



HAUTE ÉCOLE

The Official Magazine of the Lipizzan Association of North America

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U.S. Remount Service and its Stallions

The Rescue of WWII Hostage POWs and of the Lipizzans

A Personal Account of the Rescue of the Lipizzan Horses

Training the Horse for Dressage: The Legs

Légèreté and Philippe Karl

Member Journal: Just a thought, a squeeze, and a halt at X

Movies with Lipizzans: Ben-Hur



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CONTENTS

- 4 U.S. Remount Service and its Stallions & Rescue of WWII Hostau POWs and of the Lipizzans, Part I
by Dr. Earl Parker
- 8 The Pliable Seat DVD
by Johann Riegler
- 9 The Rescue of the Lipizzaner Horses: A Personal Account
by Colonel Charles Hancock Reed
- 11 Légèreté and Philippe Karl, Part V
by Sherry Leväaho
- 12 Training the Horse for Dressage: Part II, The Legs
by Hildegarde Gekiere
- 14 Movies with Lipizzans: *Ben-Hur*
- 15 Member Journal: Just a thought, a squeeze, and a halt at X
by Susanne Desai
- 15 In Memorium — Carol Wilde
- 16 Lipizzan Farms and Breeders



on the cover: "Rescuing the Lipizzaners"
courtesy of Don Stivers

Don Stivers, who died in 2009, was a superb artist specializing in painting military scenes with realistic detail yet sensitivity to the emotions of the moment portrayed. Mr. Stivers began sketching military subjects during his Navy service in the Pacific theater during WWII. When he returned home, he studied art formally then embarked on a career as a commercial artist/illustrator. His art work is among the most appreciated and collected military art, and his original works can be found on display at the Pentagon, the Army War College, multiple forts and museums, and many private collections.

Mr. Stivers depicted Lipizzans in two paintings,

"Rescuing the Lipizzans" and "The Quiet Professional."

Mr. Stivers gave LANA permission to use a representation of this painting depicting the 1945 rescue of the Lipizzans; original prints are no longer available.

If you wish to see/purchase Mr. Stivers other works, please go to www.donstivers.com.

REMINDER

This will be your last issue of Haute École
unless you renew your LANA membership.

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U.S. Remount Service and its Stallions & Rescue of WWII Hostage POWs and of the Lipizzans, Part I

by Earl Parker, Ph.D., J.H. Daniels Fellow

Born in Mississippi, LANA member Earl Parker completed his B.S. from Mississippi State University and his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, both in Chemistry. His entire professional career was spent in the Plastic Industry in Texas.

As a horseman, he has been competing in and judging Cutting Horse events for 20 years.

For the past ten years, Dr. Parker has been a Docent of the Stark Museum of Art in Orange, Texas, a museum that houses a significant collection of American Western art.

Over ten years ago, he became interested in the U.S. Cavalry Remount Breeding Service and where these stallions were re-located. These studies led him to the history of the imported "Spoils of War" horses, including the Lipizzans. He has already published two articles in *The Cavalry Journal* about the Remount Service.^{1,2}

In 2011, Dr. Parker was awarded a J.H. Daniels Fellowship by the National Sporting Library (NSL) to further his investigations into the Remount Service and the stallions involved in that program. The National Sporting Library and Museum, located in Middleburg, Virginia, is dedicated to preserving and sharing the literature, art and culture of horse and field sports: it houses a 17,000 book collection (www.nsl.org).



This article is the first in a series of articles written for LANA about the Remount Service and about the Lipizzans involved in this program. Dr. Parker's research is ongoing, so if you have any information about the Remount Service or about any of the Lipizzans involved, please contact him at Eparker4@gt.rr.com.

Introduction

As an awardee of a 2011-2012 J.H. Daniels Fellowship from the National Sporting Library, I have the privilege of completing further research on the U.S. Remount Service at their Library in Middleburg, Virginia. My research centers on the "U.S. Remount Service: Stallions Distributed across America." My four-week stay there coincided with the beautiful fall colors of Northern Virginia.

By an Act of Congress, the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps began a breeding service in 1920. The Army provided purebred stallions to approved horse farms and ranches across America for the purpose of breeding a better cavalry horse. Stallions were bought, loaned and/or donated to the Army for this purpose by patriotic people across the nation. Each year, from 1921 to 1949, Stallion Distribution Reports (SDRs) were published by the American Remount Association, a joint cooperative of the various breed associations and the Army. The Army provided the location and agents in charge of the horses, and the breed associations provided names, sire, dam, year foaled, and other breed-related data. My main goal for the J.H. Daniels Fellowship is to document the principle breeds by year and location.

The research objectives are to locate each SDR, publish a database for public utilization, and discover how horses today continue to benefit from the Remount Service. After more than ten years of research, I have found SDRs for 23 of the 28 years of the Remount Service's existence.

Most of the reports were found in libraries, museums, military posts, National Archives II, and the National Sporting Library. While in Middleburg, I found the 1947 and 1948 Stallion Reports in the Washington, D.C. area; these had been previously undiscovered. These reports show how, after WWII, the Remount Service changed emphasis from horses for the Cavalry to adding a variety of purebred stallions to benefit all horsemen. The missing stallion years are 1924, 1926, 1932, 1933, and 1939.

Additional goals of this research are: (1) to identify two areas in which the Remount Service advanced the health and welfare of all horse breeds, and (2) to conduct oral history interviews with people connected with the Front Royal, Virginia Remount Depot. This information will become part of a separate publication.

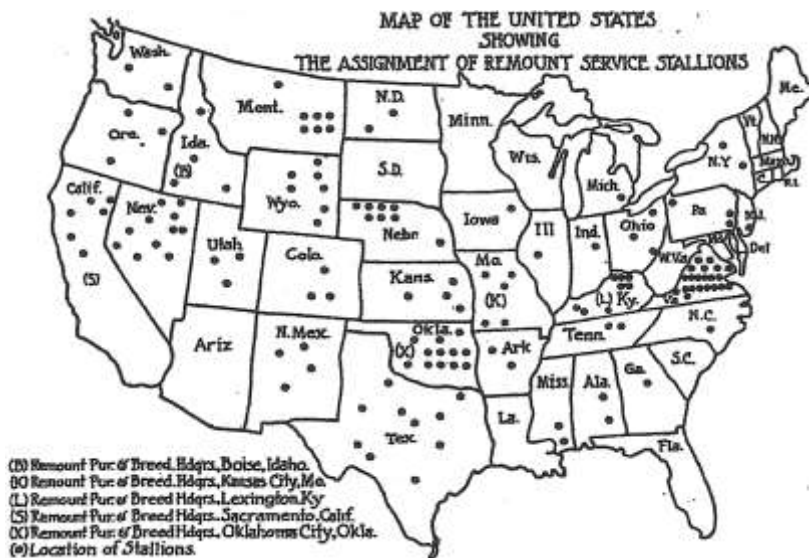
The Remount Service

Beginning in the 1900s, the mechanization era reached farms and ranches, so fewer horses were required for working and riding. As a result, farm and ranch horses became a buyers' market for the cavalry. In time, the quality of the cavalry horse, especially the Thoroughbreds, Arabians and Morgans, declined.

