



Central Plains Dressage Society Newsletter March 2020

Fun Friendly Forward

President's Message/April

Hello members of Central Plains Dressage! I hope everyone is staying safe and well. The saving grace for me so far is being able to go to the barn and ride. The social distancing is right and the benefits of exercise and being with my horse is keeping my mind healthy. I sincerely hope it is the same for you.

This period of time is historic and the outcomes are still unknown. It has made me think about other important moments in time during my life. I can tell you exactly where I was and what I was doing when JFK was shot, when Martin Luther King was killed, when a lottery was used to draft young men into the Vietnam war, when the US men's hockey team beat the Russians during the 1980 Olympics (I was at that game)!. I remember what I was doing when the news of the Murrow bombing was announced, when 9/11 happened, when the plane carrying OSU basketball personnel crashed. This moment in time is different because there is not a singular place or time to herald it, because it is not over yet! So my place has become the barn with my horse. It is my respite from the uncertain times we are all experiencing. Other than that I stay close to home, working in my garden, going through clothes to be donated, reading and planning my one activity a day. I love seeing how creative people are in encouraging those who are on the front lines fighting "the invisible war" against a germ. For those of you who are working in helath care, in food service, in any way supporting first responders thank you.

It is also a time when those of us lucky enough to be healthy and looking for "action" to feel a little sorry about the situation. We see our goals slipping through our fingers. We are pretty sure we area immune from danger and that the times we come together at shows we have few people around. Central Plains Dressage depends on our activities to make ends meet. It is not a good start to the year for us but so far we have time on our side. Shows have been postponed and when the all-clear is sounded we will be ready to go. We

will salvage what we can from the competition year and enjoy every moment. We will celebrate as we always do the accomplishments of our members. We will be okay.

No activity is more important than staying safe and healthy right now. We will try to stay in touch with all of you on a regular basis during these days. We are the lucky ones if we can get out and be with our wonderful horses. When this is finished we will all have a new marker of where we were and what we were doing when the end to this pandemic is announced. Cheers!

Chris Cashel

President, CPDS

What some members are doing during the quarantine.

Holly Fisher: I'm teaching Mikey the Mustang to paint during our lovely pandemic. I'm an essential employee at Tulsa Boys Home so me and the boys have been learning about positive reinforcement training with the horses and Mikey is our most enthusiastic student!!

Liz Dudley: This down time is giving Marie Maloney & I an opportunity to work on some foundational things, perfecting half pass, starting passage, piaffe, canter pirouettes, and doing tempis [2's & 3's]. Lots to work on. I am also rehabbing my new mare, Quick Lady from her colic surgery & slowly getting her back in shape. So there are a lot of things to work on. I am looking forward to taking long tack walks along my country roads with Quick Lady [Quinn].

Can't wait to see Robin, Chris, Nancy & Stacia Wert-Gray & the gang at Valley View for some of their shows & clinics. Everyone be safe & stay healthy.

Lee Ann Alf: So happy I have my horses at home. I'm just continuing their training and a lot of hacking around my 5 acres. I have found the weather to be more of a hindrance than the quarantine. Also doing lots of organizing in the barn. Not so much in the house. And maybe too much eating and online ordering. Will be glad when things are back to normal.

Central Plains Dressage Society
Board Meeting Minutes (*subject to approval by the Board at next meeting*)
April 5, 2020 (Zoom meeting)

The meeting was called to order by Chris Cashel at 5:05 pm. Chris Cashel, Nancy Eytcheson, Robin Hessel, Annie Houchin, Lee Ann Alf, Janelle Williams, Stacia Wert-Gray, Amy Mullins and Kathy Maxwell were present.

The minutes from the March meeting were approved. Motion made by Amy Mullins, and seconded by Stacia Wert-Gray. Passed.

Committee reports:

Treasurer

* Stacia Wert-Gray reported that the club has \$887.82. The Poulin show was canceled, and we will get a refund of \$200 from USEF. Poulin's airfare has been banked to use next year, but airfare for the TD will be lost. There are no other outstanding bills.

Membership

*Christina Harmon reported through Annie Houchin that CPDS currently has 150 members already submitted for the 2020 year.

Shows

*All shows are on hold for now.
*Melissa Creswick changed her flight to have a show in May, but it is likely that will not happen. Discussion about rescheduling for a later date, and Stacia Wert-Gray will call her tomorrow to find out her availability.
*Discussed having a Dawn and Dusk show during the summer. Classes would run 6-10 am, and 6-10 pm.

Tack Sale

*The Tack Sale is on hold until the show season resumes.

