



Ottawa Area Dressage Group

www.ottawadressage.ca

Newsletter



OADG is a chapter of CADORA Inc.

OADG is a Dressage Canada affiliated riding club.

August/September/October/November 2014

Well, we're out of the summer sunshine and heat, and into the crisp days of autumn! Time to celebrate the achievements of ourselves, our horses, and our friends and competitors. Also time to look back and assess what we want to work on next year and also, quite simply, how is our horse feeling at the end of the competitive season? What do we need to do to "gear up" for next year's season? See Awards, Perspectives, and "Organizing a Dressage Show"!

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Message from the President

Well, the 2014 dressage season is coming to an end and I hope that you have all had a good and satisfying season. Here are the latest developments that took place and the few events that will culminate 2014:

- **On Saturday November 22nd, the 2014 Award Banquet will be held at the Hellenic Centre on Prince of Wales Drive.** As our tradition wants it, this is the occasion that the OADG takes to recognize and reward the multiple efforts and good equestrian work that our riders have done during the season.
- I want to take this opportunity to congratulate all riders that participated in events during 2014. Granted that there are champions but the most important aspect is that many of you have again participated and your presence to our events is the one thing that makes it a great and rewarding success for the OADG and especially you the riders and your equine companions!
- I also want to thank the show organizers, judges, sponsors, stewards and even more, the numerous volunteers that made it a success. Without these hard working persons, there would not be any safe and enjoyable equestrian events. The long hours that volunteers spend on a voluntary basis to prepare and insure that the presentations are well organized and enjoyable for the riders, their mounts and the spectators is without any doubt, the key to our success year after year.
- Finally, I want to recognize the benevolent work that was done, in the background most of the time, by the members of the OADG Board. They also contribute with their hard work, to the success achieved.
- **On Sunday December 7th, we will be holding the OADG Annual General Meeting. It will be held at the Danby's Bar and Grill in Munster Hamlet (2858 Munster Road), starting at 1pm.** I hope that many of you will attend. This is your opportunity to voice your comments about the current year and the coming one.
- **News of the OADG Board:**
 - Christine Boucher has joined the Board as the Banquet Director.
 - 2 meetings have been held since my last message to you, on August 26th at Anne Galt's place and October 19th at Cathy Gordon's place.
 - The 7th and last 2014 meeting will be held on Sunday, November 2nd at 2:00 p.m. at my place.

Continued on page 3...



Many thanks to our wonderful **Show Sponsors**, including the Team at Oakhurst Farm for doing such a great job organizing the Eastern /Silver Dressage Championships this year.

Sponsors:

Major Show Sponsor: **Cadora Ont.**, www.cadora.ca;
Don Barnes, President

Class Ribbon Sponsor: **BFL Canada, Classic Equine**
www.BFLCanada.ca; 1-888-244-6709

Champion and Reserve Champion Ribbons: **TwinPines Equestrian Centre**
www.twinpines.ca; 613-821-0234

High Score Ribbon and Champion Flower Bouquets: **Oakhurst Farm**
www.oakhurstfarm.com

And for the prizes...

Ottawa Area Dressage Group, www.ottawadressage.ca
President Pierre Paquette, 613-821-6206

Mrs. Barbara O'Grady, Addison, Ontario

Henry Equestrian Insurance Brokers Ltd.
www.hep.ca; 1-800-36-36-HEP; hep@hep.ca

Schleese Saddlery Service Ltd
www.schleese.com; 1-800-225-2242

Intercity Insurance Services
www.intercityinsurance.com; 1-888-394-3330

StoneMeadows Equestrian Centre
www.stonemeadowstable.com; 613-295-9147

Greenhawk Harness & Equestrian Supplies
www.greenhawk.net 1-800-268-0484
Slack Rd. location 613-225-9900

Graystone Equestrian Centre
kblaeske@sympatico.ca; 613-256-7887

Rainbow Ridge Ranch
www.rainbowridgeranch.ca; 613-821-2939

Kate's Kreations, katepaintsonglass@gmail.com

Encore Equestrian Tack and Apparel
www.encoreequestrian.com; 613-269-Tack(8225)



The end-of-season update on the OADG Awards...

The final qualifying scores are posted to the OADG website <http://ottawadressage.ca/awards/#scores>. All local shows are reported, as well as all external scores received. Award winners are posted to the website as well.

