

Long Lines



March 1, 2008

New Web Address!

Visit us on the web at
www.cvdrivingclub.com

Add a Photo!

www.flickr.com/cvdc
Login: **ctvalleydrivingclub**
password: **driveon**

April Assignments:

Send in your stories...
"How I started driving"
And "beginner learning experiences (which also pertain to experienced drivers)"...

Notice:

Please submit any photos, articles, or news for April's newsletter by March 20th!

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Large Animal Rescue: CVDC's March Program with Jeff and Donna Lord East Haddam Grange, March 15th, 6:30 pm Potluck

In March don't miss an exciting program with Jeff and Donna Lord, large animal rescue personnel! Jeff and Donna will tell stories of their encounters and rescues. They will also give information on how to stay safe while working horses, especially out on the trail and on the roads, and they will give advice on what to do in certain dangerous or problematic situations. This program will be helpful for all horse people, no matter what you do with your animals!

Jeff and Donna Lord are experienced equine enthusiasts who have recently returned to CT after spending the past 4-years living in northern VT. They both served as Officers in the VT Mounted Response Unit, providing various services to law enforcement agencies in the areas of Search & Rescue, Event Security, and Tactical Deployment. Their extensive training includes a wide variety of first aid certifications for human, equine, and canine. They are both Certified Back Country Trail Medics with prior experience as First Responders. Donna is also a Certified Nurse's Aid.



Jeff Lord Ready for Rescue

Jeff is a member of the American Council of Forensic Examiners and is certified in Homeland Security. The couple has rescued, fostered, and rehabilitated various animals and is active in Best Friends Animal Society (<http://www.bestfriends.org>), and Crane Mountain Valley Horse Rescue (<http://www.cmvhr.org>). They are also active in the Tibetan Heritage Fund.

Driving Trial Workshop In March!

Saturday March 22nd, 4-6pm Killingworth, CT

If you are curious about the sport of Combined Driving, please come and join us for a free workshop. Learn the basics of Driven Dressage, Cones and Marathon. This workshop is open to any club member (can join club the same day). Gaitors and Driving Trial Volunteers welcome! **RSVP 860-395-7283.**
Workshop Location: 110 Chestnut Hill, Killingworth

Spring Calendar of Events

March 1 & 2: The Driving Forum, Clarion Hotel, West Springfield, MA. 603-673-3956 www.driving-forum.com

March 14 at 7:30 p.m. Litchfield Hills Driving Club Mtg at the Plymouth Congregational Church, corner of North Street and Route 6, Plymouth, CT with guest speaker Jean Kinsella. She will be speaking about general driving safety and judging protocols with an open Q & A session included. It should be GREAT! Our hostesses for the evening are Sue Hildred and Nancy Mangino. Contact richard_mangino@netzero.net

March 15: CVDC Potluck meeting with program, 6:30pm – Large Animal Rescue with Jeff and Donna Lord, East Haddam Grange. Contact andree@betterdaysalliance.org

April 18 Litchfield Hills Drivin Club meeting & Potluck Supper 7:00 p.m. at the Plymouth Congregational Church, corner of North Street and Route 6, Plymouth, CT Hostesses: Jan Rogers and Caroline Borkoski. Contact: richard_mangino@netzero.net

April 19: CVDC Potluck meeting with program, 6:30pm – Special Panel Discussion on Lyme Disease Prevention and Treatment. East Haddam Grange. Contact andree@betterdaysalliance.org

April 20: CVDC first drive at Wimler's in Guilford, 10:30am, Route 77 south of Durham on right on town line. Contact John Miller, (860) 343-3211.

May 3-4: Lord Stirling Stable CDE; Basking Ridge, NJ. Contact Kay 973-285-0009 (Entries open Feb 1)

May 10: 10:00 AM "Plowing the Community Garden" with the Eastern CT Draft Horse Association
Wilbraham, MA Public invited. Food and Activities planned. Contact: Elaine Keeley (860) 376-8110

May 17-18: Northeast Region Campout and Ride/Drive (see last page of newsletter for details)

May 17: CVDC Potluck meeting and pre-event meeting for volunteers, 6:30pm. East Haddam Grange. Contact andree@betterdaysalliance.org

May 18- Litchfield Hills Driving Club celebrates National Carriage Driving Month at White Memorial in Litchfield. The drive will depart at 11 a.m. led by Don Rogers 860-589-6293.

