



DRIVING NEWS

Spokes & Spurs Inc Newsletter

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Spokes & Spurs 2026 Educational clinic - "You Be The Judge"

On Sat., April 11, Spokes & Spurs held its first of three educational clinics. Our guest speaker was Teresa Bron. Teresa is the current President of the American Driving Society; an ADS "R" Combined Driving Judge, a USEF "R" Combined Driving Judge, a USEF Certified Pony Measurer, and a PATH International Advanced Driving Instructor (CIRI). Additionally, she is a specialist in equine mental health and learning. Teresa is an accomplished equestrian from Washington State. Teresa drives and rides and it is quite evident that she has a passion for education and encouraging others at all levels of driving.

Teresa began the seminar with a morning session discussing what judges look for. We had a wonderful discussion with so many questions! Teresa reminded us that a judge is looking at you and your horse in the dressage arena as a, "moment in time". They then mark the score against the directives. She explained the score from 1 to 10 and to note that over 6 is positive. Scoring and the judge's comments are what the judge sees at that particular moment; they are not a trainer.

Advice along the way is to keep one's composure; if you make a mistake, or you're not happy with a section of the test, remember to move on; don't dwell on what happened in that section - stay relaxed.

As you train and prepare for a dressage test remember to look for Harmonious Development with your horse. Keep your horse balanced, especially in preparing for halts, turns and transitions. Watch those circles and corners especially. To have connection equals contact and you want to achieve an elastic connection with your horse. If your horse lifts its head they become hollow and this allows for disconnection with your horse. Energy should be from engagement of the hindquarters. Suppleness should be Lateral; side to side through the body without stiffness; Longitudinal through the back. Make your transitions soft, smooth and accurate. Drive correct shapes as well as maintaining straightness where asked. Understand where the nose of the horse is to achieve changes at the correct letters. Rhythm is important; the horse should maintain a regular footfall; a clear four beat walk, the trot with two beats and the canter three beat as you move up the levels. The judge shouldn't see rushing with the gaits. Presentation should be clean, neat with a harness that fits properly as well as an appropriate carriage or cart for the particular horse or pony.

We had a lunch break with a wonderful pot-luck luncheon. I should mention that we enjoyed the company of several members from the Ohio Valley Carriage Club. I think that this is wonderful to share our love of the world of driving. We are so glad that they came down to join us.

Spokes & Spurs 2026 Educational clinic - "You Be The Judge" , Continued

After lunch we were able to watch two driven dressage tests. We were given the score sheets as a judge would use. Teresa gave us tips that she uses, as a judge, to see the movements required without having to dwell on the sheet of paper and give her full attention to the driver & Horse(s). The first test driven was a USEF Training Level Test 1. Noelle drove her 22 year old Standardbred, "Lily" (a lovely mare) to give us a good example of a training level horse. Teresa gave us her judge's comments & scores. The comments and score reflected what we may see with a training level horse; a bit rushed; shallow circle; brief halt, some crookedness, but yet a very obedient horse. Judge's comments included, work on circles and accuracy. The test was driven again and you could see improvement. Of course this is a reflection of what we all have seen with our own horses as we bring them along.

The next test, driven by Sonia and her wonderful pony, Bonnie, was the FEI Test CA11*. With the more experienced pony we could see the balance & bend, finer transitions. And of course, the upper level test asks for more transitions and deviations. We appreciate the drivers taking the time to show us these tests at two different levels.



Some good resources for Driven Dressage;

The American Driving Society has all of their tests available on their website. This book is a wonderful laminated collection of the tests.

Driven Dressage Handbook

The ADS Driven Dressage Handbook published in 2020 includes: 80m & 100m Dressage Tests and Directives, Arena Trial Tests and Directives, Terminology of Driven Dressage, and Arena Diagrams.

There is also this Dressage Poster of the Dressage Training scale

Driven Dressage Training Scale Poster

A good reference book, "**Driven Dressage with the Single Horse**" through ADS

Another great way to learn more about Driven Dressage is to scribe for a judge. I gained a much better understanding of what a judge is looking for by volunteering and being a scribe.

