

April/May 2026

President

Valerie Blasi
blasivalerie@yahoo.com

Vice President

Hanna Calcagni
hanna@nantucketblonde.com

Membership Coordinator

Denise Clark
337 Park Avenue
Naugatuck, CT 06770
deniseclark1211@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

Fern Feldman
fernfeldman@gmail.com

Treasurer

Christine Engel
christineengel923@gmail.com

Centerline Newsletter Coordinators

Pam Wilhelm
wyndendown@gmail.com
Heather Ashe
Hlashe8@gmail.com

Competition Questions

Carol Mohyde
carolmohyde@gmail.com
Amy Ravitz
amy.ravitz@yahoo.com

Education Coordinator

Patricia Norcia
pnorcia@mac.com

Omnibus Coordinators

Carol DiCarlo
carol@cheshireequestriancenter.com
Valerie Blasi
blasivalerie@yahoo.com

Silent Auction Coordinators

Carol DiCarlo
Carol@cheshireequestriancenter.com

Year End Awards Coordinator

Kari Bradshaw
rkhotshoe3@gmail.com

Youth Representative

Ellie Johnson

Social Media Coordinator

Jen Corti
jencorti@gmail.com

Website Coordinator

Paige Rollinson
paigerollinson@gmail.com



President's Message

Hi everyone,

Yay, spring is finally here! CDA has already had a busy and exciting start to the year. In March, we brought back the Dressage Simulator, and it was a hit once again. Riders had the opportunity to experience a realistic ride while learning more about their balance and position in the saddle.

In April, we hosted Bobbi Carleton's Ride–Critique–Ride clinic at Sperry View Farm. We had a great turnout over two full days. Thank you, Bobbi! It was wonderful to see members getting out for their first tests of the season and receiving helpful feedback supporting their training.

Show season is now in full swing. Two of our three virtual shows are complete, and the third is open and accepting entries. The first weekend in May, we kicked off our first CDA sponsored show at Sperry View Farm alongside the NYUC Pony Club Rally. We loved supporting our youth riders as they demonstrated both their riding and horse management skills.

Coming up next for schooling shows are the Weatogue show in June and Belle Free in August. Great opportunities to learn, compete, and work toward Year-End Awards and Rider Achievement Programs.

We also have some exciting clinics ahead! In June, we'll host a three-day clinic with Bill Warren at Sperry View Farm. Applications are now open. Bill enjoys working with riders of all levels. His experience as an FEI rider and trainer, along with his judge's eye, helps bring both horse and rider to their full potential. In October, we're looking forward to a Working Equitation clinic with Stephanie Hayes. We're excited to offer this clinic as a way for our members to explore an additional facet of our sport.

A heartfelt thank you to all of our volunteers. You make these events possible and we truly appreciate the time you dedicate. We hope you're enjoying your copy of the Omnibus, whether in print or online. And of course, thank you to our sponsors. Please patronize our sponsors because their support means so much to CDA.

We're always happy to welcome new volunteers, ideas, and faces at our monthly meetings. If you'd like to get involved, feel free to reach out to me at blasivalerie@yahoo.com or Fern Feldman at fernfeldman@gmail.com.

Looking forward to seeing you and your horses out and about this season!

Warmly, **Val Blasi**
President Connecticut Dressage Association

Pony Club & Dressage: A Perfect Pair

If you've never heard of the United States Pony Club (USPC), here's your introduction: it's the largest equine education organization in North America, founded in 1954 and it's built on a simple but powerful idea. Great horsepeople know what happens in the saddle and in the barn.

USPC's curriculum covers riding skills alongside the full spectrum of horse care: health, nutrition, stable management, and safe handling. Members learn to take a horse's temperature, properly wrap legs, interpret feed tags, spot signs of illness, and yes, quiz each other on equine anatomy just for fun. It's the behind the scenes education that turns riders into a true horseperson. And despite the name, it's not just for ponies. Horses of all shapes and sizes are welcome.

