

# Years of Riding

This year I completed my 50th year of riding. I am sure when I was a kid I would have told you that I would be riding for my whole life but, as we all know, life takes us on many paths we never saw coming. Somehow, this has been important enough to me to struggle through the ups and downs, both financial and emotional, to be able to recognize this anniversary. I have many to thank starting long ago with my parents and continuing through to this moment in time with my students, trainers, friends, and, of course, the horses.

Although my journey has been mine alone, there are many people whose

lives are defined in large part by horses. We are happy to set most everything around these wonderful animals. Through education and personal experience we may change our opinions, disciplines, and preferences, however our devotion to what the horse completes in our life doesn't change.

I would like to acknowledge the many people out there who have also had horses and riding in their lives throughout the decades.

For each of us on this journey, I celebrate us.

## Calendar

### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Tuesdays through the Hartland Recreation Dept  
Bus available contact the Rec

Wednesdays  
4-6 pm

Riding & Chores  
8 week sessions  
intro to chores  
9/6 - 10/25  
11/1 - 12/20

Thursdays  
2:45 - 3:45 pm  
Horsemanship  
Lessons  
9/7 - 10/12  
1:45 - 2:45 pm  
2:45 - 3:45 pm  
Horsemanship  
Lessons  
10/19 - 11/16



### STUDENT

A person who pays for education on the subject of interest.

Students may have their own horses or use lesson horses.

### BARN RAT

A current student who comes to work at the barn to benefit the farm with good work and honest intentions while learning about the daily operations of the barn.

### WORKING STUDENT

An exchange of work for more education. These students may or may not own their own horses and are able to bring some experience to the barn.

### BARN HELP

A person who is a paid employee at a barn. Depending on the duties performed, education levels may vary.

## Barn Notes

### Peanut

Peanut is maturing into a very handsome chestnut gelding with a lot of personality - do I say this every time? Yes, I am enjoying him!

His work continued as planned this summer with a regular three day a week work schedule. He is very comfortable hacking out alone on our trails, going over the footbridge, ditch, logs, and up and down our hillside. Just recently we have added trotting the hills. His balance is improving as his confidence grows.

The plan is to continue with his work for the fall then give him four or five months off this winter. Next spring when he comes back into work it will be with the intention of short vacations - no more winters off.

### Mock Dressage Show

The DS Club held a Mock Dressage Show that was a huge success. The whole day was set up as a learning opportunity for everyone from

## Barn Notes Continued

parking attendants, scribes, ring stewards and scorers, to competitors. As well as our brave students we were delighted to welcome some western friends.

The introductory tests for both the USDF and WDAA were offered. Charlie and Willa competed as juniors and were exceptional in their support of each other. The whole club came together to support everyone who participated, creating a fun learning opportunity for all.

### TREC

The DS Club is continuing to support the sport of TREC with discussions on how best to develop the sport over the next year and into the future. If you have some specific interests you would like us to cover, ideas on how to promote the sport, or are willing to be involved, please be in touch. We would be delighted to hear from you.

## Monthly Challenge - Leading

**Purpose** - To clearly communicate to your horse where you would like them in relation to your body.

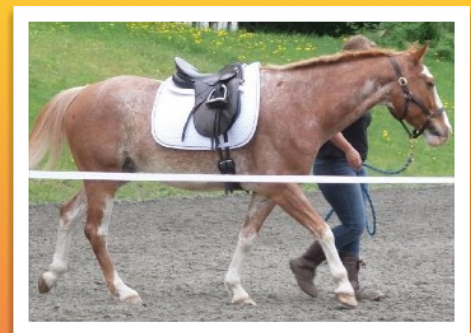
**Set-up** - Start young horses with having their neck be at your shoulder with enough space between you so as not to get hit by their hoof.

**Ideal** - When you walk forward the horse moves with you getting their neck back at your shoulder within one or two strides. When you halt the horse halts with their neck at your shoulder.

**Training Tip** - Clarity of intention is very important as is allowing the horse a second or two to recognise your body language. Pay attention to your own body positioning.

**TREC** - For the sport of TREC and many real life situations it is great to have the horse behind you with a smile (loop) in your lead or reins. Teach this approach once the 'at the shoulder' approach is confirmed.

**Other worthwhile leading skills** - There are times when it is great to be able to have the horse walk beyond you. Be sure to keep this in mind when you are training the other positions.



## Barn Notes Continued

### Green Gables Freeze

Our newest equine addition is Green Gables Freeze, an Iberian warmblood gelding born in January of 2022. He came to us as an 18 month old with baby warts and all from Anne Dewar Llop over near Lake Erie, NY. Freeze is a bay gelding currently with an interesting chocolate coloring that he might hold onto as he matures. Anne did have him gene tested and he came back as a plain old bay.

