

# TAMARACK CENTERLINE NEWS

For All Things Traditional Dressage, Western Dressage, and Eventing in Eastern Iowa



## Spring Warm-Up Clinic and Show March 2024

03/40

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# Welcome to Tamarack's Centerline News! And the Spring Warm-Up Clinic and Show!

By Tammy Lisi

The Ides of March will mark the start of Tamarack's first 2024 event at the Iowa Equestrian Center. This year we set up a packed 2-day clinic followed by a schooling show.

Our headliner is **Matt McLaughlin**. I have had the privilege to work with Matt for quite a few years on my mare, Bonita. Some of the things he taught me are the following:

- 1) Bo is a leg mover and when she engages her back, she is actually bouncier than a warmblood.
- 2) You must be able to control the neck. Lowering the base of the neck, understanding how to adjust the height and the length are all important than riding (and more than just stretching).
- 3) Introduction of higher-level movements needs to start when the horse ready for them or you potentially miss your opportunity.
- 4) If the saddle is falling off...it doesn't matter keep riding.

**Michelle Blacker** does amazing work in hand. She is a hidden local gem who can create beauty on the ground. I highly recommend working with her if you want to understand ground control better.

The **RideSum app** is a neat tool that really can help your riding. Currently 30,000 riders in 100 countries have downloaded the app for real time seat analytics, performance tracking, personalized recommendations, and optimization of equine health through balanced riding.

**John Linnan** is a physical trainer who works primarily with equestrians. **Nena Denman** is a USDF "r" and WDAA "R" judge as well as a technical delegate. She will go over Western Dressage Rules and Guidelines.

**Leslie Ross MacBride** has a resume longer than I can possibly get into here. I have teamed up with her to bring you **Recovering Your Brave**. This program is a journey with tools to help you be more confident in the saddle. Did I mention catering by **Prairie Moon, Lubben Wine, Cotton Candy**...and everyone's favorite massage therapist **Rob Myers**?

Auditing is \$25 per day or VIP with admission for 4 people is \$150 for the weekend.

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## Michael Poulin Dressage Fund Awarded to Tamarack Stables Iowa

Tamarack Stables is pleased to announce that we have received a grant from The Michael Poulin Dressage Fund through The Dressage Foundation. The goal of the Michael Poulin Dressage Fund is to provide financial support for the advancement of dressage in the US. With this innovative grant we can offer the following support for dressage education in Eastern Iowa:

- Free VIP auditing tables to our local pony clubs.
- Affordable clinic ride fees for the Matt McLaughlin clinic.
- Special pony clubber rates for members selected to ride with Matt McLaughlin.
- Multiple side clinics with no added expenses for auditors,

We are deeply grateful to The Dressage Foundation for helping us to keep such a great educational opportunity affordable for all participants and auditors.

## Matt McLaughlin Clinic

At an early age, Matt began studying dressage and the art of training horses on haute école for exhibition performances. Matt spent 7 years working for the Royal Lipizzaner Stallion Show as well as Arabian Nights Dinner Theater. He has successfully trained horses through Grand Prix dressage that have gone on to compete nationally and internationally. He has finished multiple horses in haute école including capriole, courbette, and levade. Matt has earned USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold rider medals, and he has a 5-star rating on Centerline Scores. In addition, Matt is an “r” judge as well as a popular clinician. Audiences relate to Matt’s use of humor, kindness, and frankness to demonstrate his training methods. His interactive training style allows individuals of any discipline to benefit from his sessions. He specializes in training from intro level through Grand Prix dressage. Please see Matt’s website for additional information and photos. [Matt-Mclaughlin.com](http://Matt-Mclaughlin.com)





### **Matt McLaughlin continued:**

Matt's training philosophy for horse and rider from his website: *"Our training philosophy for horse and rider is based on Matt's system of horsemanship that integrates classical principles of dressage, the requirements of today's competitive dressage, and Natural Horsemanship techniques. Emphasizing the values of respect, control, and fairness in the relationship between horse and rider, our focus is to teach people how to train horses."*

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## **Be Teachable**

**By Tammy Lisi**

Really rewarding teaching opens a door to a new way of thought for the pupil. In other words, teaching is more than the rider doing what they are told. Teaching creates a new way of being.

