



## Hoofbeats and Heartbeats USDFD Jan/Feb 2012



The USDFD is happy to reinstate its Hoofbeats & Heartbeats Newsletter. With all the exciting events in 2011 and the growing number of new drivers, our Board of Trustees decided that an organizational facelift was just what we needed to kick off 2012, starting with our Newsletter. This next year's going to bring some changes to our wonderful organization. With a heavy dose of renewed excitement from our Board we're bringing the USDFD into the 21st century! It is our greatest desire that this Newsletter will help to connect our small community by helping new drivers to become acquainted, sharing information, keeping everyone apprised of upcoming events, and inspiring everyone to stay involved as we come into yet again another Para-World Championship year.

### 2011 News

Once again the USDFD would like to thank the Gayla Driving Center for holding its annual Gayla Bluegrass CDE as a fundraiser for USDFD, successfully raising just under \$1,000 despite the struggling economy.

We are also pleased to report that we have had several opportunities to help educate the public about adaptive driving. This year we have worked with the Universal Access Program Aide Department of the Environmental Conservation Division of Lands and Forests in Albany, NY, to help them make accommodations for mobility challenged individuals wishing to visit historical sites in the Adirondacks that are closed to motor vehicles.

USDFD and Gayla Driving Center also have been providing a place for a local Lexington program, Central Kentucky Riding for Hope, offering some of its students more driving opportunities, teaching them about driven dressage, cones, and driving out in Kentucky's bluegrass.

USDFD also worked with the new Foot Hills Therapeutic Equestrian Center located at a southern KY army base, providing information about available adaptive equipment, carriages, and the qualities a suitable driving horse should exhibit. This program also works in conjunction with the Bluegrass Army Depot, the Eastern Kentucky University's Veterans Club, and PATH's affiliate program Horses for Heros to serve injured war veterans through facilitating equine assistive activities and therapies.

### Para-Equestrian Clinic

In October of 2011 USDFD hosted a Para-Equestrian Clinic for drivers hoping to represent the USA in this year's upcoming FEI Para-Equestrian World Championships to be held in Breda, The Netherlands.

Held at the Gayla Driving Center, the clinic was taught by head trainer Sterling Graburn and FEI judge Debbie Banfield who both graciously donated their time. It was attended by Pam Johnson of MO, and Boo Finch West of VA. Sterling and Debbie combined their efforts to help both drivers address their goals of improving their dressage skills.

The USDFD would like to congratulate both drivers on their success at the Fall Kentucky Classic CDE. Boo placed First in Preliminary single pony out of a class of sixteen and after just moving up to Intermediate Level Pam was able to place third. Again, we want to send a BIG congratulations to two of our own.



Boo West and her horse discussing the halt with head trainer Sterling Graburn



Pam Johnson and her horse working on bending with head trainer Sterling Graburn.

In November of 2011 Gayla Driving Center hosted a USDFD/PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) workshop/certification program for therapeutic driving instructors, gathering participants from all across the country. The attendance was the largest in history, operating at PATH's maximum allowed capacity with ten people participating in the three day workshop along with four auditors, eight people taking the three day Therapeutic Driving Instructor certification, and six complete turnouts to work with.

Each year the number of Therapeutic Riding Centers interested in offering driving grows, leaving us struggling to accommodate the need for certified instructors. This year alone we had to put twenty-five people on the waiting list. Though we are sorry to keep them waiting, we are happy that interest is increasing!

If you happen to be looking for a driving instructor who has completed the driver certification you can find a detailed directory on [www.pathinti.org](http://www.pathinti.org)

### Therapeutic Driving Instructor Workshop & Certification



Volunteers Carrie Ostrowski, Gail B. Austin, Anna Newman, and Debbie Femster hold Gayla Therapy animals Arne, Socks, Breimar, and Rosey during a Harnessing and Hitching seminar.



Volunteer Anna Newman holds Gayla Driving Center's rock solid pony Breimar.

## What's new for 2012:

As of the first of this year the USDFD will have a brand new look on its updated website! We would love it if each of you would take a moment to check out the changes and let us know what you think. Please feel free to write us if you have any information to add, suggestions, or questions that you would like us to answer.

Now, I know it may be hard for you all to believe, but we are also proud to announce that the USDFD is now on Facebook and Linked In, so search us out so you can "like" us or join our group and help to spread the word! Then you can upload your favorite photos and post any questions you may have on our wall.

Another new and maybe not so exciting change in USDFD is the revision and updating that our Board has done to its bylaws and mission statement. We are hoping that this revision will streamline the running of this national organization and help it continue to grow. You can find both the revised bylaws and the mission statement on our website at [www.USDFD.org](http://www.USDFD.org).

One of our most important projects for this year will be our membership drive and for that we are asking each driver for their help. If you or someone you know is a driver with a disability or is interested in driving please let us know. We are here to help.

## Board of Trustees News

Marjorie Margentino, Linda Word, and Gail Austin have resigned from our Board after many years of service. We thank you so much for your time and hard work, and wish you each the best in your future.

