

Minutes of the KDEA Meeting, December 14<sup>th</sup>  
2008

Members Present

Susan Lang, Pam Wrona, Bekki Moore, Cindy Sanders, Barb Deenihan, Missy Bartel, Sherry Engel, Marie Maloney, Lisa Bryant, Maribeth Willard, Cassie Black, Bonnie & Tim Griest, Nancy Harvieux, Dwight, Fern & Blair McGehee, John & Sue Clarke, Elaine & Patricia McEwen.. Apologies for absence: Lisa Sutherland.

Minutes of October Meeting

Pam Wrona proposed that the October Minutes be accepted as written – seconded Barb Deenihan, approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

12 members have renewed so far this year and have been forwarded to the USDF. Members were reminded that dues were due by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. Barb Deenihan proposed and Marie Maloney seconded that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. All were in favor.

USDF Convention

Sherry Engel, Susan Lang, Maribeth Willard, Bev McLean, Trish Kaufman & Barb Deenihan attended. The Kyra Kyrkland clinic concentrated on rider position. The USDF business meeting was very animated. The budget was the main topic. The increase in fees was voted down. All departments will cut their budgets to deal with the deficit. The new performance standards were also voted down. It was decided to develop rider tests and perhaps reintroduce the rider performance standards. Next year the Convention will be in Austin, Texas.

Jumps

Brady Bartel has already made the parts but they still need to be assembled.

Equifest

It was decided to share a booth with the Meadowlark Pony Club at Equifest. Bekki Moore, Missy Bartel & Cassie Black volunteered to liaise with the Pony Club. We already have KDEA fliers. The cost of a 10X10

***Kansas Dressage and Eventing  
Association***

A Group Member Organization of  
the  
United States Dressage Federation

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Deadline for submission: The first  
day of Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct  
and Dec

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booth is \$400 which includes 2 free passes a day. Missy Bartel proposed a budget of \$200 for the booth & \$100 for handouts. Bekki Moore seconded & the proposal was passed unanimously. Nancy Harvieux suggested a daily drawing for a free KDEA membership.

### Web Site

Susan Royal has paid the \$30.60 to renew our domain for three years. We will send her a check.

### Arena Set-Up Tool

Ours is 18 years old and has been refurbished several times. The cost for a new one will be \$236.71 including shipping.

Cassie Black proposed and Missy Bartel seconded a proposal to purchase a new Arena Tool. It was unanimously approved.

### KCDS Show March 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009

This year it has moved to the Kemper Arena in Kansas City.

### KDEA Show

The Omnibus listing had been sent in. Debbie Riel-Rodriguez will judge. Susan England will be TD. Susan Sjogren is no longer videoing. Pam Wrona suggested soft music playing during the show. There had been discussions at the Convention about rating shows and a three page draft proposal had been tabled. This would doom some shows but it was not discussed further.

### 2009 Schooling Shows

March or April will be Ride-a-Test. Schooling Shows will be on May 16<sup>th</sup> and the second week in July with September's date to be decided. It was decided that the entry form is acceptable as it stands. The problem with online entries is that we need the money and Coggins before the show. It was decided to hold Trail, Prix Caprilli & Call Your Own Score tests again. The fee for Call Your Own Score will increase to \$10 with 50% going to the Education Fund.

### Education Committee

Bekki Moore, Cassie Black & Marie Maloney agreed to run this committee. The February meeting program would be given by Katie Young from Nutrena. Jim Ennis (EVCA chiropractor) is tentative for April.

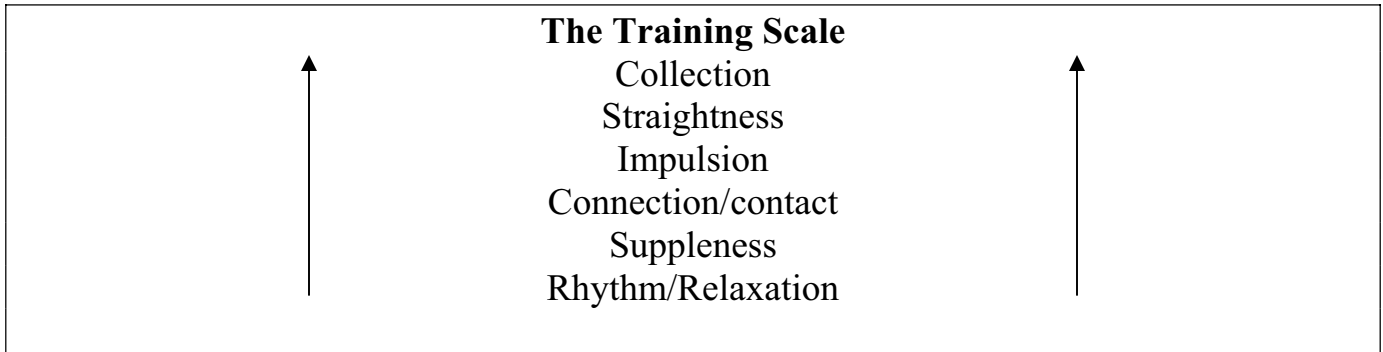
### Elections

The following nominations were presented 3 times, with no new nominations, and were unanimously approved:

