



Spring 2016 Newsletter



Happy Spring, everyone!

We are hard at work getting ready for the upcoming show season, and there's a lot going on behind the scenes in ADA right now. We've got some great judges lined up and some super volunteers helping out with lots more opportunities on the horizon. We made a whole subcommittee just for ribbons! So get those shedding blades out, start pulling manes, and dust off your test book. It's going to be a great year.

Important Announcements

Bill Burke at Bluff Park Arena in Wasilla. April 9-10. Proceeds to benefit Aurora Equine Therapy. \$75. Contact Linda (355-TROT).

Daisy Dance Dressage Schooling Show May 14 and clinic with Deb Moynihan. May 13, 15, & 16 at SEEC to benefit Alpenglow Pony Club. Contact 227-4022.

Ride-A-Test with Nicole Ringler. May 21. Dimond H Ranch in Anchorage. \$15/test to benefit ADA. Email spencerjennifer@hotmail.com to sign up.

Centered Riding Open Clinic with Karen Irland. July 1-3 at Saddle-Up Arena in Butte. \$300 ride/\$50 audit. Contact Alys (745-4747).

Vaccination for Equine Influenza and Equine Herpes will be required within six months of ADA shows. Bring your shots records with you.

You might have noticed a few familiar names in a recent *USDF Connection*. Our gold medal winner, **Nicole Ringler**, and our two bronze medal winners, **Lauren Eaton** and **Samantha Capps**, have done us so very proud this year! **Raena Schraer**, **Marti Miller**, and **Linda Kelly** showed up, too, for the Adequan®/USDF All-Breeds awards! Coincidentally, those three were also our top ADA first level amateurs. For participating organizations and an **All-Breeds Awards Declaration Form**, visit the USDF website at (<http://www.usdf.org/awards/all-breeds/>). Submit the form to USDF by **August 1, 2016** to be considered.

We celebrate each and every one of you who are working toward your goals, whether it's breaking 60% at a new level, straightening out that crooked leg yield, building a better partnership with your horse, or just improving upon last year.

The secret to a great leg yield.

Illustration by Lindsey Kahn
<http://www.kahnartistry.com/>

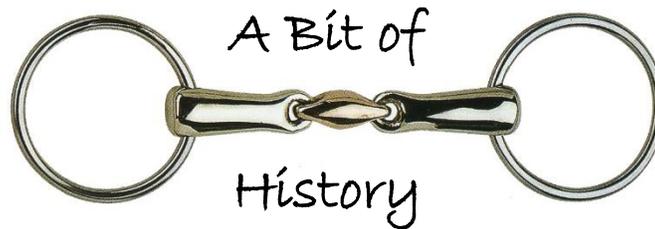


Just do us a favor, and don't be a *Dressage Queen* (compound noun). Someone who:

Mows you down with their horse in the warm up ring then tells you to look out. | Has more bling than sense (e.g. matching tiaras for me and my horse). | Looks down at any other kind of riding. | Over-dramatizes absolutely everything. | Buys new tack rather than cleaning tack, etc. (Yeah, we do notice when you don't clean your stall).

A few (less fun, more official) *USDF Rules* for the Warm-Up Area:

Pass left shoulder to left shoulder and look where you are going. Pass to the inside with plenty of clearance or make a circle instead. | Keep at least one horse's length away from other horses. | Plan halts for the center of the ring. | When turning, check your "rear view" first. | Be careful how you use your whip; other horses may react more enthusiastically. | Do your schooling in a positive manner. Do not school after a test if you are angry. | Do not meander around the ring without purpose at any time.



In the early 80's, when Kathy Brooks and her husband along with Carolyn Schultz co-founded ADA, they incorporated so much more than a nonprofit. Without them, the organization that has brought us all together and made so much possible for our riders and enthusiasts, would not exist. In the early 90's when Christine Erikson jumped on the board, ADA flourished with her support.