Though we are sad to see some of our members go we would also like to offer our new members a welcome. Over the last two meetings of USDFD's Board of Directors we have added Bev White of OR, Sara St. Peter of VT, Joy Adamski of OH, Cat Luce of MA, Susan Guinan of FL, Linda Yutzy of TX, and Carol Bowersock of OR. We look forward to what each of you will bring to the Board of Trustees, and what we can build together as a team!

The USDFD also voted in its new executive officers during our January 4, meeting of this new year. We would like to congratulate Kathy Coutemanche on holding her seat as Treasurer, Carol Bowersock as Secretary, Diane Kastama as Vice President, and Bev White as our new President.

We would like to take a moment to acknowledge Debbie Banfield, our newly retired past President, for her years of dedicated service. Debbie has been an integral part of USDFD. Without her effort and knowledge little would have been accomplished. Debbie came into her presidency when USDFD was on shaky ground; she now passes USDFD on to Bev White with a much better outlook for the future. Though we are sorry to see her step down as President, we are looking forward to her continued service on the Board. Her knowledge and experience will be greatly needed in the coming years, so even though she will no longer be working as our tireless President we want her to know how much we appreciate her (and that she won't be able to get away from us yet).

## The Meet & Greet

Featuring Board members/Active drivers

### Bev White Bio:

Bev got her first horse in 1966, began showing her Quarter Horse in 1967, and continued the equine adventure with her daughters in 4-H and youth classes, and with her granddaughters showing Pinto and Paint. She discovered carriage driving when the first mini joined the family, followed by ponies and carriages, trailers and trucks and Gabe, an employee/surrogate son/friend who makes it possible to compete and his brother Manuel who keeps the barn and equipment in immaculate condition and navigates for the mini team with his brother.

Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1979, Bev progressed from studying and teaching Jazz Dance and running three miles a day to riding around in a scooter and continually seeking better adaptive equipment on and off the carriage. She often bemoans the fact that she did not know USDFD could help with that search and could have saved her from many costly errors in creating and purchasing carriages and safety devices. It is her goal to facilitate that process for new drivers with disabilities through finding ways to make them aware of this resource early in their search.

Bev worked with her husband in their construction business for fifteen years. After doing the Executive Secretary bit for mortgage and insurance companies for a few years, she went back to school, earned a B.S. in Psychology with honors, was awarded membership in Phi Beta Kappa, followed by a M.S. in Clinical Psychology and work in community mental health and private practice. Retired, she volunteers as a Docent at the Portland Art Museum and for the Independent Living Program in her region, furnishing apartments and making Christmas for youth aging out of foster care. She organizes the CDE at Inavale in Oregon each July.

She is delighted to join the Board of Trustees of USDFD and hopes to help find ways to introduce new drivers with disabilities to the resources USDFD can make available to them and support them in the quest to someday join Team USA.



Beverly White  
Active driver and new USDFD President



Diane Kastama

Hi, I have been a life long equestrian with a background in dressage and some jumping. At the age of 22, I purchased my first horse after graduating from University of California, Santa Cruz with a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science. I had planned on riding the trails. Then, at the age of 24 I was in a car accident, which left me paralyzed from the waist down. That was 20 years ago. I wasn't sure what to do, but I knew it was going to involve my horse. I started back riding one year after my injury at a NARHA riding program REINS. It was great, but not very satisfying.

I wanted speed and no boundaries. I managed to buy a used cart and a harness from a catalog, went to a clinic, bought a book, and taught my trail horse to pull the cart, all from a wheelchair. I had a few misguided friends (I can only say that now because I have learned so much more) who helped me in my endeavors. A few mishaps involving a pig and a bent shaft made me finally decide that the trail horse was not to be a driving animal. I then looked at a broodmare I had and she learned to drive when she was pregnant, then I decided to teach her first born to drive. By now I had a road cart and my original cart and a 3 year old mare, I went to a show and found out about the American Driving Society and discovered Combined Driving. With the help of a few mentors along the way (Hardy Zantke, Jody Cutler and Mickie Bowen) I was hooked.

I spent the first year 1998–1999 making rule changes with the ADS to allow the disabled to use a vehicle to view the obstacles and hazards. I am ecstatic to say this is commonplace now, and thrilled at the various competitors who have been able to make use of these accommodations.

I found out about the World Championships for disabled drivers in 1998, and made it my goal to make the team. I was not successful in 2000, but I went in the following years. In 2002 I won an Individual Silver-Team Bronze, 2004 5th place, in 2006 Individual Gold, in 2008 Individual Bronze-Team Silver. In the states I compete with a single, a pair, and tandem. I have shown FEI level single and pair, and have been long listed for the National Singles team. I have done many demonstrations to support driving for the disabled. Whether it is a local riding group or an international three day event or the World Equestrian Games, I promote the sport. Most of the competitions I attend are in the Western part of the United States as I live in California, but I have gone back East to compete and enjoyed it very much. The driving community is a very supportive community.

I plan on driving seven days a week, but life does get in the way and I average five days a week. I have learned that I should not train my horses completely myself, and prefer someone else to hook them for the first month or two.

