk, with 3 to 5 clearly defined walk steps, a transition is made into the other canter lead.

Looks pretty simple! And easy... don't think it is!



*You firstly need a canter
and the horse needs to
sit and engage in an uphill*

Image by Roger Fitzhardinge.

*that is balanced – as is seen here
understand the half-halt, so he
way to make the transition to w*

“Straightness is also
important, as is the
degree of collection.”

A JUDGE'S PERSPECTIVE

Equestrian Life thanks Eurodressage for the following words of wisdom from Maribel Alonso.

According to FEI O-Level judge Maribel Alonso, the most common and most obvious mistake judges see in the simple change is the horse falling into trot before he reaches the walk. “For some amateur riders it is not always clear to them, or the judges, that the simple change is a transition from canter to walk, (3-5 steps of walk ideally), then back into canter,” Maribel once explained to Eurodressage. “However, canter to walk is a difficult transition, as the horse needs to be slightly collected to make a good transition directly to the walk. The horse must also remain relaxed, maintaining a good rhythm both in canter and in walk, as well as keeping the straightness. Riders therefore have to use effective half-halts to maintain their horse's ability to stay active and listening. All these elements need to be there at the moment of the transition in order to avoid a loss of balance as the horse goes into the walk.”

Maribel is typically forced to lower the marks for a long list of reasons: “Either, the horse dived into walk, trotted all the way through, the horse was not straight into the downward transition or

the upward one, the horse was not really through and therefore was not relaxed in the neck or in the body, the horse took the wrong canter lead after walk, the horse was behind the bit, against the bit, showed an unclear rhythm in walk, was resisting or reluctant to go forward into canter. All these examples belong to the 4s and less.”

With all these things to avoid, there are also many elements to the simple change which can help us reach those top marks. “Top marks will be awarded for a good lively, clear



and active canter, with good self-carriage, showing relaxation of the body and back,” says Maribel.

“Straightness is also important, as is the degree of collection, so the horse is able to respond to the half-halt while remaining in balance, flowing into a relaxed clear and active walk, and then returning smoothly into an uphill canter, without diving and while keeping the vertical.

Judges are really looking for a smooth, straight, uphill transition that fluently goes from an active clear walk, and back into an uphill canter, without losing the straightness and balance. The simple change should be free of

tension, with good self-carriage and some degree of collection.”

One would wonder then if any elements can be overlooked and Maribel advises that if the rider has fulfilled the requirements above, then a judge can live with more walk steps than the required number. “Sometimes it is better to give the young horse or rider a chance to take a little bit more time and perform a more fluent transition, than a rough one lacking preparation,” she says.

It's easy to see here that engagement and an uphill feeling may enable a wonderful collection to the walk, and this is what is needed when riding a simple change.

TRANSITION TO CANTER

“When we’re talking about looking at a 10 for this movement, you need to perfect the downward transition from canter to walk.”



The engagement and lightness of the forehand before the walk transition. Image by Roger Fitzhardinge

When we’re talking about looking at a 10 for this movement, you need to perfect the downward transition from canter to walk, and in order to do this the horse must be able to canter on the spot!

When the horse is sitting engaged, balanced and light in the contact, the first step of walk is light and the feeling should be uphill. The feeling must be of the horse sitting with a raised forehand and the front feet light to the ground. The front feet must be feeling free to move and this comes from a good throughness to the bridle that at no stage is dull and dead in the rider’s hands.

A problem that comes into this transition is always falling out of the canter into trot (on the forehand). There must be no trot steps in a simple change. It must be canter, walk, canter. It’s also very important to be seen to be able to control the walk steps without your horse anticipating that as soon as he goes canter-walk, the next transition is going to be canter.

With horses that anticipate the walk transition and drop the rider early, you must try then to ride the collected canter forward and then collect again until you feel that the last stride of the canter can melt down into an elastic walk stride.



a) A well-balanced canter on the left lead, showing inside flexion and very good balance and collection, preparing for a simple change. b) As you start collecting more towards the walk, you need to bend the horse to the new direction (i.e. to the right) with the balance a little to the left-hand side of the horse. This will keep him straight and prepare for the new lead. c) As the rider sits, the horse transitions to walk with no trot steps; the horse's balance is to the left with a little right flexion, totally ready for a strike off to the right! d) You can see here clearly the strike off to the right lead is very balanced uphill, with an already directed flexion of balance to the right with a little weight to the horse's left. Looking at all four photos, you will see the rider's leg position is really good for the collection, the positioning and the transition.

HANDY HALF-PIROUETTE

Very handy and helpful in the beginning of a walk-to-canter transition is a half-pirouette in walk. So ride a half-pirouette, for example to the left, and as soon as you finish that pirouette to the left, then strike off in the canter right, at a place on the arena that is open and easy. Vice versa, half- pirouette right, to canter left. This exercise is very good for positioning, balancing and creating activity, and it's a great way to start canter-from-walk transitions.

The most important thing in the transition to walk is that many of the simple changes are done off a circle, a curved line or serpentine. In the canter-to-walk transition on a circle line, you must make certain that your outside rein and outside leg keep the horse very straight. If you create too much inside flexion while making the transition to walk, the horse will fall sideways, outwards, and cannot truly sit and engage. In fact, it is very

important to use your outside rein and outside leg almost feeling that you push the horse in half-pass as you collect so you keep the hind legs straight and under the horse. As you do this you could also indicate a little with a new flexion to the new direction before you walk (i.e. using the old outside rein). So when you land in walk, your horse is already balanced for the new canter transition to the new direction.

This exercise – i.e. canter left, collecting slightly, pushing your outside leg behind the girth to get the horse to balance over to the left, so as you land the new flexion to the new direction (right) is already present – is, in fact, exactly the same as a preparation for a flying change.

Your horse simply needs to accept your rein and leg aid simultaneously to contain him and make him wait for the correct aid. Simple changes that are done correctly like this will make flying changes easy and will help a horse to realise he can sit and be balanced for the change without panicking. It teaches him to change bend and flexion before the flying change.

The simple change has many changes of position and balance. Never overlook the absolute honesty of being able to adjust the balance of your horse; the rider's most important job is to create a balance by adjustable positioning, so the horse simply makes the movement that he is prepared for. **EQ**

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE TO READ:

[Taking the Plunge](#) – *Equestrian Life*, September 2023

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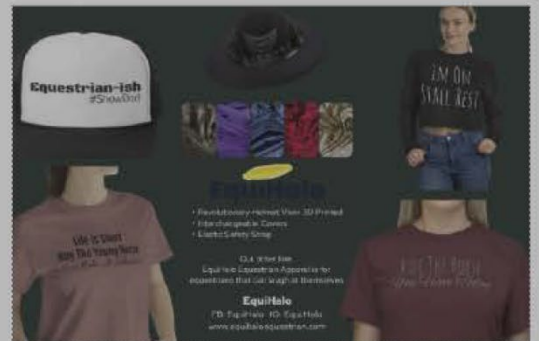
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Boarding-Training-Lessons:

- Magnolia contact Sandra Lindenberg 14 X 14 stalls + turnout Sandra_dressage@yahoo.com
- Magnolia contact Fran Kehr, Windy Knoll Farm www.windyknolldressage.com or franwkf@gmail.com

Tack for Sale:

- Dressage Saddles for Sale....Marshall Special II medium tree 17.5" seat \$650; Crosby medium tree 17.5" seat \$650 Schleese wide tree 18" seat \$1200. Contact Sandy Venneman vennemansandy@gmail.com
- Pixem Robotic Camera, complete system, like new \$800 contact Catherine Hall cmh@satx.rr.com 830-743-79



Six Decades – The Lifetime Sport

April 30, 2024
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Reprinted from YourDressage.com

April 2024



Lyndon, left, and Grace, right, are separated in age by six decades, and are proving dressage is the sport of a lifetime. Photos by SusanJStickle.com and Chelsey Burris.

