

Jan 2024



CENTERLINE



Connecticut Dressage Association

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President's Message

Greetings!

Happy New Year to all!!! I hope you all enjoyed peaceful healthy holidays with family and friends. Our world has been in such turmoil this past year and time spent with loved ones, both 4 legged and 2 legged is especially valuable. The barn can provide such a sanctuary, and the magic of our horses is their ability to refocus and calm our minds (usually!!!). Let us cherish them and be the owners they dream of!

CDA has a great year of events lined up! We have multiple clinics planned, including our annual ride-critique-ride clinic with Bobbi Carleton, a bio-mechanics clinic with Virginia Leary, the return of Stephen Hayes, and the introduction of a Lisa Schmidt clinic! We have the usual line up of schooling shows planned with the exciting addition of a virtual schooling show series. Keep an eye out on our website for important dates and details for entering.

We are considering hosting all, or part of the USDF trainer certification workshop series – possibly with the help of one or more GMO's. A brief survey was sent to all members to get an idea of interest in our area – if you can please take the time to answer the questions it will help us determine how to proceed.

As usual, a giant thanks are in order for the farms who host our shows. THANK YOU to R Folly Farm, Sperry View Farm, Belle Free Farm, Weatogue Stables, and Idlenot Farm for hosting events for CDA. We absolutely could not function without your generosity.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in 2024!

Warmly,
Hanna

"Riders of all disciplines have to work and look at one thing: the importance of the horse's hind legs."
Mette Rosencrantz

2024 CDA Sponsored Clinics

More Details to Come

Ride-Critique-Ride
Hosted by Sperry View Farm
With Bobbi Carleton
April 20-21, 2024

Biomechanics
With Virginia Leary
Hosted by Sperry View Farm
May 25-26, 2024

Lisa Schmidt
Hosted by Idlenot Farm
July 27, 2024

Stephen Hayes
Hosted by Belle Free Farm
Aug 31, 2024

CDA Year End Awards



2023 Year End Awards

Final Results are now posted.
Congratulations to all!

We cannot wait to celebrate with you at
the Year End Awards Banquet
**Sunday January 28th 3PM at the
Bethany Lakeview Lodge
265 CT RTE 42
Bethany, CT**

**Please RSVP to Fern Feldman
<mailto:fernfeldman@gmail.com>**

UPCOMING ELECTIONS FOR CDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

According to the CDA by-laws, adopted February 11, 2006, the membership of CDA must now elect approximately half of the Board of Directors for a 2-year term. Of those adults listed below, a total of UP TO TEN WILL BE ELECTED at the annual meeting being planned for January 28, 2024.

We are listing the proposed slate of Directors in this issue of Centerline for your consideration. If you have any questions, or would like to be put on the ballot, please contact me, president@ctdressageassoc.org, and we will add your name to the slate. There will be an opportunity to write in additional candidates on the ballot.

Thank you for your participation in the governance of CDA.

Hanna Calcagni, President

PROPOSED SLATE OF DIRECTORS FOR CDA (Up to 10 adults will be selected)

VALERIE BLASI
HANNA CALCAGNI
ROBERTA CARLETON
DENISE CLARK
CAROL DICARLO
LIZ DOERING
CHRISTINE ENGEL
PATRICIA NORCIA
AMY RAVITZ
PAM WILHELM

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES (UP TO TWO YOUTH CAN BE SELECTED): ELLIE JOHNSON

(Nominations sent to president@ctdressageassoc.org
will be accepted as
long as the person nominated agrees to the
nomination and is a current

Member Profile

Volunteer Spotlight: - Megan Clarke
Hosted by Amy Ravitz, CDA Volunteer Co-Chair.

The CDA is starting a regular newsletter column highlighting one volunteer working on CDA activities. The hope is to generate the interest of others to become involved with CDA; especially at our horse shows. They are an important part of the organization and a great opportunity for members to get to know one another.



This inaugural Spotlight is on Megan Clarke. Megan lives in Cheshire with her husband and border collie, Tess, and has been a CDA member for one year. After

many years as a hunter-jumper, three years ago Megan began her dressage journey at Sperry View Farm with her Connemara-cross mare, Lassie.

In the past, she was a riding instructor at a horsemanship camp, helped rehabilitate and re-train abused horses at Cheshire Farm Sanctuary, and volunteered at local therapeutic riding centers and rescues. Some of her interests include horse behavior/psychology, horse-rider biomechanics, and finding new ways to spoil Lassie! When not riding, Megan works as a clinical social worker at a nonprofit community mental health agency.

