



Transitions

Issue XXII

November / December 2011

CTDA Calendar

- * Apply for Year-End Awards by December 15
- * Year-End Awards Party at 5 p.m. on January 22
- * CTDA Schooling Show on March 24
- * Tennessean is April 14-15

Next Business Meeting

Monday, Dec. 5
TGI Friday's in Cool Springs
6:30 pm

Inside this issue:

- Earning USDF Medals 6 & 7
- The Write Stuff 8
- Year-End Awards 10

Send Us Your News

Contact *Transitions* Editor Mimi Bliss with news about you and your horses.

(615) 297-3656
mimi@mimibliss.com

Dressage Festival of Champions — By Mimi Bliss

The 2011 USEF Dressage Festival of Champions was a dream come true for CTDA member Sierra Keasler, who was selected to compete as a junior in the National Dressage Championships in September.

The Festival of Champions is held at Gladstone, headquarters of the United States Equestrian Team. This year's event included selection trials for the Pan American Games, which attracted international competitors such as Heather Blitz and Paragon, Steffen Peters and Weltino's Magic, and Cesar Parra and Grandioso.

"I got to interact with top dressage riders," said Sierra, who is eighteen-years-old and a college freshman. "Everyone was so nice."

Sierra and her twelve-year-old Hanoverian gelding, Fabulous LHF, made a strong showing in Junior competition. The pair from Murfreesboro, Tennessee, placed fourth overall with a combined score of 64.467% on the Junior individual and team tests.



Sierra & Fabulous at Gladstone

Continued on page 5

Part of a Community — By Mimi Bliss

When you join the Central Tennessee Dressage Association (CTDA), you become part of the dressage community in Middle Tennessee.

The membership year begins on December 1. You may join or renew online at tndressage.com or with the membership application in this newsletter.

We have nearly 140 members who range from adult amateurs to juniors and professionals. CTDA welcomes riders who compete in eventing and other equestrian disciplines, riders from neighboring states, and family members of dressage competitors who want to support our sport.

"The horse world is all about community," said Lara Stringfield, CTDA member and professional trainer in Fairview. "I joined CTDA to be part of a community with like-minded people and to support dressage in our area."

Continued on Page 2

Letter from the President



Chris Saia and Wynona

2011 marked a year of achievement for both our individual members and CTDA. We have a remarkable number of members who earned USDF Medals at Gold, Silver and Bronze levels. The medals demonstrate the high quality of dressage in Middle Tennessee.

We begin the new membership year with a solid base from 2011. CTDA membership increased 10% to nearly 140 members and our goal is to grow in 2012. I encourage you to spread the word about the value of CTDA membership. As a member, you are part of a vibrant local dressage community and a group member of USDF.

Our board of directors is focused on being good financial stewards of CTDA. The slow economy presents challenges for CTDA and USDF group membership organizations across the country. While we were disappointed to cancel the State Dressage Championships and Harvest Classic because of low registration, we are fortunate that our financial loss was small. We are grateful to our judges, TD, staff and the facility for working closely with us.

We look forward to another solid year for the Tennessean and Ole South dressage shows, which are USDF-recognized shows in April and August. We've updated the schedule so the Tennessean and Ole South weekends each have two one-day recognized shows. We dropped the Friday competitions, which had lower participation. 2012 schooling show schedule is already posted online.

Thank you for your participation. I appreciate our new members and volunteers – it's wonderful to see so many new faces at our shows. Feel free to contact me at cnsaia@bellsouth.net or 615-804-2348 with suggestions or questions. I look forward to another good year for dressage in Middle Tennessee.

Sincerely, Chris Saia

Part of a Community, continued

Lara moved to Tennessee from California. She says CTDA connects her to a network of trusted people who can recommend veterinarians, trainers and other resources.

Lara encourages her students to join CTDA. Lara has an active equestrian program of nearly thirty juniors at the Fairview Riding Club (fairviewridingclub.com).

