



Maine Dressage Society



Fall Newsletter

Issue #74

Fall 2012

From the president.....

Inside this issue: Happy Fall MDS members!

- Warm days and cool nights with a hint of cooler things to come on the breeze makes perfect days for riding! Hopefully you are all getting to enjoy it even though school has started back up and it's a busy time of year!
- CMDA News* 2
- EMDA News* 3-4 The arrival of fall is your reminder that the new membership year is upon us. Please take time NOW to fill out 2013 membership forms so you don't forget and get late fees later on in the year! Forms can be found in this newsletter and online. Please read them carefully and fill them out completely.
- NMDA News* 5
- While show season feels like it's winding down, there are still many exciting clinics and shows still coming up in 2012! Please check out the calendar on our website- www.mainedressagesociety.org to stay up to date on fun things to do in the beautiful Maine fall weather!
- SMNDA News* 6-7
- WMDEA NEWS* 8 I just got back from Region 8 Dressage Championships in New York. We had great weather and got to watch the best of Region 8 (Maine, Mass, NH, VT, Conn., NY, Rhode Island) compete! It was so nice to see such a large contingent of Maine horse and riders! Many ended up placing in the top ranks in their respective classes! Congratulations to all on a great culmination of their show seasons! Thanks for doing Maine proud!
- Reminders* 9
- Article: "To Show or Not to Show"* 10-12
- Miscellaneous* 13 I wanted to remind everyone that MDS is a volunteer board. If you have any interest in being a part of the growth of dressage in Maine, please feel free to contact me or just show up at one of our meetings! Everyone is welcome! It's not a huge commitment and it means a lot to dressage in Maine and MDS! The next MDS board meeting is September 25, 2012 at 6:30 at the Maine Farm Bureau in Augusta. I hope some new faces can join us!

Don't forget to go apple picking before the season is over! In addition to the beauties found on the trees for eating and cooking, many orchards have discounted prices for bags of "drops" that may be a little bruised here and there but are PERFECT for our spoiled horses! After all- an apple (or three my horse seems to think) a day keeps the vet away!

Bryn Walsh
MDS President



Central Maine Dressage Association

Fall is in the air, and Central Maine Dressage is still riding strong. With the Jan Ebling clinic coming right up and the “Kur for a Cure” right behind it. We have had a busy year.

We want to thank everyone who helped make “Carol’s Heart” Clinic & show a huge success. Thank you to all the instructors for giving of their time & talents. To all the riders for coming out and riding with a new instructor and we hope you gained some new skills. A BIG THANK YOU to Elizabeth Owens, for putting the paper work together and hosting this event at Esprit. It was such a fun atmosphere that day. And our best wishes to Carol, our club would not be the same without you!!

One of our most fun events of the year has been the Michael Matson ride to music clinic, held at Amy Greens barn in Pownal. We had 7 riders who now have music to dance with their horses. It was great to see smiles come across the faces of the horses as well as the riders when the music was right on. Riding became light and easy and the horses seemed to have as much fun as the riders did. The audience was a big help for the riders to pick out what music worked and when the horse came to life, their truly danced together.

With two shows behind us, and one more to go, which is our benefit for the Patrick Dempsey Foundation, if you want to see some beautiful freestyles this is the show to come to. We will be at Kennebec Morgan Farm in Woolwich on Oct 6th with a rain date of Oct 7th. If you want to make a donation to this show to benefit cancer patients and their families you can log onto the Dempsey Center web site info@dempseychallenge.org or send your donation to Suzanne Crowell at 118 Fickett Rd Pownal ME 04069. The day starts with our regular schooling show being judged by Leslie de Grandmaison, with the freestyles starting at 12:30. We hope to see you there.

Remember to send in your membership form ASAP. This helps our secretary stay on top of the membership and for you to get your Omnibus when it comes from the printers.

Happy fall riding and we hope to see you at the year- end banquet.

