



The Centerline

MARCH 2008

President's Passage

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I hope everyone is looking forward to another busy Alaskan show season. And I do mean busy: for the first time since 2003 there will be five - yes five - recognized dressage shows in Alaska. In addition, it looks like there will be five dressage schooling shows. The two schooling shows in Anchorage at WCCEC will have rated judges and clinics available with each judge. Great learning opportunity - don't miss these clinics. The three schooling shows being held at the state fairgrounds in Palmer will be part of the Valley's new "Nothin' But Fun Schooling Shows."

I am elated that there are so many opportunities available to the dressage community in Alaska and I hope everyone will take full advantage of ALL of

these shows. There are many dedicated individuals putting in many dedicated hours to make these dressage events available to all of us. However, remember they cannot do everything alone.

I sincerely hope that each of you will demonstrate your appreciation for these dressage opportunities through volunteering a little of your time and talents to help make these shows successful. Not sure who to contact about volunteering or what you might be able to do? Just give me a call and I will help you out and hook you up with the right person.

And speaking of dedicated individuals...I would like to relay a huge THANK YOU to Susie Kaiser for her many years of distinguished service to the ADA board. Susie has served in just

about every capacity as a member of the board and most recently as President for the past two years. Susie is a vital part of ADA and will still be very active in helping ADA continue to succeed. Thanks again, Susie.

Additionally, I would like to welcome Victoria Fredenhagen as the most recent addition to the ADA board. Victoria (voted Favorite Horse Show Mom at the 2007 ASH Awards Banquet) joins her daughter Shelbie on the ADA board and will fulfill the remainder of Susie's term. Welcome and we look forward to working with you.

So, lots of dressage events with great groups of people are on tap for 2008 starting with the ADA Spring Meeting on March 30th (see page 4 of this newsletter). Check out ADA's awesome website at <http://www.alaskadressage.org> where Mary Kaye keeps us all up to date on the Alaska dressage world happenings. Thanks Mary Kaye!!!

Happy Hoof Beats -

Linda Kelley, ADA President
746-5994

The Importance of Turnout by Cindy Sydnor

I have been riding over 45 years now and the biggest thing I've learned is how to keep a horse and how to give him a good home. Dressage riders usually love their horses and pamper them. Sadly, I find that the more expensive and better a horse, the more isolated he becomes.

Twenty years ago I did not believe in turnout at all. I believed turnout was counterproductive to my work as a dressage trainer and rider. As a girl, I copied other riders—including their opinion on turnout—and didn't give it much thought. The reasons for not turning horses out haven't changed. First of all, because dressage horses are so expensive, riders are afraid they might get hurt and either don't turn them out or turn them out alone. When turned out alone, they often race around because they are herd animals and long to be with their buddies. Horses need a herd. It makes them feel safe and content.

Some dressage riders also think that turnout uses up the horse's energy for the trainer, and he won't be able to perform as strongly as when not turned out. Other riders think that horses that are turned out use the wrong muscles.

Turning out all of my dressage horses—Grand Prix horses included—has made all the difference in my success as a dressage rider and trainer as well as my horses' performances, their overall health and their happiness. They are much more relaxed. They're more trustworthy and understanding and calm about the environment. Nervousness in the show ring is reduced as well.

Shying and its consequences are reduced enormously. Often, everything that might have happened after shying, such as bolting—an instinct that comes from the horse's natural flight mechanism—becomes a serious problem. When the horse shies or bolts, the rider often gets angry, also out of fear. The horse will feel the fear of the rider. Now whenever the rider is tense toward the horse, it triggers the response, such as shying, and becomes a bad habit. The rider keeps punishing the horse for his bad behavior, but he really ends up punishing the horse for having been afraid.

Barns are getting ever more luxurious. I find it a sad misconception that the barns have spacious stalls, automated bedding, regulated feeding time, etc, but no turnout. You'll say, OK, but at least my barn is fly-free, cool and clean. But let's be honest: Isn't it also more convenient for us? We don't want to walk miles across the pasture, we want to open the door and just take the horse out to ride.