I spend my hours working as a software engineer when I'm not out with the horses, I also teach lessons and clinics on driving. I have been the treasurer of Brass Oak Driving Society in San Luis Obispo County, CA for the past few years.

Driving excites me and I wish to share that with as many people as I can.



Vice President & Team USA Chair Diane Kastama

#### Team USA update:

Team USA is off to a great start in planning and acquiring equipment for this year's Para-Equestrian World Championships to be held in Breda, The Netherlands. We have created a selection committee and have contacted people for the position of coach and chef d'equipe. These names will be submitted to USEF for consideration for the 2012 team. The selection criteria has been edited and submitted to USEF and will hopefully be available to drivers soon.

Thanks to some great friends and wonderful contacts we have firm commitments from fellow drivers of suitable horses and ponies that will be available to lease in the Netherlands. Various carriages and harnesses will also be made available, and a suitable training facility has also been located. With a lot of work from our Team USA Chair Diane Kastama and a fabulous bunch of people willing to donate we are well on our way to having everything we need to send another medal-winning Team! Team USA would also like to send a special thanks to Gerard Paagman of Ideal Harness for his help with this endeavor. His great energy, contacts, and selfless offering of personal resources has already been indispensable to this year's Team.

## The Team USA Fundraising Dilemma

USDFD has two major goals this year: to increase our educational push by sponsoring more opportunities for new instructors to become PATH Certified, thus providing more driving opportunities to new drivers, and to help send a Team to the Para-Equestrian World Driving Championships in Breda, The Netherlands in August.

Money has been allocated to put on several PATH Certification Clinics this year and we are in the process of identifying prospective instructors and clinic locations. The Board is very excited about this initiative and looks forward to increased driving opportunities across the country.

To reach our second goal, the Board has allocated \$10,000 toward the cost of sending a team to the World Driving Championships. The cost of funding a team is approximately \$50,000. In the past, team members have received some support from USDFD, none from USEF and a little from ADS. The majority of the cost to compete has fallen to the individual team members. In 2010 we did not send a Team as prospective Team members faced the same financial issues as the rest of the country. This year we are planning to apply for small grants from USEF, ADS and the Christopher Reeves Foundation, but even with these grants, individuals named to the Team must raise the remainder of the funds necessary to attend. USDFD and drivers in general benefit from the increased exposure and attention gained in a Championship year. Our Team represents all of us at the Championships, provides inspiration to new drivers and a long term goal to current drivers. Just as not all able-bodied drivers aspire or have the talent to be on a USEF Driving Team, not all disabled drivers aspire or have the ability to be on our Para-Equestrian Team, but by sending a Team we highlight the sport and bring awareness of the possibilities. Our Team needs your financial support so we are asking that you think about ways you might help, either by making a donation to the Team or by putting on a fundraising event in your area. Together we can ensure that the United States is represented at this years World Championships.

If you feel you need a little help to get your creative juices flowing, try taking a look at one of these great websites.

[www.fundraising-ideas.org](http://www.fundraising-ideas.org)

[www.fundraising-ideas-center.com](http://www.fundraising-ideas-center.com)

[www.fundraiserhelp.com/charity-events.htm](http://www.fundraiserhelp.com/charity-events.htm)

### Fundraising in the works:

We have approached several CDE's around the country to see if they would be willing to have us put on a fundraising event during their competition. Kelly Valdes at the Southern Pines Event in SC, has contacted us and is willing to allow us to put on something during the course of the competition. Presently we are looking for drivers in the area that would be willing to organize something. A single Comfy-fit harness is up for raffle to support the Team. Tickets will be made available at [www.USDFD.org](http://www.USDFD.org), by phone at 1-800-360-5774, by mail at USDFD 3329 Cynthiana Rd. Georgetown, KY, or through your local Board member. Tickets are \$10 each or six for \$50. Make funds payable to USDFD



Single Comfy-fit harness

For Sale:

2004-2005 Thornlea Wheelchair Accessible Carriage for sale. This carriage makes the perfect Therapeutic Driving Center vehicle. It can take most any wheelchair allowing programs to treat a variety of patients. All inquiries please contact Megan Bereskin from the Luci Center [www.thelucicenter.org](http://www.thelucicenter.org) at 502-845-2157 or [lucicntr@aol.com](mailto:lucicntr@aol.com)

If you have anything you would like to add to our next issue such as: any experiences, stories, bio's, sales items, have any issues you would like to see addressed or would like to receive Hoofbeats & Heartbeats in hard copy please feel free to contact Sara St. Peter at [shena198031@yahoo.com](mailto:shena198031@yahoo.com) or 802-728-4806 any time.

We want your feedback!

Please tell us how you liked this issue of Hoofbeats & Heartbeats. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please feel free to contact us. Each of your Boards members is here to serve you, so don't be afraid to let us know what you think! Contact us anytime at 502-863-5113 [usfdoffice@bellsouth.net](mailto:usfdoffice@bellsouth.net) or by mail at 3329 Cynthiana Rd. Georgetown, KY, 40324.