By Chelsey Burris

There are few sports that you can enjoy from your youth through your golden years. At the recent US Dressage Finals in Lexington, KY, an 11-year-old and a 70-year-old rider both competed at the same show. With their ages spanning a full six decades, it proved dressage is truly a lifetime sport.

Lyndon (right) at the 2023 US Dressage Finals with student Elisabeth Dewar and Don Darling

Preparing for the Show of a Lifetime



In Barn #18, [Grace Christianson](#) excitedly finished tidying up her horse's braids and shining up her tail, something she always makes sure to do before leaving the stall. Her mount, 8-year-old mare FHF Roulee, leaned her dark muzzle down to snuggle the young equestrian. Grace was missing school this week, 6th grade, to travel from Indiana to the Kentucky Horse Park with her family for her first ever trip to the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan®, the year-end championship show for dressage in the United States. At just 11-years-old, she was the youngest competitor at the national championship show in 2023. Her friends and family back home would be anxiously awaiting updates to

find out how she was doing, and Grace and her mother, Elizabeth, were keeping them apprised with plenty of videos and photos. Just a couple arenas away, [Lyndon Rife](#) was schooling his horse, Conflorsan, nicknamed Conner, for his two upcoming Finals classes. Lyndon, at age 70 (and just two weeks shy of his 71st birthday during the show), was the senior-most competitor on the grounds for the championships. In a dressage career

spanning over 40 years, he's brought horses along from Training Level to Grand Prix. In addition to earning his USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medals, he has also helped his students earn more than forty USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold medal awards. For his efforts to improve dressage in his home region, he was awarded Region 9's Horse Person of the Year in 2009.



Recognized-Show Debuts...42 Years Apart

Having been bitten by the horse bug at a young age, Grace's life purpose has quickly come to revolve around equines. After riding dressage for about a year or two, she was already proudly telling folks that her goal was to one day win a gold medal in the Olympics. "She had to be only around 9 years old when that became her dream," her mother, Elizabeth, said. After riding a variety of horses in her youth, it was partnering with Roulee that launched Grace's showing aspirations into realities.



As 2023 began, attending the [US Dressage Finals](#) was beyond Grace's wildest dreams. After loving horses since she was 3 years old, Grace got serious about her riding goals and made her recognized show debut in May 2023. It was a sparkling entrance to the dressage world, where she won her class. The fact that the show, the Harmony in the Park Spring I, was a qualifier for the Great American Insurance Group Regional Dressage Championships made the victory all the more thrilling. Over the summer, Grace dabbled in more shows in Kentucky and her home state of Indiana. Riding at Training and First Level, occasionally doing a First Level Freestyle (to positive female anthems including Meghan Trainor's 'Dear Future Husband', Pink's 'Just Give Me a Reason', and Demi Lovato's 'I Love Me'), and adding

equitation classes to the mix, Grace and Roulee were routinely finishing in the top three, and more often than not, coming home with blue ribbons.

Lyndon made his recognized show debut, where he rode a Saddlebred mare in a Third Level test under judge Hilda Gurney in 1981, 31 years before Grace was born. In 2023, he rode the show circuit that has

become familiar to him – with shows like the Dallas Dressage Club Spring I and National Dressage Pony Cup – while preparing to return to the Region 9 Championships. Making it to Regionals is always notable, but for Lyndon, it's usually more of an expectation and a decision of, 'Which horse should I bring along this year?' than a pipe dream. He is a Regional Champs veteran, attending the show 29 of the last 30 years beginning in 1994. The only thing that was capable of ending his perfect attendance streak was



being hospitalized in 2009 and then being limited to coaching when he lost too much training time to compete his own horses due to Covid in 2022.

Lyndon aboard the Saddlebred mare with whom he rode his first dressage test.

Regional Championships – The Veteran and the First Timer

Back in the Midwest, the prospect of the upcoming Regional Championships was nerve-wracking for young Grace. In September, it would be her first real acid test at the Region 4 Championships in Iowa. “Going to Regionals, I didn’t want to get my hopes up, so I tried not to expect much. I just wanted to get in the arena and do well,” Grace explained. “This was Roulee’s first Regionals too, and she’d had a 7-hour trailer ride, which I knew was a lot on her body and mind. Most of all, I wanted her to have a good experience. I was never expecting, or even hoping, to qualify for the Finals...”

What Grace expected and what happened were as different as a woolly Haflinger and a sleek Hanoverian. Grace and Roulee notched wins in the First Level TOC Freestyle and the Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Finals in her age category (13 and under), placed 4th in the Training Level Jr/Young Rider class, 8th in the First Level Open Freestyle Jr/YR, 5th in the First Level Jr/YR, and 2nd in the Training Level TOC AA/Open/Jr/YR. This was more than enough to punch her ticket to Kentucky for the national championships. She was on cloud nine. When asked how she felt about her trip to Regionals, Grace gave all the credit to her dance partner. “I was so proud of Roulee; she is the best mare! That’s what it’s all about. It’s all about the horses.”



Grace’s mother, Elizabeth, who has had a front row ticket to watch Grace blossom through her passion for horses, was extremely proud of her daughter. “I was just in awe of her poise, her talent, and her ‘grace’ at Regionals! She’s such a good teammate, a good friend, and cheered everyone on while also taking great care of Roulee to make sure she was having a positive experience at such a big, busy show.”

In Texas, Lyndon and Conner entered three classes at the 2023 Regionals and came away with a first place in the FEI Intermediate I Freestyle Open and a second place in the FEI Intermediate I Open. “In 2022, I missed riding in the Regional Championships because I had COVID. In 2023, I was really busy with our move and overseeing all of the construction at our new facility, but luckily I did just enough showing to qualify,” Lyndon shared. The excitement was building for him to return to Finals, a show he adored. “I didn’t think Conner would be super competitive at the Finals, but I decided to go along with one of my students because it’s always a great experience, and I missed being there.”

Lyndon and Conflorsan (Conor) compete at the World Equestrian Center in Ohio; Winslow Photography photo

Finals Bound



Honing in on the national championships, Grace had eagerly informed her teachers that she’d be out of school for Finals in November. Meanwhile, Lyndon was busy arranging for others to manage his stable of 20+ horses while he was away showing.

The week of the competition, Grace and her family excitedly drove down from Indiana. On the 4-hour trek, Grace alternated between going over her dressage tests and doing her homework for the days she’d be out of school for the show. Her

family listened to country music, their favorite tunes from the 80’s, and Michael Jackson songs to get hyped up on the trip.

Lyndon and his team made their voyage up from Texas, settling into Barn #18, which was coincidentally the same barn that Grace and Roulee were stabling in. He worked on getting himself, his student, and their horses acclimated to the sweeping showgrounds and chilly weather at the Kentucky Horse Park. While not deliberately, Lyndon and Grace were likely to have crossed paths heading to or from the schooling rings or along their barn shed row, not realizing they were the bookends in age for the whole competition, spanning over hundreds of competitors.



The Centerline of Champions

Nicknamed ‘The Centerline of Champions’, the US Dressage Finals is the year-end dream for many riders across the country. Lyndon was up first, with his initial Finals ride of 2023 on Friday, November 10, in the Intermediate I Open Championship, held in the renowned Alltech Arena, a hallowed space for dressage enthusiasts.

