



e:news SALUTE

March 2009 April

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Dealing with Frustration when Riding

by Tracey Smith Oliver

The following article is the first of a series that highlights a few of the topics covered at the Seventh Annual Weekend Education Program. The Program was held Jan. 31st to Feb 2nd in Woodbury CT and sponsored by dressage with kids. This article was based on a session held by Lendon Gray and Beth Clarke.

We've all felt it at some point during our rides.....frustration. "Why does my horse spook every day at the same spot in the arena?" Why do I constantly have to remind my horse to move off from my leg?" "Why does my horse always fall to the inside?" Unfortunately, we all can recall times when our horses have suffered from our frustration, whether it is a jerk on the reins or a sharp use of the whip, or both.

To successfully manage frustration, you need to first understand the cause. Frustration is simply caused whenever the results you are experiencing do not seem to fit the effort and action you are applying. Frustration will occur whenever your actions are producing less and fewer results than you think they should. This is a very simple fact, but it is an important step to solving frustrating problems.

Why does any horse work for us? We need to keep this in mind at all times. Patience should be a top priority. Rewarding the horse is right up there as well, but often overlooked. Be quick to reward the action, not just the result. For example, you feel your horse is behind the leg and work on walk/trot transitions to improve the response to your leg. Your horse improves the response to your leg, but his head goes up in the walk/trot transition. Reward him! The improved connection/throughness will come later. In addition, remember that there are days (like the rider's) when the horse just isn't into it. Honor that and go out on a trail ride instead.

It's the rider's job to correctly explain the exercise to the horse, but in so many cases, the rider doesn't know how to explain it to them. The rider should get help when this happens. For example, your horse is constantly falling to the inside. However, the rider is hanging on the inside rein. You can't blame the horse for falling to the inside.

What can we do to help prevent frustration in our riding? It is important to leave your day (and emotions) outside of the arena. This is especially important on days when things did not go well for you; flat tire, lost car keys, late for work. We've all had those days. These are things that make us even less tolerant of a horse that spooks every day at the same spot in the arena!

So what do we do when we feel frustration rising? Most important is to take a break before continuing. Be conscious of your frustration level. If it's high, go back to an easier exercise, try another activity such as going for a hack, or make it a short session and get off the horse. Ask yourself, does he not understand what I want? If so, how can I make it more logical for him? Is my position correct; what about my aids? Is there some other reason he's not doing it: discomfort or fear? Joy is one of the greatest tools for eliminating anger and frustration. If we're sad, then we have less patience and tolerance for everything and everybody. Lendon Gray closed the session with, "Let's all be the best riders we can be, and help our horses be the best they can be (whatever the level)."

*"When your horse has reached his potential, leave it. It is such a nice feeling when you and horses are still friends."
Dr. Reiner Klimke*

SWVADA News...

Educational Sunday Over 70 people braved the cold to attend our 13th annual Educational Sunday in the Alphin Stuart Arena at Virginia Tech. Thanks to our lecturers and exhibitors who included: Dr. Martin Adams, Sue Cooper, Jeff Johnston, Dr. John Dascanio, Lynn Jendrowski, and Kim Huffman. Thanks to all the SWVADA volunteers: Blanche Mahoney, Laura Nelson, Bob Whitehurst, Susan Ott, Mary McFee, Pat Bevins, Judy Stanley, Nan Palmer, Chris Young, Meredith McGrath, Shelley Stewart, Heather Cowan, Emily Graberek, Terri Abrams, Katherine Abrams, Ashley Amos, Mariah Criste, Veronica Crosier, Debbie Criste, Gail Stanley and Jean Bost-Moore. And, finally, a special "ThankYou" to Rebecca Splan for orchestrating this whole event and ensuring another successful year of fun and learning.

Omnibus You should have already received your 2009 Omnibus thanks to Beckie Mitchell who edited this years edition and due to a glitch with the previous format included re-typing most of the publication. All that added up to **twenty five hours** of typing time. And yet, she managed to finish and send it earlier than previous years. Kudos to Beckie!

