



COLLECTIVE REMARKS

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3 - MARCH 2013

COLLECTIVE REMARKS - WWW.ESDCTA.ORG

PAGE 1

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Show season is here!
See the Omnibus
for the many
opportunities for
you to show off
your horse.

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Awards Luncheon

See What All the Fun Was About!



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Marketing Committee	Lisa Toaldo dentist2.lt@gmail.com	570.491.5147

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Calendar/Activities	calendar@esdcta.org	
Grants Committee	Julia Peterson	908.326.3120
Nominating Committee	Jen Morris nominating@esdcta.org	201.986.4601
Omnibus Committee	omnibus@esdcta.org	
Newsletter Committee	newsletter@esdcta.org	
Webmaster	Gary Maholic gmaholic@gmail.com	215.489.1557
Show Results / Volunteer Bucks	Jean Goeltz results@esdcta.org	732.577.0272

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The "newness" of the year has waned and we have buckled down to business as usual and not so usual as we enter March.

Last year, we sent the membership a survey regarding whether we should continue publishing the Omnibus and the newsletter as we have in the past or simply offer it online. You voted to keep both publications in hard copy. We were grateful to receive so many responses. Communication is key in running any organization, and since we are a membership-based organization, your opinions are the fabric of the Board of Trustees' decision-making.

The Board is about to embark on another exercise aimed at evaluating and refining policies and procedures, as well as programs and services. We are formulating a Strategic Plan that will address our strengths and areas of improvements. The last time we did this was under the guidance of then president, Marsha Montgomery. It is an exercise that usually occurs every five to ten years with on-going attention to implementation in between.

Strategic planning is about self-reflection and evaluation. You cannot have goals without knowing what your mission and vision is, as well as the culture of your organization. You cannot know what direction you want to go, without evaluating where you have been.

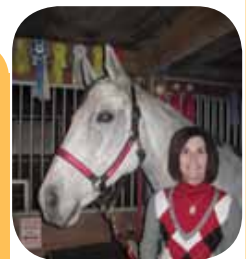
By identifying our strengths – what works – and our areas of improvement – what isn't working – we can come up with an action plan that supports the strengths while improving the weaknesses. ESDCTA is committed to achieving and succeeding in the areas our membership look for in an organization. The Strategic Plan moves us to success, not as a one-time accomplishment, but as an ever-evolving challenge.

We will be looking at leadership, membership, programs, and services – which include competitions, educational events, communications – and marketing. We hopefully will be able to drill down to create a plan that is not just a broad view of the organization but an in-depth, goal-oriented process addressing each category of the organization's various "departments."

If you have any concerns or suggestions about ESDCTA – YOUR organization – please email them to me (chivalryhillfarm@aol.com) so we can address them as we create the strategic plan. Your input would be very much appreciated and valuable to the process.

"It is necessary ... for a man to go away by himself ... to sit on a rock ... and ask, 'Who am I, where have I been, and where am I going?'"

– Carl Sandburg, American author, editor, poet.



Susan and Chevy

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ESDCTA Statement of Purpose

Eastern States Dressage and Combined Training Association (ESDCTA) was founded in June 1969 and incorporated in 1970 as a nonprofit educational organization under the laws of the State of New Jersey. ESDCTA with membership open to all interested in dressage and combined training, has the following stated purpose: *"Whereas it is the desire among many equestrians in the United States to foster and stimulate interest in dressage and eventing in the hope that this may ultimately benefit the United States Olympic Team in its international competition, this organization is established as a nonprofit educational organization."* Its further purposes are to foster and stimulate interest in dressage and eventing in general, to educate, conduct clinics and hold dressage shows and combined training events.

GET SOCIAL!

Like us on  ESDCTA

Follow us on  @ESDCTA

CROSS COUNTRY... New Across our Region

COMMUNITY NEWS

Two South Jersey Counties quarantined after a horse tests positive for neurologic equine herpes. Know the signs and symptoms and pay close attention to your horses who come and go from your farm. See the NJ Department of Agriculture website (www.state.nj.us/agriculture) for more information

The New Jersey Equine Environmental Stewardship Program has announced the creation of the Gold Medal Horse Farm award. If you would like to apply, the deadline is June 15. Contact Laura Gladney at 848-932-3229 or gladney@aesop.rutgers.edu or check out http://esc.rutgers.edu/release_2_05_13_GMHF_gen.htm

WHAT'S YOUR TALENT??