Cheryl Peaslee
President CMDA

EMDA News

EMDA Board Members

President: Becky Reed 478-2097 b_girl52@hotmail.com

Vice Pres: Bryn Walsh 659-3129 BRedman23@hotmail.com

Secretary: Cassie Elia 262-0133 ridinraffles@yahoo.com

Treasurer Kitty Mitchell 525-4435 kittym7@myfairpoint.net



Greetings to all from Eastern Maine Dressage Association!! Hopefully everyone has had a wonderful summer and show season!

We have had two successful shows so far for EMDA. Our August 5th show was held at Puckerbrush Farm with Bryn Walsh as a judge. Special congratulations to Bryn for becoming a USDF 'L' graduate with distinction!! The EMDA board opted to make the August 5th show a free show to our membership as a way to say "thanks" for being a part of EMDA. Results for the August 5th show are following.

A huge thank you goes out to Kris Nicola and Stepping Stone Farm for hosting a benefit show for EMDA on Sept. 16th. There were a good number of rides and beautiful weather.

Interested in becoming more active in EMDA? We are looking for 'fresh ideas' to help implement clinics and other educational programs, please contact Rebecca Reed, your EMDA president about how you may be able to help.

Hope everyone has a great Fall, get out and enjoy the crisp weather and beautiful colors to come!

- Rebecca

**EMDA August Dressage Schooling Show – Free for EMDA members
August 5, 2012 at Puckerbrush Farm
Judge at C: Bryn Walsh (L)**

USEF Training Level Test 2

Olivia Hecker	Talia	67.857%
Elinor Hunt	Ducati	65.000%
Liz Robbins	Another Bold Cat	64.643%

Training Level Test 1-2 Re-ride

1 Liz Robbins	Another Bold Cat	66.429%
2 Elinor Hunt	Ducati	58.393%

USEF Training Level Test 3

Olivia Hecker	Talia	63.000%
Elizabeth Vigue	Daddy's Dollar	61.200%
Amy Conforti	Just Say Yes	59.600%

Training Level Test 3 Re-ride

1 Olivia Hecker	Talia	61.400%
2 Elizabeth Vigue	Daddy's Dollar	61.400%

USEF First Level Test 1-2

1 Cassie Elia	Rhode Island Red	67.931%
2 Jessie Darkis	Riley	66.081%
3 Jessie Darkis	Riley	65.172%
4 Amanda Snow	Super Star Version	60.517%
5 Amanda Snow	Super Star Version	57.568%
6 Kathleen Monahan	Diamonds are Forever	54.189%

USEF First Level Test 3

1 Kathleen Monahan	Diamonds are Forever	52.419%
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USEF First Level Re-ride

1 Cassie Elia	Rhode Island Red	68.276%
2 Amanda Snow	Super Star Version	56.897%
3 Kathleen Monahan	Diamonds are Forever	54.355%

Northern Maine Dressage Association**NMDA NEWS**

President: Michelle Zambrano 564-8992
Vice-President: Lydia Rose 564-3499
Secretary: Stacia Russell 564-3080
Treasurer: Laurie Harvey 564-3598
Show Chair: Alison LaCourse 343-2270



Fabulous Fall

It is my favorite time of year. The air is crisp, the foliage beautiful, the horses frisky and there are NO BUGS! With show season winding down, get out and play with your horses. Take a leisurely trail ride in the forest and just have fun. We all need a break from the ring sometimes and get back to riding basics—horse & rider having fun, communicating and simply enjoying time together.

I hope everyone had a successful show season & we will see you at all the year end award events.

Happy riding!

Don't forget to join NMDA for the 2013 show season, get those membership forms in, membership forms found at www.mainedressagesociety.org We have great judges, nice show grounds and the friendliest horse people around.

SMDA

President Robyn Cuffey 929-6562 robyn@sacoriver.net

V. president Wendy Brunson 839-2114 wnbrunson@aol.com

Secretary Elena Raymond elena_raymond@yahoo.com

Treasurer Beverly Dudley 642-3696 drkside@fairpoint.net



News from Southern Maine Dressage Association September 201

2013 SMDA Schooling Shows

We are planning to again hold four schooling shows at the Hollis Equestrian Park in 2013. When we confirm dates, we will post them on our website.

