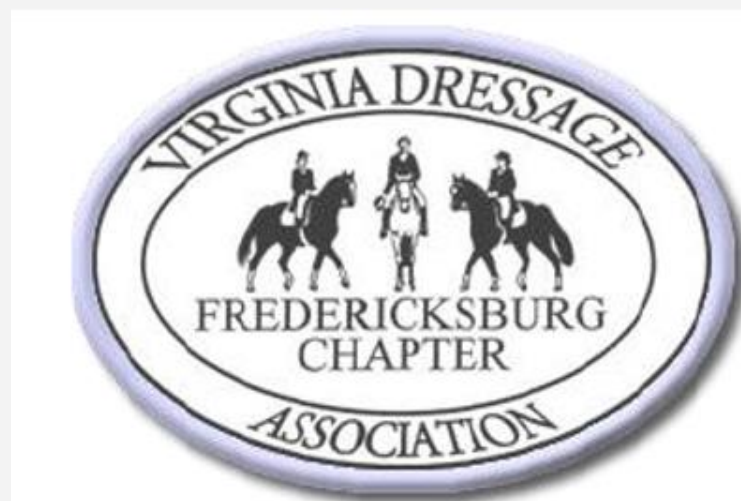


Fredericksburg Chapter of the Virginia Dressage Association July 2023



Collective Remarks

By Anna Fox

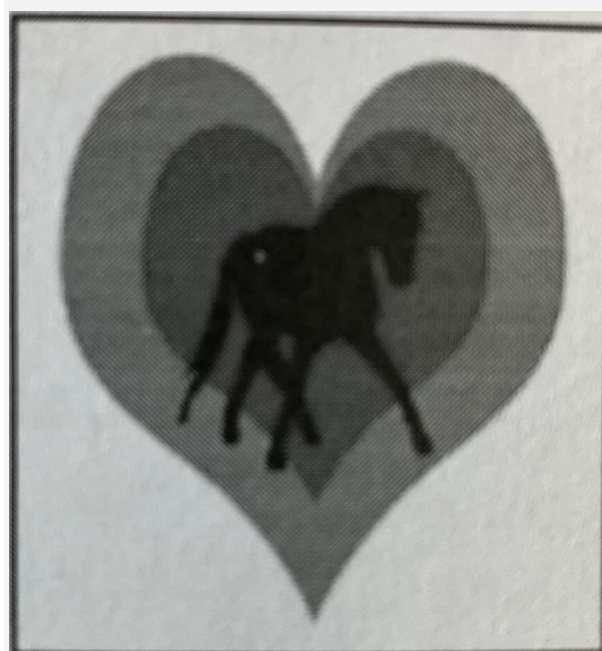
Classical or competition? Is there a difference in Dressage? Should there be a difference? Recently, I listened to a podcast that talked about the differences between competition and classical dressage. One of the things that I found very interesting is just how young dressage in international competition is! Dressage was first in the Olympics in 1912, but the testing changed many times up until the addition of the Freestyle in 1996! Wow, I've been watching the Olympics since before 1996 and I don't remember there NOT being a Freestyle. Maybe I just have a really bad memory.....Interestingly in 1948 there were only 19 riders from 9 countries in the Dressage competition. In the last Olympic Games, there were 44 competitors from 15 nations.

Other than the test requirements and freestyle addition, what else has changed in dressage competition throughout the years? This podcast suggested that training methods have changed dramatically. I think most of us would say, well of course, we've learned so much and gotten better as humans. However, it seems that after the initial requirements of horses to be agile and willing partners to their riders in war, training methods began to show more stiffness and resistance in horses. From these difficulties, the Rollkur (hyper flexion of the neck) technique was developed. Its intent was to free up the legs of the horse and cause more supple and expressive movement. Quickly realizing that this method was detrimental to the horses, the FEI outlawed the practice. That doesn't mean humans stopped using Rollkur away from competition though. Nor does it mean that remnants of the training method don't exist. We see hyperflexion quite frequently in competition. So, is what we are asking our horses to perform in competition, unhealthy? Intriguingly, the FEI recently changed the format of its rulebook and moved the Articles and Principles of Dressage to another publication, so they are not technically part of the rules anymore. Article 401 used to be synonymous with USEF DR101 (now it's about categories of international events).

(continued on page 5)

“Few knowledgeable horsemen would deny that the consummate dressage masters are the most skilled, patient, and meticulous trainers in the horse world. Any event riders who have the opportunity to learn from these great horsemen will quickly learn several facts.

