

# THE READER

*The official newsletter of CenterLine Dressage*



## Susanne von Dietze clinic at StarWest

by Rosalind Essig Fields



*Equestrian biomechanics expert Susanne von Dietze*

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**CALENDAR**

CenterLine Dressage and StarWest hosted Susanne von Dietze for a clinic June 16-18, offering a unique educational opportunity for riders in the region.

Twenty riders and 24 horses — Training Level through Grand Prix — participated in lessons over three days, but the experience wasn't limited to those in the saddle. There was also plenty to take in for those of us, like myself, who audited and took part in the lunch Gyrokinesis class and dinner lecture.

Susanne is an author, physiotherapist, judge, and top rider, with multiple national championships and senior team selections in dressage. She is the author of several books, including *Balance in Movement*. Today, she travels internationally to teach clinics all over the world — and we are lucky to be one of her stops in the U.S. I told an equestrian friend about the clinic and received a text back with a picture of her copy of *Balance in Movement* and a note about being jealous!

## Susanne von Dietze (cont.)

It was amazing to see the horses react to seemingly small changes in their riders – small definitely didn't mean minor. From adjustments in rider balance to different breathing rhythms, the change was often immediately visible. Rider breathing made noticeable changes in horses, no matter the level. In one advanced horse and rider combination, the horse's reaction to the rider's breathing was so abrupt that there was an audible reaction from the auditors in the viewing area.

Breath was an important concept throughout the clinic and was the theme of the lecture and Gyrokinesis class. Susanne introduced breath work in a way that would make sense to participants with no experience with it, while still presenting fascinating information for those who did have some familiarity.

On Friday, a large group participated in lunch and a class that connected breath and movement. Susanne introduced them to something she now incorporates into her training: Gyrokinesis, “a movement method that addresses the entire body, opening energy pathways, stimulating the nervous system, increasing range of motion and creating functional strength through rhythmic, flowing movement sequences.”

Susanne also gave a lecture on breath after the dinner on Saturday. She covered the basics of what you should understand about your own breathing and how your horse breathes, and ways that you can use your breath to influence your horse. After seeing these concepts in action during the clinic, the lecture really tied it all together and had me ready to work on my breath control.

The whole weekend was educational, inspiring and a wonderful opportunity for equestrians in the area to learn, gather and share some time together. Many participants commented that it had been too long (thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic) since her last visit and Susanne agreed, promising to come back again very soon.



*Rosalind on Westerstorm, owned by Deb Klamen.*

## About the author

Rosalind Essig Fields began riding horses at the age of six and grew up taking lessons at an eventing barn with a deep respect for dressage.

She got back into riding in 2021 after a break and began training with Kate Fleming-Kuhn at StarWest later that year.

She is a beginner instructor in the StarWest Academy lesson program.

# On the Road to “R” Judging Status

by Paula Briney



My journey as a dressage judge has been great. Not without challenges and setbacks, but fun all the same.

I started out with the USDF “L” program which I passed with distinction. I highly recommend all dressage riders at least audit this program. It will make a huge difference in your view as to what our judges have to go through to come up with the scores and comments. I recommend the “L” program for the western dressage rider for the same reason.

Now I have completed my requirements for “r” program and am on the list for the “R”. This means I have ridden five Prix St. Georges or higher tests with scores of 65% or better and have judged a minimum of four USEF shows. That means judging at least 20 First Level, Test 3 and 20 Second Level, Test 3 rides each, and over 60 rides at Second Level and below.

I continue to scribe and learn so that my eye and comments grow and are educated. In addition, I will audit a USDF “L” program within the next year to be up to date on the current guidelines. The education is never ending.

I should mention I am also finishing up the requirements to apply for the “R” judging license in Western Dressage--with a different set of requirements! Life is never dull, that’s for sure.

## Thoughts on CLD Classic I & II—2023— Not from the sidelines

by Theresa Litchfield



I was asked to write about the 2023 Classic Show. My experience as a participant this year, instead of being manager of Classic or being the President of CLD, was very different. It has been five years since I have shown at a rated show. I entered this show with a different partner than previously, so, needless to say, I was very excited and nervous.

