



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

May 2023

2023 Dates to Remember

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

Development Days

May 6, July 22, September 9

Schooling Shows

May 7, July 23, September 10

Clinics

Jane Karol, May 20 & 21

Kathy Connelly, August 12 & 13

Warm-Up Arena Procedures & Etiquette

Warm-up areas need not strike fear into the hearts of riders and horses alike if we all remember the rules. The hard part is that they aren't all officially written down anywhere. Riders frequently need to share an arena in a clinic or show situation. To make it easy to know how to handle most warm-up situations, we've broken it down for you.

Before you go to the warm-up ring:

- Take time to make sure you have all you need to head to the warm-up (show coat, spurs, whip, etc.) If it is a show, be sure your number is on your bridle or saddle pad before you tack up. It is



important that you know what tack is allowed in the warm-up ring at shows, as it can lead to elimination. Check the USEF rulebook; there are lots of pictures to help you.

- Think about how long you would like to warm-up and what you would like to ideally accomplish. Things don't always go to plan but a concept of what you would like to do helps you and your horse focus and relax.
- Find out which ring(s) you are riding in and which warm-up area is

best for you to use before you get on. Sometimes there are several options, so check out which works best for you and your horse. Do you need a quieter warm-up area or one right near where you will be competing? Check when will you be able to ride in and/or around the ring you will be showing in. Do you know how to get there? It can be very helpful and reassuring to walk there on foot or hand walk your horse so you can check it all out first at your own pace, whether you are showing or riding in a clinic.

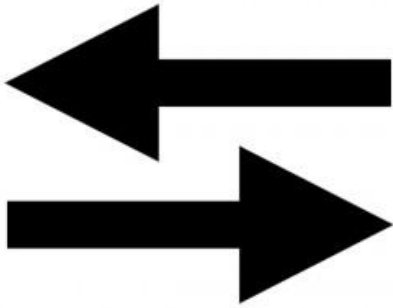
- Some shows and facilities have specific times when warm-up is available prior to the show/clinic itself starting. Remember, show management must get all the areas ready for competition which may require closing the warm-up areas at particular times. Make sure you know and allow yourself enough time to get there.
- Make yourself aware of the facility and event's regulations for the warm-up areas. For example, there is usually no schooling allowed in the competition arenas by anyone during the break time at shows.
- If you need to lunge, find out where that is allowed before heading out. Generally, it will not be the same area where people are riding.

Entering the warm-up ring:

- When entering or leaving the riding arena, make sure you do not get in the way of approaching riders. If indoors and the entrance or view to the arena is obstructed, announce in a clear voice "door please," before entering to prevent accidents. Be sure not to obstruct the entrance/exit, or the track.
- If you are warming up for a clinic, be sure to let someone know you are there upon entering.
- If you are warming up for a class at a show, you will see a warm-up or ring steward by the warm-up area. There could be several if the warm-up area serves several rings. This is important... GO TELL THEM YOU ARE THERE UPON ENTERING, and what ring you are showing in and at what time! They will be so grateful, as it can be hard to see your number from across a warm-up area. Remember to be pleasant and thankful, as these are volunteers who make it possible for you to compete.

Riding in the warm-up ring:

- Polite communication and a positive continual flow pattern will help avoid many problems. Be aware of your fellow riders and ride considerately. If you do end up getting in someone's way (and it eventually happens to us all), be sure to apologize.
- Be aware of your surroundings – common sense to avoid a collision trumps the rules.
- If you want to stop to talk to someone, do so outside of the arena.



- Always pass in the opposite direction left shoulder to left shoulder. Staying consistent with this solves so many issues!
 - Slower moving horses (walking) should keep to the inside track. When transitioning to walk or halt, do so off the outside track in order to keep the track clear for faster moving horses. Try not to stop suddenly and don't deliberately cut across someone else's path. Always look behind you before you halt in arena traffic.
- If you are doing lateral work (shoulder-in, leg-yield, half-pass) or more advanced work (tempi changes, extended trot, etc.) look ahead of you to make sure your path is clear before starting. If you would like to use the diagonal or centerline, announce it in audible voice ("diagonal please!").
 - Give riders ample room when passing them and be sure that your whip does not inadvertently touch another horse. Always keep at least a one-horse distance between horses.
 - Do not gallop past riders in the arena or anywhere on the grounds.
 - In an emergency, "halt" may be called out and all riders should halt. If there is a loose horse in the arena and/or a rider has fallen and is not getting up, stop. If you feel unsafe, it is fine to get off and hold your horse.
 - If you have a fractious or young horse, you may use the riding and lungeing arenas to settle him but not at the expense of everyone else's safety. If you see a young or fractious horse, try not to upset them, and give them a wide berth.
 - Instruction from the side of the arena is allowed but not at the expense of distracting other riders or to the detriment of the image of our sport. Instructors and riders are encouraged to use microphones and earpieces in order to minimize distractions. At most competitions, anyone on the ground must be at the side of the arena and is not allowed to stand in the arena.

