

SMDA Newsletter



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SMDA News and Updates

Spring Has Finally Arrived!

SMDA Website: Have you been to SMDA's website lately? www.mainedressage.com. It's been a lot of work, but the website has had a full make-over and is now fully updated with current show listings, information about clinics, show entry and other forms, and past newsletters. We hope the website will provide a current and useful source of information for our members. We're grateful to Tebo Marketing + Design for helping us maintain the site. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the website, please contact Elena Raymond at elena_raymond@yahoo.com or Tania Jones at tjones86@me.com.

2015 SMDA Shows: We're pleased to be hosting four SMDA shows this season at the Hollis Equestrian Park. We will be holding three regular Schooling Shows on May 17, August 2, and September 13. On July 12 we will hold our first-ever USDF/USEF Recognized Show, with Judge Susan Roberto (S). This is a great opportunity to try out a higher-level show in a familiar environment, and where you can earn a score towards a USDF Medal or qualify for Regional Championships. A full listing of the 2015 shows, including the regular SMDA shows plus our 13 SMDA-affiliated shows can be found in Equine Edition – Directory of Dressage Shows in Maine.

July 12 SMDA USDF/USEF Recognized Show: If you've never ridden in a recognized show before, you'll immediately notice that the entry form is different (the entry form is posted on our website). If you need help with your show entry (including information on what memberships you must have for you, your horse, and the horse's owner), please refer to the February newsletter where we provided detailed information. Additionally, we appreciate that the following individuals have volunteered to serve as mentors who will be available to answer questions and/or review your draft entry form to help ensure everything is accurate:

- Hannah Keohane at hkeohane2008@gmail.com
- Amanda Gervais at durginfarm@hotmail.com
- Laura Noyes at lndressage@gmail.com
- Jane Tremlett at calamity101@roadrunner.com

Upcoming Clinics and Events

May 3rd: SPHO Fun Day – a good opportunity to bring your horse over to HEP and practice your tests and generally experience the show environment without pressure.

May 30-31: Pineland Equestrian Center – Judging Musical Freestyles

- *Two days of Musical Freestyles featuring Terry Ciotti Gallo of Klassic Kur and FEI 4* Judge Lois Yukins*
- *Auditors Welcome*
- *See Pineland's website for details*

June 6-7: Riding to Music Clinic

- *See SMDA Website or article on page 4 of this Newsletter for details*

June 27-28: George Williams Clinic

Laura Noyes Dressage is hosting a George Williams clinic June 27-28 at Durgin Farm - 52 Whites Bridge Road, Standish, ME.

- *Auditors are welcome (\$20 at the door), and SMDA members will receive a \$5 discount. For more information, please contact Laura at LNDressage@gmail.com.*

News and Updates Continued

Show Entry Reminder: For all SMDA shows, please remember that your paperwork must be complete before your entry form can be processed. This includes:

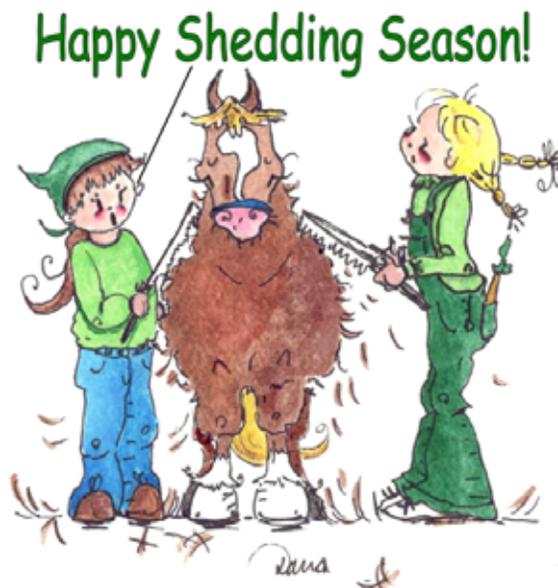
- Copy of current negative Coggins: within 12 months of the show date for in-state horses, and within 6 months for out-of-state horses. Don't forget to schedule your spring vet appointment and get your Coggins updated!
- Complete entry form with all signatures: To ensure the release of liability is valid, we MUST have all signatures completed on the entry form for the rider, horse's owner, and parent or guardian for riders under 18. Even if you own the horse you are riding please sign in both places!

Test of Choice: You'll notice a change in SMDA's Schooling Show Entry Form this year. We've added a category (Class 7) called Test of Choice. Test of Choice is literally that – riders can sign-up for a specific test they are interested in that's not one of the regular USDF Intro, USEF Training – Fourth Level or FEI tests. For example, Western Dressage is becoming more popular so someone interested in showing a Western Dressage test would sign up for Class 7. If you want to take advantage of SMDA's Test of Choice, please clearly write on your entry form what test you will be doing, and provide a copy of the test for the Show Secretary. If you have any questions, please contact the Show Secretary.