President:	Susan Lang	Secretary	Susan Clarke
Vice President :	Cindy Sanders	Treasurer	Pam Wrona
Board:	Lisa Sutherland, Tim Griest, Sherry Engel, Bekki Moore, Lisa Bryant. Junior Board member is Blair McGehee.		

The February 2009 meeting will be held at Pam Wrona's. The meeting was adjourned at 3.30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Clarke, Secretary.



## George Williams Jr/YR Clinic – November 1-2, 2008

By Susan Lang

KDEA member Elaine McEwen offered me an audit slot at the 2008 USDF FEI Jr/YR Clinic with George Williams at Pine Hill Farm in Kansas City, and I gladly took her up on the offer to watch this talented rider and instructor. George spent many years at Tempel Farms as an instructor and trainer, and then began competing Rocher, owned by Chuck and Joann Smith of Gypsy Woods Farm in Richwood, OH. Although Williams missed the 2004 Olympic selection trials because of an injury to Rocher, he has since won numerous championships with Rocher. In addition, George Williams is the current Vice President of the United States Dressage Federation.

The riders were Juniors or Young Riders from Region 4, including KDEA member Elaine McEwen. All riders had competed at least through Second Level and most rode horses that were schooled through at least Fourth Level. Because of a health issue with her horse, Elaine rode a horse generously “donated” for her ride by clinic sponsor Nancy Gorton. Elaine mount was a 14 year old Dutch gelding named Major.

When watching each horse and rider warm up, George made the comment that he watched to see if the rider paid attention to the 3 lower rungs of the Training Scale. Can you name them? Rhythm/Relaxation, Suppleness and Connection/Contact. In the warmup, George helped the riders create a horse that moved freely forward, with a suitable self carriage, and responsive to the rider aids. Only when the horse was properly warmed up could it be asked to do more intense work toward the top three rungs of the Training scale. Can you name them? Impulsion, Straightness, Collection.

Many of the clinic sessions focused on helping the riders find the correct timing of their aids so as to best influence and balance their horses. One exercise was to sit the trot, and the rider was to feel when their inside knee drops. It is at this moment that the horse’s inside hind leg is in the air and the rider can ask with their leg for the horse to step away and toward the outside rein, thus creating a more balanced horse stepping into the outside rein.

For the timing of a canter to trot transition, George had the rider feel when their seat is pushed forward in the canter, and in that moment, the rider was to “grow tall” and trot. With another rider, he also stressed to put weight into the outside heel in order to initiate the first step of the trot. The thought is that in a canter to trot transition, the mechanics of the canter is such that the outside fore and inside hind are already in the trot rhythm (even though still in the canter, as the outside fore and inside hind are the diagonal pair, which is characteristic of the trot rhythm) and by “interrupting” the outside hind, the horse comes into a balanced trot rhythm in the transition. By utilizing this method to create the canter to trot transition, the rider leaves their hand/rein aids free to work on the suppleness (rather than using the hand to bring the horse from canter to trot). For a canter to walk transition, the rider is to feel the moment when their seat comes forward, and as this is the moment that the inside hind is on the ground, that is the moment for the timing of the canter to walk transition.

In Elaine’s lesson, she worked on making sure that the trot and canter in the warmup covered the same number of strides - about 22 strides on a 20 meter circle at both canter and trot. Each quarter of the circle was to have approximately 6 strides, and Elaine was responsible for developing the line of the circle, and seeing that the horse maintained the same tempo and stride on the circle. This exercise was also very good for determining if the circle was truly round, as any “ovalness” to the circle showed up by an irregular count of strides in one quarter of the circle. Once off the circle, Elaine was to go around the entire arena in exactly the same tempo and length of stride until both horse and rider came into a balance that was easy to maintain. It is only when the horse is in a steady tempo and the horse “relaxes” into the rhythm that the rider can then begin to influence the horse’s balance and work on additional training.

At the walk, Elaine was told not to “beg” the horse for a walk, but to require that the horse walk with enough energy so that she didn’t have to nag. Nagging the horse or always driving interrupts the rhythm of the walk, which can lead to permanent erosion of the clarity of the walk. If the horse becomes accustomed to a leg that always drives, they cannot be responsive to aids and the leg cannot be used to supple the horse. Elaine was to feel when the horse’s barrel swung away from her inside calf and in that moment was to ask the horse to look a little more to the inside; the next step was to use her inside leg to move the horse into the outside rein. The outside rein then received the energy of the inside leg, without restricting the tempo and rhythm of the horse.