By 1920, Congress recognized the problem and established the U.S. Cavalry Remount Breeding Service. Prior to this period, the Department of Agriculture in Vermont and the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps at Front Royal, Virginia, Fort Reno, Oklahoma, and Fort Robinson, Nebraska, operated breeding stations. These Army posts and stations were unable to meet the needs of the Cavalry.

This 1920 Act of Congress set the stage for the next 30 years, from 1920 until 1949, after which all horses were returned to owners or sold. Congress budgeted \$250,000 for the initial program, which allowed the Quartermaster Corps to purchase purebred stallions and loan them to American farmers and ranchers for breeding a better cavalry horse. If the resulting foals were suitable for the cavalry, the Army bought the young geldings, while fillies remained with the broodmares. The respective breed associations also allowed the half-bred horses to be registered.

The Remount Service was well received by the farmers and ranchers. The initial recipients of the stallions were people of vision, who saw the future benefits to the country and to themselves. The horses were distributed in many States, and the Territories of Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The hundreds of requests for these purebred stallions far exceeded the supply.



At its beginning, the Remount Service had 160 stallions. This number grew to 382 by 1926, when 7,080 foals were produced. At its peak, in 1941, there were 724 stallions and, by 1942, the number of foals increased to 12,074. In an average Remount year, more than 8,000 foals were produced. At \$150 per foal, the Army estimated that the resulting value exceeded \$30 million for the entire program.

The percentages of each breed changed very little from year to year, except for the Thoroughbreds. They became more popular and peaked in 1942. The Remount breed percentages in 1921 were as follows: Thoroughbreds 84%; Arabians 4%; Morgans 4%; Saddlebreds 4%; and Standardbreds 4%. During the peak-breeding year in 1942, the percentages shifted to: Thoroughbreds 95%; Arabians 2%; Morgans 2%; and Saddlebreds 1%.

The Remount Service included some superb horses, including Sir Barton. This stallion was the very first thoroughbred to win the Triple Crown, coming in first in the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont in 1919.

Between 1875 and 1919, no horse had succeeded in winning all three races. Astonishingly, Sir Barton had not won a single race until he raced in the Kentucky Derby. He was run as the "rabbit" for his more successful stablemate; the plan was for Sir Barton to set an early pace, tiring out the major contenders, so that his stablemate could come from behind to win. Instead, he led from start to finish. He won

the Derby, then four days later, the Preakness, again leading the field from start to finish. Then he won the Withers Stakes, and finally, the Belmont; he had four wins, including the Triple Crown, in just 32 days.



Sir Barton—
Triple Crown Winner—
ends his career as a
Remount Stallion

In 1933, Sir Barton was sent to the U.S. Remount Station in Front Royal, Virginia, then on to the Remount Station in Fort Robinson, Nebraska, where he stood at stud for only \$5-10. J.R. Hylton, who owned a few racehorses, bought the old champion, brought him home to his ranch in Douglas, Wyoming, and bred him there in 1934 and 1935. Sir Barton died of colic in Wyoming in 1937.³

U.S. Cavalry and World War II

No writing about the Remount Service would be complete without commenting on the horses recovered in Czechoslovakia, near the end of the Second World War, by the 2nd Cavalry of General George Patton's troops. After the European War ended, with Germany's surrender on May 9, 1945, the U.S. Cavalry turned its attention to importing the best European horses the American troops had captured. These horses were considered as "Spoils of War" booty. Hitler's army had confiscated some of the finest purebred horses in Europe, and a breeding program had been started to produce a super horse to go along with Hitler's Nazi super race. The "Spoils of War" horses were shipped to coastal Newport News, Virginia, and then on to Front Royal, Virginia by train.

Events that Led to the Recovery of the Lipizzans

As the war proceeded across Germany in April 1945, the Allied Forces were moving from the West at the rate of 10-20 miles per day. Their mood was high at their accomplishments over the past months. The Axis forces, however, saw the writing on the wall that the war's end was near. On April 25, the Americans met Soviet Allies approaching from the East about 50 miles from Berlin. From there, the Soviets would attack and later capture Berlin. Rather than risk capture by the Soviets, German soldiers began surrendering to the U.S. forces and our Western Allies.

More than 1,000 German soldiers a day made this decision. During April 1945, Allied forces in Bavaria and Southern Germany captured over 190,000 POWs, including German officers, who surrendered after crossing the Rhine and Elbe Rivers.⁴

Colonel Charles H. Reed of the 2nd Cavalry, 3rd Army, was located in southern Germany near the border; he later wrote a detailed description of the events surrounding his involvement in the rescue of the Lipizzans.^{5,6} On April 26, 1945, Captain Ferdinand P. Sperl, who was attached to Colonel Reed's group, met with a German Intelligence general who was stranded for lack of transportation. A peaceful encounter followed a non-lethal exchange of gunfire. During his debriefing, the German general showed pictures of captured Lipizzans and Arabian horses that were

not far from where Colonel Reed's troops were positioned. It was also learned there were Allied POWs at the German Hostau Stud location in Czechoslovakia.

Without much more information than this, Colonel Reed contacted 3rd Army Headquarters and General Patton. Patton replied with succinct orders: "Get them. Make it fast. You will have a new mission." Colonel Reed's troops were located at the border dictated by the Yalta Convention of February 1945. His new assignment was to move the front line inside that border to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia.