Quick Reminder – Keep Copies of Your Tests! SMDA keeps track of scores from our regular schooling shows. However, if you are submitting scores from an SMDA-affiliated show for Year-end Awards or to apply for one of SMDA's Rider Medals you need to submit a photocopy of your test along with the required Rider Report Form or Rider Medals Award Form.

Food for Thought: A couple of years ago we discontinued selling food at our dressage shows. Dressage riders tend to come and go throughout the day, and the various food vendors and organizations were not selling enough food to justify the effort. However this year we have some good news:

- Gorham Equestrian Club – a group of young riders from Gorham have formed an Equestrian Club, and they plan to sell food (primarily bake sale items) at our schooling shows to try to raise money for their club. Everyone loves baked goods – so we are excited this group will be at our shows and hope their efforts are successful.
- July 12 Recognized Show – We will have a food booth of some kind at the recognized show. The details have not yet been worked out, so if you know of someone who has a food truck or is interested in selling food at the show please contact the Show Manager, Robyn Cuffey (robyn@sacoriver.net).



Riding to Music

Matching your horse's gaits to appropriate music is the goal of the Ride to Music clinic to be held on June 6-7 at Evergreen Farm in Pownal, ME. Our clinician, Michael Matson of Equimusic, has a passion for musical freestyle and has found his niche in finding the right music for different types of horses. Mike fell in love with dressage freestyle in the mid-1990's after seeing a video of Anky von Grunsven riding Bonfire and watching Klaus Balkenhol riding Goldstern performing an amazing freestyle at the 1994 WEG. Mike soon discovered that one of the hardest parts of designing a freestyle was finding the right music for the horse. Starting in 2000 he began the process of creating a database of music, and www.equimusic.com was born.

A member of USDF's Freestyle Committee, he has worked to promote freestyle participation and recognition of freestyle performance. His most significant contribution to the committee was the initiation of the USDF Freestyle Rider Awards, which recognize achievement in freestyle performance.

At the clinic, Mike will work with the riders to evaluate the horse's gaits and calculate the beats per minute at the walk, trot, and canter. Once the beats per minute have been calculated, several pieces of music are selected from the Equimusic database of over 1500 songs that represent all types of genres. It's an amazing process, and as Mike notes, "You will know when the music 'fits' your horse because both of you will feel it and people watching will say, 'You're dancing!'"

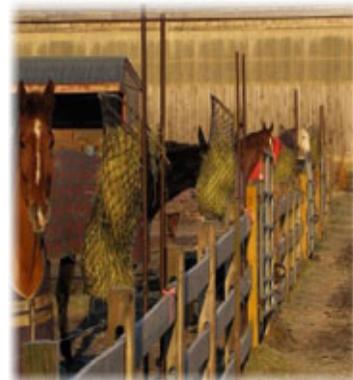
Finding the right music can be a lot of fun, especially with such a wide range to choose from, whether it's rock 'n roll, Big Band, or a sultry Latin beat. The clinic is an interactive session with lots of involvement for the auditors as well. At the end of the session, each rider will receive a personalized CD of music that has been specially selected for their horse.

This is a special clinic event that is jointly sponsored by SMDA and CMDA, and graciously hosted by Amy Green at her farm in Pownal. The fee is \$85 per ride for SMDA and CMDA members, \$100 for non-members. Auditors are welcome at \$10 for the day. More information and rider entry forms can be found on SMDA's website.



In The Community: Vienna Farm Hay Feeders

Looking for a new hay-feeding system for your horses? Vienna Farm Hay Feeders are locally crafted hay feeders for both inside stalls and run-in sheds, as well as outside in paddocks to help simplify your feeding routines for your beloved horses! "Solely the idea and invention of Tanya Rennie," states Cheryl Roy-Stuteville, who worked closely with Tanya of Vienna Farm to find the most functional design. The project began after some research online for easier feeding routines. Cheryl then involved her husband in the project to weld the feeder frames. "It is quite an easy process really!...but there were some prototypes first" Cheryl recounts. Finally, after Cheryl's husband created prototypes for the feeders, the best design was the angled top. This angled top allows the person loading the feeder with hay a closer reach, as well as preventing the horse from eating out of the top of the feeder! "You can just toss the hay from the other side of the fence...saving time for you, while making the hay last longer for the horses to munch on!" The feeders save on having to clean, flip over, or "chase down" other hay feeders. No more perfectly good hay wasted in stalls or in the mud either! The safe, effective design really makes feeding your horses efficient and cost effective! Please contact Cheryl (143 Jo Joy Rd Limington, ME 04049 [207-281-3265](tel:207-281-3265) call or text) if you are interested or have any questions on pricing, trials, and return policies. All proceeds will go directly to filling her hay nets at home!