Donning a dapper navy show coat with gold accents and aboard the 17-year-old Conner, the pair finished a respectable 10th, earning a neck sash.

Lyndon and Conner share a unique bond. Conner belonged to a student of Lyndon's who unexpectedly passed away. Since Lyndon was already familiar with the gelding, he decided to purchase him and keep him in the barn that the horse was already accustomed to. The Holsteiner had struggled with recovering from an injury, and it took multiple vets to help him fully heal. "He was off for over a year, and we weren't sure if he'd ever come back sound again," Lyndon said. Being able to share the Finals experience with a horse who had been through so much was especially rewarding for the Region 9 horseman.

The pair were back in action in Saturday's Intermediate I Freestyle Open Championship, where Lyndon and Conner danced their way through a dynamic freestyle featuring music from the band Queen. Among a big competitive field, they didn't place in the ribbons, but Lyndon was still quite pleased with the outcome, particularly since there was a time not long ago when Conner's future was uncertain.

"Conner is a special horse for many reasons," he shared. "He has a lot of personality, which can be good and bad, but I enjoy him, and I especially enjoy giving him a good home, as I know this would make Michele (his previous owner who passed away) very happy."

Next, it was Grace's turn. Nicknamed "Lil Grace", she and her mount, Roulee, stood by the gate, waiting for the judge to signal they could enter the ring for her first ever Finals class, the First Level Junior/Young Rider Championship. She took her inaugural ride down the Finals centerline on Saturday, November 11, a day she will always remember. Grace narrowly missed the ribbons in her debut, finishing in 11th place with her American Warmblood. This is especially remarkable given that her mare is also in her very first season of showing.



With the initial jitters for both horse and rider out of the way, the girl-power duo returned to the arena Sunday for the Training Level Junior/Young Rider Championship. This time, she and Roulee moved in perfect harmony, with Grace's beautiful, light blue show jacket standing out against her horse's dark, shiny coat. Against a competitive group, including many riders who were much more seasoned, the youngest competitor on the Finals showgrounds held her own, finishing with an incredible 70.278% and earning 5th place honors.

Going in and out of the arenas, Grace and her good friend Andrea Balas would jokingly ask each other, "Are you nervous yet?" Much like, 'break a leg', it was their way of wishing each other good luck.

Getting to take a victory lap in the prestigious old Alltech Arena with a sash around Roulee's neck was awe-inspiring for the young Grace. As they stood near the horse tunnel Grace shared, "I was hoping Roulee would be OK. She could be a very tense horse - she took a big breath as we walked into Alltech, and I was like "it's OK girl". As we made our lap, I was over the moon to see the huge Reta, all the shops lighting the top, and all the people. All I could think was, "Wow this is the arena where we watch the Grand Prix riders last night. I can't believe we get to be here".

The Finals Experience

For those who have attended the Finals before, they know it's much more than a show – it's an experience. One of Grace's favorite parts was making so many new friends – from competitors, their families, show volunteers, and staff. She was thrilled to meet so many new people and go through all the shops on the concourse, making sure to take lots of photos and selfies with everyone so that her family could make a gallery with all their new '#Finals Friends' when they got back home. "We really enjoyed the whole experience. Everyone was so nice," Grace's mother reported.



Trainer Jennifer Kaiser, of Forrest Hill Farms, assists with a stock tie adjustment.

Grace's parents, her barn family from Forrest Hill Farms, and her trainer Jennifer Kaiser all came out to the show to support Grace and cheer her on. Back home, not all of Grace's friends and classmates understand what drives her ambition. "Some of my classmates think, 'Where have you been? We've been in school without you for days!' My friends who don't ride don't really seem to understand the horse world. My mom picks me up during the time that I should be in PE class to drive me to the farm, and my friends sometimes ask me if I'm skipping out on my workout. I tell them, 'Don't worry, I'll be getting plenty of exercise around the barn and on my horse!' My best friend brought me a gift to say congratulations after the Finals. She isn't a horse person, but she loves hearing my stories and is so supportive of me".

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A Finals veteran, Lyndon made his Finals debut in 2015 when the competition was only in its third year. For the most recent edition, he said, "I really enjoyed being there with my wife Julie, my student, and her family. Riding in the Alltech Arena was great, and it was fun to watch the competition. We had attended Finals a couple of times before but had taken a long break, so it was a good feeling to come back. It's always nice to visit with people from other regions that we don't get to see very often, catch up, and maybe get some inspiration."



Speaking of inspiration, Grace added, “We hope to be back next year, and we really hope Lyndon is there as well. I’d love to meet him in person! He’s an inspiration to me!”

An Eye Toward the Future

When thinking about the younger generation, Lyndon had this wisdom to impart. “I would advise young people starting out to enjoy the horses and remember that learning is first. Learn to be an advocate for your horse and shy away from any training or competing practices that aren’t in the best interest for the long-term health and confidence of your equine partner.”

The future looks bright for Grace. To go from a young equestrian who had never competed in a recognized show to taking a victory lap at the US Dressage Finals in the span of just 7 months, the world is her oyster as she embarks in her second season in 2024. She has aspirations to return to Finals and raise her placings, qualify for the US Dressage Festival of Champions in the FEI Children’s division, improve her test scores overall, and acquire a sponsor this year. “Most importantly, I want to have fun and enjoy the season with my wonderful horse; it goes by way too fast!” she said.

Meanwhile, Lyndon and his student returned to Texas, where they will spend the winter training, welcoming some new horses into the program, and welcoming more students into the barn to learn under Lyndon’s tutelage. It’s back to business as usual, as it has been for the master horsemen for the last 4 decades.

There are very few places where the national championship for a sport would feature competitors with a full sixty-year age gap between them. But in a world of magnificent, dancing horses, these two riders, aged 11 and 70, added an extra dose of magic to the already electric stage.

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THE EQUESTRIAN CENTER AT



TWIN WOOD



FACILITIES

The Equestrian Center at Twinwood is a premier dressage boarding and training facility located approximately 30 minutes west of Houston, near Fulshear. We offer full care stall and pasture board for the competitive equestrian, in an idyllic country setting.

Twinwood sits on one hundred and twenty acres, offering spacious grass turn-out paddocks and 120 acres of ride-out space. We offer two full-size dressage arenas: The outdoor arena is lighted with all-weather GGT footing and the covered arena, also lighted, features footing from Premier Equestrian. While historically our competitive focus has been dressage, we also offer amenities for the serious eventer, including a dedicated 130 x 200 ft., lighted, all-weather outdoor jump arena, a one-acre grass cross-country jump school, and a quarter-mile gallop track. Nowhere in Houston can you find all these amenities in one place. In addition to an excellent barn manager, our experienced staff live on site to ensure your horse's safety and well-being.

Twinwood boasts resident dressage and eventing trainers, all capable of taking you and your horse from green to Grand Prix. Our trainers have competition and training experience in Europe and the U.S., and each have an active and supportive group of clients showing with them.



HISTORY



The Equestrian Center property has a 30 year history with horses and first went by the name Jamar Farms. Bill (William) McArthur was a thoroughbred breeder in the 1990s and was hired by Jaramar. McArthur purchased the 130 acre property from Arthur Hilton in 1993. In 1995, Mr. McArthur received approval from the Department of the Army Corps of Engineers to build the main barn, large hay barn, and race tract that is still on the facility today.

