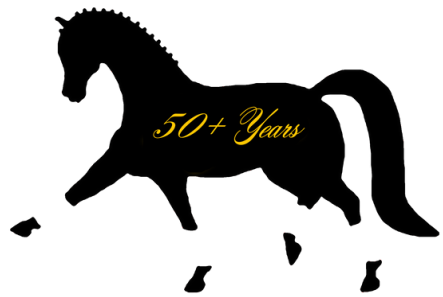


# THE READER

The official newsletter of CenterLine Dressage



CenterLine Dressage

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## President's Letter

by Theresa Smith

Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed a wonderful holiday season. Many of you know me from horse shows. I am either volunteering as a scribe, standing at one of the gates checking in horses and riders, or encouraging people to join CenterLine Dressage. I believe the easiest way for each of us to support dressage is by being a member of a local GMO. USDF offers many benefits to each GMO member as well as to our club. I encourage each of you to log in to [usdf.org](http://usdf.org) to check out the discounts offered plus educational and scholarship opportunities available.



I am excited to be your GMO president for the 2024 show season. I hope to inspire more people to be actively involved in our club by volunteering. There are many ways to volunteer that do not require a lot of time or the full year's commitment of being a board member. This year I would like to utilize committees and committee chairs to handle many of the tasks needed to offer shows and clinics.

I began this crusade last year while serving as vice-president. Our committee chair for schooling shows for 2023 was Helena Rosse. She is amazingly detail-oriented and efficient. She has agreed to oversee schooling shows for 2024 as well. Our newest committee chair is Paula Briney. She asked to oversee Classic I and II for 2024. I eagerly accepted her offer. She brings her experience as a competitor, a trainer, and a dressage judge to our annual rated shows. We would like to add a sponsorship chair, a volunteer organizer chair, and a fundraising chair. If anyone is interested in helping or has fresh ideas for our club, please contact me.

We have two schooling shows and two rated shows currently scheduled:

- -The IceBreaker schooling show will again be held in conjunction with ARAB, Inc.'s Arabian Value Show on April 20 and 21 at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. ARAB, Inc. manages the show and splits the profit with us in exchange for CenterLine providing the volunteers.
- -Our annual USDF-USEF approved shows, Classic I and II, will be at the Illinois State Fairgrounds on June 22 and 23. We have hired a show secretary but still need a day manager and many, many volunteers. This weekend requires the most volunteers of any of our events. We would like to have enough volunteers that any one person only needs to work one four-hour shift. Please let me know if you would like to be involved or have family or friends who would like to help.
- -The FireCracker schooling show will be at Tower Hill Equestrian Center on July 6. This is always a fun, laid-back show. It is a great show to move up a level or to introduce a horse new to competition.

Enthusiastically,  
Theresa Smith

# Member Carli McKelvey's Horse Story

by Carli McKelvey

For as long as I can remember, I have wanted a horse. I did not grow up in a wealthy family, horses were (and still are) a privilege that was not necessarily within my parents' means. But that did not stop me, it only stoked an already blazing fire within me. I knew I had to use my intellect to be successful in school, to get a career with a well-paying job, one that could support dreams I would hold close to my heart. Like playing cards, quietly biding my time, I always had a long-term strategy to be successful as a horsewoman and rider.

My parents did what they could. They let me join 4-H and drove me to countless Pony Club meetings and riding lessons. Frequently I worked off lessons by cleaning tack and various other chores, so they were stranded at the barn 65 minutes from home for hours. Although horses are not their thing, they nonetheless supported me. Due to my lack of finances, I spent a considerable amount of time reading horse books -Saddle Club, Pony Pals, Thoroughbred, etc... series, encyclopedias, textbooks on dressage, course building, anatomy. You name it, if it involved a horse, I read it. Plus I am no less than a pro at internet research or, let's call it what it is, low-key stalking.

When I've been able to ride, it's mostly been on borrowed horses. With a pretty athletic, flexible body, I've gotten a lot of "has talent, needs direction" feedback. Then I had a kid and suddenly I was almost 40, I could stand it no longer. I was tired of wasting all the potential I believed I had, but never felt like I could take advantage of because of money, time, family, etc.

I made a choice, I was going to get a pony. I have always wanted a Connemara. I brought Paddy home. He was nervous, but sweet, smart, and basically untouched when I got him. Me? I was an unfit adult re-rider.