PLEASE help our volunteers who work so hard as Show Secretaries and Show Managers. Plan ahead so that you have your paperwork in order for the upcoming season - this means scheduling vet calls for your horse's Coggins, and getting your SMDA renewal form in on time. Remember, we no longer require proof of rabies vaccination; just proof of negative Coggins (within one year of the show date for in-state horses, and within six months of the show date for out-of-state horses).

And as always, we are looking for volunteers to help with our shows. If you are willing to help SMDA and serve as a Show Secretary, Show Manager, Scribe, Runner, Ring Steward, or Announcer - please contact any one of our Board members.

We really need your help!

SMDA's 25th Anniversary

2012 is SMDA's 25th Anniversary! SMDA was established in 1987 by a group of riders who wanted to form a club that focused on dressage training and showing.

We are having a special celebration on September 15 to recognize this milestone. We hope you are joining us at the Hollis Equestrian Park for this event!

From 2:00-6:00pm we will have activities including a tack swap, demo rides, a retirement ride for a special SMDA horse, a graduation ceremony for SMDA's new L Program graduates, and a lobster bake. See you there!

Continued next page

SMDA Grants

SMDA's 2012 grant recipient was Jane Tremlett, and she used the money to fund her participation in the USDF L Program - which we are proud to announce she passed with flying colors!

Opening day for 2013's grant submissions is March 15. The SMDA dressage grant is designed to advance the sport of dressage in Southern Maine. This includes, but is not limited to, encouraging individual members to reach a higher performance goal, improving the availability or quality of facilities for club use, or working toward improving the lives of people or horses involved in the sport of dressage. For a complete list of rules, guidelines, and the application, please see the Grants screen on our website.

Warm-up Ring Etiquette

The safety of riders and horses is of the utmost importance, and SMDA established some rules and guidelines to address your concerns. By adhering to a few rules and ring etiquette, we can make sure everyone has a positive experience, has adequate time to warm-up their horse, and above all stays safe!

The warm-up ring rules touch upon the following: the number of riders allowed in the warm-up ring, lunging your horse, and observing general ring etiquette.

For a complete list of guidelines, please see the Forms screen on our website.

www.southernmainedressage.com

WMDEA NEWS

OFFICERS:

President Pat Martin 890-3112

Vice President

Secretary Sandy Snow 674-3629

Treasurer/Membership Beth Brainerd 743-6546

MDS Board of Directors

Pat Martin, Beth Brainerd ,Cassie Martin, Stephanie Hatcher, Kate Holden, Tina Brooks

Beth would like to remind everyone to get their memberships in for the 2013 Show season. Membership forms can be found on the Maine Dressage Society web page at:

www.mainedressagesociety.com



Reminders

All Forms can be found on the Maine Dressage Society Web page.....

www.mainedressagesociety.org

Remember to get your membership forms in for the 2013 show season**



We are looking for a new Public Relations person

for MDS

FMI contact Bryn Walsh at:

beredman23@hotmail.com

Want to volunteer! Please contact any Board member and we would be glad to give you a job!

Have you mailed in your membership form to your club treasurer?

Have you sent in your Horse registration to Beth Brainerd?

To Show or Not to Show...

At first glance, this seems like a simple question. These days, it is not so simple.

Showing CAN be an excellent experience for both horse and rider. Or it can be a disaster.

In today's horrible economy a local schooling show can be a less expensive option than a private lesson. Many have to travel quite a distance for lessons, and with gas hovering around the \$4 mark, nearby is good.

Most schooling shows have remained affordable, while recognized show fees have continued to soar far beyond reasonable. It only makes sense to show often locally before spending the big bucks on a rated show.

Showing and getting ready to show make you ride differently. When we school a green horse, or bring a horse up to a new, higher level, we ride for optimal response. Often, accuracy is scarified in the beginning toward this goal. Funny that... a year or two later, we find it taking two or three times around a circle before we are 'ready' to give that canter aid...

So test riding presents us with the challenge of getting the transitions exactly where they need to be. It's a different mindset, a different timing. At times, this is exactly what the doctor ordered!