On April 26th, 2006, Twinwood purchased the 81 acres from FM 1093 Farms and then on May 20th, 2008, Twinwood purchased the remaining 54 acres from Hambrant. On February 1st, 2010, Twinwood Equestrian Center, Inc. was formed and the original 130 acres was no longer divided. Later that same year, The Equestrian Center at Twinwood opened its gates as a boarding facility.



BOARDING

The Equestrian Center at Twinwood offers full-care stall and pasture boarding, with some of the best amenities in the Houston area. Stall boarders are housed in our 44-stall main barn or 12-stall round barn. Both barns have automatic fly spray systems, climate-controlled tack rooms and boarder lounges with kitchenettes and restrooms. The barns offers built-in tack lockers and grooming stalls and hot/cold water wash racks.

Stall board includes Purina grain up to three times daily with owner-provided supplements, as well as 20 lbs of high-quality coastal hay three times a day (including a night check hay for horses stalled overnight). Alfalfa or extra coastal are available for an additional charge. Stall board includes winter blanketing/fly sheeting and protective boots as needed for turn-out. Stall-boarded horses are turned out seven days a week, weather permitting, and are checked daily for cuts, injuries, or missing shoes. We offer day or night turnout options, depending on availability and owner preference. Turn-out for stall boarders is individual, but we can often accommodate turnout with a buddy in a larger pasture for those who prefer it.

“INSIDE LEG TO OUTSIDE REIN” *by Fran Kehr*

Originally Printed in “Dressage Today” Sept. 2016

ask the experts

How Do I Know If I’m Successful in Riding Inside Leg to Outside Rein?

Q I am working on my inside-leg-to-outside-rein connection, but I don’t really feel any difference in my horse when I use this leg–rein combination aid. What exactly is this famous aid supposed to achieve in the horse? How do I know I am getting a successful inside-leg-to-outside-rein connection? What is a good exercise that helps me get the right feel for this aid?

Name withheld by request



Leg yielding is a methodical movement that promotes straightness and throughness, which in turn promotes balance. Here Catherine Chamberlain demonstrates the leg yield with her Dutch Warmblood, Chance.

Rebecca Neff

FRAN (DEARING) KEHR

Inside leg to outside rein is a concept of biblical proportions in the dressage world. This is because it has withstood the test of time in the teachings of classical horsemanship. A case in point is Federigo Grisone, whose book *Gli ordini di Cavalcare* was published in 1550 and who has been credited as being the founding father of classical equitation after the Middle

Ages. Grisone emphasized connecting the base of the horse’s neck to his shoulders through the rein contact. This alignment promotes straightness, which is essential for balance—all a precursor to the concept of connection and the rule of inside leg to outside rein. Your three questions intertwine, and we will look at each individually.

1. If I do this with my leg and this with my rein, why

Q&A



Fran (Dearing) Kehr is a USEF

"S" dressage judge. She has been successfully competing Accentuate, a 10-year-old KWPN gelding, through Intermediaire I. Based in Magnolia, Texas, she is the owner and trainer of Windy Knoll Farm.

don't I see a difference? This issue is about communication and effectiveness. Just as with human-to-human interaction, there must be a common language in order to communicate. In the case of this scenario, the language from you is, "I apply pressure," and what your horse must comprehend is, *I move away from the pressure*. Only then are you speaking the same language.

When that point is understood, effectiveness must come into play for a positive result. You must not only use the pressure aid for a response; also, it must be a correct and effective response. How do you decide? If you have a correct and progressively positive response to those aids, it can be considered proper communication. I must emphasize that just going through the motions does not necessarily give you a correct response. Inside leg to outside rein provides the correct ingredients, but you must deter-

mine the recipe. If you have never experienced the proper feel of these aids, have a professional establish the communication with your horse and show you the correct response in your horse's balance, posture and contact. Then get on your horse and with the help of your instructor, try to recreate that connection until you feel the straightness, improved balance and contact. In the golfing world it would be called the "sweet spot." You must apply these aids until you feel the sweet spot. You will know you are there when you feel an elastic, uphill contact and energy. Until then, unfortunately, you are just motoring around.

2. Why should these aids work? The bottom line is: It's physics. However, you do not have to understand the details of physics to comprehend the results. And the result of inside leg to outside rein is uphill and forward energy. The inside hind leg of a horse is the driving (energy) source. The outside rein is the stabilizer (organizer, if you will) of that energy. This technique is what properly compresses the body length, which in turn, controls the balance of a horse appropriate to the level of the horse's ability. That means this is the same aid that a Training Level horse will need in order to move from his untrained "front-wheel-drive" tendency to a more balanced "four-wheel-drive" tendency and eventually developing into an athlete (over years of building muscle and power) in the quest of becoming a Grand Prix horse.

3. What exercises can I use to get the correct feel for inside-leg-to-outside-rein aiding? The best exercise to help you achieve the proper feel is a leg yield. Once again, I must emphasize that it is not just going through the motions of haphazardly moving sideways and thinking you are accomplishing something. Leg yielding is a methodical movement that promotes straightness and throughness, which in turn promote balance. You should leg yield at the walk, with the help of your instructor, in either straight lines or around a large circle. It is not only the sideways yielding, but also the forward into the bit that will lift your horse's balance. This is why, if you've never felt this before, it is essential you work with an instructor or ground person who has. Once you get this connection, you can go into the trot. Then ask more with the driving (inside leg) aids into the straightening, stabilizing aid (outside rein).

Attaining the balance, energy and organization (the inside-leg-to-outside-rein concept) ignites our endorphins, giving us cause to continue the passionate pursuit of dressage excellence.

REGION 9 NEWS:

From The Region 9 Director, Bess Burton:

Our May flowers came early this year. Weather has been great for spending time outside...away from technology. As wonderful as our cell phones are to us....when you go to the barn...vow to put them in your tack box when you arrive...and leave them there, until you leave the barn. Just try it. And enjoy the outdoors and your four-legged companions without interruption. Your horse, and in-person friends/trainer deserve 100% of your attention. Whatever comes up on your phone will be there when you get back to it.

Hope for a great spring !!! Fun riding !!!

-Bess

2024 Omnibus

Thank you to everyone who advertised in the 2024 Omnibus. The 2024 books are [available for download here](#). Order hard copies [of your own here](#).

Past Region 9 Omnibus Copies, Show Bills Wanted

Region 9 is updating our historical records. We are looking for copies of the past Omnibus, starting with the 1996 edition, thru the 2010 edition. We currently are in need of 1996-2006 issues. If you have any of these copies, please email Bess. Dig thru old boxes from your barn or GMO. Copy and send the oldest newsletter, flyer, show bills, etc. Historical information for the Region 9 website and omnibus. Deadline: July.

Thanks,

Bess Bruton

R9D

bessbruton@gmail.com

It's Not Too Early - Advertise in the 2025 Region 9 Omnibus

It's not too early to start thinking and planning your advertising. Advertising in the Omnibus supports Region 9 grants and programs. Many people benefit from your advertising dollars. If you have a business, consider advertising. Rates are inexpensive and you get a lot of bang for your buck: over 100 printed copies are distributed and held onto for many years; advertisers are included on our website which reaches hundreds of people each month! [Download the advertising form here](#).