On April 26, Colonel Reed and the German general initiated the rescue by sending a German trooper to the Hostau Remount Stud, requesting that an officer come to 2nd Cavalry Headquarters to work out an agreement. About 8:00 p.m. that same day, Captain Rudolf Lessing, Staff Veterinarian at Hostau, arrived at 2nd Cavalry Headquarters riding one Lipizzan and leading another. An agreement was made and Captain Lessing requested an American return with him to the Hostau Stud, as a show of good faith.

Captain Thomas Stewart volunteered for this assignment and returned with Capt. Lessing to the Hostau Stud that night. There were many tense moments in working out the details, but Capt. Stewart's presence showed the Hostau Stud commander that the Americans would honor this agreement rather than allow the Soviets to capture the horses. The risk was real. One month earlier, Soviet soldiers had captured, killed and eaten the Lipizzans of the Spanish Riding School of Budapest. The next evening, April 27, Capt. Stewart was returned by motorcycle sidecar. He described his experiences in a letter home⁷ to his father, who was a U.S. Senator.

An Operation to Free Allied POWs and Horses

The next morning, April 28, 1945, Major Robert Andrews, with Capt. Stewart as his assistant, led a task force formed from 42nd Squadron, Troop A; elements of Troop C; a platoon of tanks from Troop F; and a platoon of assault guns from Troop E. At daylight, the task force attacked and broke through to the prison camp to release the Allied POWs, and then continued to Hostau, capturing the horses at the German Horse Depot. They also captured many German soldiers.

On April 29, Major Andrews returned to 2nd Cavalry for the Pilsen operation and left Capt. Stewart in charge at Hostau. Stewart prepared the Hostau Stud for possible attack by German S.S. troops still in the area. He enlisted the available Americans, along with German and White Russian Cossack POWs, to mount a defense in case of attack by S.S. troops. On April 30, the S.S. forces attacked and were defeated with heavy losses.



Colonel Reed (right) and two other officers of the 2nd Cavalry riding three young Lipizzans in Austria

This recovery was miraculous in all aspects, as both sides sought a common goal. The right people, many of whom, on both sides, had been schooled in the Cavalry, made the operation a success. The Americans' objectives were fulfilled with the release of the Allied POWs and the rescue of the horses. By April 30, General Patton was notified of success of the objectives.

Honoring 2nd Cavalry Fallen Heroes

There were two deaths as a result of this rescue. The Adjutant General's Unit History reported an engagement in Rosendorf, Czechoslovakia, on April 30, 1945. Pfc. Raymond E. Manz was killed in action and Tec 5 Owen W. Sutton died of wounds.⁸

On April 28, 2006, near the site of their battle, these two soldiers were honored by Czechoslovakian citizens and American veterans at a stone memorial where the Manz-Sutton plaque is located. Several flower wreaths were placed honoring these two fallen heroes.⁹ On May 1, 2009, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment held a



Manz-Sutton Memorial and wreath—

public ceremony in Hostau. They proceeded to Rusov, Czech Republic, and the site where these two soldiers lost their lives fighting the S.S. in the final days of the war.¹⁰

Axis Forces Surrender and Lipizzan Demonstration

The announcement of Hitler's death was followed by Germany's surrender, effective midnight on May 8. The day before, on May 7, General Patton and Under-Secretary of War, Robert Patterson, attended a demonstration of the Lipizzan Stallions of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna at St. Martin, Austria.¹¹

At the end of this performance, Colonel Alois Podhajsky, the Director of the Spanish Riding School, requested that General Patton place the Spanish Riding School under American protection.¹² General Patton conferred with the Secretary of War, then immediately placed the Lipizzans and the Spanish Riding School under the protection of the U.S. Army. During a tour of the stables, Colonel Podhajsky asked for the recovery of the breeding herd. General Patton then asked for a map to show the location of Hostau, Czechoslovakia. General Patton promised to see what he could do.



at the end of the Performance by the Lipizzans, Colonel Podhajsky asked General Patton for American protection of the Lipizzans and of the Spanish Riding School





Secretary Patterson, General Patton, and Colonel Podhajsky and Colonel Podhajsky leaving the Lipizzans' stables

Martin, Austria. Colonel Podhajsky realized that 15 Lipizzans from the Piber Stud, home of the Austrian Lipizzan herd, were retained in Schwarzenberg, under General Patton's orders, as war booty.¹²

The remaining horses were transferred to a German Horse Depot in Hessa. This included the Yugoslavian Lipizzans, Arabians, race horses and a portion of the Cossack horses. Since all of the horses were considered war booty of the American Army, the best of these and other captured animals were eventually shipped to the U.S. for use by the U.S. Remount Service. Colonel Reed later reported that all of the members of 2nd Cavalry recalled, with special pride, their contribution to Austrian culture with "The Rescue of the Lipizzaner Horses."

to be continued:
in Part II,
the distribution of the "Spoils of War" horses throughout
the U.S. Remount Service

Patton's Lucky Scout

PFC Frank Wayne Martin,¹³ attached to Patton's Headquarters (code name: Lucky), was contacted in early May for a cross country scouting mission. He was taken to Hostau where he selected three German cavalry horses for a two day ride to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. The large Hostau Stud herd was close to the Soviet lines, but still controlled by the Americans. The Russian and Czechoslovakian communists were very interested in these horses. The Lipizzan horses belonging to the Spanish Riding School would soon be moving to St. Martin, Bavaria.

Private Martin's assignment was to ride one horse and lead two others to Pilsen, scouting along the route. The trip started out as planned, but soon the two horses being led decided they did not want to leave the security of the herd. Martin wisely turned them loose and continued riding to Pilsen. Once there, Martin gave his last horse to a German citizen. Allied notices had already been posted that grade horses would be given to German patriots, one per family.

Scout Martin's next assignment, after Pilsen, took him to St. Martin, Bavaria, where the Lipizzan stallions were stabled. His orders were to scout the estate at St. Martin and to guard the Austrian trainers and the few Germans who were taking care of the horses. When more permanent arrangements were made for the care of the Lipizzan stallions, Private Martin was present. After his assignment in St. Martin ended, he moved on to other scouting assignments for General Patton, as the American Army continued to try to keep the Soviet troops out of the American Zone.



Hostau Herd Moved to Safety

On May 9, Colonel Reed received a message from General Patton that he had placed the entire herd of Austrian Lipizzans under the protection of the U.S. Army, and that Podhajsky would be flying to Colonel Reed's Headquarters to help sort the Lipizzan mares, foals, and yearlings from the rest of the Hostau herd.