Let us know what you would like to help us with in 2013. All skills and interests wanted. Have an idea? We want to hear about it. Remember, this club is what YOU make it. Contact Susan Lax: chivalryhillfarm@aol.com

UPCOMING MEETINGS

TBA Board Meeting	Contact: Susan Lax 609-466-4178
TBA Eventing Committee	Contact: Gary Maholic gmaholic@gmail.com
TBA Dressage Committee	Contact: Terry Masters terrymasters@verizon.net
TBA Youth Committee	Contact: Jill Kuc esea@ptd.net

MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS

For membership questions including updating physical or e-mail addresses please contact:

Diane Engler
PO Box 185
Pipersville, PA 18947
kaboomer1964@gmail.com
610-730-0371 before 9 pm

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Meredith Rogers, Diane Engler,
Susan Lax & Rebecca Kuc

E-mail: newsletter@esdcta.org

All submissions are due by the 10th of the month

Due to space considerations, the editors reserve the right to edit submitted articles. If possible, the articles will be returned for review of the editing.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- March 5** First Tuesday Lecture Series - the Neurologic Horse, at New Bolton Center. See www.vet.upenn.edu for more information
- March 9** Fix-a-Test Clinic at Rhythm & Blues Stables, Allentown, NJ See page 13 of this issue for more information
- March 30** Junior Breeder's Symposium at Rutgers University Equine Science Center. Contact Laura Gladney at 848-932-3229 or gladney@aesop.rutgers.edu for more information

ESDCTA welcomes proposals from vendors for goods and services. Please contact the appropriate committee.

Send your Cross Country Information to
newsletter@esdcta.org

2013 ADVERTISING RATES

	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBER
FULL PAGE	\$100	\$130
HALF PAGE	\$65	\$85
QUARTER PAGE	\$40	\$60
BUSINESS CARD	\$20	\$30
CARD FOR 3 MONTHS	\$45	\$65
CLASSIFIEDS	\$10	\$15

(per 35 words)

Deadline: 15th of Prior Month

Email: newsletter@esdcta.org

Please have electronic ads in Adobe or .jpg format

You will receive an invoice for ad via email.

Send Payment to: Marsha Montgomery

11 Indian Run

Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889

CENTERLINE Dressage News



Come on all you Adult Amateurs, its time to take the plunge!

Last month we introduced the new Adult Amateur Sweepstakes as a part of the CDI 1* at the Memorial Weekend Show. Let's hope that many of our FEI level Adult Amateur competitors take advantage of the opportunity to share in the Sweepstakes while sharing in the excitement of participating in a CDI.

Entering a CDI 1* is much less complicated and expensive than entering a 3* but you do need to get your registration papers in order. Here are some of the things you'll need to know.

Complete the required applications. They're quick, easy, and inexpensive.

- FEI Rider Registration: www.usef.org/documents/membership/2013/FEIRiderReg.pdf cost \$15
- FEI Horse Registration: www.usef.org/documents/membership/2013/FEIHorsReg.pdf cost \$15
- USEF National Passport: www.usef.org/documents/international/natpass.pdf cost \$50

Links to these websites are also on the ESDCTA CDI website: www.esdcta.org/CDI/index.html

You should also take advantage of the extensive information available from the FEI on their very informative websites. All the information you ever wanted to know and much more can be found at www.FEI.org/disciplines/dressage/rules for complete dressage rules/movements/saddlery & dress etc.

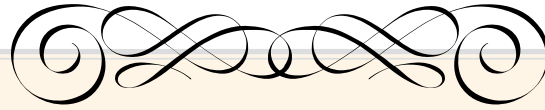
Information on veterinary inspections, required equine influenza vaccination and health requirements, doping and controlled medications and much more can be found at: www.fei.org/veterinary/vaccinations-and-health-requirements

So fill out your registration forms – takes only 5 minutes and get your vet started with the equine influenza vaccinations and we'll see you on Thursday, May 23, 2013. There will be a vet inspection and you'll get yourself settled in for the show.

Then all you have to do is get yourself all prettied up for the jog and the CDI reception that follows. This is your chance to schmooze and have fun.