Region 9 (In-person) Summer Meeting

Come join us July 19, 20, 21 in College Station, TX., for a Friday nite get together, Saturday meeting & networking, tour of the A&M Vet School, or Bush Presidential Library. Other activities planned. [Details and the RSVP form are available on the Region 9 website](#)

REGION 9 NEWS CONTINUED:

Youth Outreach Clinics - Region 9 June 29-30, 2024

The Youth Outreach Clinics are a new educational opportunity for our "grass roots" youth riders. The goal of these clinics is to introduce youth members, who are dedicated dressage riders, to the USDF "youth pipeline" and the opportunities it offers. Interested youth may apply as a rider or attend as an auditor. Each of these clinics will be held over two days, and will include a variety of instruction each day including a 45-minute session with the instructor, a lunchtime lecture and interactive discussion, and an evening get together. Interested riders must submit an online application; 8-10 riders will be selected to participate. Riders must be 10-21 years of age, and must be able to complete a Training Level test.

All youth and their designated chaperones may audit for free. Adult USDF members may audit for \$20/per day and adult non-members may audit for \$40/per day. Auditor registration is by walk-in only.

Region 9 Youth Outreach Clinic June 29-30, 2024

Rolling Ridge Stable, Manor, Tx

Clinician: Nancy Hinz

Deadline to apply to ride: May 26, 2024....**PASTDUE BUT CHECK ASAP FOR A POSSIBLE SPOT OR COME AND AUDIT LESSONS!!!!**

Apply to Ride

Youth are also encouraged to take advantage of an additional educational opportunity by attending a USDF FEI Youth Clinic as an auditor. For more information on the USDF FEI Youth Clinic Series [click here](#). If you have any further questions, contact the Youth Programs Liaison at (859) 971-2277 or youth@usdf.org.

2024 NAYC Sponsorship Program

Support our Region 9 Youth. [Full details available here](#) and [here](#)
Sponsorship levels

- \$100: JR/YR 1*
- \$500: JR/YR 2*
- \$1,000: JR/YR 3*
- \$2,000: JR/YR 4*
- \$5,000: JR/YR 5*

All sponsors will receive the following recognition:

- Social media (FB and IG) highlights throughout the competition season
- Printed banners at designated Region 9 qualifier shows and Regional Championships
Note: Banner sizes to be specified at a later date; will be hung in accordance with show policies/procedures by Region 9 JR/YR volunteers and parents
- Printed banners that will accompany the team at NAYC opening ceremonies, in the stabling and on golf carts.
- Printed recognition in the Regional Championship program
- Printed recognition on 2024 Region 9 JR/YR t-shirts
- 501(c)3 tax letter. [Online donations may be made here](#). Select "Donations-JR/YR" in the dropdown.

REGION 9 NEWS CONTINUED:

Training Tips

Central Plains Dressage Society has developed a series of training tips they are sharing on their website. [Check it out here.](#)

Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award Nominations Due June 1

The Dressage Foundation is once again accepting nominations for the [\\$5,000 Region Teaching Excellence Award](#). This award recognizes those who are excellent teachers of dressage. If you can help spread the word about nominations, that would be wonderful!

Nominees should be:

- A USDF Region 9 member in good standing--permanent residence in Region 9. (Required)
- A teacher of dressage, whether it is basics--Training through 1st-2nd level, mid-range 2nd-4th levels, or FEI.
- Adherence to sound dressage principles, such as outlined by the USDF Training Pyramid.
- The ability to communicate these principles of training so that students develop themselves and their horses in a logical, progressive, and humane way up through the levels.
- A reputation for honesty, integrity, and community/regional service.
- A USDF Certified Instructor is encouraged, though not required.

Nominations are due June 1. Nominations can be made at <https://bit.ly/4aQ4em6>.

After an instructor is nominated, TDF will reach out to them to let them know the good news. They will then apply for the award. The award application is due on August 1.

To learn more about the Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award, visit <https://bit.ly/46nwJFC>

Region 9 T-Shirt Contest

It's never too early to start thinking about being creative! We'd love to see your designs for the 2024 USDF Region 9 T-shirt! **Art submissions due by July 1.** Send them in to [Bess Bruton](#). The T-shirts will have a new color this year: Columbia Blue! We're very excited to offer a new option for this year's limited edition shirt!

Art Requirements

- Art must be high resolution (300dpi or greater)
- The following formats are acceptable: .JPG, .PDF, .EPS, .AI, .PSD, .PNG (if the resolution is at least 300dpi)
- The design should be composed of solid shapes or lines: no halftones. This means sketches with shadings or gradations or photographs will not work well - to keep costs down, the shirts are printed in one solid color and this process does not accommodate shades of color (see example).



REGION 9 NEWS CONTINUED:

Evie Tumlin Memorial Fund Grant Awarded

The Dressage Foundation is pleased to announce the recipient of the Evie Tumlin Memorial Fund Grant for Region 9 Adult Amateurs as Danielle Aymond (LA). The purpose of the Evie Tumlin Memorial Fund is to provide grants to adult amateur riders who currently reside in USDF Region 9, to aid in their development in dressage and/or eventing.

Danielle is an active member of the Southern Dressage and Eventing Association and the U.S. Pony Club. She is also a member of the Louisiana National Guard. Danielle plans to use her grant funding for a Jeremy Steinberg clinic and to also take lessons with Yvonne Barteau. Her goal is to confirm Second Level movements with her horse and gain upper-level experience on a schoolmaster.

After reviewing her application, the grant selection committee was pleased with Danielle's volunteerism, training plan with achievable goals, and sportsmanship. [Read more](#)



SWDC Reminder

Each year SWDC keeps a show calendar on our website www.swdressage.org. **Any show listed on the calendar is a qualifying show for the fall championship show. Competitors should always check to make sure the shows they are entering are recognized by SWDC for the ride to count as a qualifying ride for SWDC.** When competitors enter a show they can identify whether they want the score to count for Pony, Open, Amateur, or Junior. They do not have to enter the same class for it to count. In the past we have had Adult Amateurs win in our Open division. Competitors can ride in a Junior class to be a qualifier for a pony championship class. Rides must be identified and paid for before the ride.

Shows can look at the calendar to make sure their show is recognized and get their recognition number. If a show pays their recognition fee before the end of January their fee is cheaper. Show applications are available on the SWDC website.

—Sarah Jane Martin, Chairman of SWDC

USDF Sport Horse Seminar

- July 27-28
- Haras de Vess Stables & Courtyard by Marriott Wichita, East (Wichita, KS)
- Featuring Kristy Wysocki, Hilda Gurney, and Gwen Ka'awaloa
- [Register](#)

REGION 9 NEWS CONTINUED:

The Dressage Foundation Upcoming Deadlines

All upcoming deadlines and associated details may be found [here](#)

- May 15: Military Grant Fund
- June 1: George Williams Fund for Young Professionals
- June 1: Veronica Holt Fund for Dressage Technical Delegates (if not awarded in March)
- June 30: \$25,000 Debbie McDonald Fund for FEI Riders
- July 1: Maryal and Charlie Barnett Continuing Education for Instructors Fund
- July 15: Team Tate Mentorship and Leadership Fund
- July 20: Lynn Palm Western Dressage Individual Fund
- **August 1: \$5,000 Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award**

NEW DEADLINE FOR GROUP EVENTS!

- 75 days before the event – Many grants are available for dressage clubs/groups to host educational events. [TDF's Grant Calendar](#)
- As dressage riders across the country are planning for a successful 2024, there's ONE GOAL that should be on everyone's list this year...education.
- Check out the grants available. Visit www.dressagefoundation.org to learn about eligibility criteria and the simple application process. There are grants for instructors and judges, amateurs and youth, para and Western dressage riders... there's even a new Military Fund. Find out what help is available to you this year!

