

## VALLEY OAKS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

### UPCOMING ELECTIONS FOR 2006

We need a volunteer(s) for the Nominating Committee by next meeting to review qualifications of candidates. Please contact Linda Pittman by September 22<sup>nd</sup> if you're interested. Until we have a committee, for those who would like to nominate a candidate or are interested in running for Office, please contact Linda Pittman by September 22<sup>nd</sup>. If you wish to nominate someone, please check to see if they will accept the nomination.

Elected Offices available are:

Chapter Chairperson  
Vice Chapter Chairperson  
Treasurer  
Secretary

Volunteers are also needed for the following appointed positions:

Newsletter Editor  
Events Committee Co-coordinator

Ballots will be sent after the September meeting and due back by the October meeting.

### Down Center Line

Congratulations to our Juniors and Young Riders who went to the Championships. Erin Velguth shares her experience at the Junior Championship in this issue of the newsletter. Congrats also to those adults who qualified for the upcoming Annual Show at Rancho Murieta. It looks like we had a lot of busy members this year! It is hard to believe that the year (calendar and competition) are wrapping up.

Although I didn't meet my goal of qualifying for the Annual Show, I did see a definite improvement in my scores, and had I made it to all the shows I had planned on, I think we would have met the goal of qualifying also. More importantly, I'm pleased with my (and my mule's) progress and have had a good time trying. I will be doubly busy through the year-end as I was invited to ride my mule in the Rose Parade again, on January 2, 2006, and the equestrian group was accepted in the parade. We'll start the year riding down Colorado Street, in dressage attire, of course! I also bought a horse recently, so look for Kenya and I at the shows this coming year as well.

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Our next meeting is September 22, 2005 at Fat Mike's Pizza. Come early and have pizza! Good luck to everyone at the Annual Show, and if you're not riding, please consider volunteering to help with the Show.

Linda Pittman  
Chapter Chair

### **JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS by Erin Velguth**

My trip to the CDS Jr. Championships almost didn't happen at all. I was scrambling to get qualifying scores at the last minute for my newly purchased 4 year old Trakehner gelding by Arnold who had only been in steady work since April. Because of a type-o in the show premium I was under the impression that Tecate (my new horse) and I only needed 2 schooling show scores, and one rated show score. Actually the correct qualifying scores needed to be from 2 rated classes and one schooling show. I had planned to take Tecate to the Warm Up/ Cool Down for one more qualifying score and to familiarize him with the show grounds. As it turned out we needed 2 scores to qualify, so the pressure was on. We managed to squeak by with a 65% and a 66% so we were qualified, and on our way to the Championships!

Unlike the 3 previous championships I have been to, this would be the first time my mother, Heidi Chote who coaches me regularly would not be there. She needed to be in Colorado for a USDF program. Since my mom was not available, Heidi Riddle was kind enough to coach me, 2 other juniors from our barn (Kelly Collins and Liz Akel) as well as her own students. So it was my duty to pack all of my tack, check daily riding times, and take care of Tecate on my own.

On Thursday we were entered in a dressage seat equitation class in order to give us the opportunity to work in the indoor. The class was a good experience for Tecate in the company of other horses, and after 48 hours of waiting we got our score. We ended up in 2<sup>nd</sup> place and I was happy with that. Friday was a schooling day with Heidi Riddle, which was successful and fun. Saturday was our first of two tests riding for the Training Level Championship. This test was a challenge due to tension from horse eating dragons and the judge's tent. We got around the test, but could not get the relaxation I wanted. This test put us in second to last in our division. On Sunday the dragons must have been sleeping, because Tecate was much more relaxed and attentive. We won the individual

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class with a 67% which I did not know while the awards were being handed out. As awards were being distributed I couldn't believe the award presenter was placing a Reserve Champion neck ribbon on Tecate. I was so unsure of my placing I made Kelly run to check the scores, but they were right. We had an exciting victory round in the indoor with only a few dragons breathing behind the banners hung on the railings around the arena.

The Jr. Championships was a good learning experience for both Tecate and me. This was his first championship, and my first time with a young and inexperienced horse. I think that all serious junior dressage riders should take advantage of this opportunity made available specifically for riders 21 years old and under.

### **ANNE HOWARD BIOMECHANICS PRESENTATION by Heidi Chote**

On Friday evening July 1<sup>st</sup>, Valley Oaks Chapter with support from The Foothills Chapter hosted a Riding Biomechanics lecture/demo presented by Anne Howard. Held in the meeting room of the Hallmark Suites in Rancho Cordova, the session was intended for anyone interested in biomechanics, but was offered specifically at this time to let the USDF "L" Program participants and auditors a chance to add to their education as it was held the same weekend as the "C" session of the Learner Judge's Program hosted by the Foothills Chapter.

This presentation which has been an ongoing and on growing project designed by Anne who is a Physical Therapist as well as an accomplished rider and instructor and her mother Sandy Howard, herself an "S" dressage judge, former USET Olympian, trainer and instructor featured multimedia including a DVD with footage of several dressage riders in different stages of their careers as well as stock footage of "the German" contingent. In addition, there was a live body (generously lent by Michele Ng) sitting in a saddle on a saddle stand to demonstrate different types of muscle use, posture and tone.

This presentation addressed postural positioning also known as "neutral spine", tonal quality choices, alignment of head, neck, trunk, legs and energy flow. The presentation may become a permanent part of USDF programs designed for education in the area of seat, position and their effect on the way of going of the horse as correct biomechanical timing and positioning will enhance the aid system of the rider. Tom Poulin, USDF "L" faculty member and "S" Dressage

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Judge who was the Instructor for the weekend's USDF session sat in on Anne's Biomechanics Presentation and noted at the end that all of the information was well imparted, correct and necessary.

Anne fielded questions from the audience regarding asymmetries, timing of movement of the hip joint, timing of aids and various other topics. She indulged us by inviting auditors to come up and have a "hands on" correction or to be shown a change and how it effects the postural or sitting position.

All in all this presentation was well received. Since it is an evolving work in the field of biomechanics I would recommend it to anyone seriously studying riding or interested in the how and why of the horse and rider interaction.

## **CDS ANNUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Volunteers are needed for the CDS Finals being held at Rancho Murieta, from October 11 thru 16.

If you would like to volunteer please contact: Glenda Mc Elroy 818-841-3554

## **WANT ADS, FOR SALE ADS, ETC.**

If any members would like to list any ads please let Kathie Sebastian know by e-mail - kama47@aol.com

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

If your horse feels like it is rushing or unbalanced - it may not be on the outside rein.

One exercise to help connect the horse to the outside rein is: When leg yielding don't push your horse with the inside seat bone, use your inside leg to have the horse move under your outside seat bone, use your outside leg to stabilize the energy flow and support the outside rein, while controlling the line of travel.

If you have anything of interest that you would like to share, please E-mail to kama47@aol.com