

Human & Animal Bonding

Here is the website of the magazine I am writing for - yeah!!! You can open the magazine digitally and read my article and see mine and Brach's picture ~ http://www.pghpetconnections.com/February-2013/The-Gymnastic-Training-of-the-Horse/#.USaRQs_ozo8.facebook (I know, just what you wanted to see more photos of me and Brachstar...)



Springing the clocks forward, the birds are chirping and the sun actually shown today! Do wonders ever cease? Yeah, spring is just around the corner...

Calendar of Events

March 22 - Vet at Coventry wormer is Equimax
March 23 - Save Your Horse Safety Seminar www.finleyvillevfd.org
March 30 - Equine Masseuse Seminar 330 - 530pm
April 13 - Dr. Savko - Animal Chiropractor seminar
April 14th - Test n Train Clinic with Robin Birk
April 20-21 Ride with Your Mind Clinic with a Mary Wanless student who Mary recommended to Uphill Dressage (I am going)
April 21 - HOC Dressage schooling
May 19 - Coventry WPDA Dressage Schooling Show - Lisa Hall judge
May 25 - Fix a Test with Sue Hershey
June 7th - Grand Haven Dressage show

New Rider Tests ~ The USEF/USDF have come up with what they call the New Rider Tests. I think this is wonderful because these tests will judge the rider's position and we are going to offer them at Coventry's Dressage Schooling shows. Here is the basic message - no decent rider position, no communicating to the horse in way the horse understands! As you know, I spent last weekend at the L Judges Program, always fun spending a weekend horsing around, and we went over these tests. There is one test for Training, First and Second level. Here is what the USEF says ~ "The new tests are designed to evaluate the proficiency of the rider relative to the requirements of the given level, without giving extra credit for the horse's gaits, impulsion and submission," said Sub-Committee Chair Lisa Gorretta. "Riders will receive constructive evaluations that they can put to use in improving their abilities as a rider. The principles of correct application of the aids, correct riding biomechanics and the accurate geometry of the figures are assessed through 5 scores evaluating rider's position, correct and effective use of aids, horse's response and performance, accuracy of the exercises and harmony between rider and horse plus written commentary."

Some of the basics in riding position that are asked for in these tests, are if the rider's seat is in balance, that the rider's torso is not leaning in or out, or too forward or back. That the seat follows the oscillation of the horse's back. A straight line should be seen from the elbow to bit and the ankle under the rider's hip with the side of the thigh on the saddle and the toes pointing in! Sounds simple right!!! Acquiring a good basic position is the first step in creating a rider, after the rider is accomplished then they can train

a horse. At Coventry we are all about position, position, position, here is what is expected for a Training level Rider : The purpose of the rider test at Training Level is to ensure that the rider has mastered the fundamentals of riding. The test states its purpose as; To confirm that the rider sits in the correct posture and alignment and shows correct mechanics in walk, rising trot and canter. The seat is sufficiently independent for the rider to maintain a steady, elastic rein contact and encourage the horse to stretch into that contact. The horse is ridden actively forward showing impulsion and balance required for the level, bends equally to the left and right sides on turns and circles and makes smooth, willing transitions.

At Coventry the mantra is "Toes in, thumbs up, get in jumping position to get the ankle under your hip, rotate the thigh, sit in the middle..."~ this is how I spend many hours of my day teaching others how to get into basic riding position. When I took on the task of learning dressage some wise trainers told me to read the classical books so I did,; Podhasky - **The Complete Training of Horse and Rider** (the first eighty pages are on riding position, Waldemar Seunig's book called **Horsemanship** (or as I call it the Bible) and Muscler's book entitled **Riding Logic**. Those three books I still have and the are underlined and highlighted. I would read the books then practice riding in mirrors to get it. I did yoga to improve my posture, swam to keep my joints loose and still think about staying in shape so I can still ride. I used to walk around pigeon toed to get my left toe in, still have issues with that. We have to "live our riding position," as Dr. George Felder said. You can't slouch at work for eight hours and come to the barn and ride upright! My point is that these new rider tests are going to make riders more aware of their position. No correct riding position, no horsey understand you! When your position is wrong your aids are muddled. So, keep up the good work everyone - here come the position police! Here are the tests ~

[2013 TRAINING LEVEL RIDER TEST](#)

[2013 FIRST LEVEL RIDER TEST](#)

[2013 SECOND LEVEL RIDER TEST](#)

Dressage is the gymnastic training of the horse, what have you done for your body today as far as gymnastic training?

Below is an article I wrote in 1990 about Basic Riding Position...(it is short ☺)

In Stride: The Rider's Aids By Kristin Hermann ~ Horsetrend Magazine, July 1990

The rider's aids (the seat, legs and hands) are what creates the communication between equine and human. The legs are in contact with the horse's barrel, the seat balances the rider's torso and provides a base for the limbs to function from, and the rider's hands (whole arm) are in contact with the horse's mouth through an extension of the rein. As Bill Woods stated at the 1988 Equine Symposium, "dressage is a relationship of nonverbal language and, the essence of dressage is how this communication between horse and rider is enacted."