One of the horses in the clinic wanted to be behind the rider’s leg and was not always willing to go forward. George made the comment that the horse has a right to protest and say he doesn’t understand or say that the work is not easy. However, the horse must still try, which this horse was not willing to do. If the horse argues with the rider, and the rider has to compromise, then the horse doesn’t stay through and honest.

One of the horses in the clinic was not sensitive to the rider’s seat or half halts. George had them halt 2 strides before the end of the long side, then trot off. After several trot/halt/trot transitions before the short side, then the rider was to trot/halt/trot after each corner. This exercise had the horse listening to the rider’s aids, as the horse never knew when the trot/halt/trot transitions would occur. Then the rider was sent on a 4 loop serpentine, and every time they crossed the centerline, the rider was to assure that the horse was responsive to the half halt in the change of bend and direction. If not, the rider went back to the halt to reinforce the obedience to the aids. Similarly, the rider was to ride 6 or 8 ten meter circles on

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the same spot, keeping the same tempo and the appropriate bending and suppleness, regulated by the outside rein. Once this could be accomplished, the rider did one circle before or after each corner to assure that the bending and suppleness could be maintained.

With another rider, George went back to the counting of strides to assure that the horse maintained the same tempo. With the horse on a 12-meter circle, there were 6 strides in each half of the circle, and then the rider went go out on the rail in shoulder in and maintained the same tempo. At B or E, the rider then went back to the 12 meter circle, checking to see if the tempo changed. After a number of repetitions of the shoulder in to 12 meter circle, the rider changed rein through the circle and after another circle (now in the other direction) to check the correct number of strides (tempo) then the rider began the shoulder in to circle work in this direction. The sheer repetition of this exercise had the horse settling into the tempo and relaxing into the work.

Another “stride counting” exercise had the rider counting the number of strides between R & P and S and V when going down the long side. The rider then rode a lengthening or a medium trot down the long side, and counted to see if they had fewer strides (i.e. longer strides) or more strides (i.e. shorter and faster). On a similar note, another rider was to check that they had the same number of strides on a circle whether they were posting or sitting the trot, which allowed the horse to settle into a consistent tempo and the line of the circle.

As you can tell, George Williams had many exercises to help the horse and rider progress through the Training Scale. Hopefully some of these exercises will help you think more about the timing of your aids and the need to focus on the rhythm, suppleness and contact while riding your horse, whatever the level.

### Next KDEA Meeting

Date: February 2, 2009

Time: 6:00 pm

Where: At the home of Pam and Ted Wrona, 1680 Tiara Pines Cir, Derby, KS 67037, phone 788-3591.

Directions: Go south on Rock Road into Derby. Pass the High school and Dillons – keep going south on Rock Road. After passing over a bridge with water, you will turn right onto Kay Street. Take the second right onto Tiara Pines. Follow Tiara Pines for about ¼ mile until you find Tiara Pines Circle on your right.

Educational Topic: Katie Young from Purina will talk about dietary requirements for horses and will answer your questions. If you have questions for Katie that you want her to answer, forward those questions to Marie Maloney at [marie.Maloney@hotmail.com](mailto:marie.Maloney@hotmail.com) and she will get them to Ms. Young. Ms. Young’s presentation will start at 6:00, with the meeting to start at 7:00.

Other topics: 2009 Recognized Show, Schooling Shows, Educational offerings, Equifest.

If you haven’t paid your dues for 2009, please fill out the application found on line at [www.kdea.org](http://www.kdea.org) under “Forms.” (<http://www.kdea.org/forms/memb-app-2009.doc>) The membership year now runs from December 1 to November 31.

**Arena Sun Spots: Invisible jumps OR a visual straight line off the track to work on maintaining straightness without the help of the rail/track.**

### USEF Proposed Rule Change – Performance Standards – Update

During the USEF Dressage Performance Standards Open Forum held December 4th as part of the USDF Annual Convention, it was clear that the majority of attendees support some form of performance standards for dressage, mirroring the support shown in a USEF on-line survey conducted in early 2008. However, in consideration of concerns which have been expressed by membership, and sensitivity to the current state of the economy, the USEF Dressage Committee has voted to withdraw the rule change proposal for dressage performance standards.

Since the attendees demonstrated overwhelming support for the concept of "rider tests", the USEF Dressage Committee will proceed with the development of these tests, and will also be looking into ways to address judging consistency. In addition, the Dressage Committee will pursue the appointment of a joint USEF/USDF task force, with a mission to continue to study statistics and investigate performance standards options for the sport.