The technical delegate and warm-up arena steward's duties are to protect the sport and ensure a safe and fair warm-up experience for all horses and riders. The steward's decision is final: if you are reprimanded or warned, obey graciously, and learn from your mistakes.

Let's be honest... riders just before they go into the ring are sometimes tense and not always at their best. A smile and maybe a word of encouragement can really help so much more than getting upset with a rider who is being (probably inadvertently) inconsiderate. See, that wasn't so hard... now go have fun!

Jim Calabro

CVDA 2022 Volunteer of the Year

CVDA recognized Jim for his kind, encouraging presence (and booming voice) in the Upwey warm-up ring during CVDA's 2022 show season. We asked him to share a little bit about himself and why he volunteers. If you would like to volunteer at a CVDA event, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Amy Bresky, at amybresky@yahoo.com. Don't be afraid to jump right in, we will provide training and mentorship!

My initial volunteer work began at the GMHA in the late spring of 2021. Dogs and cats have always been a part of my life, especially large and giant dogs. I have always admired horses in the field but I never knew anyone that was in the horse scene until about four years ago. That friendship brought me into the horse world.

In searching to find some involvement with horses, I found GMHA and I inquired if there was something I could do to help. I was immediately taught to be a ring steward for dressage. I did act as a steward for a cross country jumping event, but I am partial to the dressage event especially at the lower levels. I very much enjoy the effort of the up-and-coming dressage riders. And, at the lower levels, it seems I have more interaction with the riders as well as the horses. These interactions are an important part of dressage events for me.

I am not a horse owner or rider. However, I have taken some recent riding lessons and it is my intention to become a competent rider in the years ahead. Perhaps I will become a horse owner, however I am getting somewhat older and I do not know if that is practical. Time will tell. I am in the process of converting some of my property into a horse property. I have read numerous books on natural horsemanship and I would be an advocate of that practice. My friend who introduced me to the horse environment lives in the Santa Ynez area in California which is truly horse

CVDA Volunteer of the Year 2023 Volunteer of the Year Award Sponsored by Triple Crown Nutrition

The CVDA Volunteer of the Year recognizes a special person who has provided outstanding service to CVDA as a volunteer at any of CVDA's shows, clinics or other events. This award recognizes a CVDA member or non-member who, through consistent and cumulative volunteer activities, has demonstrated exceptional commitment towards carrying out CVDA's mission.

CVDA Sportsmanship Award 2023 Sportsmanship Award Sponsored by Triple Crown Nutrition

The CVDA Sportsmanship Award recognizes a CVDA member who has demonstrated the principles of sportsmanship in dressage competition. The Sportsmanship Award will be awarded to the member who best exemplifies these principles and who best serves as a role model for other competitors.

Nominations for these 2023 awards will be due on October 1, 2023. Please visit [Central Vermont Dressage Association, Inc - Awards Programs & Guidelines \(cvda.org\)](https://www.cvda.org/awards) for nomination information.

country. Visiting that area and being in the Upwey or Dust Bowl warm up rings at GMHA makes me feel like I am in a different world.

Volunteer work for the CVDA provides the possibility of being around the horses, and the young and old people who enjoy working with them. I enjoy seeing the young people getting involved with their horses, it is such a wonderful life-long experience for them. I have learned a great deal about being around the horses and riders. As a former athlete and coach, I also like the athletic challenge the sport holds. Volunteering at CVDA events is an important part of my life. I hope to continue doing so in the future and perhaps take a more active position in your association.

When I am not volunteering, I have been the operating owner of a construction company (Northern Plasterwork) for 37 years. Northern Plasterwork acts as a subcontractor, specializing in spray fireproofing of structural steel and now occasional plaster restoration. I have lived in South Royalton, Vermont since 1986 after moving from New Jersey at that time.

- *Jim Calabro*

What is the USDF Convention?