May 29- June 1: Garden State CDE; Allentown, NJ. Contact Heather 908-439-3171

June 7: Connecticut Valley Driving Trial, Haddam Meadows (PrizeList and Entryform attached)

June 8: CVDC Fun Day and Clinic with Craig Kellogg and Marc Johnson -- Contact Marguerite Hayber 860-267-6552 (Info and Entryform on our website www.cvdrivingclub.com)

2008 Connecticut Horse Symposium

Saturday – Sunday March 29 & 30 / University of Connecticut, Storrs

Events Include:

Disaster preparedness- Stallion behavior- A horse that paints- Saddle fitting- Equine massage- UConn Morgan Drill team- Cowboy Mounted Shooting- To shoe or not to shoe?- Music for horses- Reining- UConn Equestrian Team- Polo demo- Kentucky Mountain Pleasure Horses- UConn Dressage Team- CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol Trail Demonstration- Ann Guptill with lateral dressage movements- Tim Hayes of Hayes is for Horses- 4-H donkeys- Learn how to go green on your farm- Take a field trip to area horse farms- Vendor fair- Silent auction for youth and adults- And more! For more information, schedule, ticketing, and directions: www.canr.uconn.edu/ansci/equine/horsesymp.htm

or contact: Dr. Jenifer Nadeau
Jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu, (860) 486-4471

Reminder! The 1st National Carriage & Driving Month: May 2008

The Carriage Association of America (CAA) is pleased to announce the first National Carriage & Driving Month, to be celebrated throughout the month of May. To celebrate our horse-drawn heritage, the CAA encourages driving clubs, museums, and historic sites throughout the United States to plan special programs and events during the month of May. These events can explore and bring to light our shared history while also promoting current interests in restoring, collecting, and driving horse-drawn vehicles.

For more information on the Carriage Association of America or to join, visit www.caaonline.com or send an e-mail to info@caaonline.com or call (859) 231-0971.

Frostbite Series

Arena Driving Trials at the Carriage Barn
March 8th, 22nd & April 5th Arena Driving
Events: Cones courses, Obstacles, and Driven
Dressage. All in our lovely indoor arena. Taste
the thrill of timed events, gallop to the frozen
finish line. Spectators encouraged.

<http://www.carriage-barn.com>

Coming in 2008....

www.northeastcarriagedriving.com

The regional website for driving!

Another Letter from Rita Bellinger!!!

"Thanks Krista. I don't mind you putting our story and updates in the Long Lines. It will probably help to keep me on schedule to get out there and work with the mini, if I know people are following our progress. I'll send you a pic I took of Bonnie Kreitler and I (and the cart) that she was nice enough to deliver (2 1/2hrs). She had even cleaned the harness and inflated the tires the night before and gave me extra leather harness cleaner and conditioners. Bonnie was apologizing for the "age" to the harness's look, but you tell it was still fine and is very well made. The cart needs a bit of work, but my husband is a talented carpenter and welder. He anxious to start his refurbish effort and any modifications Brenda needs to stay safe. It's actually better that we got a used cart instead of the cost of a new one that we need to make changes to. Bonnie showed me how well balanced this cart is and it will fit Bucky perfectly.

I was waiting for her with Bucky. She really sized him up quickly. Apparently he's not only the same shape as her mini (obese), but he's also got the same "attitude". He doesn't trust strangers right off, but once he knows you, he'll do anything for you.