By May 10, the Czechoslovakian and Russian Communists were showing even greater interest in the Hostau horses. This information was relayed to General Patton's Headquarters, with the recommendation to move the horses immediately to Schwarzenberg, Bavaria, where the communists would not be tempted to claim the horses. The Army gave Colonel Reed's troops orders to move the herd and granted them priority on all the roads.⁵

At dawn, on May 12, the Hostau herd began the move that concluded late that night. Most of the horses were driven in small herds, each preceded and followed by American vehicles. Outriders and herders were provided by German POWs and White Russian Cossacks, assisted by volunteer cavalrymen from American, German, and Polish units. White Russian and German families were transported by trucks and wagons pulled by captured horses broken to harness.

Lipizzan Mares Return

About May 14, Colonel Podhajsky arrived and spent the night at Colonel Reed's Headquarters in Zinkovy, Austria. Colonel Podhajsky reported that 13 two- and three-year old stallions bolted and were lost because some of the German officers tried to ride the unbroken colts. Colonel Reed said the Lipizzan breeding herd would be transferred to the vicinity of St. Martin, Austria as soon as practical. The exact time was dictated by the availability of trucks to carry the horses.

The transfer of the Lipizzans, from Schwarzenberg, Bavaria to a vacant air hanger near St. Martin, began on May 18 through May 25. Army trucks were modified to carry the horses. A total of 216 animals were returned to Austrian control near St.



General George S. Patton on Favory Africa

N.B. The full text of Colonel Reed's description of the rescue operation appears on pages 9-10 of this issue.

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www.nsl.org



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To Fellow LANA Members:



Hans Riegler
Former Chief Rider of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna
Member of LANA's Board of Directors

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"The independent, well balanced seat in the saddle is the most important tool to communicate with the horse. Without a soft, pliable movement, well coordinated with the horse, the aids can never be efficient.

"I want to make everybody understand the benefit of controlling the seat whenever you ride."



The Pliable Seat

this DVD is available from The Lipizzan Store

www.lipizzan.org/store.html

(LANA members receive a 10% discount on purchases)

The Rescue of the Lipizzaner Horses: A personal account *by Colonel Charles Hancock Reed*

“The rescue of the breeding herd of the Piber Austrian Lipizzaner horses, which supplied the stallions for use in the Spanische Reitschule, took place on the 28th of April 1945 at Hostau, Czechoslovakia. It was accomplished by a small force formed for the mission from Task Force Reed – which was composed of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Group, 2nd and 42nd Squadrons; an artillery battalion; engineer battalion and an anti-aircraft unit.

“It must be admitted that a great element of chance gave the opportunity for this happy event. On the 25th of April, Captain Ferdinand P. Sperl, I.P.W. Team No. 10 attached to the Group received information of a large German intelligence unit bivouacked in and around a hunting lodge on the Czechoslovakian border – it lacked transportation to proceed further on its flight from Berlin to the proposed Bavarian bastion.

“After some dangerous negotiations with the commander of the unit, Captain Sperl, on the 26th of April, led an attack on the unit, which after the arranged formal exchange of harmless gun fire, surrendered most promptly. The commander of the intelligence unit, a fine appearing German General, proved most hospitable, and finding that on this early advance I had missed my breakfast, invited me to join him and his staff for theirs. We found that we had mutual horse interests and he showed me quite beautiful pictures of the Lipizzaners and Arabs, which he had recently taken at Hostau. He also stated that several hundred Allied prisoners of war were held there. We mutually agreed that these fine animals should not fall into the communists hands, and the prisoners should be rescued.

“A German bicyclist was sent to Hostau to arrange for a German officer to come through our lines that night to arrange terms. A radio message was sent through XII Corps to 3rd Army Headquarters requesting permission for the operation. Shortly, a laconic message was relayed from General Patton – “Get them. Make it fast! You will have a new mission.”

“About 8:00 P.M. – Captain Lessing, Staff Veterinarian at Hostau, arrived at one of our border outposts riding one Lipizzaner stallion and leading a second. He was brought to 2nd Cavalry Headquarters – dinner had been delayed pending his arrival – after cocktails and dinner, agreement was reached that, provided we furnished an officer to show good faith to ride back with him, he, Captain Lessing, would be able to arrange for the surrender of Hostau (officers and men there were mostly ex-horsemen). He stated however, that between us and Hostau were stationed elements of an SS Division who would fight. That bothered us very little as we planned a quiet day or so – then a great attack to over-run them.

“Captain Thomas M. Stewart of Tennessee, a fine horseman and son of the then Senator from Tennessee, volunteered and rode back with Captain Lessing. On the night of the 27th of April, he was returned to our lines by Lessing in a motorcycle side car – after some rather harrowing experiences behind the German line – for which he was decorated. He reported that all was arranged in Hostau – except for one Czech Lt. Colonel in the German army who opposed this – but had no support from the German officers.

“A small task force for the operation had already been formed from the 42nd Squadron – A Troop – elements of Troop C – a platoon of tanks from F Troop and a platoon of Troop E assault guns. All under the command of Major Robert P. Andrews, with Captain Stewart as his assistant.



“At daylight all elements in the front line opened a fire fight – the Task Force broke through, and after some fighting at Bela Nad Radbuzou and a delay caused by an unmapped town showing up in their line of march, the town of Hostau was reached – no problem there – appeared as a fiesta rather than a battle. Townspeople and Allied prisoners of war lined the streets – the German soldiers presented arms – German flag went down – ours went up – and after placing outposts, the officers, intelligence personnel, and as many soldiers as could be spared, went to look at the wonderful array of captured horses.

“Allied prisoners of war released totaled about 400 Americans, British, French and Polish. Regulations required the immediate return of all of these to their own nations – the Poles could not go at that time – but we immediately started the evacuation of the others. Here we ran into an unexpected problem. Many of the prisoners has been at Hostau several years – had achieved a kind of “trustee” status and were well fed and cared for. Many had married or taken up living with Czech or German girls – some even had children – these men refused to be evacuated except with their families – a problem not easily solved to everyone’s satisfaction.

“Horses captured consisted of about 300 Lipizzaners, the Piber breeding herd plus the Royal Lipizzaner stud from Yugoslavia – well mixed together. Over one hundred of the best Arabs in Europe, about two-hundred thoroughbred and trotting bred race horses collected from all of Europe – finally about 600 Cossack breeding horses – Don and Urals.