Thank you to all who made this clinic such a success. We had a beautiful day, fantastic camaraderie held at such a marvelous facility. Special thanks to Teresa for traveling to Kentucky and sharing her knowledge. And of course, thank-you to Leslye and all at Valkyrie's Haven for opening up this gorgeous facility in order to learn more about driving.



News from our Treasurer...

The April 11 Valkyrie's Haven clinic was a well attended event with more than 25 members in attendance. Said Valkyrie's Haven owner Leslye Sandberg, "This was the first in our 2026 series of educational clinics and I am happy that Teresa Bron, current ADS president, came across the country to meet and interact with our local drivers. Her level of expertise is significant – ADS, USEF and FEI judge, and everyone really got a chance to interact and ask questions in an easy and non pressured environment."

Member Spotlight



Among those present was 11-year-old Mikkel Stensrud, accompanied by his father, David. From Mount Sterling, Kentucky, Mikkel, despite his young age, is an accomplished driver already with six years experience under his belt. The 5th grader is a pupil of Jacob Arnold, resident trainer at Valkyrie's Haven, and is building quite a resume. According to Dad, Mikkel has "taken over" his father's 20-year old Clydesdale-Bashkir Curly cross named Hoss Boss. In March the duo competed in Ocala, Florida at Live Oak International and placed first in the Youth Division, 12 and under CDE. Congratulations, Mikkel!



Proud Mom Lisa tells me that her son is a mature, thoughtful young man and is serious about driving. With such supportive parents we can expect to hear more about Mikkel's progress. We can all agree that young people are the future of the sport and we wish Mikkel well in his future endeavors.

With so many enthusiastic members at this clinic, it's clear that Spokes and Spurs plays a major role in Central Kentucky's driving community. Actually the club's outreach goes way beyond the commonwealth, and last year had members in six other states. Among them are Martha and Dave Merry of Lebanon, Ohio. Recently they signed up as the club's very first Life members and as their interests include CDEs, clinics and parties it's clear that the club has a lot to offer them.

Life membership which is \$350 (individual) or \$400 (family) is ten times the annual rate and is for those persons who wish to financially support the club long term and who prefer not to have to deal with the annual payment of dues. Thank you Martha and Dave for your commitment to Spokes and Spurs and we hope to see you at club events later this year.

Both memberships and finances are showing a healthy trend this year. To date 72 individuals have renewed their club memberships, 26 family and 18 single. Others will undoubtedly rejoin during the year as they sign up for club events and realize that their dues were not paid. The club's current bank balance is \$5,101.79, compared to a little over \$3,800 just 15 months ago. Thanks are due to the Board for its careful oversight of club finances.

Hugh Bellis-Jones, Treasurer

2026 Driving Derby Series

Derby #1

Saturday, May 23, 2026
Start Time 10:00 am

Pot Luck Lunch with beverages provided by the Club
Entries Open April 23 and Close May 17

After Lunch – Open Day of Driving
Go out and Play on the Obstacles or Drive the Farm

Sponsored by Spokes & Spurs
At Valkyrie's Haven
487 Cynthiana Road
Paris, KY 40361

Entry Cost \$50 per equine. Drivers may enter more than once with different equines
\$25 goes into the Prize Money Pool for Finals
\$25 goes to support Spokes & Spurs

Entries will open 30 days before the event and close 1 week before the event – details to be sent out with entry forms, waivers and request for equine health information. Current Coggins within 12 months; Flu/Rhino/EHV within 6 months, Health Cert out of state.

How It Works

First of a 3 part Derby series in Kentucky,
sponsored by Spokes & Spurs driving club.

We welcome all participants!

Each Derby will be held in the indoor arena and consist of a course that includes both obstacle elements and cones.

Each participant will go 2 rounds with points being totaled for the Final Scores at each of the events. Ribbons will be awarded in each class.

Classes for VSE, Pony, Horse, Para.

Divisions will be Training (no cantering) and Prelim/Open.