One last thing to remember, you can enter the CDI 1* and just do the PSG class. You don't have to ride either the I-1 or the I-1 MFS if those levels aren't yet part of your repertoire. After your ride your CDI PSG class on Friday you can enter open classes for the rest of the weekend.





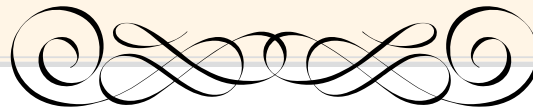
WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF THE EXCITEMENT OF SHOW SEASON?

**Volunteers are up close with all the action from ringside to sitting next to the judge.
...But you say, "I don't know how to do the jobs required at dressage shows!"**

Now is your chance to learn. On May 11, LVDA and ESDCTA are hosting a Volunteer Training Day. It will take place during the Fix-a-Test at Rhythm & Blues, Northampton, PA. Lisa Schmidt will be officiating, Lisa is an (S) Judge and our Region 1 Director. The day will include training for the positions of scribe, ring steward, warm-up steward, scorer, and runner. Concentrate on one job or try all five. There is no fee and lunch will be provided. Register with Beth Ann Adams at baakaa68@gmail.com by the Fix-a-Test closing date of May 3.

If space and time allows, walk-in participants will be accepted.
Phone: 484-554-4501.

Join us – learn something new – watch the rides – enjoy a day of FUN with friends.



Attention ESDCTA Members!

The ESDCTA Education committee would like your input.

We are going to start an amazing educational incentive for our area and we would love to know who you would want to learn from. Trainers, amateurs, youth and horse enthusiasts everywhere are all invited to let us know!

Please contact Francine Gentile at francinegentile@comcast.net and give us your input. Any person who has intrigued you, inspired you, or simply excited you about your riding – let us know. We'll try to make it happen.

THE START BOX

Eventing News

We heard your comments about last year's Eventing Championships, what you liked and what you'd like to see changed, and we are making changes accordingly. First, we are adding open, unrecognized divisions, for those of you looking for a chance to compete at the Horse Park, but didn't qualify this year, if you have a second horse that didn't qualify, or if you were lucky enough to buy a new horse late in the season. Also, we will be changing the time schedule to better accommodate the eventing competitors. The awards will be as fabulous as last year (if not better), and we will also work on having great weather!

For those of you not competing at the championships (and that's not too many of you!), it's a great opportunity to volunteer, as it's a difficult weekend to get volunteers, because so many of you will be there competing!

So whether you are competing or volunteering, we look forward to seeing you at the Eventing Championships on Sunday, September 15!



TURN YOUR PASSION INTO ACTION!

Become a CHAMPION Through the EQUUS Foundation's Equine Service Program

By Debbie DelGiorno, Vice President

Did you know that ESDCTA was the first GMO to be accepted into the EQUUS Foundation's Carrot4aCause Network? Carrots4aCause Network connects volunteers with a passion for all things "horsey" to non-profit equestrian organizations who need volunteer help. Anyone can now volunteer at ESDCTA activities and receive national recognition through the EQUUS Foundation's CHAMPIONS Program!



CHAMPIONS is an incentive-based equine service volunteer program designed to recognize and reward individuals and organizations in the Carrots4aCause Network. It only takes 24 volunteer hours each calendar year to achieve CHAMPION status. CHAMPIONS receive the following opportunities:

- A chance to win 1 of 5 \$250 gift certificates towards Ariat boots awarded each quarter
- Eligible for a drawing each May where the winner selects a Carrots4aCause charity to receive an EQUUS Foundation Grant
- Youth CHAMPIONS with a GPA of 3.0 or above have the opportunity to apply for 1 of 5 \$1,000 equine service scholarships sponsored by Ariat International; "CHAMPION" USEF youth members also have the opportunity to apply for the USEF Champion of Equine Service Scholarship

All you need to do is sign up and start logging in your volunteer hours. Once you achieve CHAMPION status, continue to log in your hours throughout the year, as there are additional benefits under development that involve rewards for the quantity of service.

To learn more about the EQUUS Foundation's Carrots4aCause Network and the CHAMPION Equine Service Program, go to www.equusfoundation.org.