At this point in the "busy-ness" leading to the banquet, I want to sincerely thank some people:

- Kiki Baggerman-Webster and Rhonda Burke. Thank you so much for helping out with tracking scores in the Silver and Gold circuits. Everyone reading this newsletter should know that the job of getting scores onto the website for all to track standings throughout the season is quite large. Without Kiki and Rhonda's help, I don't think it would happen.
- All this year's competitors. Thank you for giving me feedback on score changes and for getting your year-end forms in on time. Much appreciated.
- All last year's award winners. A stellar response to my call for return of trophies. To date I am at about 95% returned, which is excellent!

Note: Those of you expecting CADORA Silver awards should check your results at <http://www.cadora.ca/Cadora-Ontario/>. On the right side of the page is a direct link to the 2014 standings: "2014 Silver Standings online".

Looking to 2015. Ideally, it takes 5 people to efficiently run the score tracking and trophy process for OADG. Three are needed to track the scores in Gold, Silver and Schooling (ESD). One is needed to assist with the trophy return and engraving process. Only one, the Awards Director, needs to be on the Board and attend meetings. With this number of helpers, the actual workload is light and enjoyable. So if you have extra time and would like to be involved next year, please let me know. Any help would be appreciated!

See you at the banquet! I would love to put some faces to names I only have email contact with.

Catherine Maguire, Awards Director
awards@ottawadressage.ca

Message from the President, continued...

- The Board will be looking at this point of time for at least one other director for 2015 to probably take over the membership portfolio. Any one interested should contact me directly to indicate their intention to join and/or to obtain info if need be. (president@ottawadressage.ca)
- The total OADG membership for 2014 is 216 which includes 35 junior members.
- The Board set the cost of the Banquet ticket for this year at \$38.00 for adults and \$20.00 for children under 12.
- The Board is very happy to report that Shirley Guertin of Centaur Riding School has accepted to be the Guest Speaker at our coming banquet and she will be speaking to us about the Lendon Gray Youth Dressage Festival which is held each year in August, in Saugerties, New York.
- Finally, at this time, it appears our show calendar for next year will have 10 schooling shows, 6 silver shows and 7 gold shows.
- Finally, it is with regret that I wish to advise you that Spiritwood Farm will no longer be on our show list. Spiritwood Farm has been a very important entity in the Ottawa Dressage community. Our best wishes go to Joanna MacDonald in her retirement and our sincere thanks to her for all she did for dressage and the OADG for so many years.

Pierre Paquette, OADG President



OADG Annual Awards Banquet!

Get your tickets early!

Saturday November 22, 2014

Hellenic Meeting and Reception Centre

1315 Prince of Wales Drive
(the same location as last year)

Socializing (cocktails): 5:30 pm

Buffet dinner: 6:30pm.

Tickets are on sale now:
\$38 per adult, \$20 per child (under 12)

(Drinks are not included in the ticket price; a cash bar is available at the event.)

Special Guest Speaker: Shirley Guertin

speaking about Lendon Gray and “Lendon’s Dressage Festival for Youth”

Please note that a team made up of OADG junior riders competed, and had excellent results at the 2014 festival! Come out and hear about their experiences, and what’s involved with going to the next LDFY with your own junior riders!

(For some background info on Lendon Gray’s Dressage Festival for Youth, see this month’s copy of *Dressage Today* magazine (Nov. 2014).

The trophies will be polished up with new plaques added. We hope to see you there! To purchase your tickets, please contact Marie-Christine Boucher at 613-573-0075 or banquet@ottawadressage.ca, or contact one of the other directors on your Board of Directors.

Make cheques payable to OADG. Sorry, electronic payment is not yet an option! Contact Marie-Christine for any of the following requests:

- Tables can be set up to seat 8 or 10. If you want a “barn table” (or two!), please provide a list of the names of people who want to sit at the same table.
- If you have special needs (food allergies or handicap accessibility), please discuss your requirements with the banquet director.

A big THANK YOU and WELCOME to Christine Boucher, who made a timely offer to help with the organizational logistics for the banquet! Much appreciated!



Catching up with... Barbara O'Grady

Many OADG members remember Barbara O'Grady and her horse, Kanada Post, competing up to Intermédiaire I a few years back. Mrs. O'Grady has remained a member of OADG, and we asked her recently if she would summarize her competitive career and the highlights along the way.

Thank you for your interest. So many memories, so much fun!