Over three years ago, I bought the first Dressage Rider Training (DRT) program. I went to work, completing the DRT2 immediately following, and then on to DRT3, DRT4, DRT High Performance Fitness (HPF), and DRT5. To this day I work out 6 days a week, using the DRT programs, and am on week 175. Honestly, I have never been fitter. It has made a world of difference in my riding. (Check out the [dressageridertraining.com](http://dressageridertraining.com) with Nicola Smith. Carli promises more about the program in the next issue of the Reader.)

Then over two years ago, I made the leap and messaged Kate Fleming-Kuhn on whim knowing that she had again added some school horses to the program at StarWest. I had taken a handful of longe lessons with her and Martin when I was pregnant with my daughter Charlotte. I had taken the longe lessons on schoolmaster Kelly. Around the time I was ready to come back to riding, Kelly was overburdened and that part of the program was half-halted for a bit. (This is when I brought Paddy home, but back to the present).

I keep striving to put in the work. In over two years I have gone from "has talent, needs direction" to a rider whose goals are slowly becoming more attainable. Only recently, have I even quietly, limitedly started sharing them. The continuous drive for perfection I get from Kate and Martin Kuhn, along with the positive feedback from them, and other riders and instructors at the barn and elsewhere has been incredibly sustaining and empowering. I continue to strive to improve, in every ride, in every chance to spend time with a horse on the ground or in the saddle. *(continued on page 3)*

## Member Carli McKelvey's Horse Story cont.

Last year, Kate offered to let me take schoolmaster Wes to IceBreaker. I jumped at the chance. His owner, Deb Klamen, was so gracious to allow me to ride him. I almost jumped out of my head when Kate said I should plan to ride Third Level. Surely, I was not ready, but as in all things, I have put my entire trust in Kate. I entered Wes in Third 1, and Paddy in Training 3. On the day of the show, Kate and Martin were both super busy with other rides. I had to ride them by the seat of my pants. Luckily instinct is actually something I feel relatively confident about in the saddle. I had just taken a couple of super clinic lessons with Gerhard Politz the week before. I was able to put some lovely rides in on a spicy Wes and nervous Paddy.

I took both to Centerline Classic in June, where the real show nerves hit. I think it's because I didn't have to think so hard about how to ride the horse I was on that I let my mind focus on the fear. It is something I continued to work on at National Dressage Pony Cup with Paddy, and later at SLADS in August with Wes. Over those shows, those two helped me get one First Level and both of my Third Level scores toward the USDF Bronze Medal.

I was also fortunate enough to land a couple of "internships" with the team, grooming and braiding for a May show and the U.S. Festival of Champions, both held at Lamplight. The latter only served to fuel my fire. With Kate's input, this year I will show Luna to complete my First and Second Level scores toward the Bronze, and to show Wes at Fourth Level. Just after Christmas, I did my first one tempis, 17 of them in a row. It was so thrilling .



Carli McKelvey aboard Stella Luna during a lesson with Martin Kuhn at StarWest during the Christmas holidays.

### About the Author

Carli lives in Pekin with her husband, James, and seven-year-old daughter, Charlotte. In her non-horse life she has an MS in Ag Econ from Purdue, and an MBA from Indiana University. She works for the Caterpillar Product Logistics and Distribution Network in IT infrastructure.

Carli joined CLD in 2023 at the grooming and braiding clinic last spring, to support the organization as horsemanship education is a particular interest. Last year, she checked in riders and auditors at the Suzanne von Dietze clinic for CLD. This is in addition to completed educational programs in hoof trimming, equine body work, biomechanics and locomotion of equine anatomy, nutrition for sporthorses and neuromuscular diseases to name a few of her other equine studies.

Stella Luna, owned by Madison Peer of MN, is a 2023 leased addition to the StarWest school horse band. She has been trained to PSG+ and carried Madison to a Silver Medal in national dressage seat equitation in 2017.

It still feels surreal, a dream come true. I've still have bigger dreams, and I will work tirelessly to attain them. I cannot express the gratitude I have for the StarWest team's support, to my family because I'm frequently not present for so many things because I'm "at the barn" or "at a show", and for the flexibility my job allows. Let's be honest, I am pre-spending my retirement savings on my present passion.

I am grateful for all the learning and riding opportunities that have come my way. I maintain my Pony Club membership, and hope to take my H-A test in the next few years, as well as some of the dressage specialty certifications. In addition, this year I would like to attend the Indiana Dressage Society's offering of the USDF "L" Education Program. I have big goals. I'm "tired of being a mediocre rider" as I once said to Kate when she asked me what my goals were one cold day after a lesson. Those goals haven't changed, but I have changed to reach for them.