Licensed Show "Sunshine and Flowers" is the theme for this year's Licensed Show scheduled for May 23rd at GHPEC. Show management is looking for members to donate live or synthetic flowers, as well as the pots that house them. Consider loaning your potted plants to the show for the day before you take them home to plant them. Nancy Stone, our Licensed Show manager, is also soliciting prize donations from national corporations and asking that members solicit prize donations from local businesses in the hopes that we can award **lots** of prizes this year. Some ideas for recognition include: High Score Adult Amateur for the Day; Youngest Competitor; Oldest Competitor; Best Braids; High Score Breed Awards. If you have additional suggestions, or would like to volunteer to help out at the show, please contact Nancy at nancy@oakhillstablesva.com For more information and show forms, please visit the website at www.swvada.org

A Day of Dressage Fun Immerse yourself in dressage on August 22 at GHPEC. The planned events include a variety of demonstrations and booths aimed at providing entertainment and education for both dressage newbies and veterans free of charge. We are still in the planning stages for this event so if you would like to have your input and ideas heard, or would like to volunteer as a demo rider, exhibitor and/or manning a booth, please contact Mary McFee mary_mcfee@hotmail.com or Beckie Mitchell beck56@cox.net More information to follow in future E-News Salute issues.

Video Library New DVD's have been purchased for the video library. The new titles are: The Winning Edge, Vol. 1; 2007 USEF Training, First and Second Level Tests; The Equestrian Events of 2008 Olympic Dressage Individual; Balance and Bodywork for the Horse and Rider by Sylvia Loch; and FEI World Cup Dressage Final 2008. See our website at www.swvada.org for a complete listing. Contact the video librarian, Katherine Gramam to arrange check-out at KCCGraman@aol.com And please remember to send your Southern States feed proof of purchase labels to Laura Nelson. These labels are SWVADA's source of funding for the video library.

Upcoming SWVADA Show and Clinic Dates

April 4 Ride a Test GHPEC Manager: Robin Jones

April 18 Schooling Show GHPEC Manager: Ellen Aiken, Secretary: Pat Nelson

May 23 Licensed Show GHPEC Manager: Nancy Stone, Secretary: Mary McFee

June 13 Ride a Test GHPEC - Manager: Judy Bonin

July 4- Schooling Show GHPEC Manger: Bob Whitehurst *Secretary Needed*

August 22 Clinic Committee: Mary McFee, Laura Nelson,

October 3 Schooling Show GHPEC Manager: Maeve Crowgey, Secretary: Heather Hurst Weaver

[Do you need volunteer hours? - - Please note that we are still looking for a volunteer to Secretary the July Show](#)

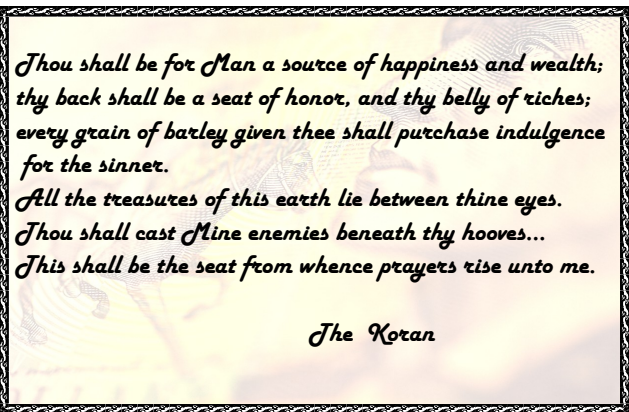
VADA News

Thank you to all the members who donated items to the VADA Chapter Basket and Auction. Our basket was one of the top selling baskets at \$160. The theme this year was "Treasures from Southwest Virginia" Many of the items were handmade by SWVADA members and the uniqueness of these items made our basket truly special. Thanks to Shannon Simpson, Pat Nelson, Lynn Jendrowski, Tracey Smith-Oliver, Meredith McGrath, Marie Klimchuk, Alicia Daily, Robin Jones, Gary Goodale, Ellen Aiken, Tobie Bentz, and Blanche Mahoney for your donations. And a special "thank you" to Susan Dallas who not only collected the donated items, but donated the chest that presented the gifts so beautifully. Our "treasure chest" was a real collaborative effort!



Last year there were teams that represented VADA State-made up of those individuals that wanted to be on State Teams. This year the VADA Board has decided to not have VADA State Teams but to supplement each chapter for the teams they put together within the chapter. It has now been decided to give \$100.00 for each chapter team - up to THREE teams per chapter for the entry/stabling fees.