I was excited to step back into this level of showing and nervous as to how we would do. Don’t get me wrong, I still like going to schooling shows. However, there is something about showing at a rated show that is different. Is it the judges, the other participants, the dressing in show clothes or what? I believe it is all the above.

Those who know me, know that it is nearly impossible for me to travel to other rated shows. So CLD Classic is the only rated show I am able to attend. I am not alone, there are others that can only show at Classic also. Their reasons may be different than mine, but the bottom line is the same. Like me, Classic is their only opportunity to show at this level.

# Thoughts on CLD Classic I & II (cont.)

Classic was a great learning experience for River and me as a pair. I felt the judges were fair in their scores of our rides. I really appreciated it when Natalie Lamping (S) called me over after our last ride. She gave me some pointers and a compliment. She could tell I was nervous, not sure how though. It was so hot that weekend everyone was drenched before they even went down centerline. I was no different. Even with the heat, I had a great weekend.

Let me switch hats and talk a little bit about how I felt the show went as a whole. It seemed to me, that Classic I & II had a good turnout. I talked to many of the participants and they were pleased with the judges and scoring. Okay, not everyone, but you can't please everyone. I think the show ran smoothly even though I know we were really short on volunteers to help. I think the only complaint I heard was there were no food vendors open. Judy Nordstrom did an awesome job running this year's Classic I & II. It is not an easy task to put on this show and that I know!!!!



## 2023 CLD Classic I & II Photo Gallery



Paige Burdette on  
Champions Denali



Karen Spradling on  
Sniper Van De Helle



Ida Noll on Madrono



Olivia Fesi on Perfect Alibi



Patricia McVary on  
Redeeming Grace



Laura Miller on  
Mulan RLC



Jodi Lemkemann on  
Bughazi



Isabell Fix on Halina LHF

# Firecracker - The Show Must Go On

Reported by Deb Bonner



(L) Helena Rosse on Fashion Master | Deb Bonner with Jet Jocky | (R) Susan Rosse on A Blaze of Romance

Firecracker is CLD’s annual summer schooling show held at Tower Hill Equestrian Center. There was a full roster of rides set, and everything pointed towards a large and successful show. Then, two days before horses and riders converged on Tower Hill, a Derecho blew through much of Illinois, downing trees and powerlines and even spawning a small tornado in central Illinois. As we emerged from the storm, there was some concern if the show could even happen. Fortunately, Tower Hill had very little storm damage, though they did get a LOT of rain, which led to some pretty soggy rings.

But, that wasn’t Firecracker’s only challenge. A last-minute medical emergency left show manager Helena Rosse scrambling to find a replacement judge. Calling dozens of judges in multiple states, Helena was able to secure a replacement. Thank you to Cathie Trent who was able to step up at the last minute, and once again, Firecracker was on track!

Even though there were some last-minute scratches because of the storms two days earlier, we still had 22 riders and 47 rides.

Congratulations to Teresa Litchfield the Adult Amateur High Point winner and Ellie Mendenhall the Junior/Young Rider High Point winner.



Ellie Mendenhall on Benjamin’s Airlines



Theresa Smith on Calista



Lauren Lausen on Profound Effect

# In Memoriam: Genelle Royer, CLD Founder, dies

by Alice Martin

Genelle Bishop Royer, 85, of Nauvoo, Illinois, passed away on Saturday, May 13th, 2023, surrounded by friends at Memorial Hospital in Carthage.

In 1972 Genelle and some of her students from the Peoria area met in Fisher, IL at the kitchen table of then Elaine Powell, owner of Golden Miss Stables. Some of Elaine's students from the Champaign area were joined by some of the Southern Illinois students of Alice Martin. CenterLine Dressage was formed that day. Elaine Powell (now Gibala) was voted President; Genelle Bishop, Secretary; and Alice Martin, Newsletter Editor.



Genelle and Ril-Ka-Bar at a Chuck Grant Clinic in Dec. 1973 --before helmets were mandatory.

Genelle was a business school teacher, having graduated from Evangel College of Springfield, MO, with a bachelor's in education. She earned her Master's at Kelley School of Business at Indiana University and began teaching at various colleges and universities in the US.