“My junior riders are excited about dressage,” said Lara. “They recognize the importance of flatwork for jumping. They realize that dressage engages your mind.”

Our goal is to add more new members like Lara and her students in 2012. As a CTDA member, you automatically become a group member of the United States Dressage Federation (USDF), which provides benefits such as member discount rates at USDF events and USDF's monthly magazine. USDF is the only national membership organization dedicated to dressage.

Members receive discounts at our clinics and CTDA schooling shows. You are eligible for CTDA scholarships and year-end awards, and receive a free link on CTDA's website to your own website.

For information about membership, contact CTDA membership chair and dressage trainer Jessica Roberson Wright at 615-414-4840 or jrwright09@att.net.



2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND YEAR-END AWARDS PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Return form to:
CTDA—Membership
P.O. Box 681056
Franklin, TN 37068-1056

CTDA is a group member organization of the United States Dressage Federation and its members are automatically USDF group members. For USDF Participating Membership, members must apply directly to USDF.

Name:	Phone:
Address:	Alternate phone:
City, State, Zip	
E-mail:	
Status: Adult Amateur Junior Professional	Date of birth:
Referred by:	USDF#:

Roster info CTDA may make available to other members: Name
 I am a new member
 I am renewing a previous membership

Address Phone # Cell Phone # Email address
 I would like to receive the newsletter on-line
 I would like to receive the newsletter by US mail

Membership year for CTDA is Dec. 1–Nov. 30.
 Initial Fee: **\$45.00**, each additional family member:
\$20.00 (Family defined as spouses and dependents)

Areas in which you are willing to volunteer your time:
 Scorer Hospitality Runner
 Gate keeper Transportation Pre/post-show set up
 Fund raising Video library Scribe
 Jr/YR Group PR/Sponsorship Club Admin.
 Committee (please specify) Other area (please specify)

Please make your check payable to CTDA. \$20 of the annual dues goes toward your USDF affiliate group membership.

CTDA offers Year-End Awards for horse and rider combinations, as well as a Volunteer of the Year, Most Improved Horse/Rider Combination and a Participation Award.

In order to be eligible for Year-End Awards:
 The rider must be a current CTDA member at the time scores are earned.
 (All horses shown by CTDA rider/owner will be eligible. Scores from CTDA organized shows and other recognized shows must be submitted on the Rider Report Form between Nov. 1 and Dec. 15.)

Rider must complete 5 hours of CTDA volunteer work per horse and must turn in their Volunteer Hour Affidavit, with signatures, to the Awards Coordinator with Rider Report Form *OR* sell a minimum \$60.00 in ads and/or sponsorships for a CTDA organized event (i.e. recognized show, clinic, banquet).

See CTDA website (www.tndressage.com) for complete eligibility details.

Activities you would like to see CTDA offer:
 Clinics Recognized Shows
 Seminars Schooling Shows
 Other (please specify):

Comments you would like to make to the Board:

2012 CTDA Schooling Shows

March 24; rain date - Mar 31

May 5; rain date - May 12

June 23; rain date - June 30

July 21; rain date - July 28

August 11; no rain date

Sept. 22; rain date - Sept.29

Oct. 13; rain date - Oct. 20

Show locations are coming soon!

Schooling show photos courtesy of Cathy Holmes, Mustard Seed Photography



Murray State University Dressage Team at CTDA show

USDF Member Benefit

e-TRAK is a searchable database of educational content – everything from videos to articles and audio tapes on equine health care, training, and much more. To access e-TRAK, USDF GMO members just need to log in to the web site at www.usdf.org/e-trak.

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Festival of Champions, Continued

The Junior tests combine movements from third and fourth level dressage.

“I was thrilled to pieces with Fabulous,” said Sierra. “Our strength is the trot work – shoulder-in, half-circles, and half-pass. We can nail the trot work.”