The journey we take as dressage and eventing riders means we must be teachable. To be teachable, we must be emotionally and physically available to listen to and interpret the instructions of another while interacting with our horse. We must listen with positive intention to an instructor AND to our equine partners.

We need to listen carefully to learn a language that we have not inherited a right to understand. Even the best instructors cannot tell us how to listen or interpret our equine partners. Instead, we must put ourselves in a position to be teachable in a way that requires absolute release and strength at the same time.

Steps to positive learning:

- 1) Be mindful. Slow down and think about what you are experiencing.
- 2) Use as many of your senses as you can to stay in the present moment. See. Touch. Smell. Hear. Taste.
- 3) Try to feel affection for what you are learning. Say to yourself: *"I am happy that I get his experience."*

Example: A rider in a clinic was frustrated with her horse. I asked how she was feeling. She said that she was frustrated and angry. Then I asked her *"How does your horse feel?"* She responded with an enthusiastic *"LAZY."* I explained that her horse is feeling stick and stiff – that he needed her to help him. She responded with *"No, he just needs to do what I tell him to do."*

**Be Teachable by Tammy Lisi continued:**

Strength can be ugly and harsh or gentle and beautiful. Neither is incorrect. Would I have preferred the young lady to be more teachable. Absolutely, yes.

But in Nature, both are true; and they are polar opposites. To understand both, you must experience both. It is part of the learning process. AND from here, we can choose a path that is better than the one behind us. Beautiful riding is different from training.

To be beautiful with another being, such as a horse, you must first work at finding your (physical and emotional) balance. Mistakes in balance help us to realize where good balance is. Mistakes in riding are not inherently bad – they are just part of the path you need to be on to learn to be harmonious. So how does this work?

When a trainer rides, they make the effort to show the horse what they believe is the best way to be. Sometimes the trainer will exaggerate and get out of position to help the horse to understand with is being asked. Once the horse has learned the task the rider can then continue to guide.

Forcing perfection all the time rather than guiding the horse and rider can create stiffness. Many years ago, I conducted studies on muscle atrophy through immobilization of limbs. Within 24-hours of immobilization measurable changes in the muscle are observed. Through those research studies I realized that a complete range of muscle movement is required daily. (1) When working our horses and riding, rigidity is not something we want to strive for; instead, we strive for movement together.



The rider needs to help the horse understand that we desire a full range of motion through the limbs and the back muscles. To do this, sometimes we must SLOW down the movement and exaggerate to achieve the correct response. Then, later, we can ask for a quicker response or more forward movement.

As both a rider and a trainer the one thing I keep reminding myself is that at the end of the day we must ride to learn how to be in harmony with our horses. Yes, mistakes are made. Yes, the path is not always beautiful. Yes, there is effort.... BUT the reward is worth the investment.

**At the end of the day.... Riders Ride.**

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# Tamarack Show Traditional and Western Dressage