Trainer Tip – Laura Noyes

The connection to the outside rein is essential for supporting correct positioning to the inside, regulating the horse's rhythm via half-halts, and maintaining self-carriage. The horse must be willing to step slightly away from the rider's inside leg so that he fills out the outside rein. If the rider can give on the inside rein and maintain the same carriage, rhythm, and way of going, the connection to the outside rein is honest. Only when a horse is through on the outside rein can he truly be surrounded by the rider's aids.



A very simple exercise to establish a good inside leg to outside rein connection begins on the curved line of a circle. First, establish about a 15-meter circle so that at no point do you touch the track. In the walk, slightly open your inside rein and ask your horse to step away from your inside leg, into a soft, steady outside rein for a total of 3 strides. If you are having difficulty keeping your outside hand steady, establish a contact point with your hand and your horse's neck. Do not press your hand into the neck but only use the contact as a reference point. As your horse moves away from your inside leg, it is imperative in that moment to soften the connection on the inside rein. You should think from the first to the second to the third stride, the horse steps away from the inside leg "some, more, most". The outside rein keeps the horse's shoulders from falling out, but instead, it is there to regulate the horse's body moving sideways parallel to the track.

The same exercise can be repeated in the trot and canter with the same concept. The horse must be willing to yield to the inside leg and rein in order to fill out the outside rein. The horse also must be willing to stay connected, only with slight reminders or repeating of the aids. In other words, the rider should not have constant pressure with the inside leg



Photo Credit: Lauren Barrett

to maintain the full feeling in the outside rein. If this is the case, the horse does not truly yield. It is very difficult for a horse to build a correct topline and an honest understanding of self-carriage if he is tight and bracing against the rider's aids. He must learn to yield to the inside in soft way in order to be through to the outside aids, so that he may be surrounded.

Bio-

Laura Noyes is a USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medalist. She currently runs her training business, Laura Noyes Dressage, out of Durgin Farm in Standish, ME.

Pyramid of Training





SMDA Grant Scholarship 2015

SMDA is pleased to announce the results of the 2015 Grant Program. This program supports the education and advancement in the sport of dressage in Maine through grants up to \$1000 to qualified individuals and teams. Alexa (Ali) Perkins was the first to receive that newly formed State of Maine Dressage Association award this year for her continuing education with Lendon Gray's Winter Intensive Training (WIT) program in Wellington, Florida. Ali spent 3 months, with her horse Piper furthering her training taking lessons with Lendon Gray and Stephanie Beamer. In the WIT program a typical day includes farm chores, taking care of the horses, daily fitness, riding lessons, lectures, and field trips to farms and shows. Ali also had the opportunities to ride at Stillpoint Farm, one of our countries' best dressage farms, where many top trainers congregate for the winter. There she rode two of Tuny Page's horses and trained with her. Another exciting opportunity was to groom for FEI judge and competitor, Cesar Lopardo-Grana, who is from Argentina and was in Wellington for the season to compete in the Global Dressage Festival to qualify for the Pan American Games. Grooming for Cesar also allowed her to experience the CDI competitions and observe top riders from around the world. Her experience in Wellington this winter gave her "confidence and inspiration in my riding". It also allowed her to meet so many incredible people in the program and make lifelong friends. This amazing experience made her realize what she wanted in my riding, and inspired her to "set higher goals and standards for myself in the barn, arena, and show ring." If you are interested in learning more about the program and the day to day experiences, please enjoy Ali's daily blog that she kept during the program: <http://farmingtontowellington.blogspot.com>

SMDA awards these grants on an annual basis and encourages all members to participate in this amazing program. Please go to our website and look under "Resources" for more information on how to apply for a Grant.

Once again, Congratulations, Ali, well done and proceed to X!



Volunteer Notes: What does a Ring Steward Do?

Serving as Ring Steward is one of the best volunteer jobs at an SMDA show, as this is where all the action is! The Ring Steward keeps track of the show program, including who is in the ring, who is next (rider on-deck), and who is second in line to go (rider in-the-hole). If you've ever ridden in a dressage show and felt stressed out about getting into the ring on time, the Ring Steward is your friend! The Ring Steward notifies you when you are on deck, and helps to make sure you get into the ring before the bell is rung. We try to keep SMDA shows running on time, so it's important to move each rider into the ring as soon as the last rider has her final salute and is preparing to exit. However, even the smoothest running shows will have challenges staying on time, dealing with rider scratches and no-shows, and other possible glitches. Good communication between the Ring Steward and the Show Announcer is critical, and we're usually able to keep things humming along.



The Ring Steward also helps monitor the warm-up arena to make sure the Rules of the Road are observed. We have a small poster with common courtesy rules to make sure the warm-up ring remains a safe and friendly place for all levels of riders. The Ring Steward keeps an eye on things and works with the Show Manager to assist people and help keep things civilized during busy times.