The Dressage Foundation

Celebrating 35 Years with Your Stories

In celebration of TDF's 35th anniversary this year, we want to hear from YOU!

Whether you've received a grant that helped you pursue your dressage dreams, generously donated to support others, volunteered your time, or achieved the remarkable milestone of the Century Club, **we want to know how TDF has impacted you and why you value TDF.** Stories will be shared throughout the year as we celebrate 35 years of supporting the U.S. dressage community!

Weather Forecasters Predict a Seriously Active Hurricane Season for 2024!!!

The article below is reprinted with the generosity and permission of "USDF Connection" and author Judy Nauseef. Originally printed July/August 2023.



As I write this, it's been a little more than three weeks since a tornado ripped through our 10-acre Iowa farm in late March. I was already working on the article you're reading, but now the topic of disaster preparedness has particular relevance.

Thankfully, in our case, the two horses, the dog, and my husband and I survived without injury. The farm itself wasn't so lucky, although the damage could have been much worse. The 30-year-old run-in shed stood, keeping the horses safe. The fencing enclosing the horses was nearly down in some places, but it kept them in. The rest of the fence was torn out. The hay barn lost part of its roof and one side collapsed, but the hay was still there and stayed dry.

The entire property, especially around the house, was littered with large pieces of metal that had wrapped themselves around trees. Our 50-year-old maple trees stopped a neighbor's dumpster and one-ton steel bin from crashing into our house. The house itself sustained porch and roof damage but otherwise was intact. The debris was from a friend's farm a half-mile away; he lost nearly everything. We lost many large trees and much of my garden.

The aftermath of the storm stretched from days to a week and more. Cleanup and repairs are ongoing, and we've spent hours contacting insurance agents and contractors. I think back on our preparation on the day of the event, as well as in the months and years prior, and I am sure we should have done more. Here's what I learned for next time—because in today's increasingly volatile climate, it's wise to assume there will be a next time.

Make a Plan

Don't wait until an ominous forecast to get your horses and your farm ready to weather a storm, or to evacuate if it becomes necessary. Get your emergency plan in order well in advance. Here's what you need to do.

Invest in several sturdy flashlights, and keep fresh batteries on hand. Check them regularly and replace batteries as needed. Spotlight models throw extra light, and headlamp styles are handy when you need both hands free.

Make an evacuation plan. If you don't own a truck and trailer, or if your rig alone isn't enough to remove all horses from the property, work with boarders or other area horse and farm owners to create a list of people willing to evacuate horses. Include drivers' mobile-phone numbers and how many horses their trailers

hold. Review the list periodically to ensure that it's up to date.

Identify farms, show grounds, or other facilities within driving distance that are willing to take evacuated horses. Make a list of names, addresses, and contact information.

Get paperwork in order. Keep personal and farm records up to date and in a safe and easily accessible place. Include health and medication records for both humans and horses.

All horses should have a tetanus toxoid vaccine within the past year. Due to the increase in mosquitoes

after massive rainfall, all horses should receive West Nile virus and Eastern/Western encephalitis vaccines at the beginning of the hurricane season, if your area is prone. A negative Coggins will be necessary if the horse needs to be evacuated to a community shelter or across state lines, and a health certificate is required to cross state or international lines. If you live near a border, you may need one. Check state regulations.

The North Carolina State University Extension Service offers a list of necessary documents for traveling

with horses, as well as tips on disaster preparedness, evacuation, first aid, and other useful information, at ncdisaster.ces.ncsu.edu/2016/10/horses-and-horse-farms-hurricane-preparedness. (For additional disaster-preparedness resources, see "Important Resources" on page 51.)

Collect emergency-contact information. Maintain an up-to-date list of horses' names, owners' names, horses' identifying information (see "Equine-Safety Action Plan" on page 50), and any specific handling instructions. Keep a list of phone numbers and e-mail addresses for owners, grooms, and riders. Take detailed identifying photographs of each horse.

Also have on hand: contact information (and account numbers, if applicable) for insurance companies (farm, home, medical, equine, vehicle), utility companies, telecommunications providers, emergency services, and fence and building contractors. You may need to have a name for a contractor who can repair a broken water line.

Consider investing a standby electric generator. In the event of severe weather, you may lose power. Decide what must stay on—the well-water pump, lights, refrigerator, and so on—and purchase a unit that will generate sufficient electricity to power these items. (See "Choosing a Generator" at left for more.)

Keep enough hay and grain on hand. Have enough grain, supplements, and medications to last at least one week—although some farm owners have learned to stockpile more.

"I learned from experience that I really need to have one month of hay and grain on hand" in case a storm disrupts the supply chain, says Jean Kaplan Thornton, a

CHOOSING A GENERATOR

When power goes out, the need to supply horses with drinking water is of primary concern. Many farms rely on well pumps, so no power = no water. That's why lots of farm owners invest in standby electric generators, either smaller portable models or permanently installed units.

How big and powerful a generator your farm needs depends on the property size, number of horses, typical length of outages and how common they are, amount of power needed to run the well pump (and what else you want to be able to operate during an outage), how portable the generator needs to be, and how much space you have to safely store fuel. Talk to an electrician, the well service, and generator vendors to help you select the type, size, and fuel type that's best for your situation.

For an overview on choosing and operating standby electric generators, including a safety video, see this information page from North Dakota State University: ndsu.edu/agriculture/ag-hub/ag-topics/ag-technology/machinery/standby-electric-generators.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), a manufacturers' trade association, offers information about buying and using generators safely, as well as storm-preparedness tips, at its website, opei.org (type "generator" into the search box).



BACKUP PLAN: Standby electric generators—either portable or permanently installed, like the one pictured—can power essentials (or even entire buildings) during outages

USDF gold medalist and USDF-certified instructor/trainer through Second Level who owns and operates Equivale in DeLeon Springs, Florida. As a 24-year central Florida resident, Thornton has experienced many hurricanes, and has found that advance-warning times can vary wildly, from as much as five days to as little as three hours, in the case of Hurricane Charley in 2004.

Assemble a supply of tools and first-aid items for horses and humans. Fence-repair materials, chain saws, wire cutters, heavy work gloves, crowbars—these and more may be needed to deal with storm damage to buildings, trees, or fencing. The NCSU Extension's hurricane-preparedness webpage listed above includes a suggested list of tools to have on hand.

