



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

The Central Vermont Dressage Association

www.cvda.org

The Half Halt

The Newsletter of the Central Vermont Dressage Association

August 2023

President's Message

It is Time to Pass the Torch

Little did I know when I assumed the position of CVDA President in the fall of 2019 that my tenure, which comes to a close this fall, would be bookended by such remarkable events. In 2020, as Covid swept the country, CVDA, like many others, cancelled its season of events. And, in 2023, we were again faced with extraordinary circumstances when we had to cancel our Summer Development Day and Show at the very last moment, due to unexpected and unprecedented flooding at GMHA. It has been a wild ride, so to speak!

CVDA has come through it all a little bit stronger. We began an online winter webinar series to keep us connected as Covid kept us physically apart. We (*Editor's note: Many thanks to Shannon for taking this on!*) built a new web site that enables e-commerce, which came in handy when refunds had to be made for the July show. Handwriting refund checks would have been quite the chore! Our membership numbers have rebounded to pre-Covid times, and we continue to offer a wide range of events for horses and their people.

Looking ahead, CVDA is at a crossroads. With two-year terms, our board of 12 has the potential to turn over by half each year. This is a year when we are very close to doing that. We are losing CVDA's second generation "founding mother" Terri Satterlee (Terri attained non-profit, tax-exempt status for the young CVDA); long-time board member Dinah Rojek; Pirouette Farm owner Pinky Tullar; marketing and communications wizard Laurie Hall, and myself, CVDA webmaster, "herder of cats" and show secretary. Amy Bresky will be giving up her Treasurer post, but, thankfully, running again for another term and keeping her Volunteer Coordinator and show manager roles.

We have some key positions on the board to fill and some key skill sets to recruit (webmaster and communications/marketing, among others). While we will be seeking nominations for five board seats this fall, you don't need to be on the board to help out. We have CVDA Committees that members can join, or you can

pick one task and help out. For example, though I will no longer be on the Board, I will continue to be on the CVDA Show Committee and remain as show secretary. (I would love an apprentice so that we have redundancy and someone to take on those duties eventually.) I realize that this is a big ask, when many are so busy. But I think that I can speak for all board members when I say that it is worth it to see a junior rider or an adult amateur have a wonderful first show, or a rider have an “aha” moment at a clinic. CVDA is a key entry point for so many to dressage, horsemanship and showing. Let’s keep it strong!

(Look for Board nomination materials, membership renewal and annual banquet details to arrive in your inbox in late August and September.)

Tips for Successfully Auditing a Clinic

Not all of us have the means or time, not to mention the willing and able horse, to attend a clinic. However, many can audit one, learn a lot and have fun. The pressure is off - your only job is to watch and learn!

For those new to it, auditing a clinic just means that you attend to listen and learn, often with friends or new friends you might meet. Most clinics bring in a well-known trainer/clinician and occur over two days. As an auditor, you can come for one ride or the whole weekend (many like to see the positive differences from day one to two). You may be asked to formally register and/or pay a fee. Pre-registering does help the organizers plan for their auditors’ needs but walk-ins are usually welcomed.

When you arrive, there will be a place designated for you to sit and, often, a time set aside for you to ask questions. Sometimes, the clinician will give an informal lunch-time or end of the day talk for riders and auditors. Auditing is a great way to check out a new farm or determine if you would like to ride in a clinic someday. You might be interested in a particular clinician’s style, and whether you would like to ride with him or her sometime in the future. This also applies if there are trainers riding in the clinic.

Hopefully, you are convinced to try out auditing! Here are some tips to make your auditing experience a positive one:

CVDA has two upcoming clinics for those interested in trying out auditing for the first time. (Veteran auditors are always welcome of course!) Kathy Connelly will be here on



August 12 and 13 and Jane Karol will close our season on September 30 and October 1. Visit our website, [CVDA Clinics](#) for more information. We look forward to seeing you!