Although there's some work involved, the Ring Steward job is really great because you get to watch all of the tests. Although the Ring Steward needs to monitor the warm-up ring and keep track of the riders entering the ring, there's usually time to watch the tests - and that's the best part about volunteering at an SMDA show! You get a great ringside view and opportunity to cheer people on. It's fun to watch the nervous faces turn into smiles as they exit the arena after a successful test!

Ring Steward Responsibilities:

- Keep track of ride times and updates to the show program (scratches, etc.)
- Notify riders in the warm-up ring when they are on-deck and in-the-hole
- Assist riders entering and exiting the ring (operating the gate)
- Monitor the warm-up ring and notify the Show Manager of any issues

SMDA Member Profile: Brandi Raymond

SMDA member Brandi Raymond is a professional trainer and instructor currently showing at the local level. While she has shown regionally in the past, her current horse is young and is just ready to enter the show ring. Christiano (barn name DC), a six-year-old RSPI gelding, was saddle broke in April of 2013 and Brandi plans to show him at Training Level this summer. Brandi says "he's a talented, level-headed horse who is very willing to learn and work," and she looks forward to moving-up the levels with him.

In 2014, Brandi had the privilege of riding and showing Santorino, a horse owned by Robyn Cuffey. Brandi is grateful for this opportunity, as it was a terrific learning experience with a young talented horse.

In fact, she was the 2014 winner of the Tarbaby award – an award given to the highest scoring horse/rider combination at First Level. This perpetual trophy was sponsored by the late Jane Petrin in memory of her First Level mount.

Brandi first got involved with horses thanks to her godmother, and was gifted a pony at age eight. Like most of us, she has always loved horses, and hopes to train her young horse up to Grand Prix. Brandi believes "there is no greater moment than seeing a horse and rider have a break-through in their training and learning."



Favorite piece of training advice:

Have a plan and set goals for your riding. Know that nothing happens overnight and everything takes time and patience.

SMDA By-Laws

SMDA By-Laws: The new State of Maine Dressage Association has been granted 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status by the IRS. As part of this effort, a new set of By-Laws has been prepared for the club. We've made a few changes to the By-Laws both to better reflect today's technology and address the needs and interests of our members:

- 1) Board Meetings: The new By-Laws require us to hold a minimum of four meetings each year, one of which is the Annual Meeting held during the Awards Banquet. All Board Meetings are open for attendance by any SMDA member. Board Meetings will be announced in advance on SMDA's Facebook page. If you would like to be notified in advance of these meetings, please contact any of SMDA's Board members (contact information is on our website).
- 2) Elections: SMDA's Board of Directors serve two-year terms. Under the old club, elections were held by mailing ballots to members (approximately 125 individuals). Typically, less than ten people voted – most likely because everyone on the ballot gets elected! SMDA's Board members are what keeps this organization going; it takes a lot of work to run our shows and other activities and we struggle to find people willing to invest this effort for the two-year term. To save ourselves the expense of mailing ballots, the election will be announced in the newsletter, and candidate biographies will be posted on the website. This information will be made available in the fall, and the official election will be done at the Annual Meeting in January. (And P.S., if anyone is interested in participating as a Board member, please let us know, we're always happy to have new faces join the team!)

President's Corner

It's been a long, cold winter and it's hard to believe that Spring is here and show season is just around the corner. We're excited about the upcoming season, especially the Recognized Show on July 12. Please consider volunteering a morning or afternoon at one of our shows – it takes a lot of hands to make these shows successful, and it's actually a lot of fun to come and help out and watch all the riders.

We're very pleased to have the opportunity to work with Central Maine Dressage Association on the Musical Freestyle Clinic (June 6-7 at Evergreen Farm in Pownal, ME). CMDA hosted this clinician, Mike Matson from Equimusic, a few years ago and we hear it was a very successful and fun clinic. Last year we enjoyed the Smith twins' Pas de Deux ride – how much fun would it be to have more Musical Freestyle rides at our shows! We hope SMDA riders will take advantage of this opportunity to have a customized CD prepared with music that fits their horse's gaits. It's also a great auditing opportunity, and a way to learn more about creating a freestyle test and selecting music. It's nice to work on a cooperative effort with our friends from Central Maine, and we hope the clinic will be a big success.

As always, we welcome your input and feedback about SMDA opportunities and events. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns please feel free to contact me or any of the other SMDA Board of Directors.

Best regards,

Susan Pendleton



The SMDA newsletter committee welcomes your input! Please share newsworthy events, including new horses, achievements, and life passages. We'd love to hear from you!

Please contact:

Tania Jones tjones86@me.com

www.mainedressage.com

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