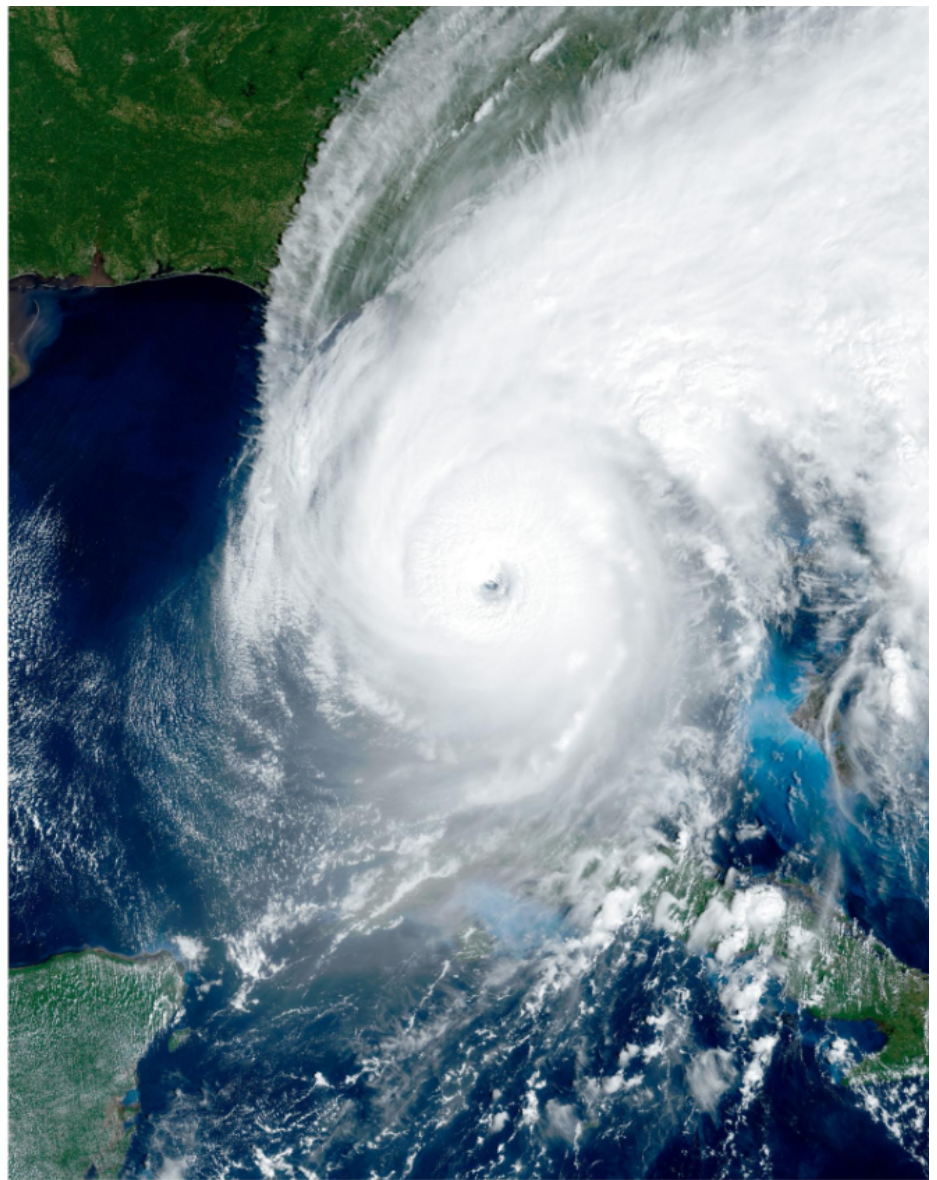
Veterinarians and emergency services may not be able to reach your property as quickly as usual, so be sure you have well-stocked equine and human first-aid kits, as well (see "Important Resources").

When a Storm Looms: Final Preparations

You have an emergency plan in place, and now the weather forecast isn't looking good. As you monitor the weather reports, see to the following while there's still time.

Have a trusted weather app on your phone. Buy a weather radio—especially important if at your farm you cannot hear sirens activated in your county or nearest town.

Take safety precautions as advised by the apps and TV/radio reports. Secure all items that high winds could turn into weapons. Store jumps and lawn furniture in a safe place. Park trucks, trailers, and farm equipment in areas where trees will not fall on them. Remove items



GO TIME: When one of these (or a tornado, or a wildfire, or...) is bearing down, it's time to execute your disaster-preparedness plan. Satellite image shows Hurricane Ian approaching southwest Florida in September 2022.

hanging in hallways and barn aisles.

Bring pets indoors. Secure barn cats in the tack room or other indoor space.

Charge all cell phones, portable electronic devices, and power packs. Make sure your supply of batteries for flashlights and other devices is ample.

Fill water troughs, buckets, and other clean or lined containers with fresh water. An idle horse of average size drinks six to as many

as 15 gallons each day, and more if it's hot or he's working, according to the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP). Fill plastic-lined garbage cans, as well. If necessary, adding two drops of chlorine bleach per quart will purify contaminated water; let it sit for 30 minutes before allowing animals to drink, according to North Carolina State University Extension animal-science representative Alaina Cross.

As part of Jean Thornton's hur-



LUCKY BREAKS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Sometimes severe weather arrives with very little warning. Just ask Tammy Lisi, owner of the dressage facility Tamarack Stables in Anamosa, Iowa, which was nearly flattened by a surprise severe storm in 2020.

Summer thunderstorms are a way of life in the Midwest, and Lisi heard a typical forecast of storms predicted for that August afternoon. "I did my normal bring-in of horses about an hour before it hit," she recalls. There was no warning that something far more dire was approaching until her husband, Tom, texted her from work, urging her to "Take cover NOW!" Less than five minutes later, as Lisi sat on her couch frantically searching for weather information, her windows blew out.



DEVASTATED: What was left of Tamarack Stables in Iowa after an August 2020 derecho

What hit was a derecho, a long-lived, widespread storm characterized by powerful straight-line winds, usually in conjunction with fast-moving severe thunderstorms. "Our farm experienced winds in excess of 120 miles per hour for an estimated 45 minutes," Lisi recalls. The winds destroyed the barn roof (the horses survived), indoor arena, fencing, and stored hay; the house was rendered uninhabitable.

In one incredible stroke of luck, "We had found out in July that our carrier had dropped insurance on our indoor riding arena" due to some previous storm damage, Lisi says. "We put [a new] policy in place and paid for it in full at 10:30 a.m. the day of the derecho. By 1:30 p.m., [the structure] was leveled."

Lisi sums up the lessons learned and steps taken as a result of the storm.

1. If she had it to do over, "I would have chatted with my insurance agent every year. I now have an excellent lawyer and can identify the best private adjuster in the area. I fully understand my insurance policy and how to deal with adjusters."
2. After the storm, the Lisis purchased "a full farm generator."
3. "We rebuilt and reinforced the power station that feeds all our buildings."
4. "Always keep cash on hand in a locked safe. When power is out for multiple days and communication is down, cash is king."
5. Keep all fuel tanks full.

Nearly three years later, the Lisis are still living in a camper because their house remains structurally unsound, she says. The main barn has been rebuilt, but "We are gearing up for another construction season after a long battle with our insurance company; we won, but it was a slow process." Lisi remains grateful for the help and support they received from friends and neighbors, saying, "The people in our lives made it bearable."

ricane prep, "I have always filled all of my water troughs, but I learned through experience that they should either be covered or brought under cover," she says. "You should fish all the sticks and debris out of the water immediately after the storm passes."

Fill clean jugs with tap water for human consumption. If power goes out, households that rely on well water will lose access to water.

Store grain in watertight containers. Protect hay from wind and rain by stacking bales on pallets and covering tightly with water-repellent tarps.

Equine-Safety Action Plan

Before disaster looms, think about how best to keep the horses in your care safe.

Will they be best off in your well-built barn, with stalls and doors you can secure? In an indoor arena? Or might they be safer outside in pastures or paddocks? Opinions vary, as do individual circumstances. There is always the chance that a barn or other building could collapse in a storm, or that a horse outdoors could be injured by flying debris or a falling tree. Know your horses, your farm, and your neighborhood. Are there obstacles or dangers beyond the fences? Are there any potential hazards in turnout areas? If heavy rain is predicted, is there a location on the property that's especially flood-prone?

Whatever you decide, before the storm arrives, place identifying information on each horse. Options include a breakaway halter with identifying and contact information sealed in a zip-lock bag and duct-taped to the halter; owner's name and phone number written on the horse's body in livestock marker;

COURTESY OF TAMARACK STABLES



THE AFTERMATH: After a tornado went through the writer's farm, debris from neighboring properties was scattered around the landscape

and a waterproof luggage tag containing contact info, braided into the horse's tail. Use more than one method. Thornton now braids cow ear tags into horses' manes.