Dressage Rally at Sperry View Farm

The New York Upper Connecticut (NYUC) Region hosted a Dressage Rally on Saturday, May 2nd at Sperry View Farm in Bethany, CT. The event was held in conjunction with the CDA schooling show. Clubs from across the region did compete as teams and individuals in both riding and horse management.

Here's something that might surprise you, not every team member rides. Each team has a Stable Manager. This person is an unmounted member who is every bit as vital as the riders in the ring. They coordinate the tack room, oversee horse care between tests, track equipment, and keep the whole operation running smoothly. Pony Club makes sure that role gets the credit it deserves, because anyone who competes knows, it takes a village!



Riders will complete two dressage tests throughout the morning with final scores combining riding performance and horse management. This completes the full picture of what it means to be a horseperson.

Shetucket Pony Club (Bozrah, CT) and Connecticut Valley Pony Club (East Haddam, CT) also competed at the rally. The clubs and events are supported by volunteers.

About Sleeping Giant Pony Club

<https://www.facebook.com/sleepinggiantponyclub>

Sleeping Giant is proud to be part of the NYUC Region and this year marks our 51st year as an active club. We are based at Sperry View Farm. That's 51 years of kids learning to love horses the right way, from the ground up.

The NYUC Region has clubs throughout the area with opportunities to grow in both riding and horsemanship. Find one near you at newyorkupperct.ponyclub.org.

Nina Cleveland, DC, Sleeping Giant Pony Club
Kristin Connell, Regional Supervisor

Member Spotlight

Sherri Pasquale-Cassidy



Photo: Sherri and her horse Peter

How long have you been riding; what got you into horses?

I started riding when I was 6. I was always an animal lover. We moved to Southington and there was a horse farm next door (Olsons farm) so I looked at these beautiful animals everyday. Our church at the time also had a small farm so I always got to see the ponies. I fondly remember a pony named Frankie. The church had a fair and they gave pony rides. I was hooked.

What disciplines do you like best?

Well times have changed. I loved the hunters (still find the look and movement of a hunter to be my favorite) but as I got older jumping got scarier and I had 2 horses I bought to be hunters. Both ended up having issues and I decided I wouldn't jump them so I got involved in dressage which is where I am today. I did dabble in low level eventing, which I liked, but I am way too chicken to go beyond beginner novice. Now I have found working equations and I'm liking that it's a

little bit of dressage, obstacles, and speed fun. I'm at the point in my life that showing is less important to me however I still like dressage training. To me now it's about having fun. I enjoy doing obstacles, cow sorting, trail riding, and mounted shooting. I'm up to try anything with my horse, Peter. The next horse will be a nice western pleasure aka my retirement horse (after my up and coming 3 yr old).

What do you love about dressage?

I love the training of dressage, when it is done well it's beautiful. I like how you can compete against yourself, bettering your scores. I love the freestyles, and putting a personal twist on them. I try to make them special to me.

What are your personal goals as an equestrian?

At this stage of the game my goals have changed. I would love to get to 4th level and be competitive. I would like to make it to finals with my 3 yr old at some point so I can say I got all 4 of my horses there. I would like to learn more about liberty and tricks as well as be competitive with Peter and my "retirement horse" in obstacle challenges.

What do you value about being a CDA Member?

I have been a CDA member for a very long time. I love that CDA is open to new ideas, they offer educational events, and inviting shows. It's a great group to belong to and I find CDA to be very supportive.



Photo: Sherri and her horse at a working equitation event

You mentioned working equitation, can you tell us a bit about that? How does Working Equitation connect with dressage?

Working equitation originated in Southern Europe and is quickly gaining popularity in the U.S. The sport includes 2-4 trials or classes depending on the level of competition: dressage test; ease of handling trial (obstacles); speed trial (timed obstacles); and a cattle trial (this last trial is optional and not as commonly offered). In the U.S. you can ride in English or Western tack as long as all of your tack is cohesive, making this a very welcoming sport!