Sierra rides with CTDA member and trainer Jessica Roberson Wright at Roberson Equestrian Center in Murfreesboro. Sierra’s family purchased Fabulous in 2006 with the goal of the pair competing in national Junior and Young Rider competition.

Prior to the Festival of Champions, Sierra and Fabulous competed at the North American Junior and Young Rider Championships (NAJYRC) at Kentucky Horse Park in July. NAJYRC is the premier equestrian competition in North America for junior and young riders, age 14-21 (youngriders.org).

Sierra says her greatest challenge with Fabulous was to retrain his late changes and improve their canter scores. She also lost training time in 2010 when Fabulous wasn’t sound for a period of time.

Sierra travelled to the Festival of Champions in 2010 as groom for Erica Marino, who competed as a Young Rider when she rode with Jessica.

“I felt prepared to compete this year,” said Sierra. “It was helpful to have worked behind the scenes as Erica’s groom.”

It takes a team to reach national junior competition. Sierra thanks her family, Jessica, veterinarians Matt Povlovich and Jessica DeLisle, and farrier Steve Davis. Sierra’s mother travels with her to every competition and her father comes to as many shows as possible. Sierra’s grandfather, Pete Anderson, is a regular volunteer at CTDA shows. Sierra is the only member of her family who rides.

Sierra’s immediate goals are to be successful with her studies at Motlow State Community College and prepare for the North American Young Rider Competition. She has three years of eligibility as a Young Rider, a level which requires dressage movements that are equivalent to Prix St. Georges.

“I’m going to train through the winter and see if I can get Fabulous to Prix St. Georges and to Young Riders in 2013,” said Sierra. “I’m not ready to stop anytime soon.”

Thank You to Our Volunteers at Ole South & Fall Schooling Shows

Susan Anderson, Pete Anderson, Ridley Bouldin, Danielle Bolte, Julie Burns, Lindsay Craig, Karen Choate, Elaine Conese, Jane Crowley, Alexandra Davidson, Adam Foster, Michael Foster, Bethany Gallagher, Sarah Haynes, Brandie Heidenway, Jana Henry, Stephanie Hickerson, Anna Holder, Lishia Holder, Nan Holland, Cathy Holmes, Andrea Johnson, Josie Johnson, Joan Jones, Katie MacFarlane, Libby MacFarlane, Kerstin Moltmann-Wilder, Katharina Nowotny-Boles, Marcia Richardson, Jayne Rogovin, Chris Saia, Beth Sheller, Susie Stephens, Lara Stringfield, Stephanie Taylor, Jen Thompson, Connie and Clyde Truett, Laura Wayman, Nancy Whitman.

News & Notes

- * Find news and photos from CTDA at tndressage.com and Facebook.
- * CTDA members Brandie Heidenway and Chris Saia travel to San Diego to represent Region 3 at 2011 Adequan/USDF National Convention & Symposium on Nov. 30—Dec. 4.

Learn Along the Way — By Mimi Bliss

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) honors riders for their achievements with Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals. CTDA members earned three Gold, three Silver and two Bronze Medals in 2011. Their achievements reflect years of hard work.

CTDA president **Chris Saia** earned her Bronze Medal on Wynona, a seventeen-year-old Hanoverian mare. Chris bought Wynona when she was “green broke” and moved-up the levels.

“You have to train at each level,” said Chris. “It’s about more than scores. What’s important is what you learn along the way.”

The Bronze medal requires two scores of 60% or above at each of three levels – first, second and third – for a total of six qualifying scores. Qualifications for Silver are two scores of 60% or more at both Fourth Level and Prix St. Georges. Gold requires two scores of 60% or more at both Intermediare I or II and Grand Prix. Riders must receive Bronze and Silver medals to be eligible for Gold.

Chris is an adult amateur rider who balances riding, CTDA, family and her profession as a chiropractor. Juggling dressage with other responsibilities is a common theme for USDF medalists.