Carolyn is still supporting ADA in too many ways to list. Although Kathy and Christine are no longer with us, they would doubtless be impressed that we have gone from no recognized judges to four USDF shows each year, a website, an annual banquet, prizes, and even sweatshirts! We had three USDF medal winners last year, and those riders were able to train and show entirely here in Alaska. We have nine people serving on our board, plus so many others who lend their time and skills to help us achieve success.

But I would like to think, what would impress them most is that we continue to support each other. For that reason, we recognize those who contribute to our community in positive and exemplary ways via two special awards.

Just a few of people have been nominated for both awards; dual winners include **Carolyn Schultz, Susie Kaiser, Christine Erikson, and Linda Kelley**. So many people make great dressage possible here, and make dressage great here.

*Kathryn Brooks
Lifetime Achievement
Perpetual Award –
Credit: Fiore
Photography,
2015*



Look out for them this summer, and for a nomination form visit www.alaskadressage.org.

Christine Erikson ADA Super Volunteer Award

Christine is remembered for her ardent volunteerism as well as her irreverent sense of humor and memorable laugh. She was a person who “knew no strangers,” who was bright, bold, sassy, sincere, and “oh-so-vocal in the things she believed in.” She was cherished for her role as a mentor to young people in all areas of her life, and all equestrian disciplines. Her friend Pauline remembers, “She was my greatest fan, my biggest critic, and the one person who truly believed in what I was trying to do. I love her, I miss her, and I give thanks for what we were able to say to each other while we were both still alive. CHRISTINE, really ... Have you ever really met anyone like her?”

Kathryn Brooks Lifetime Achievement Perpetual Award

USDF rules state that the horse, rider, and tack should be “immaculate when entering the competition arena.” Kathy was immaculate when entering just about anywhere; Carolyn remembers her in a white skirt and heels like Grace Kelley. She came to Alaska with her third level horse well before the first USDF judge bundled up against a space heater at the Chamberlain Equestrian Center. When score sheets at open shows had a number with no comments, her tack and attire were ready for Devon. But it was her enthusiasm that helped bring ADA into being. She recognized the need to organize, and knew that all would benefit and strive to improve, which laid the foundation for all we are able to accomplish today.

Alaska Gold

Before she got her horse, HS Wistful Elegance (“Ellie”), second level was the highest that Nicole Ringler had attempted. But as she and Ellie trained and developed a partnership, it was clear that more was possible. One day she said to a clinician, “It would be fun just to learn some Grand Prix movements.” The clinician responded, “why not show them?”



Nicole and Ellie – Credit: Fiore Photography, 2015

Last summer, Nicole achieved USDF gold medal status: scores above 60% for two different judges at both Intermediare and Grand Prix. To get this far without regular instruction, Nicole watches lessons, shows, and YouTube videos online. “I just learn as much as I can and apply it to my horse. It can be a big timewaster, but it’s also fun to see the mistakes that other people make and know that you’re not alone.”

When she can, she takes clinics with Jeremy Beale, Sue Kolstad and Jennifer Williams. But mostly she says, “I learned Grand Prix by trial and error. We figured it out along the way.” Also along the way, Nicole had two children (Chase, 8, and Eli, 6). “I showed first level one year. Then I had a baby. Then I came back and showed third level. And then I had another baby. So in the time I’ve had [Ellie], I’ve had two babies and just shown when I can. Last year I only got to do the one show, the second one, for the last score I needed – and we got it!”

She describes Ellie as a “high-maintenance mare with a good work ethic once you get her attention.” Learning the piaffe was definitely the hardest, Nicole says. But flying changes came more easily. “After we figured out the singles, doing the tempis wasn’t too bad once I learned how to count.”

All of the judges Nicole has ridden for have said positive things about her horse’s potential, even one day, at third level, when the mare “screamed her head off for the whole test.” She is quick to add that they managed to do all the movements, and explain: “She’s kind of a challenging personality at the shows. She’s very herd-bound with other horses. Just getting her mentally stable in the warmup is my biggest challenge. One day she can be good, the next she’s a nut job. She’s also very loveable, very loving. She’s really fun – when she’s good.”