VADA is looking for as many members as possible to attend the Region 1 meeting on March 15 at Scott Haslers house in Maryland as there are now three different organizations vying for the Fall Championship Shows. Loss of the BLM's or AGAGS means a huge loss of revenue for our GMO. Please support your club and sport by making plans to attend this meeting.



Congratulations to the following SWVADA members and 2008 VADA Award Winners

Katherine Abrams and --

Mighty Perfect were the Junior Training Level Champions (Recognized Shows)

Charlemagne placed 4th at Junior First Level (Recognized Shows)

Mighty Perfect placed 6th at Junior First Level (Recognized Shows)

Charlemagne were the Reserve Champions for Musical Freestyles USEA division

(Katherine also received USDF National Rankings this year on two horses: with Snickers she 22nd in the nation at Junior Training Level; and with Charlemagne she was 18th at First Level Musical Freestyle)

Laura Nelson and Kalif placed 7th at Prix St. Georges

Susan Dallas was named VADA Volunteer of the Year.

New Horse Club In Bedford County

The Bedford Equine Association was established to serve as a resource for local equine owners, equine professionals and equine industry providers. The focus of the Association is to improve communication and cooperation among the many equestrian disciplines in Bedford County, to provide information about equestrian activities, to offer educational programs and networking opportunities, and to assist in the development of public infrastructure to meet the needs of the Bedford equestrian community.

The club is currently in the stages of organization. We had our official organizational meeting on January 20, 2009

with 72 horse enthusiasts in attendance. We passed out a questionnaire form and were able to get goals and ideas into which direction to take this association. If you would like to give us your input and fill out the Questionnaire Form please download it here. You can download the [WordDocForm](#) and email it back to us at mail@bedfordequine.org or download the [PDF form](#) that you can fill out, print and fax to us at 540-890-6702. You do not need to be a resident of Bedford County to join this group. If you would like to be added to our email list to receive informative emails, please email us at mail@bedfordequine.org.

GHPEC News...

The last show of the Winter Series is scheduled for March 15. For more information and a class list log on to the GHPEC site www.ghpec.org

The 2009 Officers were elected at the Feb. 12th meeting and are as follows:

President: Tammy Nichols
Vice President: Ellen Oliver
Secretary: Leslie Prilliman
Treasurer: Joanie Firebaugh

The new sound system is expected to be operational just in time for the spring show season :-)

The gate combination will be changed on March 1st. **Now** is the time to ask yourself if you have sent in your 2009 membership dues, not as you are standing at the locked and unforgiving gate with your horses impatiently pawing on the trailer!

A few important reminders to members:

Gates must be locked behind you to discourage trespassers.

Dogs must be on a leash at all times.

Guest(s) must have applied for one day pass to ride with members. Furthermore, if a non-member is found riding with out proper validation, the member he came with risks having his membership revoked. Ouch!

If you see people who you **know** are trespassing through the park (or worse yet, riding on the soccer fields) please call the non-emergency number for the Roanoke County police which 540-562-3265. The Committee discourages any confrontation between park members and trespassers, but does encourage the wholesome hobby of photography!

Educational Opportunities...

VADA is hosting a clinic with Anne Gribbons on April 4-5. Contact [Alison Head](mailto:Alison.Head@vada.org) for more information.

Tracey Smith Oliver is hosting a Cindy Sydnor Clinic at her farm, Dixon Hill, in Fairfax, Virginia on June 20-21st. Fees are as follows: \$85/ride \$10/night stabling and

\$10/day auditing. Contact Tracey at 540-348-6734 for more info. To learn more about Cindy visit www.braeburnfarms.com

Marie Klimchuk is investigating hosting a private (limited to 4 participants) clinic with a Morgan Dillard, a former Clinton Anderson apprentice, to learn extensive and varied ground work techniques. If interested please contact her at cobbsmtfarm@verizon.net.



Horse/ Dressage Organizations....

www.swvada.org

www.virginiadressage.org

www.usdf.org

www.usef.org

www.ponyclub.org

www.blueridgeeventingassociation.org

www.virginiahorsecouncil.org

Sites for Fun and Learning

www.virginiahorse.com

www.dressageunlimited.com

www.dressagedaily.com

www.dressageresource.com

www.dressageblog.com

www.dressagecritique.com

*You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed.
Antoine de Saint Exupery*