Western Dressage Symposium

Annie Houchin reported that the clinic broke even, and was very well received, with the clinician experienced and flexible, working with advanced as well as beginning riders. There were 10 rides each day, and about 20 auditors.

Newsletter

*Lee Ann Alf reported that the April newsletter is ready to go out in the next few days, and she is looking for an article about the trip to Florida Trainers Conference. Nancy Eytcheson, Kathy Maxwell and Chris Cashel will work on that.
*Lee Ann is working on the directory with the membership spreadsheet from Christina Harmon. The next newsletter will offer to members a way to opt out of personal information being included if they prefer. Members need to reply to her by

May 1 to opt out. Discussion of printing costs, mailing directories, or possibly emailing it out for members to print at home.

Robin Hessel added a request for wording in the directory that would encourage keeping all information private, and used only by our members.

Facebook

*Annie Houchin reported on her efforts to encourage members to support our local equine vendors and trainers. Discussion about gift cards, contacting more businesses, and how they could help. Annie and Kathy Maxwell will pursue further.

*Discussion about having a Facebook or email blast every week at least to include a short story of what riders have been up to in the hiatus, to include a picture. Start with Board Members. Send to Annie Houchin.

Horsemanship Clinic

Robin Hessel is working on an unmounted symposium with Jack Horsey speaking on horsemanship. This will probably be a video symposium, posted on the CPDS website free of charge for viewers.

New Business

*Virtual Horse Show – Discussion of a CPDS virtual show. It is suggested by the board that riders ride a test for their instructor so as to get immediate feedback instead.

*Remainder of the year – Discussion of rescheduling recognized shows and schooling shows, and the status of year end awards. It was determined that a decision cannot be made at this time without knowing when we will be able to start back up.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 pm. Motion to adjourn was made by Annie Houchin, seconded by Chris Cashel. Passed.

The next meeting is via Zoom on May 10, at 5 p.m.

CPDS is putting together a membership directory/roster. It will contain member name, address, phone, email. **If you wish to be omitted or leave out individual items, please send a message by May 1, 2020 to:**

leeannalf@gmail.com

(The directory of our state sister club, ODS, has always been a very popular publication, much used and appreciated by members.)

CPDS Members Travel to Florida and Attend USDF Trainers Conference, Etc

(submitted by Nancy Eytcheson)

Now that we are locked in at home, it is a joy to reflect back on some exciting adventures we had in the not so distant past! In late January this year, which seems like 3 years ago, not two and a half months, five friends set off for Wellington, Florida, to fill up our souls with laughter, fabulous horses, great instruction, and wonderful shopping.

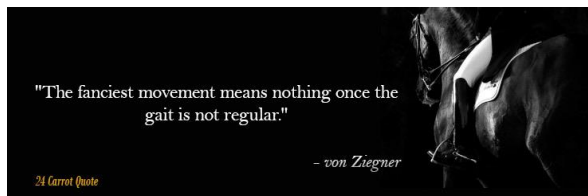
The purpose of our trip was to attend the USDF Trainers Conference, but we came into town a few days early so that we could take in a couple horse shows and check out the vendors and local shops. The van driver who picked us up at the airport to get our rental car set the tone for the weekend by dubbing us The Golden Girls, a name we lived up to by laughing a lot and enjoying each other thoroughly with our shared interests, and giggling into the night, all five of us in the same room. To do a five day trip like this, you have to REALLY like these people!

Robin Hessel had planned the trip by researching shows and farms to visit, and since she and Chris Cashel had made this trip a few years ago, they made sure we saw and did everything we could. Friday evening we saw a horse show with CDI and FEI rides, and we visited vendors, including our new Russian friend, Katya, who found Nancy Litsch the perfect pair of boots, a pair of breeches and a beautiful shawl. Saturday we also spent at the horse show, watching some international horses and riders do incredible freestyle rides at all levels. We had to pay a visit to our friend Beth Haist at Horse of Course in their booth on the grounds, where Robin found a new shadbelly, and Nancy Eytcheson ordered her very first shadbelly, custom made, with lots of input from everyone on colors and buttons. Everyone came home with new breeches as well, and Kathy Maxwell also found a new halter.

Saturday night we went to the CDI Jumping competition, standing room only, to watch some unbelievable rides in a stadium with live music, startlingly huge jumps, and a decidedly carnival atmosphere. We are all sure we are happy as dressage riders!!!

One evening we caught up with our Kansas friend, Codi Harrison, who is a professional rider and trainer, up and coming in the Wellington area. It was great to have dinner with her, and she set Nancy Eytcheson up to try a horse for sale on Sunday afternoon. It didn't work out to bring him home, but at least she can truly say she rode an FEI horse in Wellington!!!!