Horses are designed to walk and move around all the time. All of their organs are relying on that—hooves, joints and skin. If you put a horse in his stall for the majority of his life, it would be the same as if you were told to stay in bed for that time. A horse should live to 25 or 30 years with no problem. Ironically, today's dressage horses are (most of the time) well cared for, but they often become lame due to immobilization in stalls which also promotes colic.

In the course of my career, I became more and more aware of unhappy signs due to lack of turnout. For example, look at the hooves of horses that are not allowed turnout. They usually have contracted heels and their feet become narrower. Studies on incidents of stomach ulcers have been done where it was discovered, sadly, that if the horses are kept in 20 hours a day or more, they often have stomach ulcers.

At my barn, horses stay out at night and come in the morning at around 6 or 7. They eat breakfast, lie down and rest for a while, and then we take them out to train them. After training, they take another nap and then are turned out again. They're in their stalls for about five hours a day. Since I began turning out my horses about 25 years ago, I've never had one single case of colic.

I don't believe I can change other dressage riders' opinions about turnout, but think about it. Your dressage partner needs to be allowed to be a horse, not just a trophy.

Cindy Sydnor is a U.S. Equestrian Federation "R" judge and a U.S. Dressage Federation Certification Examiner. She has trained in Europe with Egon von Neindorff and in the United States with Karl Mikolka and Col. Bengt Ljungquist. In 1975-77, she was long-listed for the U.S. Equestrian Team. A popular clinician and dressage instructor, she owns Braeburn Farm in Snow Camp, N.C., where she trains horses and riders through Grand Prix. Article reprinted with permission from Dressage Today magazine. Go to www.dressagetoday.com to subscribe.

Check your dressage scores

It's important to check the scores you earn at this summer's dressage shows. Show managers report all dressage scores to USDF for publishing in its official online data base. ADA uses USDF's data base in computing our own year-end awards, and of course USDF itself relies on its posted scores for its many award categories. But mistakes can happen: a score might be omitted, or a stellar 75.357% might get entered as 57.357%. To ensure against errors, check your reported scores (they'll be on USDF's website four to six weeks after each show). Compare them to your test sheets, which you should keep in a safe place—nobody else has a copy! If you find a mistake, contact USDF immediately to get it corrected. USDF warns, "The owner is responsible for contacting the rider (if different from the owner) and checking and verifying all information presented on this score check. All corrections MUST be received at the USDF office by 5:00 pm, EST on October 15. No changes to year end awards will be made after that date."

How do you find your scores? Sign on to <http://www.usdf.org/online-services/> (you'll need your USDF number and a password), then look for Competition Services and select the score check you need. Can't remember your USDF number or your horse's number? Detour to USDF's membership verification page, <http://www.usdf.org/verification/verification.asp>, and type in your horse's official show name. (If you want a one-page record showing all these numbers plus USEF's—this is handy for your horse show entries, and the show secretary will love you—go to the joint USEF/USDF/USHJA website <http://www.eqverification.org/index.php> and enter your horse's name.)

Thanks to our 2008 sponsors!

Gold (in honor of Margaret Adams):

**BOWKER MECHANICAL
LAURIE & TIM COLLINS
MARTI MILLER
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JOHN STRACHAN**

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ANNIE MABRY
RUTH SPEES**

Bronze:

**Deana Johnson of ALASKA
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Don't miss ADA's Spring Meeting

Dr. Julie Grohs will be the guest speaker at ADA's spring meeting, which is scheduled for 1 p.m. on March 30, 2008, at Gallo's Mexican Restaurant, 8615 Old Seward Highway, Anchorage. She will explain metabolic syndrome in horses and may even have state-of-the-art information from her current research on that topic. She will also give us a primer on recent changes to the Coggins test process (to guard against carriers of Equine Infectious Anemia) and updated recommendations for vaccinations in Alaska. Tickets are \$10. You can pay at the door, but please be sure to RSVP as soon as possible to reservations@alaskadressage.org.