Earlier this year, after asking Megan whether she'd be interested in scribing at shows, training was provided, first with hard-copy scribing at a Ride-Critique-Ride clinic with Bobbi Carlton. Bobbi was extremely willing and helpful. Then, after confirming her interest in working at HITS, eScribe training was arranged with Deb Reinhardt.

AR: Megan, please tell our CDA newsletter readers what got you interested in being a CDA member.

MC: After establishing my career post grad school, I was looking for a way to reconnect with my love of horses and build connections with other horse lovers. When I found out that the barn, I had taken my first riding lessons at as a 9- or ten-year old had a new name, new ownership, and new purpose as a dressage-focused facility. I reached out to its owner, Liz Doering, and started lessons there. While I was looking for a dressage education, I also found an incredible group of horse people just as passionate about horses as I am. It was through them that I

learned about CDA and all the ways it supports the local dressage community; I knew right away that I wanted to be a part of it!

AR: What got you interested in becoming a volunteer at our shows? You and I had spoken about this at the barn, but it didn't take much convincing, you were eager to help.

MC: After attending my first CDA meeting, I knew that I wanted to contribute in some way to what the organization does for the dressage community in CT. I feel so fortunate that when the need arose for people to be trained as a scribe, it ended up being a perfect fit for me!

AR: I remember talking about scribing and you shadowing the scribe at a Bobbi Carlton's clinic. How did that go for you? Did you feel adequately trained?

MC: Bobbi and her scribe were incredibly gracious to allow me to learn by observing them at the CDA Ride-Critique-Ride clinic. I couldn't have asked for better teachers! They took the time to explain everything to me thoroughly, share helpful tips and tricks, and provide me with opportunities to practice.

AR: How did your first show scribing go, what was it like? Did you feel ready? Was it fun? Were you nervous?

MC: I was a little nervous at first! I was so grateful that you offered to be present for the first show to support me if I needed it. Having the opportunity to observe different scribes while I was being trained really helped me to understand my role and different tips and tricks to do it well. With all that preparation, I was able to quickly get into a rhythm with the judge and it went very smoothly!

AR: What has been the best part about volunteering?

MC: The people! The volunteers I work with are so passionate about their roles and making sure that every rider has a positive experience. I have especially enjoyed getting to know different CDA members and build friendships through volunteering with them. Our volunteers are so supportive of each other, and it feels great to be a part of that.

AR: What would you say to others who might be considering volunteering?

MC: It's a fantastic opportunity for anyone looking to become a part of an incredible community of horse

people, further their learning about dressage, and contribute to the CT dressage community.

AR: If anyone feels they cannot spare the time or wouldn't know what to do as a volunteer what would you say?

MC: There are so many opportunities to be a part of what CDA offers that can work for just about any schedule and you'll have the opportunity to learn from and work with the best!

AR: Thank you, Megan, for volunteering and for this interview. Any last remarks?

MC: Perhaps some wisdom I've gleaned across the many talented judges I've had the opportunity to scribe for that I think is important for any dressage rider to know.

One thing that has been demonstrated to me time and time again is how much judges want riders and their horses to be and feel successful. I've never had a judge gladly give a low score; they often empathetically share in the rider's disappointment for unfortunate mistakes and challenging moments that too often happen in the context of show stress.

Judges choose their comments based on what they think is the most important information to help you and your horse to get to the next level of partnership, harmony, and technical execution. When you read the comments for your ride, know that it is carefully chosen constructive feedback designed to support you in getting you and your horse's "best" even better.

Many judges highly value the partnership and harmony between horse and rider. A more modest



mount that is skillfully and empathetically ridden can get much higher scores than a much more athletically talented horse that is ridden less so. A judge once sagely said to me to think about what you can do for your horse, not what your horse can do for

you. I think that statement truly captures the object of dressage, and it informs the philosophy I try to ride by every day!

As the 2023 show season ends, I hope riders extend themselves and their horses some grace while

reflecting on feedback they've gotten from instructors, clinicians, and judges, and use this to continue to the never-ending journey of self-improvement to show up and be the best they can for their horses. And don't forget to have fun and find time to enjoy it!

Anyone who is interested in volunteering for CDA, including scribing, ring stewarding, or other tasks, please contact Amy Ravitz or Carol Mohyde. We can provide training to help ensure that you're comfortable taking on the job.