I am so glad Kate took a chance and agreed to teach me again, and I even brought a friend (a Connemara pony-loving friend, whose daughters had two that I very much admired when in Pony Club in the 1990s). We had met online years ago, discussing Connemara ponies, and had recently reconnected. It had been a lifelong passion that she experienced second-hand watching her daughters and then by following Connemara breeders and riders.

Since I was already planning to drive down to StarWest, I thought, well she sounds like she needs to be on a horse. I thought I could message Kate to see if any other instructors had an opening for a very beginner, adult rider. She joined me and has just celebrated two years riding with Chynna Gillman with a new pony she brought home from Park City, UT with the service of the StarWest team. In over two years of carpooling to StarWest, Pat Altorfer has become one of my dearest friends. It has been a pleasure to help her in her riding journey, to grow as a horseman and friend.



# Meet our New GMO President, Theresa Smith

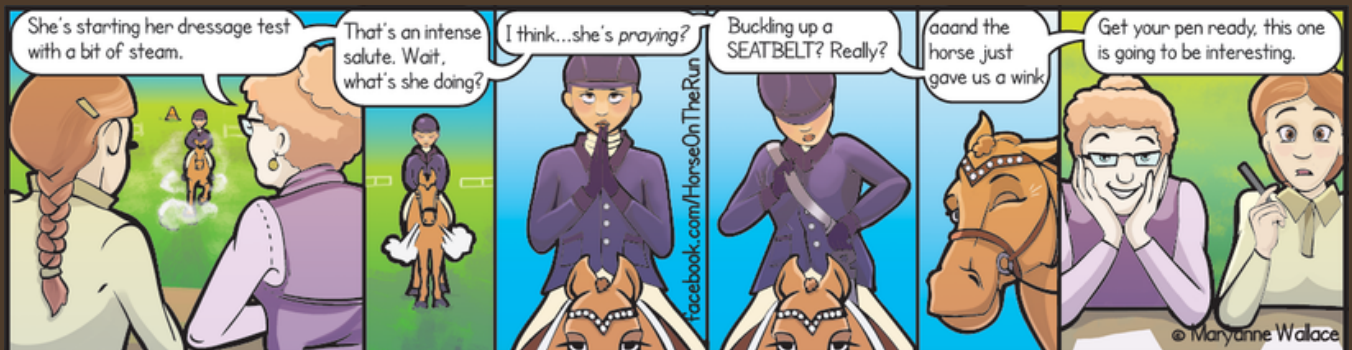


Theresa Smith and Callista at Pony Club Rally.

Theresa has spent the previous two years growing our membership from 49 to 65 members, while serving as our Membership Secretary. She also attended the USDF Annual Convention in 2022 and 2023 as a representative of our GMO. She consistently volunteers at most club events. She works full-time as a tax accountant at Troy Washko, CPA in Springfield and part-time as the bookkeeper at Tower Hill Equestrian Center.

Theresa started riding Paso Finos in the cow pastures at home in the mid-80s. However, she didn't have her first riding lesson until she started taking beginner hunter lessons at Tower Hill Equestrian Center in 2013. When Tower Hill no longer had lesson horses available, Theresa was forced to stop riding for a few years. After calling Paula Briney at Pratense Farms, she began taking dressage lessons in 2019. Her first show was FireCracker 2019 at Tower Hill on Riverdance owned by Chrissy Moran. She soon moved up to riding Training Level on Rejoice (aka Bunny), owned by Pratense Farms.

In early 2020 right before COVID closed down the world, Theresa was able to purchase a Sport Pony mare she had admired a few years earlier. Theresa and Callie enjoy practicing dressage and riding the hills on Jared and Theresa's small farm in Franklin. Their biggest adventure has been traveling to Elgin and competing in a US Pony Club Rally in 2023. The five-person team consisting of other CLD members, Susan & Helena Rosse and Carli McKelvey, brought home a double championship in horsemanship and dressage with an invaluable fifth member, Barn Manager Libbie South.



Comic courtesy of horseontherun.com

# US Equestrian to Utilize Black Horse One for Licensed Official Training and Evaluation

by US Equestrian Communications Department | Dec 8, 2023, 12:00 PM

*The digital platform will allow transparency and feedback during the licensed officials application process.*



**Lexington, Ky.** – The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) has agreed to utilize Black Horse One (BHO) as a licensed official training and evaluation partner. This agreement, which starts in 2024, will assist US Equestrian in elevating the education and evaluation process for our licensed officials.

BHO's online platform Equestrian Hub will allow judges to watch video recordings of athlete-and-horse combinations and input a score or placing based on their observations. Their inputted scores or placings are then graded against a reference judge, or judges, to determine if they are within the acceptable range.