Support your Trainer, Best Friend, Barn Mate, Student, Child or Parent with a Booster Ad in the CDI Allentown/M W Dressage Show Program... ONLY \$15




*Best Of Luck to Everyone!
Have a great Show
We're rooting for you,
bring home the blue!*

#1



*Best of luck everyone!
Have a great show!
We're rooting for you, bring home
the blue!*

#2



*Best Of Luck to Everyone!
Have a great show!
We're rooting for you,
bring home the blue!*

#3

Enter your text in the ruled box next to your choice of design. Text must fit on four lines and may be subject to editing to conform with space requirements.



Sponsor a class in the Memorial Weekend Dressage Show... ONLY \$25

Day _____ Class _____
 Day _____ Class _____
 Day _____ Class _____
 Your Name _____

Day _____ Class _____
 Day _____ Class _____
 Day _____ Class _____
 Your Name _____

Deadline for inclusion in the show program is May 9th 2013

Fill out this form and mail with check payable to
ESDCTA, Inc to:
Carol Conner
370 Barretts Run Rd
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Email Address _____
 Total Booster Ads x \$15 _____
 Total Classes Sponsored x \$25 _____
 Total \$ Enclosed _____



ESDCTA CDI3*/1* Y/J ALLENTOWN MAY 23-26, 2013

Presented by



Sponsorship Reservation Form

Name: _____
 Company Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please make all checks payable to ESDCTA, Inc.
 Return completed form with payment in full to:
 Dr. Lisa Toaldo, 29 Oak Ridge Rd, Montague, NJ,
 07827

570-491-5147; dentist2.lt@gmail.com

ESDCTA is a 501(c)3 organization: your donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law

FEL Junior/Young Rider class sponsorship

- ___ Individual Test\$100
- ___ Team Test\$100
- ___ Freestyle\$100

Individual 1* Small Tour class sponsorship

- ___ Prix St Georges\$150
- ___ Intermediaire -1\$150
- ___ Intermediaire F/S\$150

Individual 3* Small Tour class sponsorship

- ___ Prix St Georges\$200
- ___ Intermediaire -1\$200
- ___ Intermediaire F/S\$200

Individual 3* Large Tour class sponsorship

- ___ Grand Prix\$350
- ___ Grand Prix Special.....\$350
- ___ Grand Prix F/S.....\$350

- ___ **Friend of ESDCTA**\$25
- ___ **Patron**.....\$50
- ___ **Benefactor**.....\$100
- ___ **Banner space**\$150
- ___ **Reserve Champion** 12 classes\$2500
- ___ **CDI Presenting Sponsor**.....\$5000

<i>Promotional Benefits</i>	\$5000 Presenting Sponsor	\$2500	\$1000	\$500	< \$500
		X	X	X	X
Sponsor listing in show program		X	X	X	X
Sponsor listing with links on ESDCTA website		X	X	X	X
Promotional announcements over PA throughout show		X	X	X	X
Sponsor Name and Logo in promotional ad		X	X	X	
Participation in awards ceremony of sponsored class		X	X	X	X
Corporate name included in show title and in all advertising					
Corporate name on all CDI awards (where possible) and on all CDI championship ribbons		X			
8 tickets to competitor party					
Your company promotional material made available to the competitors		X			
Sponsorship of CDI Jog Party		X			
Partial sponsorship of competitor party		X			
Show Program Advertising					
Full color inside front or outside back cover		X			
Full page b & w		X			
1/2 page b & w			X		
1/4 page b & w				X	
Vendor Space					
Triple sized 10 x 30 vendor space		X			
Double sized 10 x 20 vendor space			X		
10 x 10 vendor space			X		
Banners in high visibility areas, including competition arena					
Up to 3 banners		X			
Up to 2 banners		X			
One banner			X		

SALUTE...

LORI DISANTI

By: Rebecca Kuc

Like most girls, Lori grew up a horse crazy kid. She didn't have the resources to provide herself with a horse or lessons, so Lori rode rental horses, catch rides and worked at barns in exchange for riding until she was a teenager. Although she never stopped her love for horses, she had to stop riding for a long time. Once she got married in 1997, Lori started up lessons again, leased a school horse which led to her first horse. She then bought her horse, Probably Not, aka Knot.

Currently, Lori trains with Lisa Lewis-Greene at Keneva farm in Mullica Hill, NJ. In 2009, Lori began working with Lisa regularly and she has made such a difference to both her riding and training. Lori has competed in recognized shows since 2009 but has competed in schooling shows before then. She began dressage after one too many falls in eventing. She realized she had to focus on flat work and ended up hooked to dressage. Although she no longer events, Lori is so glad she had as she has so many fun memories from eventing!