The USEF Dressage Committee would like to thank all USEF and USDF members for taking the time to send feedback regarding this project and look forward to future endeavors for continued improvement of the sport of dressage.

From the USDF Website

### Update on Ulcers...from the American Assoc of Equine Practitioners convention

If your horse has ulcers, giving him GastroGard (omeprazole) isn't the only thing you can do to help reduce the severity of the problem. At the 2007 American Association of Equine Practitioners Convention, held Dec. 1-5 in Orlando, Fla., Noah Cohen, VMD, PhD, MPH, Dipl. ACVIM, professor of equine medicine at Texas A&M University, discussed a study that found alfalfa hay reduced the severity of ulcers in young, exercising horses.

Ulcers can reduce a horse's appetite and feed intake and cause weight loss, poor hair coat, colic, and reduced performance. Many factors can contribute to ulcers, including stall confinement, intensive exercise, feeding infrequent large meals, and stomach outflow obstruction.

In this study, 24 Quarter Horse yearlings were kept in small dry lots and fed two different diets for 28 days each, with a 21-day pasture washout period between. The first diet included coastal Bermuda grass hay and a 15% pelleted concentrate, while the other diet included the same amount of alfalfa hay and the same concentrate. All horses were exercised three times per week using a horse exerciser.

Ulcer scores were significantly lower for the alfalfa diet than for the Bermuda hay diet, and the 11 horses in the alfalfa group with ulcers at the beginning of the study all improved their ulcer score by at least two grades. However, one horse went the other direction, developing ulcers while on the alfalfa diet. Only five of the 12 horses starting the Bermuda diet with ulcers had ulcer score improvement, and only two of those improved by the two grades or more. Ulcers tended to be worse at the end of the Bermuda diet period. Another notable finding was that while ulcer scores didn't change significantly from the end of the Bermuda diet to the end of the pastured washout period, they increased significantly from the end of the alfalfa diet to the end of the washout period.

"So only one of 23 horses fed alfalfa worsened vs. 16 of 24 on coastal Bermuda," Cohen summarized. "Eleven of 12 horses on alfalfa remained ulcer-free compared to only three of 12 on Bermuda." He cautioned that not all alfalfa is created equal, and it's not yet known whether older horses or those exercising more intensely would see the same benefits.

"For some owners, the cost of (the FDA-approved omeprazole product) precludes its use, particularly for purposes of preventing ulceration," Cohen concluded. "Feeding alfalfa hay may represent a useful adjunct to antiulcer treatment for the control and prevention of equine gastric ulcer syndrome."

**Helmets: not only do they protect your head from injury; they protect that expensive hair color from fading in the sun (or getting tangled in the wind).**

*New FEI Dressage Tests* – beginning 1/1/09, there are new FEI Dressage Tests. You can download them a [www.horsesport.org](http://www.horsesport.org) or you can Google "2009 FEI Dressage Tests"

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### • **USDF Convention Report – by Susan Lang**

**USEF Performance Standards.** I attended the open forum on the USEF rule proposal to implement performance standards (which was eventually removed as a proposed rule – see statement from USDF website, elsewhere in newsletter). It was pointed out that there are 35,000 USDF members, and 1200 took the survey that then documented for the USEF dressage comments regarding the proposal. The members of the USEF dressage committee each provided their comments regarding the proposal, and then took questions and comments from the floor. Some of the comments from the USEF Dressage Committee (my paraphrasing of the intent of their discussion):

Marianne Ludwig – The US has an excellent judge training program, and there are countries in Europe who are studying our judge training program for their own country. After passing their judge exam, there are some judges who, in order to get more jobs, give inflated scores. If these riders were given the appropriate score, they might not come back into the ring (or at least not for awhile) and there is a perception that show entries would suffer and judges would not be hired back. Riders who do not want inflated scores should tell show management that they do not want to show for judges who give inflated scores, and the rider and the show management can also fill out a judge evaluation form to inform USEF of the issue with the judge score.

Lendon Gray – Instructor Certification programs will create more trainers and instructors who understand the root of training issues and work to develop a horse and rider using the Training Scale. Riders should seek out the best instructor possible, and encourage their instructors to seek training for themselves and do clinics so that they can improve and pass that knowledge on to their students. The goal is that a rider, prepared by a trainer, goes into the ring knowing that they can do the work required in the test, not trying to “show” something that they are still learning. If the rider goes in the ring and consistently gets poor scores, the rider might need to seek out a new trainer who can accurately assess the rider’s knowledge and determine the appropriate level to be shown.