General Announcements

Earn USDF Volunteer Recognition – See more at [GMO Volunteer Incentive Program Hour Log](#)

Volunteer Information -

There is a need for volunteers! If you are interested in one of these roles, Email Carol Mohyde carolmohyde@icloud.com or Amy Ravitz amy.ravitz@yahoo.com.

Opportunity to 'Shadow' a Volunteer

– Ask Carol or Amy

USDF Region 8 News

USDF Group Member Organizations Volunteer Incentive Program

A Message from our Regional Director – Dec 2023 Greetings Region 8!

December, 2023

Greetings Region 8, from Omaha!

I come to you today from the 3rd day of the Adequan/USDF Annual Convention in Omaha. I have had a great time catching up with people from our Region and further afield. More on the Convention below.

The Dressage Finals in Kentucky were a great success again this year. There were approximately 50 Region 8 competitors in attendance, the weather was wonderful, and everything ran smoothly. Generous donors, including SmartPak, provided contributions that allowed gifts of tote bags, saddle pads, and hats

to all the competitors. Susan Stickle was on hand to take a picture of the group. Region 8 is the only region that does this for its people, and I think it is something very special – it gives our competitors a team feeling. Congratulations to everyone who made it there.

Back now to the Convention. I would like to thank Kate O'Connor, Diane Holston, Jamie Fell, Jane Hannigan, Molly Maloney, and Bobbi Carleton for their generous donations to make the PM Delegate Travel Fund Silent Auction a huge success. The money raised in this silent auction helps our Participating Member delegates offset some of the travel expenses for Omaha.

We had a productive Region 8 meeting on Thursday. Discussions included the increasing talk about having a posting trot Division for 2nd-4th level tests and the idea of creating a "mature" division. In both cases, the consensus was that these belonged in schooling shows (where both are already allowed). We discussed using the USEA Volunteer platform to arrange Dressage show volunteers, and apparently, it is quite simple. Regina Cristo will be putting together a group to create a Region 8 Adult Amateur Freestyle Award. She envisions it applying to Training – 4th level with cash prizes. If you are interested in helping her create this exciting challenge, please contact me, and I will pass on your info to her.

One of the items up for vote at Saturday's Board of Governor's meeting is an increase to Membership dues. In most cases, there have been no changes in the various dues for 7 years. While inflation has risen steadily in that time, our dues and membership numbers have remained stagnant. You will be hearing about the results of that vote after the meeting tomorrow. Please see these 3 documents to get a refresher on the benefits of USDF membership:

[Participating Membership \(PM\) Information & Benefits](#)
[Group Membership \(GM\) Information](#)

There has been a lot of discussion on how to engage with GMOs. One of the GMO roundtables focused on "Growing the Dressage Community in your GMO" and I heard a number of creative ideas to achieve this, including Ice Cream socials with various activities such as "Talk to a TD", specialized stretching for riders, etc.; cocktail hours at a local bar; Grand Prix Freestyle Regionals with other entertainment such as vaulters; and group watch parties of USDF educational videos. It is widely recognized that the USDF website is seriously lacking, and I, as your

Regional Director hope to focus on this in our upcoming Board meetings.

We also had a session hosted by experts on the risks to GMOs and small groups of lawsuits arising from Safe Sport issues. It was extremely thought provoking, (and frankly rather scary) and when I get a copy of the Power Point presentation, I will forward it to all the email addresses I have, as well as include it in the next newsletter.

Finally, I get questions from time to time about Volunteer recognition. There is a GMO Volunteer Incentive Program, and here is the link to check it out: <https://www.usdf.org/clubs/gmo/gmo-volunteer-incentive-program.asp>.

I'll follow up on the remainder of the Convention in next month's newsletter. In the meantime, I hope everyone has a great holiday season!

All the best!
Helen van der Voort
vandeh13@gmail.com

Renew Today! CDA Membership for 2024!

To check your 2024 membership status, click here [Members-as-of-Aug-2023.pdf](#) (ctdressage.org)

[Click here](#) to see all the fantastic benefits of membership!

CDA Sponsorship Opportunity in the 2024 Omnibus

The CDA Omnibus is an annual publication distributed to our 175+ members, as well as to other USDF group member organizations nationally. Our membership is represented by active dressage enthusiasts, residing, and competing in the northeast. The Omnibus is an invaluable reference used throughout the year by our members, to get information not only on schooling show in the region, but professional goods and services related to their equine needs!

Please consider sponsoring the Omnibus and sharing this with anyone who might benefit or want to support

the CDA. We are a not-for-profit organization, and the Sponsorship revenue significantly helps to defray the costs of producing the Omnibus.