Lori really enjoys dressage because you never stop learning. Once you think you've learned something, there's always much more to learn and on how to do it better. Often Lori tells her non-horse friends that dressage is like golf. "You can never ever be perfect. You keep taking lessons to learn better approaches. It's a lifetime of learning something that always has room for improvement and education." Dressage has also helped Knot greatly and his overall health, fitness and appearance are amazing even with turning 21 come May! Lori uses competing as a way to get a quick assessment from a judge as to if they are competing at an appropriate level and also to see what it takes to move up to the next level.

Lori has owned Knot for the past twelve years. Knot is a 15.1 hand bay breeding stock paint- not a traditional breed! Breeding stock paint registry means that he has no white spots to qualify him to be registered into the regular APHA registry. Although he isn't a typical "dressage horse", when under saddle he looks just like a cute little Warmblood! He is also always a barn favorite with his mind and gentle nature! Knot was bred for his mind before anything else and his mind is definitely amazing.

Since 2009, Lori and Knot have had many successes. In 2009, the pair won ESDCTA Championships at Training Level and were Reserve Champion for USDF All Breeds - open. The pair was Champion at the ESDCTA Championships at First Level in 2010 along with placing third for USDF All Breeds -open. 2011 was a great season for the pair as they were Second Level Champion for ECRDA Year End and Open Champion for USDF All Breeds. This past season, They were Reserve Champion for Second Level USDF All Breeds and earned an ESDCTA Achievement Ribbon at Third Level! They have also earned both rider and horse USDF Performance Certificates at Training, First, and Second Levels! Eventually, Lori hopes to earn her USDF Bronze Medal in the future, although she wouldn't be disappointed if it wasn't earned on Knot as he owes her nothing!

Aside from riding, Lori is a complete bookworm! She also enjoys running and racing! Lori and her husband, Gary, have been married for 16 years and although not a horse person himself, Gary supports Lori 100%! He never resents the amount of time or money horses require and is always a great support!

Lori would like to make a point to everyone reading that everyone CAN do it! "With enough determination and dedication, anyone on any horse can do this. I strongly want everyone to know you don't need a big expensive Warmblood or a pro riding your horse three times a week to have success and fun in the show ring." Lori knows her advice to be true from her own first hand experiences in the sport!

Congratulations on a great 2012 and best of luck with the 2013 season!



Salute

...Awards Luncheon photos continued from pg 1



Luncheon Photos by Gary Maholic.
These photos and more can be seen at
www.idsol.org



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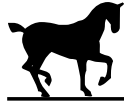
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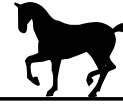
**PLACE YOUR
CLASSIFIED
AD HERE**





HORSE TREATS

By MEREDITH ROGERS



Modern medicine has nothing compared to how being with our horses makes us feel. But there are some folk medicine cures involving the horse (or parts of the horse) that have never been approved by the American Medical Association – with good reason!

Eating a hair from a horse’s forelock is a cure for worms.

Whooping cough can be cured by inhaling a horse’s breath. Of course if that doesn’t work, you can try placing three hairs from a donkey’s shoulders in a muslin bag and wear it around your neck (may also be a cure for measles).

Got bit by a snake or have a toothache? Just sit backwards on a donkey.

Pregnant women who just see a donkey will have wise and well-behaved children.

A horse’s chestnuts were believed to be a cure for cancer if dried, ground, and drunk frequently with new milk.

It used to be thought that warts could be cured by circling them in horse hair.

To lesson the pain of a toothache, rub the tooth of a dead horse over your jaw.



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ESDCTA would like to thank all of the participants in this year’s Silent Auction. Whether you contributed items or services, or engaged in some “retail therapy,” your support helped make the event a success.

Thank you!

FOALIN' AROUND Youth News, Activities, and Opportunities

TEAM SELECTION DEADLINES RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!

It's time to start thinking about representing the ESDCTA in team competitions. Last year our selected team members were very successful, had a great time working as members of a team, and learned a lot. Everyone went away with a positive experience.