**USDF Budget – Proposed Dues Increase.** After a 5 hour discussion at the Board of Governor’s meeting, there was not dues increase for 2009. In part due to the downturn in the economy (and lack of return on investments which is used in part for grants and funding), the USDF was looking at a \$500,000 deficit for 2009. After a vote to remove \$200,000 in depreciation expense (an on the books expense, but not a true outflow, and necessitating a change in accounting), the deficit was down to \$300,000. The \$2.00 out of the \$10.00 qualifyign fee, which had been put into the National Championships fund, will be suspended for 2009, and will go back into the budget (representing about \$56,000). For the remaining deficit, each Committee and Council was asked to go back and cut funding requests to balance the budget (with each program taking a cut equal to their own program’s % of the overall total budget). The Committees and Councils will report back to USDF in early 2009 to finalize a budget prior to the 4/1/09 new budget year.

**L-Program.** The USDF L Program had been restricted to those who had 2<sup>nd</sup> Level scores, whether the applicant wanted to try for an L-graduate status, or whether they just wanted to attend for educational purposes. There is a proposal for 2009 that the L program be made more educational and user friendly by dividing the program into 2 parts:

Part 1 – Sessions A (Intro to Judging and Biomechanics), Session B (Judging Criteria for Gaits and Paces, Movements and Figures, and Session C (Collective Marks, Equitation, Rider Mechanics and Basics)– no more riding prerequisites, and open to Group (like KDEA membership) and Participating members. These sessions are very helpful to all riders who desire to better understand the horse and rider requirements at Training through Second Level.

Part 2 – Sessions D1/D2 Final Exam – 2<sup>nd</sup> level scores and Participating membership required. Those in Part 1 would be broken into those who want to become a USEF judge, those who want to be a USEA judge, those who want to graduate (but “with distinction” not needed because they do not want to continue into a judge program) and silent auditors. Without requiring all the current pre-requisites it was felt that this program will encourage more people to educate themselves through the Sessions offered in the L program. L-graduates who have already come through the program are also encouraged to audit the ‘new and improved’ L program sessions, and there will be a series of L Educational opportunities in Region 2 and Region 4 developed by “S” judge Bill Solyntjes.

### **USEF Dressage Rule Changes for 2009.**

- Whip rule – whip length has gone back to 120 cm (47.2 inches) for national level tests (i.e. 110 still required at the FEI competitions).
- Half chaps (same color as boot, smooth leather, no fringe) are allowed at First Level and below.
- Cooling vests can be worn under a jacket, or if coats are waived, over the shirt, with no penalty. Safety vests can also be worn without restriction.
- “5” – now defined as “Marginal” not “Sufficient”

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**Judge's Committee meeting.** One benefit of being an L-graduate is that I can attend most of the “closed” judges’ forums at the USDF Convention. Here are some notes from the two closed meetings I attended.

- There are several complaints being heard from competitors regarding judging. Judges are being criticized for not making comments for scores of 6 and below, and for having scores in the Collectives that do not match the “top” of the test (i.e. the various movements). These are both issues that can be addressed through judge training, or judges being more dedicated to their job. There have been reports of some judges who make inappropriate comments on the bottom of tests.
- Determining Rider Score. As you know, the rider score in the Collectives is now a coefficient of 3, rather than a coefficient of 2. In the past, judges were “trained” that they should not give lower than a 5 or 6 for rider unless the rider was considered ‘abusive.’ That is no longer the case, as is being taught in the L program and the new judge training programs now being conducted. Judges who have had their cards for many years, and who have not attended these forums, are reluctant to embrace the new philosophy of accurately assessing the rider score. Here are some of the rider issues that should be addressed:
  - Why is the rider’s position going to hinder them as they try to progress?
  - Is the rider clueless, but not abusive? This used to be given a 5 or a 6, but if a 3<sup>rd</sup> level rider is really clueless, is the judge doing them any service telling them that their knowledge is “sufficient” for the level?
- One of the exercises in the forum was that the participants were read a description of a rider seen in a test. The judges were then to state what their score would be, and then judges were selected to justify their scores. One thing that was brought home was that if the horse’s performance suffered because of the action (or inaction) of the rider, the RIDER score should be lower than the horse’s SUBMISSION score, as the source of the problem is the rider. If the judge scores the horse lower, and gives the rider a 5 or a 6, the rider gets the impression that the “problem” is the horse, not their own riding. Judges were cautioned to make the distinction, using the rider score, to differentiate whether the rider’s basic education was lacking, or the horse was lacking necessary training.
- Various Rider Scores:
  - 8 – good influence, prepares properly, understands balance of level
  - 7 – fairly good position, usually prepares well
  - 6 – rider cuts corners and could be more accurate, a few seat/rider faults
  - 4 – incorrect use of double bridle, crooked horse/rider, rides transitions with reins

**Congratulations!** Congratulations to Barb Deenihan on the purchase of her new horse, Lace. We hope to see her at shows and clinics this year. Congratulations are also in order for Maribeth Willard, who has a new 3 year old to get to know. She recently acquired TitaNick through Sarah Martin. (If anyone else has a new horse, or something to share, please contact Susan before the next newsletter goes out in February...