All Divisions drive all gates, Standardized cone settings (ADS Rulebook)

At the Final – Top 3 overall Division score totals will earn prize money (all classes within each division are eligible)

To qualify for Finals and be eligible for Prize Money, you must have at least 3 round scores to add together at the final event in July. Therefore, you need to participate in at least 2 of the derby events. Of course, you are welcome to simply come to any and all for the fun!

Entries will open 30 days before the event and close 1 week before the event – details to be sent out with entry forms, waivers and request for equine health information. Current Coggins within 12 months; Flu/Rhino/EHV within 6 months, Health Cert out of state.

WATCH FOR ENTRY FORMS IN YOUR EMAIL!

2026 Driving Derby Series

Derby #2

Saturday June 27, 2026
Start Time 10:00 am

Pot Luck Lunch with beverages provided by the Club
Entries Open May 28 Close June 19

After Lunch – Open Day of Driving
Go out and Play on the Obstacles or Drive the Farm

Sponsored by Spokes & Spurs
At Charlotte's Creek Farm
4152 Paris Pike
Georgetown, KY 40324

Entry Cost \$50 per equine. Drivers may enter more than once with different equines
\$25 goes into the Prize Money Pool for Finals
\$25 goes to support Spokes & Spurs

Entries will open 30 days before the event and close 1 week before the event – details to be sent out with entry forms, waivers and request for equine health information. Current Coggins within 12 months; Flu/Rhino/EHV within 6 months, Health Cert out of state.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



MAY 15-17, 2026

We've Got A Job For You!

The Charlotte's Creek CDE is quickly approaching and we can't do it without your help! No experience necessary, all training provided.

Friday and Saturday hosts dressage and cones. We need Scribes, Warm up Stewards, Cones Setters, Cones Scribe, Cones Steward, and a Score Runner/Hospitality Person.

Sunday revs up the excitement for marathon and it requires many volunteers! We've got openings for Warmup Stewards, Timers, Obstacle Timers, Scribes, and a Score Runner/Hospitality person.

Come out and enjoy a great weekend of Combined Driving! All volunteers receive a free hat/goodie bag, free light breakfast and lunch. Daily volunteer prize drawings!

Charlotte's Creek Farm, LLC
4152 Paris Pike
Georgetown, KY 40324
(304) 208-5224
dunhorse1220@gmail.com

CLICK [HERE](#) TO
VOLUNTEER

Www.charlottes-creekfarm.com

2026 EDUCATIONAL CLINIC SERIES

Sponsored by Spokes and Spurs at Valkyrie's Haven

One Day Potluck Lunch and Learns

Expand your experience in the driving world with a series of fun interactive clinics. Clinics will begin at 9 a.m. followed by a Potluck luncheon around noon. Potluck meals are a driving tradition – everyone brings something to share. Specifics about Clinicians and Schedules to be sent out as we get nearer.

July 11, 2026 Learn to Navigate – Be the Backstep! What does a navigator do and can you do it? Ever wonder how they know where to stand? When to lean? How to help avoid getting hung up on an obstacle? Everyone will have the chance to give it a try as we practice on an indoor obstacle course. Bring your friends or spouses – maybe they will be your next navigator.

August 8, 2026 Obstacles: See It – Time It – Hold It. Volunteering for marathon? No need to panic – incoming equines and they can be very fast – lots going on and it's your job to manage it. And what if there is a hold? And what if something gets knocked down? And what if someone gets stuck and the groom gets down? Who does what in an obstacle during an event? Observers, judges, timers all have a job and you will learn what those are and how you can be large and in charge with confidence.

Meet the Clinicians...



Internationally recognized driver, trainer, and sport horse handler Sterling D.B. Graburn has decades of experience with singles, pairs, tandems and teams. Sterling trained his first pony at thirteen and has been competing since the age of fifteen. He is a Navy veteran, Pony Club graduate, and coach, Sterling has been a Glinkowski Carriage and Comfy Fit Harness representative since 2010.

He and his partner, Kim Moore, breed, train and sell sport horses at Waypoint Farm in Harrodsburg, KY.