This year we are sending teams to compete at Lendon Gray's Youth Dressage Festival (July 12-14), the USDF Region 1 Youth Dressage Team Competition (July 27-28), the Millbrook Horse Trials Team Competition (August 1-4), and the Team Challenge at Burgundy Hollow Horse Trials (Oct. 27).

If you are accepted as a member of a team, ESDCTA pays your entry fees (for team classes/divisions) and stabling fees.

Team applications are available on the ESDCTA website: esdcta.org. All applicants must have 8 volunteer hours and have met the criteria outlined in the ESDCTA Omnibus. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact one of the youth co-chairs.

DEADLINES FOR TEAM APPLICATIONS

Lendon Gray's Youth Dressage Festival, Saugerties, NY (July 12-14)	May 15
USDF Region 1 Youth Team Competition, Leesburg, VA (July 27-28)	May 15
Millbrook Horse Trials Team Competition, Millbrook, NY (August 1-4)	June 1
Team Challenge at Burgundy Hollow Horse Trials, Northampton, PA (Oct. 27)	September 15

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL AWARDS SPONSORED BY SKYLANDS SADDLERY

Becky Kuc is our first recipient of a Youth Educational Award! She earned 50 points by attending many different types of educational events this past year to receive her "Certificate of Recognition." She attended two ESDCTA Fix-a-Test clinics, the Youth Educational Seminar at Mid-Atlantic Equine, Lendon Gray's Educational Weekend, private clinics, and other events to accumulate the points. Skylands Saddlery is the gracious sponsor of this award.

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Fix-a-Test Clinics

To help you get ready for the show season, we are offering three fix-a-test clinics around our membership area. At a fix-a-test clinic, the participant rides the dressage test of his/her choice, and a judge scores it just like at a horse show. The judge will then work with the rider to improve upon the test, and the rider can then ride the test again. The rider will receive a copy of both of their tests. This format is a great way to learn how to improve your scores and to hear and see how a judge arrives at a score for each movement. We also have an hour lunch discussion with the judge/clinician. We encourage all youth to attend as riders or auditors and to plan to audit the entire day. Participants and all-day auditors will receive 10 credits towards the Youth Educational Award.

Please see the omnibus or ESDCTA website for more detailed information. We are finalizing the date for the clinic in Ringoes at Beaver Creek Equestrian Center.

Rider fee: ESDCTA Members \$40 Nonmembers \$50

Auditor fee: Free (nominal fee to join in the pizza lunch)

CLINIC SCHEDULE

March 9, 2013

Rhythm & Blues Stables
Allentown, NJ

ENTRY DEADLINE: March 2

Clinician: Amy Gimbel (r)

Contact: Heidi Lemack
RBLStables@aol.com

May 4, 2013

Hidden Creek Equestrian Center
Kunkletown, PA

ENTRY DEADLINE: April 27

Clinician: Ann Forer (R)

Contact: Jill Kuc
esea@ptd.net

Remember to read the Youth Section of the omnibus!

There are scholarship opportunities, and dressage and event team sponsorships available!

NJ Junior Breeder's Horse & Livestock Symposium – March 23, 2013

Rutgers University will be hosting its annual NJ Junior Breeder's Horse and Livestock Symposium on Saturday, March 23, at Cook College in New Brunswick. Sessions will cover Disaster Preparedness, Pasture Management, the Equine Digestive System, and Trailering Safety. Cost is \$12 for the entire day including lunch. Registration Deadline is March 15. The registration form, including the schedule of events, can be found on the Activities Page of our website under Youth Programs. ESDCTA youth members earn 4 points towards the Education Award.

WOW CAMP 2013

The USEA and the New Jersey Region of the US Pony Club will again be offering this incredible camp opportunity to young riders at the New Jersey Horse Park from July 1-4. Youth bring their horses for the four days and participate in dressage, cross-country, and jumping clinics with world-renowned trainers, while also receiving instruction on horse care and management. The USPC and USEA have again, generously, opened this camp to ESDCTA youth members. Definitely an opportunity to take advantage of! Contact Patricia Luffy at yogaandhorses@gmail.com for more information. We will post details and applications on the youth page of the website as soon as they are available.