Monday and Tuesday we spent at the Trainers Conference, a wonderful experience watching mostly young riders with very talented horses receive instruction from some amazing international judges, trainers and riders. We are planning another article with some tidbits that we gleaned from these two very inspiring days. Would we go again??? Absolutely! And we hope you will get a chance to have an opportunity like this someday too.



Ways to Beat the Covid-19 Quarantine Blues with Your Horse

(submitted by Den Burdette)

Well this Covid-19 mess has hit the equestrian community by storm. No clinics, no shows, etc. With at least a couple more months of these events cancelled, many of us have become crafty on ways to stay 'in the game.' Here are a few ideas on ways to further your dressage education and training during this difficult time.

For those of you who are not able to ride at all during this time because your riding facility is closed- I am so sorry! Hopefully in the next 30 days restrictions will be lifted for this. For those of you who are lucky enough to still be riding at home or stable here are some helpful hints. Some instructors are still able to give private lessons while following the 6-foot social distancing rule. Others are trying facetime or virtual lessons with instructors from afar. I have started teaching some of these as well. It has helped some of my clients who need to remain isolated as well as reach riders in far away areas. Use of blue tooth, headphones etc., is becoming the norm. I have also started hosting Virtual Dressage Schooling Shows. You have someone video your ride from C and upload to YouTube. You submit the video and get judged by a carded judge and even earn ribbons which get mailed to you. Money is saved from office fees and not having to travel with your horse. This is a great way to get down the centerline and practice with your horse until public events open back up. Another great learning tool you can use from the privacy of your home is Dressage Today Online which is also available on YouTube. This resource offers videos and little lessons for all levels. Check it out!

Have you ever thought about doing a musical freestyle? This isolation time may be a great opportunity to video your horse gaits and choose some music that may fit. Think about the style of music you like. Look over the USDF Requirements and Rules for the level you wish to try. Here is the USDF link for Musical Freestyles : <https://www.usdf.org/education/other-programs/musical-freestyle/index.asp>.

If you are quarantined at home and have access to your equine partner there are lots of things you can do besides riding. Hand graze your horse and spend extra time grooming. I hear we have some 70 plus degree days coming up. Great time for a thorough bath! Give your horse extra loving. Also, a great chance to be outside and in the sun. Take photos of your horse and post them on social media. Challenge your equestrian friends to do the same!

We can all get through this. Share our love for horses and this crazy sport/art we call dressage. Stay well and safe everyone. Happy riding and studying!

CPDS Western Dressage Clinic

In October 2019 I attended the Western Dressage World show in Guthrie, OK as a spectator and competitor on my Haflinger pony. I arrived early and watched our friend Patty Couch compete in the group rail classes. As I watched, a lady on a cute roan horse stood out. I learned that her name was Joann Williams and her Welsh/Cobb cross was Gallod Fantastic; which couldn't be more fitting. They would go on to win the show.... THE ENTIRE SHOW!! They won the Silver Spur Award, 6 Championships in Level 3 and Level 4 and Open Champion in the musical freestyle with a compilation of music from Queen. People were literally dancing in their seats! It was a site to see. I came up with the idea to bring Joann to Oklahoma for a Western Dressage Clinic. Shortly after the show, the Lynn Palm Western Dressage Fund was announced through The Dressage Foundation. I quickly jumped at the opportunity to apply for the grant. I wanted to offer a low cost clinic that would attract new riders to the sport of Western Dressage and give our members the opportunity to ride with a WDA Supreme Champion as well as a USDF Gold Medalist.. the only one in the world to achieve both honours.

Joann firmly believe in the principles and values of Western Dressage as developed by WDA. All horses and riders benefit from systematic, methodical, and sympathetic training. She looks

forward to helping share the message of "Partnership in horsemanship" with riders who would like to learn more about Western Dressage

I met with the board of the Western Dressage Association of Oklahoma and together we came up with a plan to promote this clinic among WDAOK and CPD. I contacted Joann and we had our date set! The clinic filled quickly with 10 riders per day and a long waitlist. I was excited to see a big response from the auditors as well. The date of the clinic arrived and of course, we had rain in the forecast with cool temps. The morning rides dodges some showers but, thankfully for the covered arena, everyone stayed dry. Joann did a wonderful job relating to riders of all levels as well as the audience. She was kind, quick to correct and each rider went home with plenty to work on. We had riders from Intro to level. Joann was able to modify her teaching for those that had never been in a dressage court to those riding upper levels. We couldn't have picked a better fit for our first Western Dressage Clinic.

HUGE thank you to the Western Dressage Association of Oklahoma, the Lynn Palm Western Dressage Fund and The Dressage Foundation.

(submitted by Annie Houchin)

Auditors and Attendees