Day 1 Friday March 15, 2024

MAIN RING DAY 1				Learning Lounge Day 1			Small Arena		
Time	RIDER	DIVISION	HORSE	Time	Lecturer	Topic	Time	Topic	
8:00 AM	Michelle-King	AA	Jasmine	8:00 AM	Coffee/ breakfast snacks		10:30 AM	Michelle Blackler Lunging DEMO.	
8:45 AM	Karen Bright	AA	Chapiro	9:00 AM	Michelle Blackler	Introduction and theory	11:00 AM	Michelle Blackler Lunging DEMO.	
9:30 AM	BREAK			9:30 AM	Leslie Mac-Bride/Tammy	Recovering YOUR Brave:	11:00 AM	RIDESUM AP	
9:45 AM	Megan Ward	AA	Wacation	10:30 AM	Carol Linnan	RideSum Ap Introduction	11:30 AM	RIDESUM AP	
10:30 AM	PJ Koehler	Open	Alvin	11:00 AM	John Linnan	Get Fit to Ride Better !	12:00 PM	LUNCH	
11:15 AM	Anna Dykstra	AA	Talamah Bound	12:00 PM	LUNCH Potato and Soup Bar		1:00 PM	RIDESUM AP	
12:00 PM	LUNCH			1:00 PM	VIDEOS		1:30 PM	RIDESUM AP	
1:00 PM	Michelle	Open	Blissoak	1:30 PM	VIDEOS		2:00 PM	RIDESUM AP	
1:45 PM	Alexandria Glenn	Open	Violet	2:30 PM	VIDEOS		2:30 PM	Michelle Blackler Lunglining/Ground Driving Demo	
2:30 PM	Tammy Lisi/Michelle King	AA	Bragi	3:00 PM	SNACKS		3:00 PM	Michelle Blackler Carol Linnan	
3:15 PM	BREAK			4:00 PM	Leslie Mac-Bride/Tammy Lisi	Recovering YOUR Brave: Session 2	3:30 PM	Michelle Blackler	
4:00 PM	Tara Walker	AA	Maximum Overdrive				5:00 PM	Recovering Your Brave Session 3	
4:45 PM	Sophia Erickson	JR/YR	Hocus Pocus						
5:30 PM	Elaina Broadwater Peyton Burch	JR/YR JR/YR	Poenix Elegante						

DAY 2 Saturday March 16, 2024

Large Arena				Learning Lounge			Small Arena		
Time	RIDER	DIVISION	HORSE	Time	Lecturer	Topic	Time	Topic	
6:30 AM	Michelle King	AA	Jasmine	7:00 AM	Coffee/ breakfast snacks		10:30 AM	Michelle Blackler	
7:15 AM	Alexandria Glenn	Open	Violet	8:00 AM	Michelle Blackler	Introduction and theory Lunging	11:00 AM	Ride Sum AP	
8:00 AM	Sophia Erickson	JR/YR	Hocus Pocus	8:30 AM	Carol Linnan	RideSum Ap	11:30 AM	Michelle Blackler	
8:45 AM	BREAK			9:00 AM	John Linnan	Get Fit to Ride Better !	12:00 PM	LUNCH	
9:00 AM	Elaina Broadwater Peyton Burch	JR/YR JR/YR	Poenix Elegante	9:30 AM	Leslie Mac-Bride/Tammy Lisi	Recovering YOUR Brave: Session 4	1:00 PM	Leslie MacBride/Tammy Lisi Recovering YOUR Brave: Session 3 (repeat)	
10:00 AM	PJ Koehler	Open	Alvin	11:00 AM	VIDEOS				
10:45 AM	Tammy Lisi/Michelle King	AA	Bragi	12:00 PM	LUNCH SANDWHICH BAR				
11:30 PM	LUNCH			1:00 PM	VIDEOS				
12:30 PM	Megan Ward	AA	Wacation	2:00 PM	NENA DENMAN	WDAA INTRODUCTION			
1:15 PM	Michelle Blackler	Open	Blissoak						
2:00:00 PM	Ahanna Scumbato Evelen Greimann	Under 14 JR/YR	Thistle Courage Of Mosswood						
3:00	Anna Dykstra	AA	Forest						



Join us for a clinic with Marina Paris Woodhead July 12-13 @ Greenbriar in Springville, IA

FEI Level Dressage Trainer, Competitor, and High Performance Rider achieving the USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medals, is a USDF Certified Instructor and "L" Graduate Judge. Marina competed her KWPN stallion, Pandorra, in International Grand Prix competitions. In 2013 the pair was ranked 5th in the US in Open Grand Prix Freestyle, KWPN Champion, Region 6 Champion and in 2012 were long-listed for the Olympics. She is currently developing a fun and talented Pandorra son as her next personal horse.