“Enemy captured consisted of about one battalion of Germans, about the same of Czech volunteers in the German army and a Sotnia of White Russian Cossacks who, opposing communism, had joined the German army in its invasion of Russia, bringing with them the Cossack horses mentioned above. The Cossacks were commanded by an ex-Cossack prince and colonel who was a most pleasant and helpful person during the time we had the animals under our care.

“The following morning – 29th of April – part of the force under Major Andrews rejoined the 2nd Cavalry Group preparatory to assuming a new mission of advancing towards Pilsen via the Eisenstein Pass.

“Troop A – under Captain Carter Catlett, with one platoon of tanks, were left to control Hostau – under the command of Captain Stewart. He immediately organized a defense force with the American troops as a base – but included the German troops – who seemed anxious to maintain the horse farm, plus the Cossacks and some of the released Polish prisoners whom he armed with captured weapons.

“This was done as we feared a counter-attack by the SS troops defeated at the border – it was an excellent plan as, late on the 30th of April, they attempted an attack on Hostau – our multi-national force defeated them with heavy losses – as the attacking Germans had no tanks and ours proved most effective weapons.

“The 2nd Armored Cavalry Group, with additional attachments, proceeded on its new mission – leaving Captain Stewart and his command to control Hostau. By May 7th, date of the complete surrender of Germany, the Task Force was on the general line about 10 miles southeast of Pilsen – Horsice – Zinkovy – Nepomuk in Czechoslovakia, facing the Russians and preventing their penetration into American held territory. Headquarters were established at the Skoda Schloss at Zinkovy. It was here about May 9th that I received a message from 3rd Army that General Patton had been in contact with Colonel Alois Podhajsky, head of the Spanische Reitschule; that the colonel with the trained Lipizzaner stallions was at St. Martin in Austria: that he would be flown up to my headquarters as soon as practical – to check the breeding herd and arrange for its repatriation to Austria in the vicinity of St. Martin.

“Here it is best to clarify a certain misunderstanding of the sequence of events surrounding the rescue of the Piber breeding herd. The actual rescue took place on the 28th of April – nine days before Colonel Podhajsky’s meeting with General Patton and pleading for their rescue.

“When General Patton answered Podhajsky’s request, either through language difficulties or a misunderstanding on the part of the officer who transmitted the message to Podhajsky, he understood that General Patton was sending the 2nd Cavalry Group to rescue these breeding horses. Actually General Patton knew by the 29th or 30th of April that the herd was in our possession at Hostau. He probably sent this information with the word that Podhajsky would be sent up to check them. This error in sequence was perpetuated by the Walt Disney movie, whose script writer interviewed me in Virginia and seemed attached to the idea of the rescue taking place after Patton saw the school horses perform at St. Martin. It made better “show business”.

“On or about the 14th of May, Podhajsky arrived at Zinkovy by American plane, where he spent the night and was entertained at dinner by our staff. Most cordial relations were established that evening and basic plans were laid for the return of the breeding herd to him in the vicinity of St. Martin as soon as practical.

“A day or so after the German surrender it became evident to me that the Czech and Russian communists were showing a great interest in the captured horses – in fact, they made several stealthy visits to Hostau, apparently to connive with the Czech born lieutenant colonel, who was second in command when we arrived.

“This information was transmitted to General Patton’s headquarters, with recommendations that the entire herd of horses be transferred to a safer base in Bavaria at a large installation at Schwarzenburg, where the communists would not be tempted to claim the animals. None of the herds or individual animals came from Czechoslovakia, but had been transported there from other German controlled countries because of the fine grazing and other facilities.

“The Army promptly authorized the operation and issued orders giving the horse movement priority on all needed roads during the time necessary.

“The movement was started at dawn on the 12th of May, and the entire plan was completed by late that night. Since few trucks were available most of the animals were driven in small herds – each preceded and followed by an American vehicle – outriders and guides for each herd were provided from German personnel and the Russian Cossacks assisted by a few volunteer cavalrymen from the Americans – very young colts were with their dams and mares heavy in foal were moved in trucks – personnel – German and Polish – and Russian – women and children with scanty possessions and as much food for men and horses as possible were moved on some trucks and in horse drawn wagons and carriages, pulled by animals broken to harness.

“The day after Podhajsky’s arrival at Zinkovy he and I drove together to Schwarzenburg where he closely checked and identified the animals belonging to the Piber herd. His intimate knowledge and quick recognition of them was most helpful and he seemed quite pleased with their condition. He evidenced no interest in the Yugoslavian Lipizzaners, as he did not wish their blood crossed with the Austrian strain.

“Since the distance to St. Martin was so great the move had to be made by available trucks – refitted to carry horses. These were not ideal and unfortunately, a few horses were injured in transport and two mares suffered broken legs requiring their destruction.



“The movement was made in two convoys the 18th and the 25th of May and was fairly well carried out considering the lack of transportation and personnel difficulties – a total of 215 animals were returned to Austrian control. The remaining horses were later transferred to the large and most suitable German horse breeding establishment of a remount depot in Hessa – this included the Arabians, racing horses, the Yugoslav Lipizzaners and a portion of the Cossack horses. Since all were war booty of the American Army, the best of these and other captured animals were later shipped to the United States for use by the United States remount service.

“The 2nd Armored Cavalry Group performed admirably many more difficult and dangerous operations in the European campaigns. However, all of our members – recall with special pride their contribution to Austrian culture and happiness : the Rescue of the Lipizzaners at Hostau.” — November 4, 1970

Text reprinted from:
Handler, Hans. *The Spanish Riding School: Four Centuries of Horsemanship.*
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

Légèreté and Philippe Karl, Part V

by Sherry Leväaho

Dozens of people met, with great anticipation, for the fourth session of the Instructor's Course of Philippe Karl's L'École de Légèreté. The Adderson Family again proved to be able hosts at their equestrian centre, "ForTheHorse," in Chase, British Columbia. Both riders and auditors were eager to see the progress made over the winter, to reconnect with colleagues, and to see what Philippe Karl's responses would be to what was shown. The Instructor Candidates that had brought substitute mounts to the October session returned this April with their original horses, which added extra interest.

has great expertise in, jumping, and had a diverse group of horses successfully negotiating a gymnastic series of jumps. The final jumps were exhilarating for me, with Caspar enthusiastically jumping an ascending oxer of approximately 3'6". M. Karl remarked that Caspar showed a very good jumping style, and an aptitude for problem-solving.