CTDA member **Marie MacDonald** is a mechanical engineer at General Motors in Spring Hill. She prefers second shift so she can ride in the morning. Marie earned her Silver Medal with Elan, a ten-year-old Thoroughbred-Hanoverian whom she bred on her farm in Culleoka, Tennessee.

“Elan is one of my babies,” said Marie. “I bred him. I broke him. I put flying changes and tempis in him. It’s neat to earn my Silver Medal on a horse that I took all the way up. I hope he’ll go farther.”

CTDA member **Lynne Lavers** trained Nick of Time while earning a doctorate in natural medicine. Nick is an off-the-track Thoroughbred whom Lynne bought for eventing. She’s a Pony Club “A” Graduate who competed through Advanced level. Nick disliked the cross-country phase so Lynne transitioned to dressage in 2003 and now trains with Jan Brons. Lynne received both her Bronze and Silver Medals this year, although most of her scores were earned in previous years.

“Nick is like a daily riding lesson,” said Lynne, who rises at 5:15 a.m. to ride before work. “Nick’s approach is ‘Come get on and see if you can ride me.’ It’s worth it because he’s incredibly talented.”

Lynne and Nick are already competing successfully at Intermediare I with the goal to move-up to Grand Prix and earn a USDF Gold Medal.

Goal-setting is a benefit of USDF rider awards.

“Goals keep you focused,” said Chris. “The Bronze Medal is a springboard for the Silver and Gold.”

Marie, Lynne and Chris credit hard work, good instruction and support of family and friends for their success. They earned most of their qualifying scores at CTDA-sponsored shows in Middle Tennessee.



Marie MacDonald and Elan



Lynne Lavers and Nick of Time

Time and Patience: Debbie Hill's Gold Medal — By Mimi Bliss



Debbie & Izod

Time and patience go a long way toward developing a Grand Prix dressage horse, says CTDA member Debbie Hill, who received her USDF Gold Medal in 2011. Debbie earned her two qualifying scores at Grand Prix in August with Izod, a 12-year-old Oldenburg gelding owned by Karen Boates.

“If you’d asked me two or three years ago, I wouldn’t have thought he could do Grand Prix,” said Debbie. “Izod is a good worker, but he isn’t a fancy horse.”

What made the difference?

The Grand Prix scores came after six years of training with Debbie and consistent riding by Karen, an adult amateur who competes at FEI levels.

“If you work with a horse for long enough and invest enough in the relationship, they’ll surprise you in what they can give you back,” said Debbie, a professional trainer in Huntsville, Alabama (debbiehilldressage.com).

Debbie’s path to a Gold Medal also required time and patience. Debbie earned her USDF Bronze and Silver medals in 2000 with her personal horse, “Indy.” She and Indy had earned qualifying scores at Intermediare II and were entered in their first Grand Prix competition, when Indy died after colic surgery in 2005.

Debbie says that losing Indy was like the death of a family member. It was several years before she had the opportunity to train a client’s horse to compete at Grand Prix, as most horses are sold before reaching the highest level of dressage.

“It’s taken a long time to have a horse who stayed with me for long enough to go all the way,” said Debbie.

While Debbie says it would be great to compete internationally, she’s focused on current opportunities. Several clients are interested in having Debbie train their horses through Grand Prix. She’s competing at Prix St. Georges with River Side Lady and Sol dos Pinhais. Debbie is also working with several promising young horses.

“I love to maximize the potential of each horse,” says Debbie.

Debbie describes her husband of eighteen years as “very supportive and understanding of the time and passion that I put into [horses and dressage].” As mother of an eleven-year-old son, Debbie’s weekends often include a combination of dressage shows and youth football or baseball games.

Debbie’s advice for other dressage riders is to “maximize the positives, improve the weaknesses... and put the time in.”