A Day of Wisdom with Tik Maynard

By Meredith Rogers

On December 16, RainbowRidge Equestrian Center in Flemington, NJ, hosted a clinic by Tik Maynard focused on enhancing partnerships with the performance horse. Tik, who is head trainer at Bow Brickhill Stables, has worked in almost all sport horse disciplines, is an Equine Canada certified instructor, and was long-listed for the 2012 Olympic Games in Eventing for Canada. I think Tik had as much fun as those of us participating because from the first horse to the last (almost 8 hours later) he gave his all with a smile on his face, even if that meant having the patience to teach a skittish horse to walk on a tarp or having to deal with an exuberant yearling.

My horse, PJ, and I were his first victims of the day. I explained that my issue was that when I ride I feel that 50% of PJ's attention is on me and the other 50% is on his environment, which I thought contributed to PJ's lack of reactivity to my aids (he's a slug). Tik started out by putting PJ in a rope halter with a long lead (I hesitate to call it a lunge line) attached. He then asked PJ to walk off like he was being lunged using just a point of his finger in the direction he wanted PJ to go. Of course, PJ didn't know what he wanted, so Tik adjusted his body position and shook the whip a little, which PJ did understand. Once PJ took a step in the right direction, Tik immediately relaxed and stopped asking anything. PJ stopped and Tik rubbed his face. Tik remarked that breaks are where the real learning takes place. Eventually he had PJ walking and trotting in both directions, as well as backing up and coming towards him with no pull on the lead – just a gesture with his hand one way or the other. Then he had me try, which didn't go quite as smoothly but I got the idea, which was to get PJ to focus on me and to react to subtle aids just like I wanted him to under saddle. I could see how this could be very valuable at a horse show when PJ was even more distracted.

A lot was going on outside the indoor and when Tik got on PJ, he wanted to spook. Tik explained that instead of focusing on what the horse wanted to look at, the rider should just continue with whatever he/she had planned, and importantly, the rider should always have a plan. Even if the plan was as simple as a 20-meter circle, the rider shouldn't be wishy-washy in his/her request. He had me get on next and concentrate on controlling PJ's speed and direction; if I accomplished that, PJ would see me as his leader because I controlled his feet, and he would shift his focus from his environment to me. We ended without a single spook.



Building a partnership is a two-way street

The next two people had very different horses. One was skittish and the other was too laid back. Tik explained that you can't change a horse's nature but you can improve him, meaning the skittish horse will never become a deadhead and the dull horse will never be flighty, but you could get the skittish horse to become calm and the dull horse to become responsive. Using the rope halter and lead with the skittish horse, Tik swung the lead rope around, which at first startled him. Once he relaxed, Tik stopped swinging the lead (giving him a break). He said that there were times to sensitize a horse and times to desensitize a horse. What he had done with PJ moving in a circle was a form of sensitizing, while what he did by swinging the lead around and not asking for anything was desensitizing.

Tik started every horse with groundwork using the rope halter and lead rope. With some horses, he rode using the rope halter and lead instead of a bridle and bit. He explained that by not having a bit, what he was asking the horse was very black and white; he just wanted the horse to go a certain speed and in a certain direction without the complication of "going on the bit". He also pulled out a tarp, barrels, and a jump with the purpose of getting the horses to learn to learn. He used the horse's natural curiosity to eventually allow him to put a tarp over a horse's head or just have a horse calmly walk between two barrels.

What Tik told us was nothing new, but he was able to put classic principles into a novel and engaging context, finding new metaphors that he was able to demonstrate with our own horses. What I liked most was that he recognized that our horses were being used in sport. The end goal was not to get our horses to allow us to stand on their backs, per se, but to trust us, to enjoy learning new things, and eventually for us to be able to ride a better dressage test or have a better cross-country run.










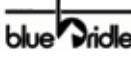




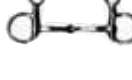

A mare learns to learn as her owner watches



Tik teaches a horse to trust

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THE 2013 ESDCTA SHOW SEASON

ESDCTA SHOW CALENDAR

Please refer to the ESDCTA Omnibus for details
All ESDCTA-registered shows are eligible for volunteer hours



MARCH

3	HPNJ Winter Series	Dressage Schooling Show
9	Whiskey Lane Farm	Dressage Schooling Show
17	Bit O'Woods	Dressage Schooling & Clear Round Jumping
24	HPNJ Spring Series	Dressage Schooling Show
24	Wit's End Farm	Dressage Schooling & CT
30	Dressage at the Meadow	Dressage Schooling