### **Cut out and place on your Refrigerator!!!**

KDEA Dressage and Combined Test Schooling Show Dates – 2009

At Windermere Stables

May 16 – with Call Your Score Class

July 11 – With Dressage Trail

September 26 – With Prix Caprilli

More clinics and educational opportunities to be announced in early 2009.

KDEA Recognized Show – 2009

May 30-31 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, KS

Watch the website for more information ... [www.kdea.org](http://www.kdea.org)

Mark Your Calendars!



## 2008 KDEA Awards

### Certificate of Achievement

Rebecca Moore

Melissa Bartel

### High Point – Recognized Shows - Dressage

Junior: Patricia McEwen & Little Star Love – Training Level 4 70.800%

Adult: Elaine McEwen & Jelmer – Fourth Level Test 3 71.707%

### Recognized Shows Pony Club Horse of the Year - Dressage

Adrian Dolatta & Static 66.000%

### Horse of the Year – Recognized Shows - Dressage

Training Level: Jr. Patricia McEwen & Little Star Love 69.214%

Training Level: Sr. Jennifer Grossi & Nuee Ardente 70.133%

First Level: Jr. Adrian Dolatta & Static 64.796%

Second Level: Sr. Marie Maloney & Lazulite 65.428%

Fourth Level: Sr. Elaine McEwen & Jelmer 66.693%

### Horse of the Year – Schooling Shows - Dressage

Walk/Trot Division: Sr. Nancy Harvieux & Buck 64.500%

Training Level: Sr. Cassie Black & Phoenix 66.685%

### High Point – Schooling Shows - Dressage

Junior: Adrian Dolatta & Static 66.333%

Adult: Bekki Moore & Bentley 71.500%

### Combined Training Dressage Low Score- Schooling Shows

Junior: Blair McGeehee & Ruby Red Slippers 38.0

Adult: Lisa Bryant & Wildside Rio Bravo 29.0

### Schooling Shows Pony Club Horse of the Year – Combined Training

Tessa Sutherland & Toby 41.0

### 2008 Volunteers of the Year

Nancy Harvieux & Stan Kent

Rebecca Moore

Wes & Karla Dolatta

Maribeth Willard

**A big thank you to all the people who helped with awards this year:**

- **Bekki & Abigail Moore** for getting awards donated and bagged for our schooling show; **Karyn Feltner** for donating awards to our schooling show awards box and to **Nancy Harvieux** for finding our great year end awards (leather halters with a brass plate). I couldn't have done it without all your help.
- **Also, thank you to all our participants;** I appreciate everyone getting their scores in to me on time.
- **Nancy Harvieux** has agreed to be the awards chair for 2009 (and we hope beyond). She will do a great job; thanks, Nancy for taking this on.
- **Some changes will be made to awards qualifications** and Nancy and I are trying to condense the awards info. Watch upcoming newsletters for this information.

**Pam Wrona (former) awards chair**

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### USDF Convention - Kyra Kyrklund Feature Presentation – “Reach Your Peak Performance.”

Summarized by Susan Lang

Kyra Kyrklund began her evening lecture by stating that the rider can reach their peak performance through daily harmony with their horse, and exercises achieved through the Training Scale. The rider must look for the “weakest link” and then work to strengthen the chain, as peak performance is the sum of many factors. First, consider the horse:

- Conformation can be a limiting factor to soundness and ease of work. If the horse has conformational limitations, the rider must be aware of these factors and work to minimize their effects.
- The rider must be aware of potential soundness issues, even if the vet cannot find anything wrong. The rider knows the horse and how he feels, how he works, and must work to find the “problem” before there is a major soundness issue. The horse is a master of compensation, as in the wild, a horse with a soundness problem becomes easy prey. The horse will try to compensate so that they are NOT lame, compounding the rider’s difficulty in figuring out what may be wrong.
- The temperament (energy level) of the horse must fit the rider. A horse with no or little energy will have to be pushed all the time. A horse that is spooky and too sensitive can only be handled well by a rider that is well- balanced and able to channel the energy. The rider must know what type of horse best suits their temperament and riding skills.
- Gaits. Big gaits may not be the best, and this may be evidenced by the fact that many of the 5 and 6-year-old Champions are not getting to Grand Prix. The walk is the most difficult gait to change - some horses with very large walks with great overstep may not be able to collect at the upper levels. The trot is the easiest to improve as you can teach a horse to trot “rounder” through the passage. The canter work will get better as the horse gains more strength, but a horse with a ‘big’ canter should only be ridden in balance.