# Equine Professional ToolBox

By Tammy Lisi

Every equine coach/trainer comes to realize with experience that we will have some clients who struggle with difficult personality traits and/or mental health issues. These clients may create havoc within our businesses and personal lives. Passive aggressive use of social media may be used to criticize or bully by accusation to spread their angst and jealousy in destructive ways. The only thing we can do is set firm, permanent boundaries in response.

It is a sad situation; and I believe we need a support group in this area to help trainers and equine professionals work through issues like the one described above and others. Equine professionals need tools to help them when dealing with strong emotional and behavioral issues.

For this reason, I am setting up an online group to address such issues. I will organize Zoom chats as needed to help give equine professionals the tools we need to work through these types of incidents in a professional manner.

I hope this group is of interest to other trainers and professionals in the area. I believe that we can continue to create healthy sportsmanship – where everyone feels welcome to participate.

To join the **Equine Professional ToolBox** group, send us an email or ask to join on Facebook. Our priority is to PROFESSIONALS; however, we will consider other adults if the need has been demonstrated.

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## Classes and Experiences

### Get Fit/Ride Better: John Linnan Fitness

John Linnan is a personal trainer with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science from Simpson College. He works as a freelance personal trainer since going back to school at age 50. In this class, John will discuss how and why to target sport-specific muscle groups. He will also address why nutrition is so important as an equestrian. An opportunity for Q&A will follow his presentation. He is available for consultation that would include a personalized assessment. From there he could recommend an individual program for interested riders. Virtual and in-person trainings are offered. John may be reached @ 515.480.8183 and linnan51@gmail.com



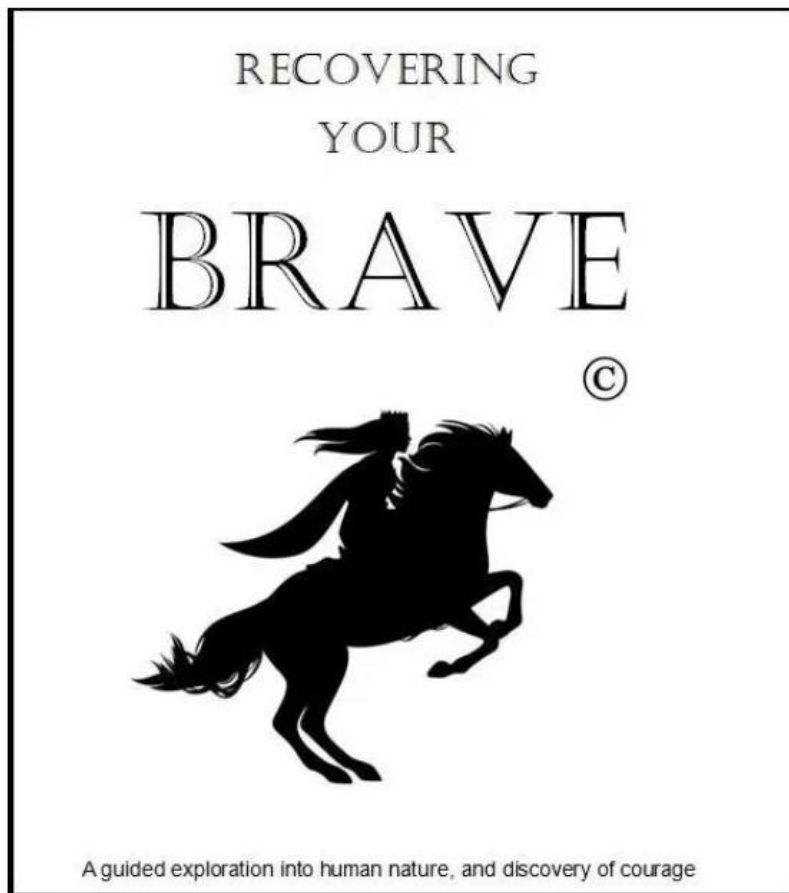
## Lunging Your Horse: Michelle Blackler