The United States Dressage Federation Convention is held annually in different parts of the country so that it is accessible to as many USDF members as possible. Every fourth year, it returns to Lexington, KY, home of USDF. It is usually held in late November. The purpose of the convention is for the annual business meeting, USDF Board of Governors member elections, educational opportunities, and year end awards for members who have earned them throughout the competition year.

Governance

The USDF Executive Board is comprised of four officers, nine regional directors and three at-large directors, all representing various facets of the sport and the membership. It is the role of the Executive Board to manage USDF operations and the three councils of national dressage activities, under the guidance of the Board of Governors (BOG). USDF Group Member Organizations of a certain size may send delegates to the Convention to participate in the BOG elections and business.

Education

The convention offers learning opportunities with various workshops and forums. It is a great atmosphere to reconnect with old friends and network with leaders in the dressage industry, and meet people from across the USA who share the same passion for dressage. The 2022 convention offered:

- Equine Podiatry, Dr. Craig Lesser DVM
- First Aid: A Response to Equestrian Emergences, Gwen Ka'awaloa
- Constructing a Wellness Program for the Aging Performance Horse, Dr. Avi Blake DVM
- Creating Effective Goals, Prof. Reese Koffer-Stanfield

There were also many open forums:

- Trending Topics in the Sport and USEF
- Rule Changes
- Test Changes
- Increasing Dressage Enthusiasts Engagement with USDF or Their Local GMO

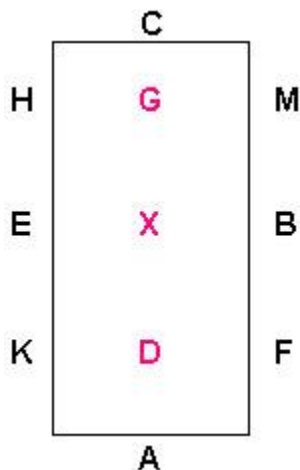
Celebration

The USDF Salute Gala and Annual Awards Banquet is always fun. The food is wonderful and the music and atmosphere are excellent. To watch USDF members receive their awards after working so hard is amazing.

Of all the offerings, my favorite is the educational program. Visiting other parts of the country to experience its local traditions and culture is also an educational side benefit. As a member of USDF, I feel that everyone who is able should try to experience the USDF Convention at least once!

-Suzie Kent

Vermont 2023 Dressage Schooling Shows



CVDA's spring, summer and fall schooling shows are just three of the dressage schooling shows offered each season in Vermont. The Champlain Dressage Schooling Series (champlaindressagevt.net) offers 10 small schooling shows on farms and fairgrounds around the northern third of the state. Huntington Farm, in South Strafford, VT, offers a dressage schooling show on June 10 and August 19. For more information, visit huntington-farm.com.

Let CVDA know if we missed other dressage schooling shows in our area by emailing centralvtdressageassoc@gmail.com. We would be happy to add them to a future newsletter.

CVDA's Winter Webinar Series a Wrap

CVDA's newly-formed Education Committee hosted a series of webinars in February and March that were well-attended – and helped members and others stave off the winter riding doldrums!



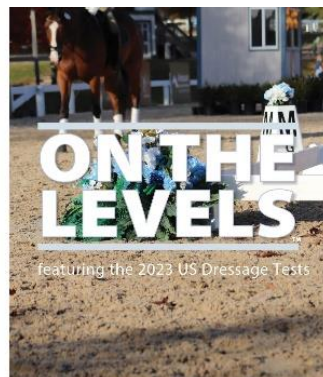
In February, Dr. Kristen Clapp of Upper Valley Equine Services in Chester, VT guided viewers on an informational tour of equine dental conditions (normal and not so normal). She covered basic mouth and jaw anatomy and function, as well as the signs of dental problems so that owners can be on the lookout for dental issues.

In March, CVDA offered a two-part look at the new dressage tests for 2023. In the first, Vermont judge, coach and trainer Lori Barnard gave her judge's perspective on the new tests. Lori had her audience's full attention for over an hour, and kindly answered questions at the end.

She discussed changes made (or not) in each test, Intro-4th level, and gave some of the reasoning behind them. The biggest overall changes, she said, were to make the terminology in the test purposes clearer and more concise, and to better integrate the training scale into the levels. As a judge, she advised, use the test directives to guide your goals and use your score sheets with your trainer to make changes and do better next time.