Kanada Post was my "horse of a lifetime". He was born two weeks early, hence the name. His main career was eventing – he won every event he entered at each level, including the Ontario Championships in 1997. Many thanks to dressage coach Gina Smith and cross-country coach Betty Cooper.

Kanada Post was 7/8th Thoroughbred and 1/8th Hannoverian, perfect for eventing, galloping and jumping BUT quite a challenge for dressage! After his eventing career, it was thanks to Gina's patient coaching that helped us climb the ladder of dressage. Many challenges were presented as we worked our way up the rungs to Prix St Georges and Intermédiaire I, but so much fun to reach each new progression as neither horse nor rider were dressage protégés from birth!

I have had numerous horses in my 72 years of riding. We are still breeding, raising and racing Thoroughbreds at Woodbine in Toronto. I am still riding, but not competing, thus selling all of that equipment.*

I have probably been a member of OADG for forty years. It has been an important way to bring along young horses, enjoy clinics, and spend time with friends. A membership with OADG gives young riders many varied opportunities to understand the importance of dressage and have fun while learning. It is important to continue to support OADG in order to cheer on and support those continuing to improve and enjoy their riding.

An important note to young riders: your dressage has to be a good solid base for everything else.

* See Mrs. O'Grady's recent ad on the OADG website for many quality items, including a shadbelly.

"Catching up with..." is a regular (or at least semi-regular! ☺) feature. If you know what someone is up to now, or would like to find out what someone is up to, please contact your Communications director to suggest an article.

OADG Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2014 OADG Annual General meeting will be held:

- on Sunday December 7th
- at 1pm
- at Danby's Bar and Grill, 2858 Munster Road in Munster Hamlet (613-838-2521)

This is your opportunity to see what was done with your membership fee in the past year and to voice your comments on the OADG and on how it could improve its service to the members in the coming year(s).

All members are welcome. We hope to see you there!

Organizing a Dressage Show

by Anne Galt and Jane Hunt
OADG Board members

Changes to the Ottawa-area dressage show venues

Change comes to all things – I think that’s a quote but I can’t remember where from! Over the past couple of seasons, Ottawa riders have seen some new venues added to the circuit of dressage shows, both here in Ottawa and in the Kingston region. And next season (2015), Ottawa will lose one of our most stalwart venues – there will be no dressage shows held at Spiritwood Farm in 2015.

While we are sad to know that circumstances preclude Spiritwood from holding shows next year, the OADG would like to say a heartfelt “thank you” to Joanna and her staff of workers and volunteers. Spiritwood has been a long-term fixture on the local dressage circuit and we will miss it.

Centaur Riding School, Dewmont Farms, Heroncrest, Starlit Farm and Preston Rosedale have provided show facilities for a number of years, and most, if not all, are planning to continue offering their Gold, Silver and ESD shows. A big “thank you” to the facility owners and their teams of workers and volunteers for providing the opportunities to Ottawa dressage riders to show and train.

Recently, other facility owners/managers have stepped up to the plate and provided new show venues for ESD (“schooling”) level shows, Silver, Gold and Platinum. In just a few years, Rainbow Ridge has held numerous shows, including a championship; Numech has hosted shows for the past two years; Oakhurst Farm has hosted the Silver championship and some ESD shows, and is joining the Silver circuit in 2015; and the Ottawa Dressage Festival Platinum (“FEI-level”) show will be returning to Wesley Clover Parks in 2015. In addition, Mountain Star Stables will be hosting one Silver show and two ESD shows in 2015; SkyLine Farm will be offering an ESD show; and Graystone Equestrian Centre will be organizing a Silver show.

Your OADG Board of Directors encourages anyone who would like to try running an ESD, Silver, Gold or Platinum dressage show. We would welcome you to the Ottawa-area circuit of shows, and work with you to find the best match for a date within the schedule, to give advice on scheduling and footing, and to promote and facilitate cooperation and knowledge-sharing among the competition organizers. For 2015, we have sufficient shows on the schedule, but we’re happy to hear from anyone who would like to plan for 2016.

Organizing a dressage competition

Your OADG Board would, seriously, NOT advise trying to run a Gold or Platinum show for your first event! More importantly, Equine Canada is extremely unlikely to sanction a Gold or Platinum show for a brand-new competition organizer at a brand-new facility! However, a few ESD and Silver shows provide a “track record” for an organizer who would like to build up to running a Gold or Platinum show.