The horse is 'on the aids' when it strides forward from the rider's driving or directing leg through the rider's torso (seat) and into the rein, which captures the horse's present state of impulsion. Then the rider's hands aid signal, this captured energy back into the horse's movement via a half-halt. Throughout dressage riding there is this constant communication between the rider's aids and the horse's muscular body. Woods calls this a 'feedback loop', which works second by second and stride by stride. In order to attain the above feedback loop the proper basic riding position is required. (A dressage rider's body should be relaxed, aligned and symmetrical.) Then the rider's three aids must learn to coordinate, not only to ride the horse but to be used in a way that will not interfere with the horse's movement. A stiff or unbalanced rider will restrict the horse's movement, a rider with uncoordinated aids will signal the horse out of timing with the horse's natural rhythm.

A rider, once basic position is acquired, then needs to learn how to coordinate his/her aids without not only interfering with the horse's movement, but without interrupting his/her own body as well. For instance, the rider must be able to coordinate an outside leg aid without the torso shifting weight, or be able to use a rein aid and not lean in either direction with the upper body. All limbs are required to work independent of the others. (Riding bareback riding helps to develop this skill.)

Reading literature about how to ride dressage helps a rider to intellectualize about the use of his/her aids. For example, knowing that the aids can be broken down into two categories, parallel and diagonal aids, provides the rider with an abstract knowledge of what should be happening. But, as all riders eventually learn, and most trainers teach, is that riding is a process of concrete feeling, and not a concept of abstract knowledge.

Therefore, acquiring this feeling of applying aids in order to communicate with the horse is accomplished by riding, riding and more riding. Also, riding as many different horses as possible will enhance one's ability because each horse's need for a leg aid and/or a half halt varies. Thus, the rider learns not only to feel and be receptive to the individual horse through his aids, but learns to apply the aids in a positive yet influential manner. "Riding (dressage in particular) is dynamic", states Charles deKunffy in his book Dressage Questions Answered, and once one begins to tread down its path, there is no doubt that one's personal dynamics of communicating with the aids to the equine will soon perpetuate through a pulse of two rhythmic bodies harmonizing as one. (Sounds like sixties riding to me ~ lol)

Horse Activities - Calories burned per hour:

ACTIVITY:	For 130 lb person:	For 155 lb person:	For 190 lb person:
Shoveling	354 cal/hr	422 cal/hr	518 cal/hr
General Horse Riding:	236 cal/hr	281 cal/hr	345 cal/hr
Riding horse at the walk:	148 cal/hr	176 cal/hr	216 cal/hr
Riding horse at the trot:	384 cal/hr	457 cal/hr	561 cal/hr
Riding horse at a gallop:	472 cal/hr	563 cal/hr	690 cal/hr
Horse Grooming	354 cal/hr	422 cal/hr	518 cal/hr
Baling hay/cleaning barn:	472 cal/hr	563 cal/hr	690 cal/hr
Shoveling Grain	325 cal/hr	387 cal/hr	474 cal/hr
Fencing	354 cal/hr	422 cal/hr	518 cal/hr
Polo	472 cal/hr	563 cal/hr	690 cal/hr
Hiking, cross country (if your horse is hard to catch...)	354 cal/hr	422 cal/hr	518 cal/hr
Brisk walking 4 MPH	236 cal/hr	281 cal/hr	345 cal/hr
Walking, carrying 15 lb load:	207 cal/hr	246 cal/hr	302 cal/hr

Want to fit into that bathing suit this summer?



Always needing help at the barn!

Spring Cleanse - if the liver is toxic allergies are likely and one is more prone to sickness. That is why God has dandelions coming up all over in the spring. The dandelion is a

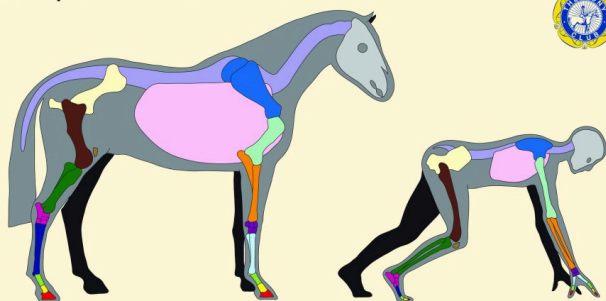


natural liver cleanser and spring is the time to cleanse. Horse's love Dandelions and we don't have enough of them. But, if you would like to cleanse your horse, I am going to buy a bunch of liver cleansing herbs to aid in our horse's cleansing. Let me know if you want to order for your horse. I think the fee will be about \$65.00 for a two of three month cleanse. Herbs include Dandelion, Burdock, Yellow dock, and Red Clover... to name a few. Read more about Dandelions here ~ <http://blythdale.tripod.com/coventryequestriancenter/id43.html>



Horse and Human Common Parts

A Comparison of Bone Structures



Ankle not under the hip, chair seat ☺

"People with goals succeed because they know where they're going"

Earl Nightingale,
Motivational Speaker