- **Be respectful of the riders and the clinician.** Turn off your cell phone and don't take photos or video unless you have the rider's and organizer's permission. Be quiet during lessons and be kind in your comments, realizing that every rider is there to improve. You might be sitting next to her trainer or niece! Be aware of when you join or leave the group so as not to disturb the lesson. Also be careful of your actions so as not to spook a horse. Remember that the riders need and deserve a conducive learning environment.
- **Be prepared to learn.** Bring a notebook and pen (less intrusive than a device) to record "Aha" moments and to jot down exercises you might try at home. Note a few questions you would like to ask of the clinician or mull over with your friends at the break(s). If a rider list is available and your time is short, pick ones that you might benefit the most from watching. You might also think of a few riding challenges you are having at home and pay particular attention to what the clinician says about them if they come up.
- **Practicalities.** You should bring a chair, lunch, snacks, water and any needed weather-dependent gear. If you do have to preregister, keep an eye out for social media posts or specific communications from the organizers about schedules and auditor accommodations.

- Katherine Roe, CVDA Board member

Congratulations!

CVDA 2023 Spring Show High Point Winners

Riders and volunteers enjoyed a lovely early spring day for our first show of 2023. The following High Point riders had a great start to their 2023 season:

Intro Junior: **Matilda Morse** and Masquerade, 73.438%
 Intro Senior: **Keeley Titus** and Penelope Paradise, 70.313%
 Training Junior: **Shiane Wheeler** and Gitt N Déjà vu, 74.231%
 Training Senior: **Jane Hamlin** and Fernhill Solstice, 73.621%
 1st Level Junior: **Adeline Tullar** and Ruffian Du Balfour, 67.593%
 1st Level Senior: **Caroleann Tullar** and Sensational, 70.417%
 2nd Level & Above: **Lisa Mair** and Winslet, 67.375%
 Western Dressage: **Leslie Rogers** and Baby, 72.391%
 Eventing: **Jennifer Fitch** and Caraways Daireing Romance, 76.389%

Thank you to our high-point sponsor, Ruth Hogan-Poulsen, and our 1st place class sponsor, Sweetheart's Horse Treats!

Summer Show Cancelled

Many Entry Fees Donated to GMHA

All was ready Friday afternoon, July 21 for CVDA's Summer Development Day and Show weekend. But, Mother Nature had other plans. A complex weather system settling in over the Woodstock and Hartland area dropped five inches of rain in three hours.

In the interest of safety, Show Secretary Shannon Hemingway and Manager Amy Bresky made the decision to cancel the show on Friday evening as the grounds began to flood and nearby roads washed out. After the widespread flooding on July 10, the GMHA grounds team had performed miracles to be ready for the July 22-23 weekend, only to see all of its hard work and new road, stall and ring material wash away.

Knowing that GMHA faces a long road ahead of planning and rebuilding, the CVDA Board decided to ask riders if they would be willing to donate their entry and stabling fees to CVDA, which we would then donate to GMHA. Many said yes in lieu of a refund, for a total of \$1,410 which CVDA donated to GMHA's flood damage fund. In addition, though GMHA waived our grounds fee because we couldn't hold our show, the CVDA Board donated an additional \$600 to GMHA to help offset that loss and paid GMHA \$700 for Friday night stabling fees.

If you would like to donate to GMHA's flood damage fund, please visit [Green Mountain Horse Association](#).

Thank You, Volunteers!

CVDA is an all-volunteer organization – our shows, development days, clinics, grant program, show and year-end awards and winter educational series wouldn't happen without many CVDA Board members, members and others giving freely of their time and talents!

We'd like to thank our volunteers for our May Development Day and Show:

Janet Wells,
Development Day Manager
Penny Williams,
Show Manager
Shannon Hemingway,
Secretary
Amy Bresky,
Volunteer Coordinator



CVDA 2022 Volunteer of the Year Jim Calabro back at his Ring Steward post for the 2023 CVDA Spring Show.

And their team:

Jim Calabro, Sharon Sweet, Mary Gulbrandsen, Sarah Froebel, Debbie Irwin, Cecelia Hoyt, Dinah Rojek, Ashley Crifield, Katherine Roe, Nancy Grout, Amy Plavin, Jacky Bode Marston, Becca Rice and Rebecca Darling.

Our volunteers are the best! If you would like to volunteer for a future CVDA event (it is fun and the food is great), please reach out to Amy Bresky at amybresky@yahoo.com.

Put on Your Thinking Cap!

Who Would you Nominate for the 2023 CVDA Volunteer of the Year and Sportsmanship Awards?