Here is a list of some of the resources that are available to you as an organizer:

1. The rule books.

Read the rules! Good golly gosh, that sounds like something the judges and stewards all say, about competing! ☺ True – and there is also a lot of information in the rule books about the requirements for putting on a dressage show. Everything from ring dimensions and minimum space around the ring (free from spectators), to drug testing requirements, to which officials you need to hire is available in the rule books.

Recommended reading: both Section A, General Regulations and Section E, Dressage. If you read them now, make sure you re-read them in the spring, to check if any changes have been made for the 2015 show season.

2. If this is your first show ever, ask an experienced competition organizer to work with you.

You can use your own network of contacts, or your OADG Show Coordinator is happy to assist in suggesting people who might be able and willing to mentor you through your first show.



3. OADG Show Coordinator.

Anne Galt is available for advice, assistance with picking a date, and for answering questions. If she doesn't know the answer to your question, she probably knows who does!

4. OADG Show Organizers meeting.

All show organizers are invited to the Show Organizers meeting. Held in July, this meeting is used to set the show dates for the next season, and also allows the organizers to talk to each other and share advice.

5. Equine Canada website (for Platinum and Gold shows, and for Silver or Bronze shows running concurrently with a Gold show).

The Equine Canada website (<http://equinecanada.ca>) has a treasure trove of documents relating to applying for and organizing a show sanctioned by Equine Canada:

- the Competitions Information Package
- EC Guidelines to Complete my Application Form
- the Competition Application Forms themselves (there are different forms for Ontario and Québec):
 - Ontario
 - Québec
- a list of all of the competition forms (from Accident and Injury Report Form through to Yellow Warning Card!); recommended reading: Competition Manager Report, Competition Master Report Form, Dressage Steward Report & Evaluation Form and Horse Show/Event Certification of Insurance could all give you ideas for proactively planning your competition
- the Competition Administration Policy (CAP)
- additional information on the EC website:
 - i. a list of accredited officials (judges and dressage stewards; note that your stewards must be accredited in dressage)
 - ii. the back issues of the newsletters for competition managers, secretaries and officials might be interesting
 - iii. 2014 Letter to Competition Organizers & Officials (check in 2015 to see if there is an updated one)
 - iv. July 2013 – Memorandum to EC Competition Organizers Regarding GABA and Injectable Magnesium
 - v. check the EC website periodically for new information

Equine Canada's competitions team, Kari MacGregor and Maria-Christina Lepore, are available to answer any questions about EC-sanctioned shows. Contact them at competitions@equinecanada.ca or 613-287-1515.

6. Ontario Equestrian Federation (OEF) website (for ESD, Bronze and Silver shows).

The OEF website (<http://horse.on.ca>) contains lots of great information for organizers of ESD, Bronze and Silver shows, including information about which officials you may hire, the deadlines for paperwork, and contact information

The Equestrian Skills Development webpage (<http://horse.on.ca/competitions/organizers/equestrian-skills-development/>) includes:

- the E.S.D. Sanctioning Guidelines and Requirements
- the E.S.D. Competition Application Form
- a Horse Show Insurance Certificate

OEF's webpage titled "Equine Canada Competitions" includes links to the Equine Canada forms and policies listed on the EC website (<http://horse.on.ca/competitions/organizers/equine-canada-bronze-silver/>).

These pages also include information about which officials you may hire (different levels for each different level of show!), a list of accredited officials, the deadlines for paperwork, and contact information for Angelique Homan (a.homan@horse.on.ca or 1-877-441-7112 ext 15) who can answer questions about organizing the shows.



7. Consider the viewpoint of the competitors.

If you are currently a competitor, or you used to compete, or you can ask competitors at your barn, put on your “competitive helmet” for a while – think about what you liked at a show, and what you didn’t like at a show. If you can put yourself in the place of your competitors, you’ll be able to proactively plan to provide the type of show that competitors will like. Their results, of course, are up to them – but if they can leave the show grounds at the end of the day saying “wow! That venue did a good job of providing a nice location. The warm-up ring was accessible and safe, the lunch truck was convenient, the trailer parking was straight-forward and it was easy to get the trailer out at the end of the day”, then that competitor will probably decide to come back next year.