**The first is that eventers really are amazingly ignorant and inept by comparison. The second is that they will soon realize the truth in the saying, “It takes two lifetimes to learn dressage.” They will, if they are sensitive and receptive, begin to truly appreciate that quietness, patience, gentleness, and systematic repetition are greatly superior to force and aggression, two unpleasant tactics seen much too often in eventing.”—
Denny Emerson**



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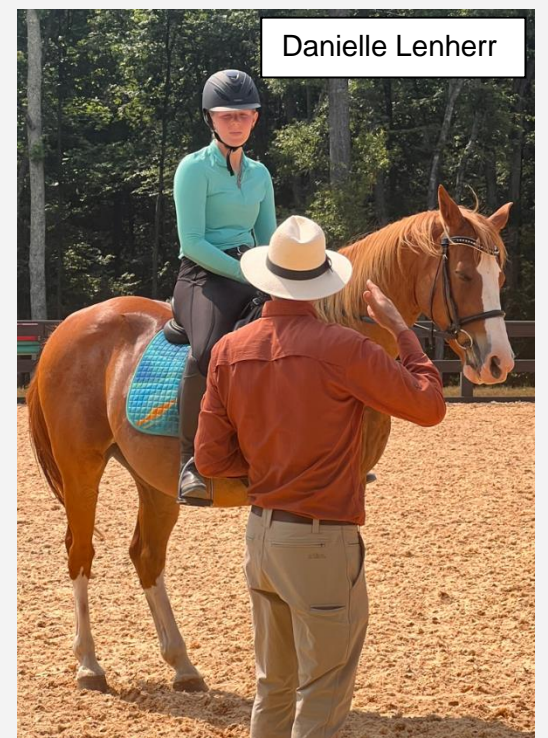
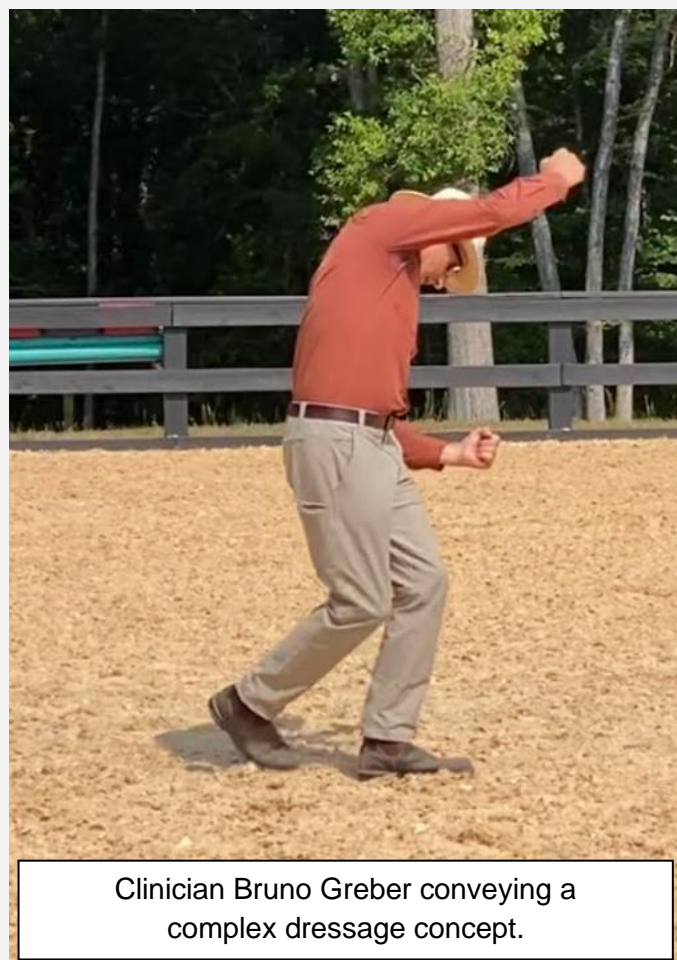
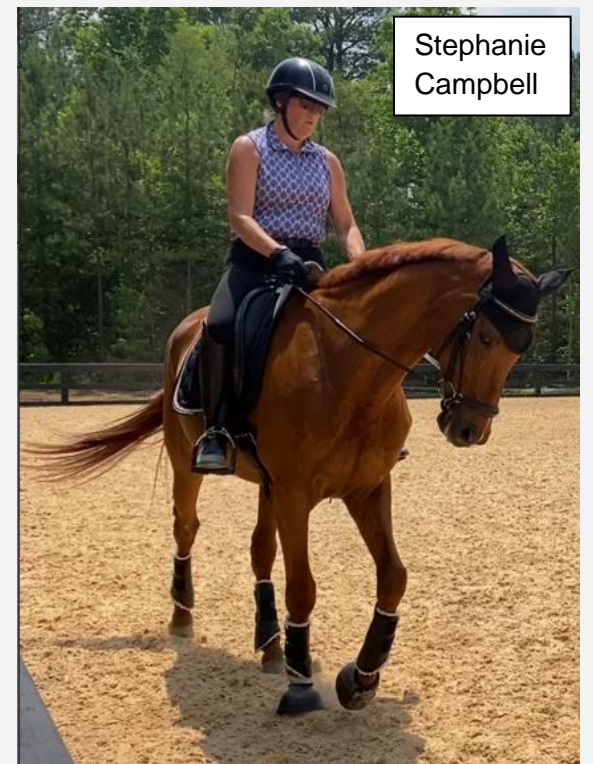
State Reps: Anna Fox, Karen Rice