The two lectures were fascinating and entertaining, as always, and packed with information. The theme for this session's lectures was collection: the different types of collection, how they are achieved, and their effect on the development of rhythm and cadence (especially for ordinary, not especially talented, horses).

A very important pair of concepts was emphasised by M. Karl throughout the lessons. These concepts are frequently confused but essential to master. These concepts are: TAKE – GIVE and ACT – YIELD. One feature which distinguishes these concepts, essential for development of rider tact, is that "to give" is initiated by the rider, while "to yield" is initiated by the horse.

As always, I left the session of École de Légèreté with homework to study. My main task will be to practice the *effet d'ensemble* in a very disciplined fashion, in all gaits, transitions and exercises, while making my actions more and more discreet. As always, I should employ a variety of positions while training, and give frequent breaks. When the *effet d'ensemble* is very consistent, I should begin riding with the double bridle, to take advantage of the different effect combinations available. I may also begin preparation for flying changes. When practicing jumping, I must be a bit bolder in my approach to fences, and allow Caspar to gallop more.

So far, in my practice since the April session, I can use one word to describe my rides and play sessions: wonderful. Progress is not always uniform, of course, but Caspar becomes more and more like butter, yet his energy becomes more and more available to me. This is very inspiring for me, and I would like very much to be able to share it with others.



Sherry and Caspar (Favory Fantasia III-1)

The format for this session was similar to that of the previous sessions. The first lessons progressed much more quickly than in previous sessions, as M. Karl was by now familiar with the horses and riders. Halfway through my first lesson, M. Karl decided that it would be profitable to teach me and Caspar the "*Effet d'Ensemble*," which generated intense interest among the auditors. M. Karl then mounted Caspar (after briefly introducing himself with in-hand work) so that he could first introduce this concept to him, before instructing me the next day. After dismounting, M. Karl told me to attend the next lesson wearing spurs. M. Karl remarked that he would have introduced the *effet d'ensemble* much earlier, but that Caspar and I needed to be confirmed in the prerequisite of proper contact.

The next lesson began with instruction in the technique necessary for the *effet d'ensemble* which I then used, to great effect, throughout all of the following work. The positive effect of this technique on all aspects of Caspar's work and attitude was astounding and apparent to all.

M. Karl also taught the *effet d'ensemble* to another horse-rider pair. He explained that most horses will never need to be introduced to it, but that occasionally a trainer will encounter a horse which cannot be trained without it. These are horses which may be perfectly schooled at home, but behave as though they are completely unschooled when away from home. The trainer needs a non-violent method to completely overcome these horses' defences when in any situation.

Another lesson which generated much interest was the introduction of another candidate's horse to working in a double bridle. M. Karl demonstrated and instructed the flexions in hand necessary to introduce the new bit and explain the proper responses to the horse, and then the correct way to use the reins while mounted.

In the group lesson, Caspar and I were practicing our in-hand work, and then practicing while mounted.

The jumping lesson was fun and exciting -- we were grouped according to how much jumping the horses and riders were used to. M. Karl clearly enjoys, and



French riding master Philippe Karl

www.philippe-karl.com

Training the Horse for Dressage: Part II, The Legs

by Hildegarde Gekiere

Dressage Rider/Trainer of the Classical French/Portuguese School

Founding Member and Former Secretary General of the Lipizzan International Federation (LIF)

As the previous article ended by having a conversation with your horse and being patient, I will stay with this subject a little longer before continuing with work on the legs.

Please note: it is simplistic to say that you have to be patient training your horse. Everyone will acknowledge and agree with this. Unfortunately, you need something more than patience to train a horse. You must have understanding and insights: technical insights and psychological insights. Actually, when you have both of these, patience naturally flows along with them.

Also note: muscle building takes time. Occasionally, as a human athlete trains his body, step by step, to build muscles, he may find that he has to slow down the regimen, because muscles do not necessarily respond as easily as the mind can imagine, because muscles don't precisely follow the mental anticipation. Therefore, the athlete must slow down and go back to a slightly easier level, in order to give the muscles time to catch up with the idea. It is exactly the same with a horse. Mentally, it may very quickly understand the exercises, but physically its muscles are not able to follow the mental understanding. Unfortunately, a horse cannot explain his difficulty in the same way a human being can. It will convey its difficulties in its own language, by a bad contact, by failing to balance its head correctly, by slowing down in the exercise, by losing his bending. This is the horse/pupil having a conversation with the teacher, telling the teacher that the exercise is too difficult, too strenuous, too long in duration.

Every one of us has had the experience with a horse doing a beautiful half pass to the left and when we ask for the half pass to the right, the horse is losing activity, trying to change his lateral bending, pulling on the hand. This just tells you that the right side is not as easy for it, that it is stiff on that side. The quandary is, how do you react, what do you do?

- Do you give the horse a sharp hit with the crop? If you do that, he will pull more because you hit him forward, causing him to lose his balance even more.
- Do you increase the weight on your hands? That shall disrupt his impulsion and he will slow down.
- Do you increase the duration of the exercise? Then you hurt his muscles and he will become more stiff, instead of more supple.

This is where understanding, then patience comes in.

You have to work the right side, not with harshness or punishment, but with understanding and patience. Prepare him on a circle to the right side. His body will come along. When you feel his body relaxing, reacting with more suppleness in the circle, push gently into the half-pass once or twice. Be sure to take him out of the exercise as soon as he complains [resists], prepare him in the circle again, then move again into the half-pass. You have to come back to the exercise many times, for short periods. Be sure to reward him each time he does well. He will come around to complete the exercise well, as soon as his muscles are capable of maintaining the exercise. This is understanding. This is patience.

Before we go into gymnastic work, as it should be followed in terms of degree of difficulty, I first want to explain something basic: what a circle is. I have a bad habit or sometimes going "off road" in my explanations. Please don't be impatient with me, as my diversions always have something to do with the subject.

The circle is and stays the same throughout the horse's training. It is a very important exercise. It gives the horse a lateral roundness. Everything in Dressage is about roundness! First the lateral roundness and, later on, the vertical roundness (which is "collection").