Some general comments:

- Prize list approval – For Silver and Gold shows, don’t forget that your prize list must receive approval from your steward, well in advance of the show! It must be approved before you can post it or distribute it.
- If you are running an Ontario Silver or Bronze level of competition, even though these are classified as “Equine Canada” sanctioned shows you can sanction them through the OEF office.
- Silver or Bronze competitions that are running concurrently with a Gold competition must be sanctioned through the Equine Canada office.
- Platinum and Gold competitions are always sanctioned through the Equine Canada office.
- All shows except ESD are subject to drug testing. You must provide a suitable stall for the drug tester.
- If you have multiple warm-up areas, or your warm-up area is a long distance from your competition ring, you should consider engaging more than one steward. Learner stewards and Basic/Medium stewards appreciate the opportunity to work with your paid steward in order to gain the experience they require for upgrading. Talk to your steward early; they may know of someone who wants to gain experience.
- Although it’s not stated in the rules, it is highly considerate of the organizer to provide a private area for the judge and steward to have lunch, so (if necessary) they can discuss any events that cropped up during the competition.

Volunteers:

You will need a few good (reliable) people to help at your show. Not all volunteers need to be knowledgeable about dressage or even about horses, but some of the positions do need someone with knowledge to fill them. They need to know that the position is “rain or shine, snow or hail”!

- You will need to provide a scribe for each judge. Ask early, as the good, experienced scribes are often booked early! The scribe sits next to the judge and writes down the marks and comments, so the judge never has to take their eyes off the competitor. This is a great position for someone who wants to learn more about what the judge is looking for, or for a recorded judge who would like to upgrade.
- Runners to pick up the tests from the judge’s booth(s) and run them over to the scorers.
- Scorers to calculate the overall mark for each test, and to calculate the placings in each class and division (1st, 2nd, champion, reserve, etc.).
- A show secretary, to hand out the numbers and collect them at the end of the day, and to collect the passports and send them to the steward.
- A whipper-in, at least one but preferably one per ring. The whipper-in keeps the competitors aware of their upcoming times for tests, and ensures that all riders are aware if there is a delay in ride times.

Note that horse show activities can be used by high school students as part of their volunteer hours (required for graduation). Ask them to bring their form, and sign it for them to register the number of hours that they work.

If you are a competitor, after reading this – I’m sure you can see it’s a lot of work to put on a horse show! Please remember to thank the show organizer and the facility owner for providing the venue. Almost always, the organizers say it’s worth it, and they’re happy to “give back” to the horse community.

Perspectives

The view from the judge's booth

Bravery: how to teach it, every day, every ride – and “why”

From my Madame Judge's point of view @ 'C', I witness a number of incidents of 'Loss of Bravery'.

In dressage it's referred to as a change of tempo, rhythm interrupted, hesitant, reluctant, misbehaviour, off track and so on.

In my personal riding and coaching this is addressed every day – in arenas, rings and hacking. I start small and build as my mount's bravery increases.

Looking for puddles, odd footing, fallen logs, changes in ground texture, light-to-shadow and back again are high on my mind. Where to guide my horse's hooves and body while maintaining straightness with a supple response, following 'my line', not theirs, is a daily goal of being a rider – not a passenger – a trainer or guide if you will.

In this manner my horse learns to trust my call. I become the leader and they are content and willing to follow my aids.

Never do I let them get into trouble, nor do I approach these 'oddities' with tension. Lightly releasing the rein pressure, but not dropping the feel completely encourages 'GO' and I praise with my voice. All the while keeping my body and rein aids firm, comforting and progressive on the forward direction. If my mount is clearly hesitant, I double my image of 'getting through' in my mind and body. Disallow step back, then praise; disallow stepping out left or right, then praise; only allow forward and praise, big time! Using a good sense of expectation of success coupled with awareness of my mount's willingness, I find a level of accomplishment as to be able to reward, never reprimand. And we come back to this specific situation again another day until we pass it to my feel of correct confidence and harmony.

Should this come up in a dressage ring, on an unappealing weather day (with wind, rain, puddles, soggy flowers or footing), we will be brave enough to show our partnership off in a positive manner.

You cannot always control what happens, so prepare at home, often, so you both will be ready to bravely handle it, and show off, not fall off!

It feels better than good to win, it feels right!

Elaine Potter, 'M' Level Judge (aka “Madame Judge” ☺)

[note from your intrepid newsletter editor: “Madame Judge” and I worked together at a show, recently, with torrential downpours, threat of lightning, and soggy flowers drooping over the letters. This article came from that environment, asking how riders can prepare their horses to halt beautifully at X, when X is slap-dash in the middle of a huge horse-eating puddle!]