After the Storm

That fateful March day, my husband and I were working from home, but after a point we could no longer concentrate, so we turned on the television to watch the weather reporters track the storms. As the red boxes of bright colors moved through towns closer and closer to us, we could hear our weather radio and cell phones alerting us to seek shelter.

The power out, we took refuge in our basement family room with blankets and flashlights. As the tornado came through, the sound was of rain and persistent wind. Eventually the noise stopped, and we ventured upstairs to assess the damage.

After a storm passes, inspect each horse for injuries, including its eyes. Check legs and feet carefully for punctures, cuts, abrasions, and heat. Look for signs of lameness. If a horse is missing, notify local police and sheriff, and post a notice with

photo on social media, including your personal and farm's pages and any area horse-related groups.

Check the property for hazards, such as hanging or downed utility lines. Do not try to move lines yourself; report the damage to your local utility company. Shut off electricity in any damaged buildings. Look for damaged fencing, and relocate horses to a secure area if needed. Move debris that poses an immediate threat to horses or people, but take photos of all damage for insurance-claims purposes before cleanup begins.

In part 2 of this series, we'll delve into what show management and competitors need to know in the event of an impending severe-weather threat at a dressage show.



Judy Nauseef is a freelance writer interested in equestrian and gardening topics. She lives on an acreage with her husband, two horses, one dog, and many gardens. Find her at JudyNauseef.com.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

The **American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP)** publishes links to national resources and disaster-planning advice on its Owner Emergency and Disaster Preparedness page: aaep.org/horse-owners/owner-guidelines/owner-emergency-disaster-and-preparedness. Suggested equine first-aid items are listed in the Disaster Planning links. Discuss any additional or special needs, such as tranquilizers, with your veterinarian.

Assemble your human first-aid kit with help from the **American Red Cross**: redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/anatomy-of-a-first-aid-kit.html.

See the **Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA)** list of "10 Items to Include in Your Emergency Kit": fema.gov/blog/10-items-include-your-emergency-kit.

REGION 9 SUMMER MEETING

Region 9 Summer meeting- July 19, 20, 21 in College Station, Tx.

Region 9 (In-person) Summer Meeting

From Bess Bruton our Region 9 Director:

- Come join us July 19, 20, 21 in College Station, TX., for a Friday nite get together,
- Saturday meeting & networking, tour of the A&M Vet School, or Bush Presidential Library.
- Other activities planned. [Details and the RSVP form are available on the Region 9 website](#)
- BACH is the GMO host.
- They have work diligently to plan tours, & dinners.
- Bryan/College Station is a great place to visit. Much is being offered. We are just touching the tip of the iceberg.
- Hope you will join us for a fun weekend of comradery and networking !!!!!

Friday-

Tour of A&M Vet School &
Dinner & Get Together

Saturday-

Meeting & Networking
Hyatt House- 8 am till noon
Lunch: 12 - 1:30.
Networking 1:30 to 4 pm.
Dinner & Get Together.

Sunday-

Breakfast.
2 tours offered....download the form

Please click on link above, and fill out form...so we know how many to expect.

And please spread the word (include in your GMO newsletter, etc)...this is not just for GMO and Regional board members. Open to everyone. A great way to meet others in our region.

I will email out an agenda in mid June. If you want to be added or have an item you would like added to the agenda, please let me know. bessbruton@gmail.com

One main item on the summer meeting agenda is the upcoming USDF Convention in Houston, Texas. As a region we usually help fund a break or the welcome party. And we will have a table...can give away or sell items, etc.

We will have fun !! See you there !!

Thanks,
Bess Bruton
R9D

THE CDI COMPETITION EXPLAINED

JUST WHAT IS A CDI?

In equestrian sports, CDI stands for Concours de Dressage International, which is the rating system for international dressage events. The Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI), the world governing body of equestrian sports, recognizes CDI events. Simply put, a CDI is an international dressage show.

WHAT SEPARATES A CDI FROM A “USEF” RECOGNIZED DRESSGE SHOW?

Specifically, there are differences in membership. A CDI is an international competition and requires a FEI or national level passport for your horse. Also, horses have an inspection and a jog for soundness the day before the competition. In the CDI that HDS sponsors, there must be three judges judging each test. Because a CDI is an international competition, you are riding and “representing” your country during the competition. CDIs are more commonplace in Florida during season because there are many riders from various countries that are competing for an international ranking for their country.

ARE THERE ANY COMPETITIONS IN THE US (NATIONALLY) THAT REQUIRE THAT THE RIDER COMPETE IN A CDI TO QUALIFY?

Currently, the only competition that requires a rider to have competed in a CDI is “Festival of Champions”, held at Lamplight Equestrian Center in August every year. Although “Festival” is not a CDI, they do require that you compete in at least one to qualify. The minimum score required is a 64% in the level that you are competing. There is a misnomer that Young Riders must compete in a CDI to qualify for NAYC, but Young Riders can qualify in any USEF show that has 2 “S” judges. It does not have to be a CDI. There is also a misconception that a CDI is required to go to our National Championship in Lexington. To qualify for the Nationals in Lexington, you must be a Champion or Reserve Champion of your Regional Finals or get invited on what is called a “wild card”.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY (“REASONING”) BEHIND HDS HOSTING A CDI? HDS started with a CDI in the 90s to allow a drop score for Young Riders qualifying for NAYC. The CDI is not required for them to qualify, as mentioned above, but they are allowed to drop the score if it is low.... (although, not allowed to drop a score in a regular USEF Young Rider qualifying class). Having the CDI gave young riders an opportunity to experience the stringent requirements of soundness, i.e., the jog, before the competition, and just the aura of what a CDI “feels like”. There is an extra “bump” in excitement because of the international flair. At the time that HDS decided to run a CDI, there were not near the number of competitions available in Florida, as there are now. Also, some people do not want or are not able to take the time to travel to Wellington. A potential solution to traveling to Wellington is that now Ocala, home of WEC, now runs CDIs. That is a 6-hour closer traveling time from Houston.... A realistic alternative for those that cannot travel for weeks and months at a time to get to Wellington. The truth is that those who want to compete in CDI’s already now go to Florida.

WHY IS THERE A PROPOSAL TO DROP THE CDI? Well, the idea of HDS hosting a CDI was born of good intentions.... but the harsh reality is that it is a tremendous financial burden. History shows that it has never been well attended, first you must have an FEI level competing horse. Horses that make up most of our competition are national (training thru forth) level classes. The CDI is not a show for national level horses. It’s a show for international level horses. Therefore, year after year we lose thousands of dollars, even with sponsorships. If we drop the CDI, we would have money for educational programs that would allow more members of the club to benefit. The national show does help support the cost of the CDI, but nothing comes close to covering it, no less the possibility of breaking even or a profit!! For these reasons it was proposed that HDS drop the CDI for 2025.

Commitment for hosting the CDI must happen by the end of June for 2024. THAT IS WHY WE ARE PRINTING THIS EXPLANATION, AND THE BOARD STRONGLY FEELS THAT THE MEMBERSHIP OF HDS SHOULD MAKE THIS DECISION. IN A FEW WEEKS THERE WILL BE BALLOTS THAT WILL BE EMAILED TO ONLY CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE CLUB. AFTER COUNTING THE BALLOTS, WE WILL ANNOUNCE THE MEMBERSHIP’S DECISION.

STAY TUNED!!