I took her, and her relative in the area who came to offer an extra hand anytime in exchange for "horsy contact" to lunch, and I learned more in that hour, than I'd ever known about driving. Once she heard I planned on taking lessons with Cynthia Bliven, in Bonnie's words, she knew "I was in good hands". Bonnie also knew and talked about training with Pam Pruitt, she seems to be quite a legend. Bonnie seemed impressed that I'm surrounding myself with the "Best", right from the beginning. Like joining the CVDC, taking lessons from a pro and surrounding myself with experience so we all stay safe. I don't know anything about Driving, but being experienced with horses in other disciplines at least I've learned, if you're going to do something, do it right and stay safe.

I'd love to volunteer if anyone is going out for a drive either privately, with the group or a show, I'd love to help to gain more experience. Email rita66_2000@yahoo.com

Thanks again for keeping track of our progress."

-Rita

The Colonial Carriage & Driving Society presents a Scott Monroe Driving Clinic

Saturday, March 9th at Orelton Farm, Stockbridge, Mass.

Here is your chance to start the season by sharpening your driving skills in a private lesson with Scott Monroe. Choose what you want to work on during a 60-minute session: fitting your harness to your horse, long lining for the first time, improving your dressage scores, maneuvering through cones -- your pleasure. Or let Scott decide. He will make a difference in your training and increase your driving enjoyment. Note: If you plan to do cones/hazards with a marathon vehicle, you must bring a navigator for your lesson. Also, Scott will be wearing a microphone, so you won't miss a word.

The clinic is limited to eight students who have assigned times in the indoor arena throughout the day, starting at 8:30 AM. Your payment in full is your registration. A waiting list will be kept; if you cannot attend and your spot is sold to another student, your check will be refunded.

Scott, the 2006 National Combined Driving Singles Champion, will give individual one hour lessons to eight students in the indoor arena.

Auditors are encouraged to attend! At lunch, Scott will discuss the mental, physical and emotional fitness required for a happy equine partner.

Lesson: \$60. Auditors: \$20
Lunch is available for purchase or bring your own.

Please contact: Jeannette Rotondo (413) 243-0989 or Kay Konove kaykon@juno.com to register or for more information.

Registration form is available at www.colonialcarriage.org.

The Carriage Barn is offering two great opportunities for new competitors!

Training Level Introductory Arena Events:
March 16 & April 20, 2008

These events are offered to give new drivers or competitors a chance to try their hand at Arena Driving Trials with the support necessary to make it a fun and enjoyable experience. The morning will start with walking the Dressage test to be sure all competitors know the test and are comfortable with the figures. Then everyone will drive the test and receive feedback from the judge. We will break for lunch, then walk our Hazards, plan the best route for each competitor, then have each competitor give it a go. We will then move to the Cones phase, where we will walk the Cones course, find all the best angles, and then drive it. As the event comes to a close, we will go over the scores so each competitor goes home with a clear understanding of how they did, what they need to improve, and a strong desire to come back and try it again!

We have a limited number of safe driving ponies you can use for the day if yours is not ready, don't waste another summer wishing you could do this -- you can, we can help you make it fun!

Entry Fee \$100 for one or \$150 for both events, which includes Arena Event entry fee and coaching support for the day. An additional \$50 fee will be charged if you would like to use one of our trained horses. Horses must be reserved in advanced, a limited number are available. This is a Bring Your Own Lunch event.

Visit <http://www.carriage-barn.com> for more information and the registration form!

The Carriage Barn
Newton, New Hampshire
603-378-0140

Members: Help Make the Newsletter Fun and Informative by Contributing!

What Have You Learned?

So members, your next assignment is to send in your stories! Send in anything that you think was a good learning experience which other drivers can learn from. This is not only for the new drivers and new members, but for the benefit of the entire club! As we all know, safety is very important when driving! Please email Krista w/ stories.

Dear Members, is there anyone our there who would like to tell us, "How I Started Driving?" This could become an enjoyable and entertaining series, but we need you to step up. Please send your story to Krista. We would love to hear about you. --Randy Sabatino

How I Learned to Drive a Horse...

Featuring CVDC Member: Charlotte Gelston

Nineteen years ago, my daughter, then eight, was taking riding lessons once a week with Terry Schreiber. But that was not enough to satisfy her "horse craving", so to augment the lessons we would travel to any horse farm that welcomed visitors. Since I had been a "horse crazy" little girl once myself, I thoroughly enjoyed these outings.