"Senior" feeds available again in Anchorage

The recent closing of Animal Food Warehouse in Anchorage led to a crisis for owners of aged horses: where to find hay substitutes for equines who can no longer chew standard hay? Thanks to quick action by Dr. Julie Grohs, Joel at Alaska Mill Feed & Garden Center, and Meg at M Bar D, Anchorage horse owners once again have some hay choices for the older horse. Alaska Mill Feed & Garden Center is now carrying Delta hay pellets and timothy hay cubes (it's even trying to keep the costs down!), and M Bar D now stocks Delta hay pellets and orchard grass pellets. Anchorage riders appreciate the response of these two feed stores to the needs of older horses, and we're grateful for Dr. Julie's help in explaining how essential these forage alternatives are—and how many "senior" horses are hungry for them!



Renaissance horses

The *Chronicle of the Horse* (Feb. 8, 2008) reported that Benjamin Aillaud took second place in the 2008 FEI World Cup Driving Final in Leipzig with a team of four Lipizzaners. Placing second best in the world was a spectacular achievement for horses not traditionally bred for driving. But even more amazingly, Aillaud shows these same four Lipizzaners in circus attractions, dressage, eventing, and 1.40-meter show jumping. That's a 4'7" jump height, higher than Level 7.

Call for sponsors



Alaska Dressage Association
P. O. Box 112067
Anchorage, AK 99511-2067

Dear Potential Sponsor:

January 30, 2008

Alaska Dressage Association (ADA) is a Group Member Organization of the United States Dressage Federation's Region 6. The word "dressage" comes from a French term meaning training. It is not only a method of training, but also a competitive equestrian sport. Dressage has been described as a combination of sport and art. Fluid artistic motion of the horse is achieved through unspoken communication between horse and rider. ADA is a non-profit association whose mission is to promote and encourage a high standard of dressage through out the state of Alaska, primarily through education programs, publications, and events. ADA holds at least two licensed dressage shows in Anchorage each summer, as well as schooling shows, clinics, and related events.

As an active member of the Board of Directors and an active participant in the shows, I am asking you to please consider a donation to ADA. Most of the costs ADA incur cover show expenses. Some of these expenses include airfare, lodging and fees for judges and technical delegates (both of these people are required at licensed/recognized shows), arena rental, insurance, and the awards. Each division of each level of competition is recognized with a champion and reserve champion, along with high point award for the show. ADA's year-end awards banquet, the printing of the ADA *Omnibus* (ADA's yearly show publication, which is published in March), and three newsletters are some of the non-show expenses. Also, you may advertise your business in the ADA *Omnibus*. At the bottom of this page, you will find the different levels of sponsorship and advertising options.

As a sponsor, you would be recognized by having your name announced at our horse shows, and printed in the ADA *Omnibus* and newsletters. If your business has a website, ADA can include a link to it on our website. This is a great way to promote your business and to help dressage succeed in our great state of Alaska. Since ADA is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, your **donation** would be **tax deductible**.

Please consider a donation to help ADA and thank you for your support. Please send your donation to the above address. For more information about ADA or about dressage in Alaska, please visit our website at www.alaskadressage.org. If you have any questions, please call me at (907)373-2330.

Sincerely,

Peggy L. Bowker

Peggy L. Bowker, Promotions/Fundraising Chair

Levels of Sponsorship/Donations

Platinum	\$500.00 or more
Gold "In Honor of Margaret Adams"	\$100.00 - \$499.00
Silver	\$50.00 - \$99.00
Bronze	\$10.00 - \$49.00

ADA welcomes gift certificates or other horse-related items that could be used for awards at our shows.

Advertising in the 2008 ADA Omnibus (ads due March 15)

Full Page = \$100.00	1/2 Page = \$50.00
1/4 Page = \$30.00	Business Card = \$15.00