- **Navigator Combined Driving World Championships 1984, 1993, 2005**
- **Competed at Combined Driving World Championships 2006, 2012, 2016**
- **National Champion 2008, 2012, Reserve Champion 2006**



Carrie Ostrowski-Place uses her 25+ years of driving experience to help guide her clients to fully enjoy their equines whether their goal is to compete at the highest level or enjoy driving their horse safely at home.

As an FEI 3* driver, Carrie has experience competing both single ponies and horses at multiple levels. She has also trained pairs and worked for 4-in-hand drivers. Most recently she and her FEI horse, Gellerdüht (Gus), were on the 2022 US Single Horse World Championship team finishing as the 2nd highest American Driver. As a navigator she has done everything from helping clients experience their first CDE to navigate at the 2016 FEI Single Horse World Championships in Piber, Austria. As an official, Carrie is an "r" American Driving Society Technical Delegate since April of 2022. Carrie is a South Dakota native, now located in Lexington, Kentucky, most of the year and Ocala, Florida, for the Winter driving season.

Additional Achievements:

- **2022 USEF Advanced Single Horse of the Year**
- **USEF Single Horse Advanced Reserve National Champion '20 & '21**
- **2020 US Single Horse Team Alternate**

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Apr 23-26	National Drive Spring Fling	Hoosier Horse Park Edinburgh, IN
May 15-17	Charlotte's Creek CDE	Charlotte's Creek Farm Georgetown, KY
May 23	Spokes & Spurs Derby 1	Valkyrie's Haven Farm Paris, KY
June 27	Spokes & Spurs Derby 2	Charlotte's Creek Farm Georgetown, KY
July 11	Educational Series 2	Valkyrie's Haven Farm Paris, KY
July 25	Spokes & Spurs Derby Finals	Valkyrie's Haven Farm Paris, KY
Aug 8	Educational Series 3	Valkyrie's Haven Farm Paris, KY
Aug 28-30	Suzy Stafford Clinic	Charlotte's Creek Farm Georgetown, KY
Sept 11-30	Villa Louis Carriage Classic	Prairie du Chien, WI
Sept 17-20	Tryon Fall CDE	Tryon, NC
Sept 25-27	Indiana CDE	Hoosier Horse Park Edinburgh, IN
Oct 5-11	National Drive	Hoosier Horse Park Edinburgh, IN
Oct 16-18	Nashoba Carriage Classic	Germantown, TN
Oct 23-25	Halloween at the Haven CDE	Valkyrie's Haven Farm Paris, KY
Nov 6-8	Stableview CDE	Aiken, SC

Spokes and Spurs Library

Spokes and Spurs has a nice little library available to our members. Let Ann Katona know if you would like to check-out anything.

*American Carriages, Sleighs, Sulkeys and Carts 168 Illustrations from Victorian Sources! Edited by Don H. Berkebile

*American Horse-Drawn Vehicles - Being a collection of 218 pictures... Jack D. Ritzenhouse

*Bending the Driving Horse Muffy Seaton

*Breaking a Horse to Harness - A Step by Step Guide Sallie Walrond

*Bristol Wagon & Carriage Illustrated Catalog, 1900 Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works Co. Ltd.

*Carriage Driving - A Logical Approach Through Dressage Training Heike Bean and Sarah Blanchard

*Discovering Horse Drawn Carriages D. J. Smith

*Driven Dressage with the Single Horse Sandy Rabinowitz

*Driver Proficiency Program - Level I and Road Driving Syllabus The Carriage Association of America

*Driving a Harness Horse - A Step by Step Guide (A sequel to Breaking a Horse to Harness) Sallie Walrond

*Driving for Pleasure or The Harness Stable and its Appointments Francis T. Underhill

*The Encyclopedia of Driving Sallie Walrond

*The Essential Guide to Carriage Driving Robyn Cuffey and Jaye-Allison Winkel

*Fundamentals of Private Driving Sallie Walrond

*Horse-Drawn Vehicles at the Shelburne Museum Kenneth Edward Wheeling

*Illustrated Catalogue of Carriages and Special Business Advertiser / G. & D. Cook & Co.'s Forward by Paul H. Downing

*Walnut Hill: A Grand Celebration of the Horse & Carriage Robert Lannazzi; Photographer. Bill Remley; Commentator