The first trial in the sport is a dressage test. The tests are all ridden in a 20 x 40 meter arena. The USAWE tests can be found in the [USAWE Rule Book](#). Dressage training is the foundation of Working Equitation. In the ease of handling trial, the obstacles should be approached with skills learned through dressage training: proper geometry, clear transitions, suppleness and elasticity of the horse, and effective use of rider aids.

Tell us a bit about the upcoming Working Equitation Show you are hosting!

I am very excited to host the first ever working equitation show in CT. I started this venture as I myself wanted to compete at WE but there was only 1 show and it was still 2+ hours away. I started hosting little clinics at my house with Bree Sprink and Stephanie Hayes and I enjoyed it. So... I decided I wanted to try to get more interest in the area and have a nearby show. I wanted to try and qualify this year for regionals, however my horse is recovering and it's not in the plans for this year after all. I felt like I needed to finish what I started so I went ahead with trying to plan. The challenge is that I'm new at WE to begin with and I have never put a show on. I have people that are being supportive and helping me to achieve this goal. We are getting there. I'm hoping it is successful and people enjoy the sport and maybe we can have more in the future. My show is more of an intro level show. It will have both schooling and licensed classes which is something I have never seen done at a show before. You can come get your feet wet in the sport and have no stress or you can get a qualifying score toward regionals. The regionals are much closer to us this year as well.

My hope is that people will enjoy the day and that we eventually find venues that offer overnight stabling. The biggest hurdle I found in the planning of a WE show is that most people need stabling for the weekend. So finding a venue that can accommodate around 20 horses and have multiple rings and be affordable was difficult. I was very happy Liz at Sperry View Farm allowed us to use her beautiful facility that has much to offer the sport. So please come out and see what it's all about, you just might get hooked.

The Working Equitation Show is being held on June 7, 2026 at Sperry View Farm. Entries close today! Reach out to Hlashe8@gmail.com with any questions. There are still a few slots open: <https://bluehorseentries.com/events/sperry-view-working-equitation>

**Opportunity for a CDA Youth to
Apply for a D4K Sponsorship**

London's Youth Dressage Festival - August 7-9, 2026 - Horse Park of New Jersey, Allentown, NJ

For riders of all levels (from Leadline to FEI U25, Para, and Western), ages 4 through 25, plus alumni, also featuring a new Horseless Division for competitors without a horse.

We'd like to share an upcoming opportunity connected to D4K. As many of you know, CDA already supports this organization through our donations, so this feels like a natural extension of that relationship.

CDA will sponsor a limited number of CDA members who may be interested in participating. If there are families or youth who would like to be involved, we'd love to hear from you. Please let us know if your child might be interested in being part of a CDA-sponsored group.

More details will be shared soon. Thank you for helping us continue to support great organizations like D4K and for encouraging opportunities for our youth to get involved. Learn more at dressage4kids.org

2026 CDA Clinics

Bill Warren (S) Clinic - June 20-22 2026
Sperry View Farm, Bethany, CT



[Photo Credit: Susan Stickley]

Bill is an FEI 4* and USEF "S" dressage judge based in Wellington, Florida during the winter and in New England for the summer months along with Bill McMullin (USEF "S" judge and USDF FEI instructor/trainer faculty) making up the team of Warren McMullin Dressage.

He not only judges in the US, but also internationally as well as being involved in conducting judges

education programs in the US, including forums and mentoring apprentice groups for judges, promotions.

Additionally, he maintains an active clinic and teaching schedule where he enjoys working with riders of all levels. His unique teaching skill combined with his experience as an FEI ride rider and trainer, along with his judges eyes, brings horse and riders to their fullest potential.

[Clinic Registration](#) | [Sperry View Farm Release](#) | [Photo Release](#) | [CDA Release](#)

Stephanie Hayes Working Equitation Clinic

October 17, 2026

Connecticut Equestrian Center, Coventry CT

Stephanie Hayes from Johnson, Vermont, has been a professional in the horse industry for 35 years and involved in Working Equitation since 2017. She is a USAWE L judge, Recognized Professional Instructor, and serves on the Professional Development Committee. She is the co-founder of New England Working Equitation, a USAWE affiliate organization.