In Part Two of our look at the new tests, CVDA showed the USDF On the Levels program. While we had some technical issues with bandwidth for the presentation, it was still useful to hear the judge's running commentary on the movements in each test.

Thank you to our presenters for sharing their knowledge with CVDA!



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ONLINE: DRESSAGEFORUM.COM

(In light of the technical issues we had in presenting On the Levels, CVDA would like to offer it for loan if members would like to borrow it for their own "watch party." Contact us at centralvtdressageassoc@gmail.com for details.)

It's Not too Late to Renew Your CVDA Membership



Central Vermont Dressage Association, Inc.

www.CVDA.org

The CVDA membership year runs from November 1 to October 31 each year. You may renew your membership online at [Central Vermont Dressage Association, Inc - Join us \(cvda.org\)](http://CentralVermontDressageAssociation,Inc-Join-us(cvda.org)). If you wish to join by mailing a check, you can find contact information and membership level costs on our online membership form.

Your CVDA membership includes a Group Membership in the United States Dressage Federation (USDF).

Thank you!

2023 CVDA Sponsor Profiles

Thirteen wonderful businesses are supporting CVDA this year. The businesses below are donating First Prize and High Point Awards at our three shows. Please join us in thanking them for their support!

Look for introductions to our other sponsors in our next issue: **Triple Crown, Sue Berrill Eventing, Poulin Grain, Farmer's Body, Rachel Clemente Equine Massage, Fieldstone Equine Clinic and SCS Saddleftit.**



Ruth Hogan Poulsen Dressage

May Show High Point Awards - 2023 Dressage Rider's Journal

Ruth has earned her USDF Bronze, Silver and Gold medals as well as her Freestyle Gold Bar and has been named a 4* rider on Centerline Scores. She is an accomplished coach and trainer, freestyle designer and author. Ruth is based at her East Hill Farm in Vermont May-October and at her Florida farm, Bespoke Farm, in the winter. Visit her at [Home - Ruth Hogan-Poulsen \(ruthhoganpoulsen.com\)](http://Home-RuthHogan-Poulsen(ruthhoganpoulsen.com)).

Sweetheart's Horse Treats May Show First Place Prizes



Sweetheart's are a 100% natural heart-shaped horse cookie topped with a candy treat: peppermints, gummy bears and seasonal specials like candy corn, conversation hearts and jelly beans. Chelsea Sprague founded Sweetheart's in 2016 and bakes them in her Vermont kitchen. Her family's horses love them! Shop for Sweetheart's at www.sweetheartshorsetreats.com or at Strafford Saddlery.

Trafalgar Square Books July Show High Point Awards - \$30 Gift Certificates



Trafalgar Square Books, Pomfret, Vermont, provides horse lovers the world over with beautiful, highly illustrated, well-written books and engaging videos to supplement their growth and development as horsemen and women. Check out their extensive collection of books and videos to help you in your pursuit of a joyful life with horses: [Home - Horse and Rider Books](#).

Hemlock Ridge Integrative Veterinary Care July Show First Place Prizes



Hemlock Ridge, Brattleboro, VT, offers a holistic approach to wellness and chronic disease management for your dog, cat and horse. Dr. Amy Plavin can treat a pet with either conventional medical therapies, such as pharmaceuticals and surgical modalities or complementary therapies - acupuncture, nutritional therapy, chiropractic, herbs - or both. For more information visit [Hemlock Ridge Integrative Veterinary Care | Dr. Amy Plavin \(hemlockridgevet.com\)](http://hemlockridgevet.com).

The Cheshire Horse September Show High Point Awards - \$20 Gift Certificates



The Cheshire Horse is a leading source for horse, pet, and farm supplies in the Northeast. Family owned and operated, it is located in Swanzey, NH, with a partner store in Saratoga Springs, NY. Visit The Cheshire Horse in person or at [Leading Source for Horse, Pet, & Farm Supplies | The Cheshire Horse | The Cheshire Horse](#).



Strafford Saddlery September Show First Place Prizes

Strafford Saddlery is a local, independent tack shop, located in the heart of Vermont horse country. Its retail and online stores are stocked with leading brands of riding tack, clothing and stable supplies. In addition to a full line of products for both horse and rider, it carries over 150 new and used jump and dressage saddles. Visit the store in Quechee, VT or online at [Strafford Saddlery - High Quality English Horse Tack and Riding Apparel](http://StraffordSaddlery.com).

Thank you 2023 CVDA Sponsors!

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