(Continued on next page)

Only in Alaska

Got an anecdote you’d like to share about you and your horse? Does it have to do with wildlife, extreme weather, or any other zany things that couldn’t possibly have happened anywhere else? Send us a line!

webmaster@alaskadressage.org

I was out riding the trail when I saw a mama bear with three cubs. I insisted we should wait and watch them for a while, then got quite the passage when I turned toward home.

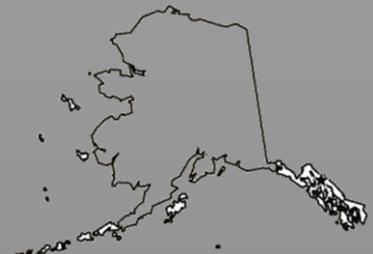
~ Sigrun and “Sara”

We used to turn my mare loose to graze at F Bar J. One day I looked out, and there she was in close company with two moose!

~ Rosa and “Bo”

The horses all panicked at the barn because a bear came through our grazing paddock. But not my horse – she was getting a massage on the cross-ties. She never moved. She was so happy.

~ Karen and “Flirt”



Nicole is thankful that ADA brings up S-level judges, without which she wouldn't be able to compete at such a high level. "I think since I've been 4th level and up, I've been one of the only ones in [those classes]. But I am not doing this for other people, I'm doing it to see how far I can go."

She's also grateful for her husband, Joel, who not only shoes her horse, but also encouraged her every time she thought she should quit, and her mom, Sue Mues, who is either watching her boys so she can ride or riding right along with Nicole. It is a passion they share.



2016 Board Members

So you guys, um, what's your favorite horse movie?

Jennifer Spencer	President	The Horse Whisperer: It shows the healing power of horses and people.
Karen Duplantis	Vice President	National Velvet: I love Elizabeth Taylor & Mickey Rooney, but the horse wasn't piebald. I was, and am to this day, a fan of spots!
Marti Miller	Secretary	Seabiscuit: 12 of us rented a limo to go see it. Our theater row rocked gently as we riders unconsciously moved with the hoof beats.
Charlene Cohen	Treasurer	Secretariat: It's a story about a woman in a man's world using her intuition and succeeding.
Ardene Eaton	Senior Board	Black Beauty: The horse is smart. He observes his surroundings and remembers people in his life.
Jeff Ritter	Senior Board	Harry and Snowman: It's a great modern horse and rider success story.
Erika Kelsey	Senior Board	Hidalgo: It shows a great partnership, based on a true story, and the "non-traditional" horse wins!
Hannah Haghighi	Junior Board	Secretariat: It really happened! It's not just another typical story about a girl and a horse.
Lauren Eaton	Junior Board	Black Beauty: It's the first movie I remember, and when he galloped through the water he was just so beautiful.

Find a mistake in our newsletter? Got a great story idea? Want to write a story yourself, or submit a letter to the editor? Great! Put "to the editor" in your subject line and send a message to webmaster@alaskadressage.org. To learn more about ADA or download a membership form, visit our website at www.alaskadressage.org. Check out our Facebook page, too!

The Judge's Box

The first judge of the season, for the June 11-12 Spring Festival, is Shirley Rector, who's been a USEF-S judge for 15 years. We asked, she answered, and she was with a dream team of other judges, too:

Q: Tell me about your pet peeves. What drives you crazy? What are you seeing a lot of, and what do you find yourself saying over and over on tests?

A: "I hate lazy walks. They're so easy to fix at home, NOT at the show. Jane Weatherwax (USEF-S, FEI-4*) said wagging heads (back and forth see-sawing). Number one, from Anne Gibbons (USEF-S, FEI-5*), is being left at the airport or unable to find the pickup person. We all agreed on that one."

Thanks, Shirley! We can't wait to host you here, and we'll definitely see you at the airport early!