Historians: Barb Ellis, Sharon Kipping

Member Column—Jamie Ramirez

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The clinic with Bruno Greber on June 17th, held at Willow Brooke Equestrian Center was a success. All rider spots were filled and there was a wait list. The owners of the facility were warm, welcoming, and easy to work with. Stay tuned for more successful VADA-F clinics!



Member Column—Teagan Niles

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Dear VADA Fredericksburg,

Thank you so much for sponsoring me for Region One Youth Team Challenge. There were many new opportunities for me to experience and enjoy! During these fun opportunities, I got to meet and compete amongst some wonderful people. Nina Cwirko was an amazing coach and her time was much appreciated as well as one of my highlights during the event. I was able to prepare myself with advice given by VADA Fredericksburg members, Anna Mitchell and Wyleng Liew. Their knowledgeable words helped guide me in the completely new activities I participated in. It was a great time learning how to contribute to being a part of a hardworking and motivated team (VADACC, coached by Heather Escobar). This was a great event for me to participate in, learn new things, and get out of my comfort zone in a safe and positive environment. Thank you again for granting me this opportunity for this wonderful experience. None of this would have been possible without the sponsorship of the amazing VADA Fredericksburg organization!

Sincerely,
Teagan Niles



This is from the publication in 2011 of the FEI:

Article 401 - Object and general principles

- 1. The object of Dressage is the development of the Horse into a happy Athlete through harmonious education. As a result, it makes the Horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the Athlete.
These qualities are demonstrated by:
- The freedom and regularity of the paces.
- The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements.
- The lightness of the forehand and the engagements of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion.
- The acceptance of the bit, with submissiveness/throughness (Durchlässigkeit) without any tension or resistance.*
- 2. The Horse thus gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. Confident and attentive, submitting generously to the control of the Athlete, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.*
- 3. The walk is regular, free and unconstrained. The trot is free, supple, regular and active. The canter is united, light and balanced. The hindquarters are never inactive or sluggish. The horse responds to the slightest indication of the Athlete and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of its body.*
- 4. By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of the joints, free from the paralysing effect of resistance, the Horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aid calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.*
- 5. In all the work, even at the halt, the Horse must be "on the bit". A Horse is said to be "on the bit" when the neck is more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the pace, accepting the bridle with a light and consistent soft submissive contact. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in the front of the vertical, with a supple poll as the highest point of the neck, and no resistance should be offered to the Athlete.*
- 6. Cadence is shown in trot and canter and is the result of the proper harmony that a Horse shows when it moves with well-marked regularity, impulsion and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all the different trot or canter exercises and in all the variations of these paces.*
- 7. The regularity of the paces is fundamental to Dressage.*

* FEI Rules for Dressage events, 24th edition, effective 1st January 2011.

(Old) Article 401 sounds very classical, and I think denotes the purpose and goals of Dressage, but if it is not part of the rules anymore, what are the objectives in competition? I think there can be a lot of disagreement over methods seen in competition today that don't adhere to (old) Article 401's principles. Could we then say that the old Article 401 version is the classical version and today's version of the FEI rulebook denotes the competition version? According to the podcast, classical dressage also considers the lifestyle, wellbeing, and autonomy of the horse. Wait, isn't that part of the sport or is the sport wanting horses to be more like racecars? Racecars are simpler; we don't have to worry about their lifestyle or autonomy and their welfare is controlled by mechanical parts. I think a horse performing like a racecar takes a bit of difficulty and fun out of the process! We all get to drive cars every day.

I think the main point that the podcast was trying to make is that classical dressage enthusiasts pride themselves on their partnerships with their horses. They also tend to keep horses in more natural settings and use training methods that are designed to work in concert with a horse's innate way of thinking. What I find interesting is that there are people doing this every day who compete. Why do we need to have two sides?