Is it too cold or muddy to ride or drive? You may notice that you and your horse are getting chubby and soft. Spring is coming up quickly. You may have New Year's Resolutions.... Learning specific groundwork techniques from FEI trainer, Michelle Blackler, can address all of those challenges while also giving you and your horse a leg up on training with fun exercises for fitness, strength, or flexibility. Michelle is a local trainer of carriage horses with a foundation in dressage. She has developed training techniques for performance that benefit both the horse and its human. With an emphasis on understanding how the horse is using itself, her practices provide relevant aids for both the horse and the rider/driver. Winter training is always a challenge to motivation in Iowa. Blackler's groundwork exercises will address straightness, bending, impulsion, and conditioning with fascinating and engaging activities. Lunging horse is not just about burning calories. Line driving is not just about following the horse around. This training helps to develop balance and rhythm in the human and horse as well as weight distribution. Line driving exercises allow the horse and rider to work on lateral exercises and half halts. Double lunging helps develop efficient ways of going using the horse's own body weight for flexion and extension of joints. It also promotes using the correct timing of the aids. Blackler notes "*Anyone can use these tools, but few people are aware of the significance and sophistication that can be achieved by the regular applications of them.*" The training demonstration will include lunging, line driving, and double lunging exercises to develop gymnastic practices for horse and rider. Michelle's teaching style is about enlightening, empowering, enriching discovery. This course is included with the paid auditor fee.



## Recovering Your Brave: Tammy Lisi and Leslie MacBride

This pilot program employs a multidisciplinary team and educational sessions to explore through survey and individualized intervention. A series of sessions with the horse and rider as well as the use of personal Journaling. This course will serve as a guided exploration into human nature and the discovery of personal courage. **Leslie MacBride** (retired psychologist) and **Tammy Lisi** will address how to prepare for the ride with mounted freestyle walking, increasing awareness of self-talk, and understanding the interactions of hormones and the brain. The presentation will describe moving through the trauma and abuse that people may have experienced. Speakers will share specific tools to allow the rider to find their confidence.



## Ridesum Videoing

The capabilities of this app are impressive. Anyone interested in being videoed for AI feedback on their position please schedule with Tammy Lisi. Riders will immediately see the results of their assessment. During the clinic, Ridesum will be giving away 1-month free app subscriptions to 3 lucky riders so that they can monitor their progress. This tool is great for riders as well as trainers to track riding progress.

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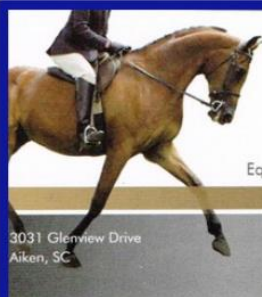
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*Best wishes to all competitors!*

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*Keeping Moving Forward, While Daring Greatly, Ride on!*



Best of luck to all riders, horses, auditors, volunteers, clinicians, and organizers!

*-Katherine Wilson*

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Sept 20-21, 2024

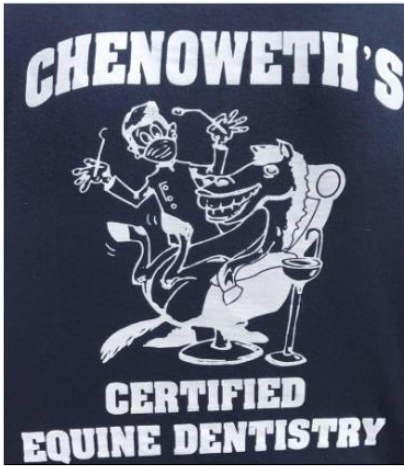
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*Enjoy the journey and have a great ride!*

## 2024 Schooling Show Series Dates

- March 15-17 Iowa Equestrian Center (Kirkwood Cedar Rapids, IA)
- June 2 Greenbriar Riding Academy (Springville, IA)
- July 14 Greenbriar Riding Academy (Springville, IA)
- Sept 20-22 Iowa Equestrian Center (Kirkwood Cedar Rapids, IA)



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