Stephanie has competed successfully on self trained horses earning numerous National Leaderboard and Regional Championships in levels 1 through 7. She was awarded the Platinum Lifetime Achievement award on her Lusitano DEM Rayo in 2025. Stephanie is currently ranked #70 in WAVE international rankings and has qualified for selection for the USAWE team at the 2026 World Championships.

Registration coming soon!

Ride-Critique-Ride Clinic Wrapup with Bobbi Carleton (R) **Weekend of April 17-18**

The clinic was full with 10 rides each day! A huge thank you to Bobbi Carleton for giving the riders such great feedback.

Below is a photo of Lily Koorejian on Charm V, owned by Liz Doering, receiving a critique and valuable tips to carry into the show ring.



The Dressage Simulator clinic with Kendra Clarke was on March 14, 2026 - Recap from a young rider!

My name is Sean Brassington, and I am a senior at Madison High School. I have always dreamed of riding in Montana, and so I started taking riding lessons in dressage with Patricia Norcia. She invited me to the Dressage Simulator clinic with Kendra Clarke, so I took her up on it to improve my seat.

Riding the dressage simulator drastically improved my riding! Since I had only been on a horse 3 times prior to the event, I was not used to the feeling of the trot, and did not know what the canter was supposed to feel like. The simulator taught me the necessary core engagements and body positioning to ride adequately with the realistic movement of the walk, trot, canter, and Kendra even set up a jump course for me to jump!

When I returned to my lesson on a "real" horse, I was so much better. I could post the trot in the correct rhythm and did not bounce on the poor horse's back. Kendra also gave me and the other young rider a gift of balancing pads to work with at home, to help me find my center.

It was a great experience and I can't wait to do it again!



T.I.P. PROGRAM

The CDA is thrilled to participate in The Jockey Club Thoroughbred Incentive Program referred to as T.I.P.



A way to recognize previous race horses at their new job!

A TB horse needs to be registered with the Jockey Club in order for the owner to obtain a TIP number. A TIP number is needed to be eligible for TIP awards at a show.

Provide T.I.P. Numbers with your entries. For more information and to see if your Thoroughbred is eligible, visit <https://tjctip.com/default>. Good luck to the Thoroughbreds and riders!

CDA Youth Connect News and Updates from Our Junior Members

Send us your stories and experiences.

General Announcements

Generous Donation to Support CDA Youth Programs

The CDA is pleased to announce receiving a generous \$2,000 donation in support of the youth programs. The CDA Board looks forward to working together to thoughtfully allocate these funds in ways that will have the greatest impact.

Investing in youth development is vital to the future of dressage, and this contribution provides a meaningful opportunity to strengthen and expand those efforts.

We extend our sincere thanks to our anonymous donor for their generosity and commitment to CDA.

Volunteer Information -

If you are interested in volunteering with us: Email Carol Mohyde carolmohyde@gmail.com or Amy Ravitz amy.ravitz@yahoo.com

Opportunity to 'Shadow' a Volunteer

– Ask Carol or Amy

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

Quote for the Show Season

"I think that everyone's different, but when I get nervous, one thing I try to remind myself is that being nervous is a good thing. It means that you've made it somewhere and that something's important to you. You're not going to get nervous for some event that doesn't matter to you. It's a reflection both of how far you've come and how badly you want it, so treat those as good things, not as bad things. That shift in mindset can be quite helpful."

Katie Dinan

Courtesy of Practical Horseman; April, 21, 2026

USDF Region 8 News

A Message from our Regional Director

April 2026 - Greetings Region 8!

I have to start with a very embarrassing correction. It came to my attention that I mis-named the USDF president – his true name is *Kevin* Reinig. I have no explanation for my error except a major senior moment. Apologies!!

Last month I started on a primer of USDF governance and this month we will continue with the Activities Council chaired by Sue Mandas. The Council is composed of the following committees.

Adult Programs Committee

To encourage, increase and enrich adult participation in dressage by providing educational opportunities and recognition of achievement.