Editor’s Notes: Other CTDA members who earned USDF medals in 2011 are Gold Medals for Kerstin Moltmann-Wilder and Melissa Cool (August 2011 newsletter) and Silver Medal for Nan Allen (May 2011 newsletter). Chris Saia and Marie MacDonald (page 6) train with Debbie Hill (above).

The Dressage Judge's "Write" Hand — By Mimi Bliss

The volunteer job of a scribe at a dressage show is both challenging and rewarding.

The challenge is meeting the USDF guidelines of quickly, accurately, legibly, and quietly recording the judge's scores and comments made about each ride.

The reward is gaining insight into how judges evaluate a dressage test.

CTDA member Jane Crowley values her experience as a scribe.

"I learn what the judge is looking for and what she likes and doesn't like," said Jane. "I know more about what I'm looking at, such as what an "8" walk looks like."

As a professional trainer based in Spring Hill, Tennessee, Jane often scribes upper-level dressage tests at CTDA's recognized shows.

"Being the scribe for an upper level test isn't for the faint-of-heart," said Jane, who describes herself as "three-instructors-in-one... classical dressage, natural horsemanship and a certified centered riding instructor." (janecrowleytraining.com).



Trainer Jane Crowley

Amateurs and lower level riders can also learn to be scribes. USDF publishes guidelines for scribes, which are available at usdf.org, and CTDA is launching a Learner Scribe Program. Jane recommends observing a judge and scribe for a half-day before doing the job yourself.

CTDA member Laura Wayman is an adult amateur rider and eye surgeon at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She handles scribe duties for CTDA at both recognized and schooling shows.

Laura says it's important to use standard abbreviations to record information. The USDF guidelines recommend abbreviations such as "bal" for "balance," "lack imp" for "lacks impulsion" and "h-in" for "haunches in."

"You get better as you go and learn to write shortcuts," said Laura.

USDF guidelines also emphasize that scribes should never volunteer information about competitors or their horses.

"A judge needs to start with a clean slate," said Lori Hoos, CTDA member and USEA "r" judge who is based at Wil-lo Blue Farm in Franklin (wil-lobluefarm.com). "I don't want any background information about the horse or rider. My goal as a judge is to score what I see in the ring."

Volunteering as a scribe is an important way to support dressage in our community. Like many CTDA members, Laura fits volunteering into an already full schedule. In addition to working full-time, Laura lives on a seven-acre farm in Brentwood with her husband, two cats, two dogs and two Hanoverian geldings named Dramiro and Dazzler.

"I help when I can," said Laura, when talking about her volunteer work for CTDA. "The only way it works is if everyone contributes."

Learner Scribe Program — By Beth Huff

CTDA is launching a “Learner Scribe Program” to prepare volunteers to scribe at dressage shows. The program has three steps:

1. Read the USDF Guide for Scribes (usdf.org)
2. Shadow an experienced scribe at a recognized show. The Volunteer Coordinator arranges this opportunity. The experienced scribe walks you through the paperwork and basic process. You sit behind the judge and keep your own list of scores and comments, as if you were the scribe. After the judge has signed the test and written her comments, you compare your scores and comments to the official scribe’s written dressage tests.
3. Scribe for **at least one** CTDA schooling show within a year of completing mentorship phase.

When you have completed these three steps, we would love to have you scribe at a recognized show.

Recognized shows generally have three levels: lower levels (Intro – 2nd), mid levels (3rd-PSG) and upper levels (Intermediare and above, Freestyles, etc) and as you become more proficient and comfortable, you could work your way up. Going through this initial program, you would be able to scribe through 4th Level at a recognized show. To prepare to scribe for the higher levels, arrangements can be made with the Volunteer Coordinator to sit on the stand for the upper level rides.

You receive a pad of paper to write your scores and comments. Please do not put any identifiers (horse/ rider name/number) on the paper. You may want to write down the number of movements for that test so you can be sure you are keeping up. Those sheets should be taken to the office and thrown away when you finish as we wouldn’t want the information floating around.