Without lateral roundness, you will never achieve a collected horse.

Following most manuals on Dressage, you will read that the horse has to be bent slightly to the inside and the inside leg has to work in on the place of the girth. Why these manuals prescribe this, I don't know. It is possible that the inside leg is needed but also possible that it is not!

Basically, there are four trouble areas for the horse on the circle for which you have to be careful. A horse can make more than four mistakes, of course, but I will stay with the most common. He can fall over his outside shoulder or fall inside with his shoulder. He can escape to the outside with his backhand or fall inside with



the backhand. Each of these mistakes requires a different approach – which may or may not require an inside leg. Maybe it is, maybe it is not! Maybe you need the leg on one side and not the other. Here again, exactly as working with the contact, do not intervene with hands or legs until you need to. It is perfectly possible that a young horse makes a perfect circle and does not need an inside leg. If this is the case, let the horse execute this exercise without interference. No automatic inside leg.

If somebody were to ask you to describe dressage training in just one phrase, what would you answer? Well, the answer could be: "Dressage is all about the training and activity of the inside back leg!" Everything is coming from that important point. From the beginning to the end of the horse's training; it is the back leg.

Since every exercise we teach a horse, up to the highest level of balance, comes from this part of the horse's anatomy, we have to be very careful to train and condition the back leg so that it is able to provide what is needed of it.

Remember, in all aspects of Dressage, in every roundness of the horse, it is the inside back leg that needs to impel the activity – and you must be very careful that the inside rein should not oppose this activity. The inside rein should not be dominating, otherwise you miss completely the purpose of any exercise.



What can go wrong?

- Your outside rein can be too heavy! The horse will lose the roundness of the body;
- The outside rein is not working enough! The horse will only bend its neck to the inside and fall over the outside shoulder. In this case, the indications of your shoulder and hip will not be able to correct that. So, the inside back leg cannot be placed under the mass, but will only go sideward.
- The horse is not reacting to your inside aids (leg and shoulder) any more! Probably your leg is “sticking” to the horse’s body which gives him no indication of what you desire. A sticking leg is like a second girth. Why would he react to that? He is used to that feeling;
- Your inside leg is working too much backwards! The back leg will only go to the side and not under the mass.

If nothing seems to be working, bring the horse back to the circle or change direction, go forward. Then begin again. Do not wait until the horse becomes irritated. Put its mind on some other work and re-prepare him for the exercise some moments later.

These are the most common problems. Others can arise, of course, and again, the main thing is to listen and to analyse what the horse is telling you.

And remember, always, you have time. You must take the time. You have no other choice. If you are not willing to take the time, get off the horse, stop torturing him. You don’t really want to be a fine Dressage rider.

The rider in all photos is Geert Craenhals on Rebimba. The photographer was Frans Roex.

This series by Hildegard Gekiere, “Training the Horse for Dressage,” will continue in the next issue of Haute École.

Again, if your inside rein opposes the fluid movement of the exercise, the horse will tell you that he cannot execute your demands by making himself stiff in the muscles of the neck. If the horse’s neck muscles are stiff, it means that his whole body becomes contracted. The result will be that the horse will try to answer your aids, but has to find relief when your inside hand opposes the activity. He may do this by falling out or in with his backhand or shoulder, so that he can place his legs to the side instead of deep under the body. This, obviously, is a normal physical reaction to your mixed aids.

The circle is one of the most useful exercises during a horse’s education. Everything comes out of the roundness of the circle, and the interplay between inside and outside and backhand and forehand gives wonderful balance to the horse. It is like fine cooking: bringing a number of flavors together to find the perfect blend.

Legs and hands opposing each other will stiffen the horse and give him artificial movements. If the legs push too hard, the horse will lose his balance and put his weight on the shoulders. The same will happen if you open the front completely. You must be aware of the interplay between your hands and legs until the horse reaches the point, or the moment, where he is capable of supporting his own balance. These moments are rare and very exciting. Do not disturb them. Use this balance to advance to the next phase. As you advance the horse’s training, developing his muscles, you will find that each advance permits you to go forward to the next higher level and balance.

Leg yielding

Once again, everything comes from the roundness of a circle. The young horse can quickly go to his first gymnastic exercise, which is the leg yielding from the circle. Instead of finishing the entire circle, you can, when you cross the midline of the circle, bring your inside shoulder a little back and make the contact of the outside rein slightly heavier so that the outside shoulder of the horse is under control. By turning your shoulder in the direction of his inside back leg, your hip and inside leg should then give him the indication that he has to go to the side. There is the horse’s first exercise, a leg yield.

It is a natural language starting from a normal circle.

In professional vocabulary I say: keep the outside shoulder under control! But what really is happening is that you slow down the action of the outside shoulder which, together with the movement of your hip and leg, gives the horse the message that he has to go sideward.

Again, as soon as he responds to this, reward him. It will take only a few days before he can do the yielding from the midline to the side of the ring.



Movies with Lipizzans: *Ben-Hur*

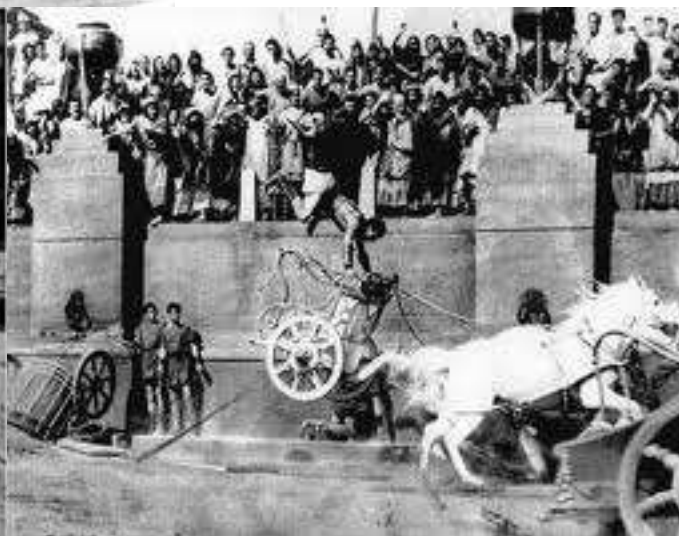


Charlton Heston learned to drive the horses and chariot, and became quite adept. His start was not auspicious. Reportedly he got into the chariot with the well-trained Lipizzans and shook the reins. Nothing happened; of course not, as driving horses are accustomed to the reins being moved around and adjusted when they are first put to a vehicle. Someone then gave a verbal signal, the horses quickly stepped forward, and Heston fell off the back of the chariot. Take two; that's him over there, that's Hur.