Genelle's dressage instructor when she taught at the University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, was Ann Ticehurst of the Midland Hunt Club, GA. Before Genelle left USM to accept a position at Bradley University, Ann told her to look up Alice Martin in Illinois when she got there. Elaine was a student of Chuck Grant as was Alice. When Elaine moved from Michigan to Illinois, Grant told Elaine to look up Alice. The die was thus cast for the formation of CLD. Champaign was chosen for the first meeting as it was central to Peoria and Watson, IL where Alice had her Star M Stables.

Alice remembers trekking to early dressage shows with Genelle who had put her first horse, Ril-Ka-Bar, in training at Star M Stables for several months. "Genelle was the neatest horsewoman I ever met," said Alice.

*"She was an excellent seamstress in addition to her teaching talents. She made grooming smocks for both of us to keep our whites clean between classes. For Christmas one year Genelle gave me a short broom and butler dust pan with a short shovel to keep my trailer clean. We each had a cot where we slept in the horses' trailer slots at an overnight show. We had a great time at the early shows which were few and far between, both schooling and rated, in those days. Most arenas were just set up on a fairly flat piece of grass."*

## Genelle Royer (continued)

With more people joining CLD, the next few years were a period of great growth, the membership eventually being over 225 which entitled CLD to nine votes at the annual USDF convention. The club divided into a chapter system with Peoria becoming North Central, plus Champaign, and South being the first three chapters. (Eventually, Springfield, Jacksonville, Quad Cities, and Great River grew the chapter system to seven at its height.)

In 1974, Genelle married her beloved farrier, Bill Royer. Together, they ran the training/boarding barn where Genelle had taught dressage in Peoria. Then they moved to Carthage, IL where Genelle began teaching for Robert Morris College in 1980.

In the late 80's they were able to buy 20 acres, five miles south of Nauvoo. There they continued their day jobs, Genelle now at Southeastern Community College in Keokuk, IA. "During this time," Genelle wrote in a biographical piece for the Chapter newsletter, "We started the Great River Chapter of CenterLine Dressage. We gave lessons and held fun shows on our property and gave lessons and clinics in Iowa. The chapter grew to around 25 very active members. In 2005, the Great River Chapter became the Great River Classical Horsemanship Association, an independent GMO."

In Genelle's obituary in the Nauvoo News, special note should be taken that long-time CLD member Sue Graham of Glenarm was listed as a "great friend" survivor. She looked in on Genelle for the last few years, especially after the death of Bill. Memorials may be made to the Nauvoo Fire Protection District, 2015 Mulholland St, Nauvoo, IL 62354



*Bill and Genelle at an Iowa Driving Club event with Crystal in the mid '80's.*

Obituary by Alice Martin, shown mounted on her dear Far Raf, at the same Chuck Grant clinic at the University of Illinois. (Chuck Grant at the standing mike in the center of the Livestock Arena.)



# Calendar

September 11-16 Arabian Sport Horse Nationals, World Equestrian Center, Wilmington, OH

September 21-24 Region 2 Championships, Lamplight Equestrian Center, Wayne

September 17 CLD Dressage Schooling Show at Tower Hill, Dawson. Show Manager: Helena Rosse, (217) 891-6105 or [helenalrosse@gmail.com](mailto:helenalrosse@gmail.com)

September 28-October 1 Region 4 Dressage Championship, Maffitt Lake Equestrian Center, Cumming, IA

October 14 & 15: USDF L Education Program, Session A, introduction to judging and biomechanics with Maryal Barnett. For more info: <https://www.glass-ed.com/2023-1-education-program>

November 9-12 USDF Dressage Finals, Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington

November 13-18 AHA Annual Convention, Virtual

December 9 & 10: USDF L Education Program, Session B, judging criteria for gaits & paces, movements & figures with Debbie Rodriguez. For more info: <https://www.glass-ed.com/2023-1-education-program>

March 9 & 10, 2024: USDF L Education Program, Session C, collective marks, equitation, rider biomechanics and basics with Kathy Rowse. For more info: <https://www.glass-ed.com/2023-1-education-program>