If you have a story, comment, perspective, or viewpoint, please feel free to submit it for the next newsletter! Contact us through communications@ottawadressage.com. Your contribution will be much appreciated.



There and back again – a horse's tail tale

(with apologies to JRR Tolkien!)

Today, my sorcerous human put me inside a magic box that shook, rattled and rolled and *_changed the entire outside!!!_* When I came out of the magic box, the entire farm was different! There were dragons, and there was gold, and there were elves and dwarves!

My sorcerous human took me into a DIFFERENT STALL. She threw down some yummy hay that tasted just like at home, but the water smelled funny and I wouldn't drink any until she gave me a bucket of water that smelled just like the water at home. So I drank it.

Then, she put me into new cross-ties and put all my normal tack on. We went outside and she took me to a strange mounting block but it didn't have teeth or anything so I finally agreed to let her use it to climb up on me. We walked around the funny farm a bit, and I looked at a lot of things. There were horses that I didn't know! They said "eh, your rider wears army boots!" so I stuck out my tongue at them. I guess my human thought that was rude, because she tightened my cavesson.

We went into a sand ring that had a fence all around it, it was almost like riding at home but the sand ring was a different size and shape, and the fence was different! It had a rail and another rail, but the fence at home only has one rail. I spooked at that, but my rider just laughed.

She made me do something called "our standard warm-up" and then a new person came into the ring and started ordering my human around. And she followed the orders! It was almost like having what she calls "a dressage session" at home, but we didn't do exactly what we usually do. This time, she made me do "leg yield" and "spiralling in at the trot"... okay, we do those at home, most times that she rides me, but this time, she MADE ME DO THEM what the new person said was "properly"! I didn't think I liked that new person, but at the end of the session the new person said "good job! Nice horse!" so now I think I like her.

After the new person left us alone and started ordering some other horse around, we walked around and looked at some more new stuff. I think it was called "hacking through the back field". Another horse came with us, and I didn't know that other horse, but my rider kept talking to that horse's rider as if she already knew the rider from somewhere before! What a weird funny farm this place was.

My rider untacked me and put me back in the stall with some more yummy hay and some gold! She said she was going to "watch some other sessions in the clinic" but I didn't understand so I just kept eating the hay and the gold. I talked to the horses in the stalls on either side, too. They had neat stories to tell me.

Finally, my human came back and she wanted to load me up into the magic box again. I can tell you, I wasn't having ANY of THAT nonsense! But then she fooled me, because she put some more gold at the front of the box and that gold just drew me up the ramp and straight to it! While I was dazzled by the gold, my nefarious human put a metal bar up, behind my butt, and then I was trapped! However, I was still dazzled by the gold, so I didn't worry about it at all.

The magic box did its shake-rattle-and-roll trick again, and guess what!?!?! When I came out of it, everything was back to normal! The funny farm had changed back to my regular farm, and my regular stall was waiting for me! Luckily, no other horses had tried to take it over while I was gone – I would have told them off if they had!

My human gave me a rub-down, and fed me more yummy hay and more gold. I drank some water too, it was normal water not funny-smelling water. I told my herdmates about my big adventure but they didn't really believe me. Oh well.

Translation:

My Horse's First Trip Off-Site, to a Dressage Clinic at Another Facility

I loaded my baby-green horse into the horse trailer and took her to another facility, where a dressage clinic was being held. I took along some of her regular hay, because the little darling

(continued on the next page)

Equine massage therapy – Post competition

The competitive show season is wrapping up for many and as we take a look back at our accomplishments and set new goals for the next show season, we shouldn't forget about the high physical demands that were placed on our horses throughout the show season.

Dressage horses are trained to perform with sophistication and finesse of execution which requires them to demonstrate control, flexibility, and accuracy. The nature of dressage work requires your horse to have great muscle control and coordination and over the course of a show season, muscles in the horse's body are inevitably stressed and fatigued. Some common signs of muscle tension are:

- limited range of motion
- lacks forward impulsion
- throws up head for gait changes
- refusal to take a lead
- horse hollows back
- inability to round their back
- rhythm feels 'off'

An equine massage therapist will perform an overall assessment and if working on a dressage horse, they will likely pay particular attention to the hindquarters, lower back, shoulders, neck (upper and lower), and jaw. The aim of the massage is to relieve tension, help restore balance, range of motion, and relaxation.

A post competition equine massage will undoubtedly help relieve immediate tension and coupled with regular wellness treatments it will help keep your horse's muscles healthy and balanced, maintain strength and suppleness, and enhance range of movement for optimal performance.

