



## BY THE LETTERS

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[Edition 1, Volume 1]

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### **KDCTA Drill Team Performances**

- ◆ Clinton County Fair, August 14, 7pm
- ◆ Ag Progress Days, State College, August 18, 10:00am and 4:30pm (come visit all day, at the Main Horse arena)
- ◆ Center County Grange Fair, August 28, 7pm

#### **PACTH Therapeutic Riding Conference**

August 28-30, see [pacth.org](http://pacth.org) for information

#### **Susanne Von Dietze Riding Clinic**

Centre County Grange Fair Facility, August 31-1  
Go to [pacth.org/103901.html](http://pacth.org/103901.html) for more information

#### **KDCTA Dressage, Hunter and Jumper Show**

Grange Fairgrounds, September 20

Volunteers always welcome! Great way to experience showing without the expense!

### BE GENTLE, THIS IS MY FIRST TIME...

Welcome to our monthly Newsletter

So... I volunteered to get this started, and really hope that you all a)find this useful b)find it humorous and most importantly, c)CONTRIBUTE YOUR STORIES/INTERESTS/EVENT INFO/QUESTIONS! This is really your newsletter, and those that know me...know I'll just rattle on unless you stop me. This is a first attempt at this, so don't hesitate to offer suggestions and content (take it easy on the criticism...we're all volunteers!!!) But in our officer meetings, we constantly ask how we can serve our local horse community, and one of the issues is always COMMUNICATION. We need to know what you need/want, plus, we feel one of the best benefits this club offers is the opportunity to share information and forge new friendships!

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

#### KDCTA DRILL TEAM

One of our main annual club activities is the KDCTA Drill Team. We perform at local fairs (Clinton and Grange) but the main focus events are our two demonstrations at Ag Progress Days. I can't say enough about the variety of things to do at the Ag Progress Days event (maple candy, freshly made ice cream, the corn maze, hay contest, dairy demos, llamas, all kinds of equipment, and all the horse demos!)

But we are happy to perform two demonstrations (10:00am and 4:30pm) between which, we picnic and hang out with our horses. Come check it out, and if you're interested in participating, all it requires is time and a horse (if you're currently between horses, feel free to inquire and see if someone just might have one to lend). It takes a devotion of some time to practice (we currently practice on Thursday evenings) and familiarizing yourself with the drill pattern. And...as I always seem to add...a signature dish for the picnic (we're pretty flexible with that!) It's a great experience, for both you and your horse, great camaraderie, and we often branch off into other activities, including riding in the Fourthfest Parade (did you see us?!). Jump on the Drill Team tab on the KDCTA website for more info, or pop by a practice or performance!

## FOURTHFEST PARADE

This year, we had EIGHT participants in the parade! Thank you, Mark Harpster and Kat Felix (the Paso Team of Colorado and Ruffino), Deb Graefe and Bea Graf (Quarter Horse team of Mountain Dew and Missy), Karen and Shiloh (the Appaloosa team of Tilly and Flex) and Melissa Deines and I (the Draft Cross team of Onyx and Hoss). Teams are not required, it just fell out that way! And very importantly, although we wish she'd been able to ride, the driving (vehicle) team of Erin Locke and Mark Majer. The Fourthfest organizers added noisemakers to this year's parade, so there was some initial...hesitation...by the horses, but everyone was a pro by the end! And it's always great to have some non-mounted support - they displayed the club banner (otherwise, no one knows who we are!) and helped in many ways! There's always a way to participate!