End President's Message



VADAF USED TACK SALE

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USED TACK, RIDING APPAREL, & BLANKET SALE AT ROSE MOUNT FARM

Come September, our club will host two days of exciting competition, a variety of vendors with their wares for display/sale, and an area under the big tent with a variety of used tack and clothing for sale. Dust off and clean up that saddle you've replaced with a new one, shine those bits and boots no longer in use, and entertain thoughts of having some extra Christmas money from your efforts. Outgrown or unused blankets and sheets are a "hot" item with the approaching cooler season. Be sure all saleable items are clean with repairs made. As in years past, VADAF will receive 15% of each item, owner 85%.

Thank you for participating in the Used Tack Sale. In order to ensure a successful sale, we ask that you follow these guidelines for submitting items. You will find a submission form on the next page of this newsletter for listing your sale items.

1. All items **MUST** be string tagged by owner. We will be removing the tags at the time of sale, so please do not use tape to mark your items.

2. Tag your items in the following manner:

Description of the item, price, your last name, and item #. Please use a 2-digit number, such as the month of your birthday, followed by the line number on your submission form.

EXAMPLE:

Item 1: Leather dressage girth, \$40.00, Smith, 0801.

Item 2: Black polo wraps, \$5.00, Smith, 0802.

3. Place a copy of the submission form on top of your items for the sale when you bring them to the tent the morning of the show. A club member will help with questions about sale items, should there be any. All items to be checked in after 8:00 a.m. both days of the show.

*****All items must be picked up by 4:00 p.m. on Sunday*****

If you wish to donate unsold items to USERL, mark your form accordingly.

Please address any questions you may have to Barb Ellis, 540-903-9049 or Chris Balasi, 540-273-1740.



Attention All Members:

Our Annual show, Dressage at Rose Mount, is rapidly approaching.

The show generates our income for the year. If we do not make a profit on the show, we have no funds to sponsor our teams and clinics. The only way we can make a profit is to bring in sponsorships. The more sponsorships that we find, the more profit we make, the more teams and clinics we can support.

All members are encouraged to secure at least one sponsorship for the show. You personally can sponsor a class. Or a high point award. Lots of possibilities. Please contact Hannah Bowers for ideas.

So far this year, we have sponsored three Youth Teams and one clinic. At least one more clinic is being planned. Help your club keep these activities happening by securing sponsorships for the show.



VADA-F Business

The Fredericksburg Dressage Chapter of the Virginia Dressage Association (VADA-F) is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization created to serve the needs of the dressage community in Fredericksburg and the surrounding area.

The VADA-F's Mission is to:

- Advance the discipline of dressage
- Promote the welfare and care of equines
- Offer and develop educational clinics and seminars
- Sponsor Adult and Youth Teams
- Sponsor an annual Licensed Show
- Support schooling shows

VADA-F is a chapter of the Virginia Dressage Association, which is a GMO of Region 1 of the United States Dressage Federation (USDF); all VADA members automatically become USDF Group Members. The 2023 membership year runs from December 1, 2022 through November 30, 2023.

VADA-F Meeting Minutes—June 13, 2023

Attendance:

Anna Mitchell, Tara Dean, Sharnette Atkinson, Hannah Bowers, Sarah Grady, Anna Fox, Barb Ellis, Teresa Crater, Megan F, Carolyn Briggs, Meghan Schrader, Minza Glover, Cambray Walmer, Karen Rice, Jennifer Lamb

Meeting Start: 7:03 pm

Membership: 26 individual, 12 youth, 3 youth affiliate, 9 affiliate, total = 50 members

Bruno clinic is this Saturday! Auditors are free for club members. The schedule will be posted on social media. Clinic starts at 9am to 4:15pm.

Youth team is competing this month! Good luck riders!

Consolidating Facebook accounts – Person page versus Group versus Business page. Can we rename them so it is more obvious?

Rose Mount – Storage Unit is roughly \$150 a month, researching other options. One could be to buy an enclosed trailer (\$4,000 - \$12,000 used options). Another option would be a shipping container (\$2-4k and \$700 to deliver) but it is not moveable. Decided to determine a budget and start shopping for a trailer.

Meeting adjourned: 7:33pm

End VADA-F Meeting Minutes

VADA Meeting Minutes – June 29, 2023

No minutes received.

Upcoming Events:

July

10-11, clinic with Lisa El-Ramey, contact Megan Irby, 540-247-6344, mirby2@yahoo.com

14-16, VADA Dressage at Lexington

August

12, VADA-CH schooling show, Grayson Farm, Scottsville

23-24, ERAHC Virginia Classic Dressage I and II, Lexington

September

9, VADA-F Dressage at Rose Mount I, Spotsylvania

10, VADA-F Dressage at Rose Mount II, Spotsylvania

October

5-8, USDF Region 1 GAIGs, Lexington



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