"We are excited to partner with Black Horse One on this important initiative," stated US Equestrian Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel Sonja Keating. "We are constantly looking for ways to evolve as a Federation, and I see this as a win-win for all involved."

Current methods of training for all types of licensed officials include traveling to a competition to apprentice or shadow a judge, completing online courses or exams, and attending clinics.

"Our licensed officials will now have a way to upskill and obtain an objective assessment remotely," stated Keating. "This is invaluable. Applicants will now receive immediate feedback on their scoring and will be able to learn at their own pace. Any opportunity we have to ensure judge applicants obtain the practical skillset to score or place a class correctly is something we must do."

The need for USEF to offer a digital evaluation program was first expressed from our dressage community, so our Licensed Officials Department will work with the Dressage Department staff, USDF and expert dressage volunteers to finalize the evaluation protocol for future U.S. FEI Dressage Judge applicants. Additionally, USDF will continue to develop and host national dressage judge licensed official education, which will also utilize Black Horse One in the future.

"While the process will begin with dressage, we are excited at the opportunity to potentially expand the video evaluation tool for other breeds and disciplines, should they be interested," stated Keating.

"We believe that Official's education is an important foundation of our sport that benefits greatly from technological advancements. It is our honor to support US Equestrian with our wide offerings and we appreciate the opportunity," states Black Horse One Chief Executive Officer Daniel Göhlen. "Aside from leading-edge software solutions for scoring, management and entries available through Equestrian Hub, BHO has always prioritized officials' education. We will assist with accessible scoring and evaluation tools for both already licensed officials who want to practice or continue their education and those who are in the process of becoming licensed. We are thrilled to collaborate with USEF to further improve our solutions."

# US Equestrian to Utilize Black Horse One cont.

## Want to become a licensed official?

More information about the process of becoming a licensed official can be found on our website: <https://www.usef.org/licensed-officials>. Individuals with questions about the licensing process can contact the USEF Licensed Officials Department at [loinquiry@usef.org](mailto:loinquiry@usef.org).

## Black Horse One

Black Horse One stands for innovative and reliable high-performance software solutions with a strong focus on equestrian sports. eDressage™, the revolutionary paperless judging solution for dressage, as well as Spectator Judging® and the international Degree of Difficulty System (DoD) are among several other cutting-edge software solutions for equestrian sports. Together, those technologies combine to form Equestrian Hub, a one-stop platform for Athlete, Officials, Organizers and Fans.

The software is utilized at all levels of the sport, from national up to the highest international, including World- and Continental Championships, Games, World Cup Finals as well as 5\* events worldwide.



**Save the Dates**

**IceBreaker Schooling Show**  
April 20-21, 2024  
*IL State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL*

**CenterLine Dressage  
Classic I & II**  
June 22 & 23, 2024  
*IL State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL*

**FireCracker Schooling Show**  
July 6, 2024  
*Tower Hill Equestrian Center, Dawson IL*

# Calendar

*February 10 CLD Braiding Clinic at Pratense Farms, Chatham, IL*

*March 10 CLD Bandaging Clinic at StarWest, New Berlin, IL*

*April 6-7 April at the Arch I & II, National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO*

*April 20-21 ARAB, Inc. AVS & CLD IceBreaker Schooling Show, IL State Fairgrounds*

*May 23-26 Region XI Sport Horse Champs & Pre-Show Illinois State Fairgrounds*

*June 22-23 CenterLine Classic I and II, Illinois State Fairgrounds*

*July 6 CLD FireCracker Schooling Show, Tower Hill Equestrian Center, Dawson.*

*July 30-August 4 NAYC, Traverse City, MI*

*September Arabian Sport Horse Nationals, World Equestrian Center, Wilmington, OH*

*September 12-15 Region 2 Championships, Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington*

*October 10-13 Region 4 Dressage Championships, National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO*

If you would like to submit an event to our calendar, please email the details to [centerlinedressage.illinois@gmail.com](mailto:centerlinedressage.illinois@gmail.com). Events must be dressage or equine care/training related.

## Nominate your horse for the 2024 End of Year Awards



2018's Jim Kuhn Award Recipient  
Emily Raynor

It's never too early to nominate your horse for CLD year-end awards. CLD year-end awards are for specific horse/rider combinations. A separate form must be submitted for each horse/rider combination per year. Horse/rider combination nomination is appreciated before scores are earned.

**Membership fees for both rider and horse owner must be current.**

Nominate your horse at [centerlinedressage.com/horse-nomination/submit-scores](https://centerlinedressage.com/horse-nomination/submit-scores)