On that fateful summer day we went down to Old Lyme to visit the Whippoorwill Morgans. Mary Jean Vasiloff was most cordial and even invited Elisabeth and her friend to ride one of the broodmares in the paddock. Her foal tagged along beside her, and the girls were thrilled. As a child I had visited the Townshend Morgan farm with my 4-H group. After meeting Orland Vigildon and being allowed to pet him, I was a confirmed Morgan fan. That day renewed my appreciation for the breed.

Mary Jean took us around the barn and introduced us to each horse. When I saw Whippoorwill Herod, it was love at first sight. He was big, black, and beautiful. But with a price of \$25,000 for him and his half-brother, who were a perfectly matched pair, I knew I could never afford him!

Fast forward about two years.....my daughter's prayers had been answered and she had been given a free horse of uncertain age and breeding. My friend Margie had lost her horse and was thinking about buying a foal. I had never forgotten the Morgans in Old Lyme, so I brought Margie down to look at the foals. When she had seen all the foals, Mary Jean mentioned to us that she had a six-year-old gelding that was up for adoption. A year and a half earlier, he had been chased by an aggressive horse out in the paddock, slipped on the ice, fell against the fence, and had broken his back. He could never be ridden, but she said he was not in pain and could be driven. He had lost some proprioception in the hind end, and his hind legs moved very awkwardly.

When she opened the stall to show us, I realized that it was the very same horse that I had fallen in love with two years earlier!! I was speechless, so Margie poked me and said, "Well, you always wanted a big, black Morgan gelding.....now's your chance!" "Yes," I replied, "but I don't know how to drive!" "So LEARN!" said Margie.

I brought him home three days later. I knew it was God's plan. Mary Jean had just about given up on placing him, and had made an appointment to put him down the next week.

I bought a harness. I bought a Meadowbrook cart. I had three lessons on driving a harness-horse with a young lady from the farm. We were on our way! It's a good thing that "Jared" (his new nickname) had a PhD in driving, because I certainly didn't! It took me three months to slowly recondition him. He would never move like a normal horse, especially at the walk. People thought I was crazy to be driving him, that one or the other of us would get hurt. But my vet assured me that as long as I was not careening around tight corners he would be fine. I noticed that he paced better than he could trot, so I encouraged him to pace in harness. That was the key.....it was neurologically simpler to pace, so he moved better. You couldn't see his handicap when he was pacing. Eventually he improved so much that he could trot as well, and would do either gait on the verbal command.

Jared was incredibly smart, sane and willing. If he was frightened, he just stopped and waited for me to talk him through it. If I made a mistake, he would stop and shake his head, and I knew that meant I'd better re-think what I had asked him to do! Since I always drove alone, I had taught him to stand untied in the yard while I hitched him. He never misbehaved, never balked when the pulling got hard, never bolted.

One day, about six months later, the worst possible combination of events coincided. I had picked up a neighbor who was walking down the road and asked for a ride. We went down Sims Lane, a dirt road which had recently been graded. It was near the end of his shoeing cycle, and his toes were a tad long. I had no brake on the cart. As we went down the hill, he stepped on a round stone which had been turned up, caught his toe, tripped and went down in front. With double the weight in the cart, and the sudden stop, the britching literally pushed his hind end up and over the shaft on the left side! He was pinned between the shafts, 90 degrees to the cart. I jumped out and went to his head, telling him to "Whoa ". He lay there as still as a statue while I struggled to free him. Not once did he thrash about, or try to get up on his own. He calmly waited for me to solve his problem.

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How I Learned to Drive a Horse...

Continued from Page 5...

As I unbuckled everything that I could, my friend went to the nearest house to call my husband and tell him to bring a hacksaw to cut the harness. I got everything undone except the tug strap, which was heavy leather. With all the pressure from the horse in one direction and the shaft in the other, I couldn't budge it. My husband crested the hill, saw the horse lying still, and assumed he was dead! Just then I had the bright idea of having my neighbor lean on the shaft.....that did the trick. I was finally able to unbuckle the tug strap.