In one memorable scene, *Ben-Hur's* team of white horses jumps over a wrecked chariot. The stunt driver was the son of the race director, Yakima Canutt, the most famous of Hollywood horse stuntmen and directors. Yak Canutt is best known for doubling Clark Gable in *Gone With the Wind* and John Wayne in the 1939 film *Stagecoach*, jumping off the stagecoach onto the backs of each of the pairs of horses. In the *Ben-Hur* scene, the horses jumped the wrecked vehicle, the chariot flew up, and the driver was unexpectedly thrown over the front onto the shaft. The stunt driver climbed back in, maintaining control while the horses continued to run around the track in traffic. This wasn't planned, but Director William Wyler left the scene in the film, later dubbing in a close-up of Charlton Heston climbing back into the chariot.

The race begins with horn fanfares and march music, but once the

race begins there is no music, just the sound of hooves, wheels, whips and the crowd. Make some popcorn and enjoy the spectacle of magnificent and real horses in *Ben-Hur*.



Ben-Hur is a 1959 film with a great chariot race, and another memorable scene when the horses (named Altair, Antares, Aldebaran and Rigel) come into the tent the night before the race. The rest of this 212 minute long film is a complicated story about Christ, faith, forgiveness, power, and friendship in Rome and the Holy Land, based on the 1880 best-selling novel written by Lew Wallace.

The chariot race is astonishing as it was created without any of today's computer generated imagery (CGI). Those are real horses (white for good, black for evil), pulling real quadriga, driven by real actors and stunt men, in a wholly created coliseum and track covering almost 20 acres. This segment of the film lasts only 20 minutes, but took three months to film after one year of preparation. The five-story stands were packed with thousands of extras. More than 40,000 tons of sand were taken from Mediterranean beaches to make the footing of the race track. 78 horses, including the Lipizzans (who were from Lipica), were imported from what was then Yugoslavia and trained by Glenn H. Randall, Sr. and Yakima Canutt for five months before filming. More than 1000 workers labored for a year to carve the oval out of a rock quarry. Rome's Cinecitta Studios loaned more than a million props, and sculptors made more than 200 giant statues for the chariot coliseum. A "minor" film in production at the same time, *La Dolce Vita*, was relegated to a back lot to accommodate filming *Ben-Hur*.



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MEMBER JOURNAL

Just a thought, a squeeze, and a halt at X

by *Susanne Desai*



In transitions or when coming to a halt, it is important to maintain focus on balance and the gentle seat aids, especially with a young horse with developing back muscles. For me, this is like thinking of halting, then slowly sitting down with almost a rising feel in the seat, until the horse's back muscles can maintain his position. This kind of rising in the seat is something you can see when watching well-schooled horses in the piaffe. The rider is asking for impulsion but not asking for forward motion. To sit down too firmly at that time would interfere with the movement.

As the owner of a Lipizzan, I cannot stop myself from dreaming of riding haute école movements and the airs above the ground. I can only imagine the feeling of balance, impulsion, collection and then explosion that is the capriole, but I am sure it is important to have an independent seat, a soft rein contact and lots of equilibrium between the horse and rider. For now, I am happy to ride around the arena, working on the simple, basic commands, and then watching my dream horse perform his haute école as he plays by himself in the warm fresh air.

As the days become longer and warmer, and the trees become green again, Spring and then Summer welcome more riding time. My dream horse, Pluto Fantasia, and I work toward our goal of cohesion and unity. Often times he tells me how it should be and I follow, but now we are focusing on communicating through some rein contact.

In the beginning, I urged him forward and made him work toward using his body correctly, making sure he moved with impulsion and rounded his back. Now, unless he becomes distracted by an imaginary mountain lion coming out of the bushes next to the riding ring or a neighbor coming to talk, this may be a good time to work on getting him to go correctly. He can be a tad bit lazy at times. The gentle tap of a whip reinforces an ignored leg squeeze. I want him to seek contact with the bit and, once that is achieved, stay steady for awhile. As a young horse with only a year and a half of saddle experience, his balance and coordination with a rider are still developing. His changes of direction without a rider are effortless, but when the sack of potatoes (a.k.a. his rider) lurches out of balance on his back, he quickly stops to regain equilibrium. He senses that it is unwise to move forward when his rider is unbalanced in the saddle. Perhaps, in the future, his struggling rider will be quicker to anticipate and to help allay his fears.

As a young rider, I learned to have soft hands and hands that were independent of my body. A rider should never have to use his hands to balance himself while riding, and the horse should never be forced to brace itself against the rider's hands and lose its balance. The lunge line is a great place for a rider to learn to have an independent seat. When you don't have to focus also on the reins, you can focus on your seat, using your core abdominal muscles. You don't need your hands so they can stretch to the sky or relax loosely at your sides. I would gladly take a class at the gym that was called, "sitting trot with no reins," or "no stirrups on the lunge line." Unfortunately, my gym does not offer these classes, and a schoolmaster horse is nowhere to be found in my part of the woods. So, as an amateur rider training a young horse, I try to focus on how it used to feel when I was young and able to just think "stop," squeeze my hands a tiny bit, and be able to halt from a walk, trot or canter. My core was very strong from years of ballet and gymnastics, and I did not have the tummy of a mother of two young children. Now it might be a thought, a squeeze, a jiggle and then a halt. I try to think of my hands as gently closing with just my fingers moving ever so lightly. My hands are not squeezing a sponge or anything so forceful, they are just lightly moving. I need to remember that I need to use my seat also, to help with the halt. In teaching my young horse, I want to start with a gentle action and only increase the pressure if needed. Actually, Pluto Fantasia has always responded to my sitting down deeper to stop, as he has always been very sensitive in his back. The reins are almost unnecessary, but adding more contact helps as we prepare to start work on shoulder-in and other lateral movements.



In Memorium Carol Wilde

long-time LANA member
who died May 22, 2012



Carol with her Conversano III Ancona



farewell dear friend



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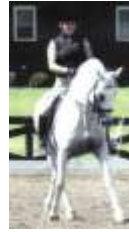


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