You are held to the same standards as the scribes. Learners need to understand that what is said on the judge's stand stays on the judge's stand. In essence, the judge is talking directly to the competitor and the scribes should not discuss the judge’s comments after the show.

CTDA offers multiple schooling and recognized shows throughout the year so there are plenty of opportunities for you to participate. To learn more about participating in the Learner Scribe program, please contact Beth Huff, Volunteer Coordinator, at bethchuff@comcast.net or 615-477-8289.

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Year End Awards

YEAR END AWARDS

CTDA offers three year-end award programs per level with the divisions Junior 13 and under, Junior/Young Rider, Amateur and Open. Each horse/rider combination may be Champion or Reserve Champion in only one of the three programs per level:

- **GOLD** USDF recognized shows only
- **SILVER** Combination of USDF recognized shows and CTDA sanctioned schooling shows
- **BRONZE** CTDA sanctioned schooling shows only

Horse and rider combinations may win only once at a given level and subsequent awards must be obtained at a higher level than before. To be eligible, both the owner and rider of the horse must be current CTDA members in good standing at the time tests are ridden. Additionally each horse/rider combination must complete a minimum number of rides:

- Intro/Training Level 5 rides
- First/Second/Third/Fourth Level 5 rides
- Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) 3 rides
- Musical Freestyle 3 rides

Timeframe for scores is between December 1 and November 31 of the current competition year.

Riders must also complete a minimum of 5 hours of volunteer time OR solicit \$50.00 in ads/sponsorships for a CTDA organized event which may include advertising in the programs for The Tennessean, Ole South, or Harvest Classic and State Championship competitions.

Riders competing on several horses must complete the volunteer requirement above for at least one horse, after which the owner(s) of other horses, or other interested parties (family, friends) may transfer volunteer hours or ads/sponsorships in support of said rider.

It is the member's responsibility to ensure that scores are provided to the CTDA for awards recognition. Riders should submit copies of their top scores, including those from USEF/USDF recognized shows, for the required number of rides for each level, along with their volunteer hours or sponsorship requirements (appropriately signed by a board member or the show secretary).

70% CLUB

CTDA has a 70% club for those members that have received a 70% or higher at a CTDA sanctioned show or USDF recognized show during the year and this information needs to be mailed in on the rider report form to notify the awards person of their achievement (no volunteer or ad/sponsorship monies are required for this acknowledgment).

Rider reports are due by December 15 of each performance year, to the Awards Coordinator (Awards, c/o CTDA P.O. Box 681056, Franklin TN 37068-1056).



Year End Awards

RIDER REPORT FORM

Rider's Name _____

Horse's Name _____

Rider's Phone _____ Email _____

Owner's Name _____

Circle One: AA Open JF/YR Date of birth _____

Circle One GOLD PROGRAM SILVER PROGRAM BRONZE PROGRAM 70% CLUB

SHOW DATE & NAME	TEST & PERCENTILE
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
VOLUNTEER HOURS OR SPONSORSHIP \$	Signature of Board Member of Show Secretary

Competition Year is December 1 – November 31. This report with copies of all required scores must be received by December 15 of each performance year. Please mail to:

CTDA Awards Coordinator
 P.O. Box 681056
 Franklin TN 37068-1056

**CENTRAL TENNESSEE DRESSAGE
ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 681056
Franklin, TN37066-1056

Chris Saia, President
E-mail: cnsaia@bellsouth.net

Mimi Bliss, Transitions Editor
Phone: 615-297-3656
E-mail: mimi@mimibliss.com



tndressage.com

About Our Organization

The Central Tennessee Dressage Association (CTDA) is a Group Member Organization of the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) and its members are automatically USDF group members.

The CTDA is committed to furthering the sport of Dressage, the education of its members and the recognition of their achievements in the sport of Dressage.

The CTDA encourages all who are similarly committed to this sport to join, learn, achieve, and grow with us.

- - The CTDA

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