Freeze will not have a formal training schedule this fall or winter. He will explore working a bit in hand, watch other work in the arena, and participate in other interesting items that might come up in a casual way. So far he has been around the property in-hand and was happy to go up and down hills, up and down the stone wall, over the logs and ditch, and in general is quite curious.

### CVDA fall show

The CVDA fall show was a huge success for Charlie with Mitchel and Shelbie with Zazu. The weather called for a lot of rain and we were very glad it held off until the drive home. As usual, this was a well run show with fabulous volunteers. GMHA had the Upwey rings in excellent condition which is an ongoing issue this rainy summer.

This was Charlie's first show away from the barn and he did a great job competing in the USDF Introductory tests A & B. The junior divisions had a fair number of competitors and Charlie earned in the 60's for both tests bringing home two more ribbons to add to his collection. He told me he is already looking forward to next summer.

Shelbie and Zazu went out at USDF Training 3 for the first time and won their division with a 65+%.

Well done teams!

## The Peanut Gallery

### "Why are there so many bugs!"

The increase in rainfall has led to our having wet conditions that the flies and mosquitoes thrive in. These insects lay eggs in stagnant water and there has been lots of that this year. Along with the rain, the hot and humid conditions we have currently been seeing continue to promote an extended bug season.

There are ways to help reduce the flies. On the farm we use many methods. First, we keep the stables and paddocks as manure free as we can. Second, we have the guinea fowl whose primary diet is insects and seed. Third, we use Spalding Labs fly predators. These tiny flies live their life cycle on or near manure and are spread throughout the paddock four or five times a year. They are completely biteless and stingless and are not a pest to horses or humans but the guinea fowl probably like them. Fourth, we have sticky fly traps to catch the adult flies before they reproduce. Fifth, we also use fly spray.

### Iberian Warmblood

Iberian Warmbloods are horses that have at least 25% of Andalusian and/or Lusitano bloodlines. They are bred to be docile, sensitive, and smart meaning they try hard to please, adapt easily, and are willing.

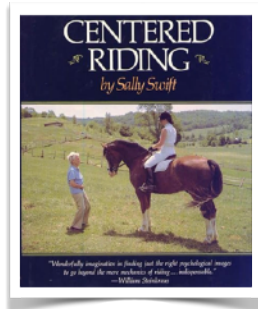
The physical characteristics include a long, arching neck that flexes nicely at the poll, long, sloping shoulder, well-muscled forearms, legs with short cannon bones, and good bone density. Their joints should flex actively and easily to create a natural elasticity, generous stride length and uphill balance. They are generally between 15.0 and 16.2 hands in height and of traditional coloring.

## Whatcha Reading?

By Laurie Hausler

Swift, Sally. *Centered Riding*. St. Martin's Press, 1985.

When I started learning to ride with Jill, I asked for book recommendations to support my learning in the arena. Jill immediately recommended *Centered Riding* to me. That was three years ago, and I continue to reference this book as it has so much to offer the new and experienced rider both on and off the horse.



*Centered Riding*, as a technique, was born out of necessity for the author, Sally Swift. She was born with a scoliosis that greatly impacted her movements in her daily life. Through her seemingly tireless journey to improve her own ability to move, she found, as she notes in Chapter One, that she had “discovered the importance of control from the center of the body, and the need for awareness, correct breathing and quietness of the balanced body.” Through her awareness of centeredness, she realized her horse responded better when she approached riding in the same way.

She teaches about the relationship between the rider and the horse based on self-awareness. Through easy to comprehend visuals, she demonstrates the principles of *Centered Riding* starting with the four basics - Soft Eyes, Breathing, Centering, and Building Blocks (or body alignment on the horse). As is used with professional athlete development, Swift recommends imagery and internal videos as a technique to support the rider in understanding and seeing what she speaks to

## Whatcha Reading? Continued

in each chapter. Rehearsing in your mind, as the rider, is a tool for integrating this learning into your practice.

Her teaching style comes across as gentle and thoughtful towards this very important partnership between horse and rider. She reminds the reader that concentrating too hard on an area can cause the rider to be rigid or stiff in the saddle which doesn't support the integration of new learning. Remaining playful and open is as important as being focused and centered.

Each time I return to this book, I am pleasantly reminded of what I'm working towards in riding. I highly recommend this book as it offers useful techniques to improve your riding skills while also being a very enjoyable read.

Laurie Hausler is a serious student of riding and the secretary of the DS Club.

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Starting to think about Christmas, remember our wonderful local shops, Strafford Saddlery in Quechee, VT and VT Horse Country Store in South Woodstock, VT.

### Resources

#### The DS Club

<https://delaneystables.com/about-ds-club/>  
*Membership Form*

<https://delaneystables.com/trec/>

#### TREC

*Local*

<https://delaneystables.com/trec/>

*National*

<https://trec-usa.org/>

*International*

<https://fite-net.org/>

#### GMHA

<https://gmhainc.org/>

#### CVDA

<https://cvda.org>