I said, "OK, Jared, get up," and he did. He took two steps over to the grass at the edge of the road and calmly started eating. He had a scrape over his eye where he had nose-dived into the dirt, one on his chest and one on his knee. My britching straps were torn right off. The shaft on which he had been lying for the fifteen minutes it took me to get him free was somewhat misshapen, but it came back after a while.

I consulted with my vet. He said that under the same set of circumstances even a sound horse would have gone down, so not to worry about driving him. I had the harness repaired, put a brake on the cart, and we were back in business. People asked, "Aren't you afraid to drive now after having that accident?" I said, "No, there's nothing worse than having your horse go down in harness. We've done that and survived, thanks to Jared's good sense, so now there's nothing left to fear!" We drove for ten more years without any mishaps whatsoever.

Thank you, Mary Jean, for giving me that wonderful horse who taught me how to drive.

—Charlotte Gelston

Tails at the end of the Long Lines...

Hello Members! It's March and spring will be here soon (I hope)... Thanks for all of the newsletter submissions; I really think it's making a difference in the club's meeting turnout and overall interest in the club! So, great job with the help- I can't do the newsletter without your news, articles, stories and pictures!

For me, March will be busy! I am hoping to find a cart of my very own! How exciting! There is only one problem, the cost of carts in relation to the amount of money I have/make doesn't really work out... So, I am really hoping and praying that for my birthday (which is March 12) all of my family members donate money to the "Krista-needs-a-cart-of-her-very-own Fund" so I can continue driving! We need more young people driving, don't we?



Long Day's Journey, 2007, etching, Krista LaBella
www.freewebs.com/kristasartwork

For the past 3 years, I have been borrowing an older easy entry cart from a friend. It was not being used at the time that I began driving, so I was allowed to use it whenever I felt like it- quite convenient! My friend bought it with the intention to use it as a training cart for her youngster, but when he finally reached an appropriate age to begin training, she realized that he had been rapidly growing and he was too large for this little cart! Now that none of her own horses will ever fit into it, she has decided to sell it to someone else who needs a training cart. This leaves me looking for a cart of my own. And I'm sure you're wondering why I can't just buy this cart for myself... well there are a few reasons. First of all, it really doesn't fit my horse that well; the shafts are a little too narrow for his stocky frame, the wheels are too small, and it is overall just not a perfect fit. Secondly, this cart doesn't have a break and I really want/need a cart with a break for my horse. Plus, let's face it, it's ugly and I can't show or do anything fun with it!

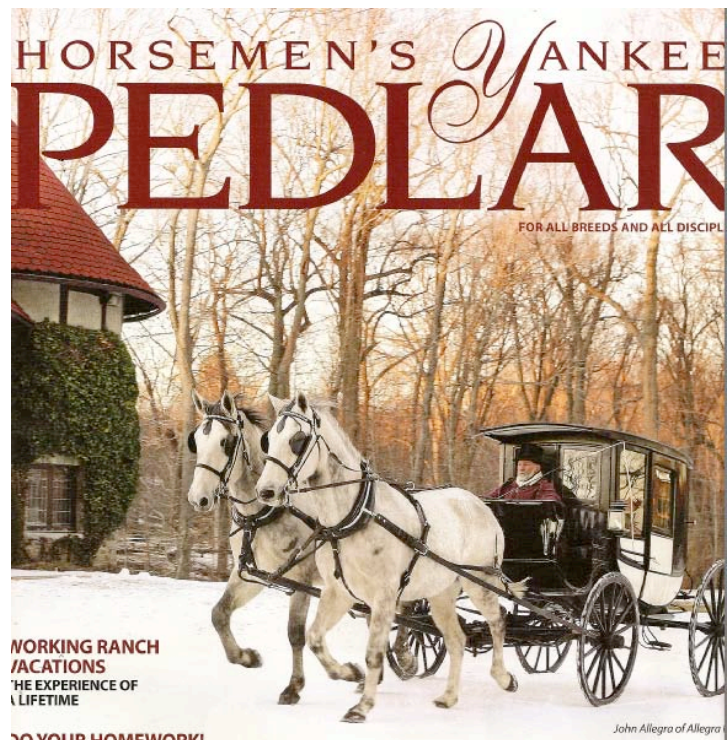
So, I guess now I wait and pray that somehow \$2000 gets dropped in my lap... or someone needs to hire some barn help to do general chores and exercise a driving (or riding) horse for them for a few hours every weekend when I am home from college! (anyone? Please contact me ☺) But, once I have the money, I think this will be a fun quest-finding the perfect cart for my horse (and myself of course)!