CDA Sponsors – Connecticut Dressage Association (ctdressage.org)

CDA Scholarships

CDA Scholarships for Youth & Amateurs Vista Vintage Educational Scholarship

CDA offers one or more scholarships per year, per category for CDA members. Check out the details for 2023 on the [CDA Scholarship Web](#) page.

The Vista Vintage Educational Scholarship



Through the continued generosity of Vista Vintage Award founder, Ted Plaut, CDA stewards the Vista Vintage Educational Scholarship.

The Vista Vintage Award singles out the best performances by our special senior horses. These are the equine partners who demonstrate that age is no barrier to competing and earning scores to make any rider proud.

The Vista Vintage Award program focuses on the success of 'senior horses. It consists of a \$300 cash prize and an elegant special award.

For more information contact Kari Bradshaw at rkhotoshoe@aol.com.

Philla and Charlie Osborne Volunteer Award

Each year, CDA has the option to give a Volunteer of the Year Award for special service to CDA.

History: The award is named in honor of Philla and Charlie Osborne who donated hours and hours of service to CDA in the 80's and 90's. They were always found at the practice ring at shows (recognized and schooling) checking numbers and entries and letting riders know when they were "on deck". Philla and Charlie also rode for many years with Vicki Hammers-

O'Neil and today, Philla owns a horse that is being trained and competed by Vicki.

CDA Rider Achievement Awards

A new annual CDA Rider Recognition Program focusing on Juniors and AA's. Qualifying rides must be completed within the current competition year and can be achieved at either schooling or recognized shows.

Scores can be achieved on multiple horses. Training through 4th level. 3 scores, minimum 62% for schooling and 60% for recognized.



CDA Facebook Pictures Needed
Please submit pictures for the CDA Facebook.
(Submitter needs to own the picture or copyright of the submission.)

Send to [**president@ctdressage.org**](mailto:president@ctdressage.org)

Schooling Show Competitions Awards Criteria for 2024

Active CDA members are eligible to submit scores for the following: Youth, Adult Amateur and Open competitors who compete between November 1, 2023 and October 31, 2024 at the following:

- 1) CDA-sponsored schooling shows.
- 2) Schooling shows whose prize lists appear in the 2022 CDA OMNIBUS.
- 3) Schooling show listings that are published in the CDA website.
- 4) Rider must be a paid member at the time of showing for scores to count for year-end awards.

Online submissions opened November 1, 2024 and ended on December 1, 2024.

Full details and requirements are outlined on the [CDA Competition Web](#) page.

*Please refer to CDA Schooling Show master prize list for details

2024 Calendar of Events

***Please check the Website regularly for the status of events Ctdressage.org**

Next CDA Board Meeting

Monday, February 26, 2024 – 6:00 PM

At Fern Feldman's house **OR**

Zoom Meeting will start at 7:00 pm

Contact Fern Feldman | fernfeldman@gmail.com

CDA Sponsored Schooling Shows 2024

Sperry View Farm

91 Bethway Rd.

Bethany, CT

***Saturday 5/4/24** (opening date: 4/14/24- closing date 4/30/24)

Judge: Liana Antonovich (L Graduate with Distinction)

***Sunday 9/1/24** (opening date: 8/10/24- closing date 8/24/24)

Judge: Steve Rugerio (L Graduate with Distinction)

Virtual Series – www.spotlighthorseshows.com for prize list and entry

CDA Online Schooling Show #1 entries open

1/19/24 - 2/11/24 Video due 3/3/24 RESULTS 3/14/24

CDA Online Schooling Show #2 entries open

3/15/24 - 4/7/24 Video due 4/28/24 RESULTS 5/9/24

CDA Online Schooling Show #3 entries open 5/4/24

- 5/26/24 Video due 6/16/24 RESULTS 6/27/24

Weatogue Stables

33 Weatogue Rd.

Salisbury, CT

Sunday 7/21/2024 (Please refer to Weatogue Stable prize list for details)

Judge: TBA

R Folly Farm

380 W. Morris Rd.

Morris, CT

Sunday 6/23/24 (opening date: 6/1/24 - closing date: 6/16/24 Please refer to Abacus Events prize list for details)

Judge: Virginia Leary (L Graduate with Distinction)

Belle Free Farm

86 Hennequin Rd.

Columbia, CT

***Saturday 9/28/24** (opening date 9/5/24-closing date 9/20/24)

Judge: Matthew Beasley (L Graduate with Distinction)