Each year, CVDA presents its Volunteer and Sportsmanship awards at its annual banquet. Nominations are submitted to CVDA by October 1; awardees are chosen by a CVDA Board subcommittee. For more information about criteria and how to submit a nomination, visit [CVDA - Awards](#).



Award winners this year will receive a handmade, customized mug from potter Alicia Daily.

Quick Tips: The Half Halt

Half halts in dressage are a crucial tool to improve your horse's balance, engagement, and responsiveness. Think of them as the briefest of pauses – a chance to check in and rebalance. You might use one as you prepare for a movement or a corner, or to recalibrate a mindset or gait. Here are the steps to execute a half halt in dressage:

- Begin by riding your horse in a working gait, such as the trot or canter.
- Use your seat and legs to create a slight increase in pressure in the seat and on your horse's sides while slightly increasing the pressure on the horse's mouth by squeezing the reins with your fingers.
- At the same time, maintain your leg pressure to support your horse's hindquarters and maintain forward motion.
- Hold this pressure for a few seconds, then release the reins and leg pressure.



Recalibrating and balancing back with a half halt.
(Photo, Obe Lisai)

- Repeat the process as necessary to achieve the desired level of balance and engagement.

It's important to note that a half halt should not be a harsh or sudden movement. It should be a subtle wave of pressure and a gradual adjustment that helps your horse better understand your aids and improve their overall performance. With practice, you can learn to execute half halts effectively and seamlessly as part of your dressage training.

- Marianne Rousseau, Esq., CVDA Board member

Calendar of Events

Visit cvda.org to register and get more information on these events.

Development Day

September 9

Schooling Show

September 10

Clinics

Kathy Connelly, August 12 & 13

Jane Karol, September 30 & October 1

Annual Banquet

October 29

2023 CVDA Sponsor Profiles

In our last issue, we profiled businesses that donated First Prize and High Point Awards to CVDA's 2023 shows. This issue, we would like to highlight businesses that are offering CVDA general support or other items. Please join us in thanking them and consider them when you are shopping.

Triple Crown

Sponsor of CVDA 2023 Volunteer of the Year and Sportsmanship Awards

Triple Crown is a super-premium feed company whose sole focus is horse nutrition. It offers bagged feed and forage, as well as a naturals line of products. To learn more visit [Triple Crown Feed](#).

Poulin Grain

Annual Luncheon Raffle: Four gift certificates

Based in Newport, Vermont, Poulin formulates feed to meet the unique demands of Northeast equines. Teamed with its specialized nutritional consultants, Poulin offers farm services including forage nutritional analysis that allows it to make feed and management recommendations. Contact [Poulin Grain](#).

Southern Vermont Equine Massage

SVEM offers equine massage sessions by appointment. Equine sports massage is useful for every horse whether it is eventing, showing, or a paddock companion! Through manipulation of the soft tissue, massage can release, relax or stimulate as well as reduce muscle-related tension. Find SVEM on Facebook at [SVEM](#).

Fieldstone Equine Clinic

Fieldstone Equine Clinic is dedicated to the well-being of the horse. Founded in 2022 by Dr. Sam Scheu, it seeks to provide excellent veterinary care and outstanding client education. Fieldstone is based in Tunbridge, Vermont and serves the Upper Valley of Vermont and New Hampshire. For more information visit [fieldstoneequine.com](#).

Sue Berrill Eventing

Sue Berrill Eventing at Greylock Farm in Brownsville, Vermont is a boarding/training stable, focusing primarily on eventing and dressage. Visit her on [Facebook](#).

SCS Saddlesfit

Sara Smith is a Custom Saddlery Sales and Service representative and an independent saddlemaker. Contact her at sarasmith.nh@gmail.com or 603-252-2113.

Farmer's Body

Hartland, Vermont-based Farmer's Body creates "farm to tub" body care products with safe, natural ingredients grown on small farms. It seeks out collaborations with women farmers to bring you products you'll love after a long day in the barn. Visit them at [Farmer's Body](#).

Thank you 2023 CVDA Sponsors!

Fieldstone Equine
SCS Saddlefit



HEMLOCK RIDGE INTEGRATIVE
VETERINARY CARE