Now, consider the rider:

- Soundness. Back pain is an issue for many riders. Most riders could use stronger core muscles, and the rider must be an athlete, just as is the horse.
- Temperament. The temperament of the rider must fit the horse *and* the trainer. The trainer must know the rider, and must know what frame of mind they must be in to train and compete.
- Goals. Everyone on the team must have clear goals, and have the same goals. Considerations when determining goals include ambition, commitment, and financial situation.

Management of the Horse/Rider Team

- Horse. The horse’s management is influenced by the veterinarian, the feed regimen, shoeing, and any other alternative therapies (massage, chiropractic, acupuncture..). The rider has the responsibility to make the decisions regarding the horse’s management. In the end, the rider needs to be the one making decisions for the horse, as it is the rider who is on the horse, not the owner, trainer, or the Federation.
- Rider. The rider is supported by the trainer, the owner, the Team, and the Federation; all must have the same goals. Fitness of the rider is important, as the rider’s coordination and balance affects their ability to influence and improve the horse. The rider must practice mental training, once they have mastered the physical skills. Mental practice is only beneficial if the practice is based on the skill/ability to actually perform the activity being rehearsed.
- External Factors. External factors affecting the horse and rider include the surroundings (facilities), the stabling (comfort/care), the arena (good footing, distractions), transportation (how does the horse prefer to travel?), turnout (risk of injury versus mental well being), and equipment (proper tack).

At the Competition.

- Preparation. Preparation begins at home, with a focus on “show riding” in the last few weeks before the show. It works best to train one exercise, one movement, or one gait each day, and train it well, rather than work on the entire test. Preparation also requires accurate goal setting. If the rider is nervous about a particular movement that is difficult, of course there will be tension in the test. The rider must be confident in their horse’s ability and in their own ability. This is where realistic goals are important, as the rider should only enter the ring when they know that they are able to perform well at that level.  
Look at all your scores, and find the average score. Make your goal to raise the average. This will avoid the tendency to “over ride” all tests to get a ‘higher score’ each time, which may result in undue pressure and tension in the test. Focusing on the overall average tends to make you work toward having “no bad rides” and will result in a higher average.
- Arrival at the show. The rider cannot influence how the judges judge or how others ride. The rider can influence how they ride and how they train the horse. At the show, focus on what you can change, and do not allow what you cannot change to influence how you react at a show. Watching the other riders warm up may make a rider nervous – so instead, the rider should develop their warmup and competition plan, and stick to it (regardless of outside influences or perceptions).

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- Warmup. The rider should be aware of their surrounding and how they may affect the horse. Be aware of weather and how it may affect (cold? Hot?) the timing or length of the warmup. The rider should know how much warmmp time is needed, and should not drill the horse on the movements they do not do well. The warmup should be a placed to build confidence and to practice the movements the horse does well.
- The Test. Every step counts, so the rider should think/ride every step. If the rider makes a mistake, they should not dwell on it, but should focus on doing the next movement well. The rider should ignore the audience and the outside surroundings – it is just the horse and rider.
- Feedback. If the rider has a good ride, all their friends want to come congratulate them, but the rider should take the time to mentally rehearse the good ride. The rider may also want to write up notes regarding the good ride. When the rider has a bad ride, no one comes to congratulate, and the rider tends to have too much time to re-ride the bad test in their mind.

Above all, remember that you are living your dream, and you should have fun in the competition arena and in the daily activities on the way to competition. Competitions are like a cake – the rider has all the ingredients, but they just have to be put together correctly to make a great ride.

**President's Message.** Hopefully you have had a great holiday season and have managed to keep riding through our somewhat bizarre Kansas winter. I'm certainly ready to get rid of all this wind!

We welcome our new Vice President, Cindy Sanders. If you haven't had the opportunity to meet her, you will see her at the upcoming meetings as well as at our educational functions. Cindy has background in other USDF GMOs, so we hope that she can bring new ideas and functions to KDEA that will enhance our membership and enable us to provide quality educational opportunities. We also have a few new board members, so welcome them the next time you se them.

We have our regular 3 schooling shows planned for 2009, as well as our recognized show the last weekend in May. If you have any ideas as to clinics or educational topics you'd like to see KDEA promote, please contact Susan and she will see to it that the someone from the Education Committee contacts you for your input. We are only as strong as our members...so please participate and make KDEA an organization that thrives and grows.

Our next meeting is February 2, and will feature a speaker from Purina Mills. Watch for more information on the website and in emails; you will be given the opportunity in the weeks before the meeting to submit questions that the speaker can answer at the educational session.