It makes us organized in our thoughts and challenges us to have prompt response to our aids. It can get a rider that is too much 'in their head' to pay attention to geometry and geography, and working another part of their brain.

Showing is an excellent mental and emotional challenge for some people.

To memorize the tests, to conquer the nerves... Some people thrive on it, and pushing down the butterflies when the bell rings to do the test gives them a huge sense of personal accomplishment. This can spread to other parts of life--it's darn easy to stand in front of a board room full of people and speak compared to the long ride down center line...

For a rider with a young horse, shows are a great way to expose the horse to the big wide world. Generally (generally!) dressage shows are fairly civilized compared to some other shows. For a green bean's first time off the farm, a dedicated dressage show *generally* does not present the challenge of costume classes, carriages, park horses with all their fire & brimstone, or gymkhana ponies raring to go...

On the other hand, a young horse can often feel totally insecure when they must leave a schooling ring with at least a smattering of other horses and enter at "A." Much opera singing and the occasional rear-spin-buck-bolt can occur.

Emotionally, sometimes we simple get *too* nervous and tense up too much, and the ride becomes a disaster. Which often becomes a downward spiral when the frustration comes home from the show and each successive ride becomes a greater battle.

Some riders are so competitive by nature that anything less than winning, or less than the 'ideal' score they are aiming for leave them disappointed and disillusioned; forgetting the progress and accomplishments the horse may have made.

Some riders will actually become physically ill. Is that worth it?

Test riding seems to be a good way to measure what level we are at, hopefully with some feedback about how to do things better.

But it is only a snapshot. It is just five minutes taken out of context. This is where picking your shows (picking your battles?) can become key. Some schooling show judges are helpful and positive--not that you want someone to blow smoke up your skirt, but it is always a better experience to get CONSTRUCTIVE criticism, and hopefully a simple sentence or two about how to improve.

When papers fly out of the judge's trailer at a green horse, the poor horse's little brains leak out of their little ears, and they spook but manage to keep at least a foot in the ring, "Hollow and counter bent" are not really comments worth time or money now, are they?

The best judges are the ones who give you an overall feel from the entire test's comments of what you need to work towards, or those who can give you a minute or two of 'mini-clinic' at the end of the test.

That doesn't mean you get all eights and 'well dones,' but comments like 'needs to be more over the back' are generally more helpful than 'hollow,' though they can both mean the same thing.

What type of personality are you? If you get a five on a movement, do you want to know what actually was ok about it and eeked you out that score? Or do you want to know what knocked it down from a six? Some judges are better at expressing the former, some the latter.

Or are you comfortable enough with your own training and philosophy to look at a show objectively, somewhat regardless of judge's comments.

There are always going to be comments that are quite accurate and on point--are you willing to pay for those, and take the rest with a grain of salt?

Showing can be completely destructive if a bad day, a bad ride, or a judge having a bad day can get under your skin and stay with you. Yes, we are paying for their opinion, but we have to remember it is just a snapshot, just five minutes in a horse's life... it is not a value judgement on our character.

Finally, showing can either be extremely helpful, or extremely detrimental at certain times in training. When a horse is just learning new skills, they may be strong at home, but the excitement and changes of the show ground, and their rider's stress may stress them.

Bad footing can make a happy, through horse choppy and resistant. A rider suddenly wearing a show coat, tall boots or gloves might feel totally different than that rider did yesterday. A rough trailer ride may set up a tense back... If a poor score on days like this is going to hurt you, or harm your attitude, perhaps it is not the time to show.

At some points in training, the philosophy that guides your passion may be at odds with what is fashionable in the show ring. As much as we hate to admit it, dressage follows trends just as strongly as puke-green breeches in hunters, or sparkly shirts in western... But in dressage, the trends are more about how much or little contact is desired, or the height and angle of the horse's head. Unfortunately, this often comes at the expense of a horse moving correctly over the back and being relaxed in the jaw. Some horses can more easily adapt to the current trends, while others may be going very correctly, but lower level, schooling judges may not have the education and experience to appropriately score them. The higher you get, generally the more fair and universal the judging becomes, but even at the WEG or Olympic level, you can see trends from some countries catching on, winning... that may conflict with your beliefs about equine welfare. Competitive dressage may not be your cup of tea.