Susan Rizcalla Hamwey is the Region 8 member.

National Youth Programs Committee

To promote dressage to young equestrians while providing for the future of the sport.

The Region 8 member is Lendon Gray.

FEI Youth Committee

To develop educational opportunities and international competition experiences for riders, ages 12-21, who ride at the FEI sanctioned Pony, Children, Junior and Young Rider levels.

The Region 8 representative is Bobbi Carleton.

Regional Championships Committee

To promote and recognize the pursuit of excellence by providing a showcase competition that meets established quality standards for riders within each USDF region.

Anita Jaffe is our representative.

Sport Horse Committee

To foster and advance the breeding and development of the highest quality dressage sport horses and to promote a strong foundation for the dressage sport horse development pipeline in the United States.

Region 8 does not have representation, so please let me know if you would be interested in joining this committee.

Awards Committee

To encourage participation in dressage by recognizing excellence and rewarding progressive achievement.

Christine Engel is the committee member.

FEI North American Youth Championships

Applications have opened for the FEI North American Youth Championships and a number of our youth have already signed up.

The FEI North American Youth Dressage Championships presented by USDF, held during the FEI North American Youth Championships (NAYC) is the premier equestrian competition in North America for children (ages 12-14), juniors (ages 14-18), young

riders (ages 16-21), and U25 (ages 16-25). During the NAYC, young equestrians vie for team and individual FEI medals in the Olympic equestrian disciplines of dressage and show jumping.

The competition is run under FEI (Federation Equestre Internationale), the international governing body of equestrian sport, and is the only FEI championship held annually on this continent. For more information on the application process, go to <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/najyrc/index.asp>

Upcoming events:

The full schedule of recognized shows can be found at <https://www.usdf.org/calendar/competitions.asp>. You will need to toggle to Region 8.

All the best, Helen | vandeh13@gmail.com

CDA Membership for 2026!

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

CDA Scholarships

CDA offers one or more scholarships per year, per category for CDA members. Check out the details for 2026 on the [CDA Scholarship Webpage](#).

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 recognizes the best performances by our special senior horses. The Vista Vintage Award Program focuses on the success of 'senior' horses (18 or older). It consists of a \$150 cash prize and an award.

For more information contact Kari Bradshaw at rkhotoshoe3@gmail.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 '80s and '90s. They were always found at the warm-up 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.

CDA Rider Achievement Awards

An 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.

Follow CDA on Facebook CDA Facebook Page



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

Send to Jen Corti at jencorti@gmail.com

2026 Calendar of Events

Next CDA Board Meeting
Monday June 1, 2026, 6:00 pm at Fern's
Zoom Meeting will start at 6:30 pm
Contact Fern Feldman: fernfeldman@gmail.com

*Please check the Website regularly for the status of events [Ctdressage.org](http://ctdressage.org) and eligibility criteria.

CDA sponsored Shows

CDA @ Virtual Show #1

[Click here for results](#)

CDA @ Virtual Show #2

[Click here for results](#)

CDA @ Virtual Show #3

Opening date May 1, 2026

Closing date May 24, 2026

Video due: June 14, 2026

Judging and results by June 25, 2026

[Click here for prizelist](#)

CDA @ Sperry View Farm - May 2, 2026

Judge: Matthew Beasley "L" Graduate with Distinction

CDA @ Weatogue Stables - June 20, 2026

Please refer to Weatogue Stable prize list for details

<https://www.weatoguestables.com/services>

Judge: Stephanie Mason "r"

CDA @ R Folly Farm - August 9, 2026

Please refer to Abacus Events prize list in CDA omnibus for more details

<https://www.rfollyfarm.com/events.html>

Judge: Karry Brothers "L" Graduate with Distinction

CDA @ Sperry View Farm - September 6, 2026

(opening date: 8/16/26 – closing date: 8/29/26)

Judge: Steve Ruggiero "r"

CDA @ BelleFree Farm - October 3, 2026

(opening date: 9/12/26 – closing date: 9/26/26)

Judge: Augusta Van Tongeren "L Graduate"