Taking good care of your horse's body and mind will help you and your horse perform at their best both at home and in the ring.

(Note: Equine Massage Therapy should not be considered as a substitute for veterinary care.)

Christine Hatfield, CEMT

www.OutaouaisEquineMassage.com

(Stay tuned for a full article by Ms Hatfield on equine massage therapy, in a future issue.)

There and back again – a horse's tail tale (continued)

does need to eat! I also took along some water from the farm's well, because sometimes horses won't drink strange-smelling water (from a different well). I also took along lots of carrots, as either rewards or bribes!

When we arrived at the other facility, there were things that my horse had not seen – such as strange dogs, horses that she didn't know, a tractor with a different engine sound, and a flappy flag waving in the breeze. I think my horse gave all of these scary things the same label – dragons! There were also children riding ponies – aka "elves" and "dwarves"!

I tacked up with plenty of time for a relaxed warm-up, so we walked around the property a little bit. About 20 minutes before my scheduled time, I started warming my horse up in the sand ring. We did our normal walk/trot warm-up, avoiding some of the "dragons" but going close to most of them. The clinician asked us to do most of the same stuff as we do at home – baby-green horse, so we're only doing walk/trot movements at the moment. She gave me lots of feedback on how to improve my position, and how to ensure my horse is doing the movements correctly.

My mare did fabulously well for a baby-green going to a new facility and doing her first-ever dressage clinic. I was very pleased with what I learned from the clinician, and how well my mare behaved! When we got back to the barn, I put her in the borrowed stall, gave her some hay and carrots, made sure she had water, and headed back to the sand ring to watch a couple of other riders.

Eventually, it was time to load my mare back into the trailer and go home. Well, she didn't like the idea – until I put some carrots at the front of the trailer and then she simply walked up the ramp and my friend could put the butt-bar up behind her! When we got back to the farm where I stable her, she unloaded like a "pro", went into her stall, and proceeded to tell her herd-mates all about it!

By the way, the facility that hosted the clinic is NOT a "funny farm"! ☺



Local show schedule

Please check the OADG website regularly for updates and new information: www.ottawadressage.ca/shows

This show schedule includes only local shows. For a list of the 2014 Ontario and Quebec shows, go to the OADG website. For a list of all horse shows, go to the Equine Canada website: <http://events.equinecanada.ca/index.aspx>

May		June	
Sun May 4-11	Spiritwood Schooling (rescheduled)	May 30-June 1	Ottawa Dressage Festival Gold
Sun May 11	Heroncrest Schooling (cancelled)	June 14-15	Rainbow Ridge Silver / Gold
Sun May 18	Starlit Farm Schooling (cancelled)	Sat June 21	Heroncrest Schooling
	Centaur Gold	Sun June 22	Dewmont Farms Silver
Sun May 25	Spiritwood Silver	Sun June 29	Spiritwood Schooling
Sun May 31	Oakhurst Schooling		
May 30-June 1	Ottawa Dressage Festival Gold		
July		August	
Sat July 5	Numech Equestrian Centre Silver	Sun Aug 3	Centaur Silver
July 12-13	Rainbow Ridge Gold	Sun Aug 10	Spiritwood Silver
Sun July 20	Centaur Schooling	Sat Aug 16	Oakhurst Schooling
	Spiritwood Schooling	Sat Aug 23	Numech Equestrian Centre Silver
Sun July 27	Heroncrest Schooling		SkyLine Farm Schooling
		Sun Aug 31	Spiritwood Schooling
September		October	
Sun Sept 14	Ontario East Silver Championships Oakhurst	Sun Oct. 5	Centaur Schooling
Sun Sept 21	Preston Rosedale Schooling	All done for 2014 ☺. Look for the 2015 show schedule soon.	

News from CADORA Ontario

- The **CADORA ONTARIO AGM** will be held in Guelph, Ontario on Sunday, November 30th, at the Mohawk Inn and Conference Centre.
 - Lorraine Stubbs, Canadian Olympian and FEI Dressage Judge will be the guest speaker.
 - Everyone is welcome to attend!
 - For those of you that have won **CADORA ONTARIO awards for 2014**, I will bring them back if you were not present at the meeting and I will advise you upon my return on how distribution will be made.
- P.M Paquette, OADG CADORA rep.

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Website: www.ottawadressage.ca