A long time ago, many of us chose dressage because it was about ANY horse becoming the best it could be, regardless of breed, colour, size, etc. As the sport has progressed, breeding has progressed, and 'specialist' horses have become more available. It can be very frustrating to have a beloved, kind, honest horse with an accurate test beat by a horse whose gaits are just plain fancier. All things being equal, fancy IS going to score better, especially at levels below PSG or so, where accuracy and strength level the playing field much more. (but even then, when it ALL else is equal, aesthetics will be the tie breaker.)

If, however, you know your horse's limitations, and are seeking to further your personal best, then the classical tenets which drew many of us to this art will still hold. You get a chance to dress up, give your pony a bath and braids, and compare today's ride with where you were the last time.

Ultimately, to show or not to show should come down to a very personal choice. You should not show because someone else tells you to, because you think you have to, because you think your horse deserves it. No horse ever died wishing they had done just one more 20m circle, just one more trot-halt transition... No horse thinks, 'darn, I just *wish* I finally nailed that piaffe...' Their desires are much more simple: safety, food, companionship... While some horses truly seem to enjoy being out and about, it's pretty safe to say ultimately they would prefer being out--in a nice green pasture.

You should WANT to show. Life is too short, and horses are too expensive to not be fun. You should be proud of your horse, and just bursting at the seams to show off your fancy pony in public. If braids and black jackets are not your thing, then choosing a (tastefully) complimentary outfit at a casual schooling show could be just the ticket.

Life is short, and horse's lives are even shorter than ours. If showing enhances your relationship and your journey--show often! If it is a challenging, objective check of where you are, show occasionally. If showing makes you sad, angry, too nervous or frustrated... save that show money for lessons. Dress up for lessons and splurge on clinics with teachers you trust.

Above all, love your horse, and enjoy your time with them. Life is too short to do anything else.

Thank-You for making Dressage in Maine a success



The next Board Meeting will be in January 2013 before the MDS Awards Banquet at the Maine Farm Bureau in Augusta.

Hope to see you there!

Maine Dressage Society Competition Awards Score Report Form

Please Print Clearly

HORSE'S NAME: _____

(Please use the name that was used on your tests)

Name: _____

Circle appropriate categories: Junior/Young Rider, (21 or under), Senior, Vintage (50-59), Master (60+), Professional, Adult Amateur

Address: _____

City & State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

EMAIL: PLEASE PRINT VERY CLEARLY!

Owner Name: _____

Special Awards: Circle those appropriate:

First Level/First Year (horse), Aged Horse, School Horse, Breed Award, Bronze Medal, Silver Medal, Gold Medal, Platinum Medal

Horse Information: Age _____, Height _____, Color _____, Gender _____
Breed _____, (registration # _____)

Score Information: (List from highest to lowest)(You can also list your medal scores here)

Show Name & Location Date Level & Test Score % Judge

Show Name & Location	Date	Level & Test	Score %	Judge

Please see the omnibus for rules and requirements.

Certification that this is a true report. Your signature or parent's signature (if under 18) attests that these are accurate scores earned in accordance with the current Maine Dressage Society Awards Program Rules. Please include or email a copy of the first page of each test. Please use one form per level per horse. Please use this form and specify if the scores are for medals.

Signature: _____

Please submit this form to: Beth Brainerd (MDS Awards), 67 Bill Howe Rd., Norway, ME 04268

EMAIL: hbf@roadrunner.com

FOR UPDATED FORMS FOR
THE 2013 SHOW SEASON
PLEASE GO TO

mainedressagesociety.com

UNDER THE FORMS TAB.
THESE INCLUDE INDIVIDU-
AL CLUB MEMBERSHIP &
YEAR END COMPETITION
FORMS FORMS AND MDS
HORSE REGISTRATION
FORM .