## Calendar of Events – 2009

If you have anything to add, please contact Susan at [smlang2@juno.com](mailto:smlang2@juno.com)

- Jan 17-18 Rebecca Rigdon Dressage Clinic. Contact Marie Maloney  
Jan 24-25 Amy Larson Dressage Clinic. Contact Cindy Sanders  
Feb 6-8 Sarah Martin Dressage Clinic. Contact Maribeth Willard. (changed from January date)  
Feb 11-13 Rebecca Rigdon Dressage Clinic. Contact Marie Maloney  
Feb 13-14-15 Equifest – Stephen Peters, dressage clinician. For more information, go to [www.equifestofks.com](http://www.equifestofks.com)  
Feb 21 Briar Fox Farm Valentine Volte. Go to [www.thehorsefarm.com](http://www.thehorsefarm.com)  
Feb 28-Mar 1 Amy Larson Dressage Clinic. Contact Cindy Sanders  
Mar 6 to 8 Sarah Martin Dressage Clinic. Contact Maribeth Willard.  
Mar 20-21 KCDS Dressage Show, Kansas City, KS at Hale Arena, American Royal Complex. 2 indoor rings. See Central States Omnibus for 2009.  
April 11-12 Briar Fox Farm Spring USDF Dressage Show. Go to [www.thehorsefarm.com](http://www.thehorsefarm.com)  
May 1-3 Sarah Martin Dressage Clinic. Contact Maribeth Willard  
May 2-3 Kansas City Dressage Society Dressage Show. See Central States Omnibus  
May 2-3 Oklahoma Dressage Society Dressage Show. See [www.showsecretary.com](http://www.showsecretary.com)  
May 9-10 Dallas Dressage club Dressage show.  
May 16-17 KDEA Schooling Dressage Show and Combined Test  
May 16-17 Cornhusker Dressage Classic, Fremont, NE  
May 23-24 Briar Fox Farm Spring Horse Trials.  
May 30-31 KDEA Spring Dressage, Hutchinson, KS. Indoor competition and warmup arena. Judge: Debbie Riehl-Rodriguez. See Central States Omnibus for 2009, or [www.kdea.org](http://www.kdea.org)  
June 13-14 Green Country Dressage, Claremore, OK  
June 27-28 Briar Fox Farm USEF Dressage Show.  
July 11-12 KDEA Schooling Dressage Show and Combined Test  
July 25-26 Briar Fox Farm Summer Horse Trials  
August 25-26 Briar Fox Farm USEF Dressage Show.  
Sept 11-13 Region 4 Great American Insurance Group Regional Championships, Mason City, IA  
Sept 26 KDEA Schooling Dressage show and Combined Test  
Oct 10-12 Grand National Morgan Horse Show – Dressage Division. See [www.showsecretary.com](http://www.showsecretary.com)  
Oct 17-18 Lazy E Dressage Classic, Guthrie, OK. See [www.lazye.com](http://www.lazye.com)  
Oct 31-Nov 1 Region 9 Great American Insurance Group Regional Championships, Katy, TX  
Oct 31-Nov 1 Briar Fox Farm Fall Horse Trials  
Dec 2009 USDF Convention in Austin, TX.  
Sep 25-Oct 10 2010 – World Equestrian Games, Lexington, KY. Go to [www.feigames2010.org](http://www.feigames2010.org) for more information and to sign up for their email newsletter. Tickets go on sale 9/25/09.

More dates and competitions shown on the KDEA website at [www.kdea.org](http://www.kdea.org) and [www.showsecretary.com](http://www.showsecretary.com)

Regular clinicians in the Area – Sponsored by private individuals or barns:  
Sarah Martin Clinics: Maribeth Willard @ [mbwillard@live.com](mailto:mbwillard@live.com)  
Lena Wedenmark Clinics: Susan Lang @ [president.kdea.org](mailto:president.kdea.org)  
Rebecca Rigdon Clinics: Marie Maloney at [Marie.Maloney@hotmail.com](mailto:Marie.Maloney@hotmail.com)  
Amy Larson clinics: Cindy Sanders @ [idlewilde@pixius.net](mailto:idlewilde@pixius.net)

**It is Past Time to Renew! If you haven't joined KDEA yet this year, please go out to the website at [www.kdea.org](http://www.kdea.org) and download a membership application. We'd like to have you as a member this year...and you don't want to miss an issue of USDF Connection or KDEA Transitions.**

### **Important Dates for 2009**

May 16	KDEA Schooling Dressage Show and Combined Test (with Call Your Score)
May 30-31	KDEA Recognized Dressage Show, Hutchinson, KS.
July 11	KDEA Schooling Dressage Show and Combined Test (with Dressage Trail)
Sept 26	KDEA Schooling Dressage Show and Combined Test (with Prix Caprilli)

Check inside the newsletter for a "Clip and Put on your Refrigerator" item with these dates!

### **Transitions**

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