## STRAIGHT FROM THE "HOSS"

We trusty steeds suffer countless indignities at the hands of our 'owners' (aka staff and sponsors). I have been suffering with my current navigator (that's really all she is....when she even manages that much) for eight years now. We reached a new low in dignity this year....at Fourthfest. I tolerate being brought out in the middle of the day (normally my naptime), waiting around while she chatters with the other staff, taking a seemingly endless stroll through the streets, and more waiting around while the staff chatters some more. I don't mind the adoration from the crowds, but the 'littles' aren't even allowed to step out and share the candy they've caught from other participants (for the record, I like butterscotch and peppermints). The new noisemakers didn't really phase me, but I was tempted to match the spinning moves of some team members that weren't sure what all that noise was about. Just because....I'm athletic like that. It might take me longer to turn around, but I should have treated the crowd to that panoramic view! (Instead, I kept the clean-up patrol busy...my small revenge)

Even though I don't quite understand your 'holiday' (your day off seems to mean I have to work), I've gone along with being adorned with ribbons and beads and glitter in prior years. This year....whirlygigs. I kid you not....a headband with not one, but TWO spinning pinwheels. I would have made a quick meal of these, but they didn't seem edible, so I thought about rubbing them off, but they just made people pay me SO much attention...I let them stay. Through the entire parade. And after. The trailer was the last straw, because they stopped spinning when pressed against the ceiling. If anyone ever doubted I'd been gelded, they don't now. I was a prancing, pinwheeling advertisement for horse abuse.

## TRAIL RIDES

We've had a few informal trail rides. Basically, some members and friends send around a Facebook or email message and meet up. It's possible (but up to individuals of course) to pick up a lift for you and your horse if you don't have a trailer. We've gone to Canoe Creek (some of us, twice) and around the Ag Progress grounds. Past favorites are the Lower Trail and Blue Knob, and we even took one trip out to Gettysburg! Footing (both rockiness and slipperiness), elevation changes, and length of ride are always factors, so assess your horse (and self) accordingly. This ridiculously wet Spring put a damper on trail rides, but we hope to catch up. If you're interested, chat with some members that have gone and/or... lead a ride on your favorite trail! These are generally not official 'club' activities, but consist of club members. If we have enough response, we may be able to make this a regular thing! Major considerations are safety and always be sure the trail is approved for equestrian use.

## CLINICS/COMPETITIONS

We have an informal group that attends the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event every year. We volunteer (in the stadium for Dressage and for Saturday night Reining Freestyle...it's hardly work...). I'm hoping our new participants will write a little something...hint, hint...

A few of us are headed off to the Rolling Rock Hunt Pony Club near Ligonier for the NEOMTA Mini-Trial on August 8-9. Will have to write a recap... if we survive X-Country!

It's always good to know people when you're heading out, and club members are a great resource for information on events. We've got members all over with all kinds of interests. Please check out the PACTH activities on the EVENTS section on the first page; this level of opportunity doesn't present itself locally that often!

Please forward your recaps and stories from competitions you've either attended or participated in!!!! And if you're looking to form a posse or crew for a future event, shoot us an email and info to put on the website or an email blast!

## MEMBERSHIP

A membership is currently \$40 and a family membership is \$60. This makes you a member of a United States Dressage Federation Group Membership Organization (you get an ID card AND the monthly publication, USDF Connections!) A competitors membership is additional. Your membership helps support sporting and educational opportunities in our area (we contribute to the Penn State Dressage Team and a local 4-H Club and they support us by volunteering at our shows). We have monthly social and educational meetings and you have the opportunity to meet a range of members from casual riders to nationally recognized trainers. We share information on medical issues, equipment and tack applications, training techniques, competitive issues and a lot of laughs. Your involvement is always welcome (volunteer for a topic at a meeting, arrange a get-together, volunteer for an event, or...write something for this newsletter!) Next meeting is in September and we're trying a new venue, Harrigans at the Ramada.

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Club,

August is here, so if you work at Penn State or any educational institution, this means preparing for the return of students! Until then, please take some time to enjoy the next few weeks enjoying our horses and ponies before the water buckets freeze.

Local events including The 4-H District Championships, Ag Progress Days (featuring our very own drill team), CPHC shows, the Therapeutic Horsemanship conference and clinic, as well as Grange Fair are all in this month.

September 20<sup>th</sup> will be your next opportunity to help KDCTA stay strong financially and socially at our own dressage/hunter/jumper show. Being hot, dusty and busy... volunteering for a little setup, cleanup, and/or helping out during the show makes for great camaraderie...please join us for this fun!

Happy August!

Emily