—Krista LaBella

CVDC Members Featured in Recent Issues of the Horseman's Yankee Pedlar

The cover of January 2008's issue featured member John Allegra driving a pair. (right)

The cover of February 2008's Issue featured member Peter Von Halem sleighing. (below)



A photograph of Randy Sabatino and Marguerite Hayber is featured in February's "Driving News" section. The two are sleighing with Randy's pinto horse Stormy.

Also, Elaine Keeley has 2 articles in the *Pedlar* recently. The first The Art of Sleighing and more recently (February) Hitch Horses: Impressing the Generations.

Make sure you take a look at the 2008 issues of *Horseman's Yankee Pedlar*! Don't miss our members in the spotlight!

Look out New England, the CVDC is taking over the driving world!

(At least according to the *Pedlar*!)

More CVDC Member News!

John Miller had knee replacement surgery on Jan 17th. He is rehabilitating at Wadsworth Glen in Middletown. He is doing well and should be back home in 2/3 weeks.

From Randy Sabatino... "Frank and I visited with Pat McNammee and Pam Pruitt last week. Both are doing well at their new homes in Wagener, S.C. I have no pictures to share except for one of Pat's pot belly pig. What was I thinking?"

President's Letter...

Happy Spring!

We made it through another long winter here in New England, but now spring is just around the corner. The last few meetings we have had a spectacular turn out with almost a full house and many new faces. It's very exciting to see our club continue to grow year after year as more people discover the joy of driving.

There are many fun activities on tap this spring. **DON'T FORGET** – Our June 7th **CT Valley Driving Trial** **OPENING DATE IS APRIL 1st**. This year's event is expected to fill quickly, so plan on getting your entry in asap, but it can't be post-marked before April 1st.

If you're curious about entering or volunteering, but not sure, come to our March 22nd workshop for an introduction to the sport of Combined Driving (see front page). We are also filling a **Fun Day Clinic on June 8th** with Craig Kellogg and Marc Johnson. First come, first serve. Held on the grounds with Dressage Ring, Cones Course and Hazards!! No experience necessary.

Go to our website to enter show and/or Fun Day! The show info and entryform are also in the ADS Omnibus.

www.cvdrivingclub.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for CT Valley Driving Trial JUNE 7th

All sorts of fun positions are available. Help set cones, measure wheels, direct traffic, be a hazard's judge (we'll teach you), or help build the course. If you would like to help again this year, or if you have always competed and want to take a turn behind the scenes, we sure can use your help – call Andree Duggan today and join the show team. Half-day and full-day shifts available. No pay, and sometimes you get soaked, but you're guaranteed a good time with friends. Call 860-395-7283 or email andree@betterdaysalliance.org

Northeast Recreational Drive & Campout May 17-18

Reynolds Horse Area, Escoheag
260 Arcadia Rd
Exeter, RI

You must be a CVDC Club Member to participate, or a member of the other regional driving clubs for insurance reasons. Arrive Saturday morning anytime after 9am. Ride and drive all day if you wish on the great dirt roads. Dinner Saturday night is a fireside-pot-luck and the same for breakfast on Sunday morning. Lunch -- you are on your own. Take a picnic out while you drive or come back to camp and join other drivers at the picnic tables.

This is a **VERY LOW KEY** event. Primitive camping - only one porta-pottie at the campground. You must bring your own camping gear for you and your horse. Portable stalls, electric enclosure, picket line, whatever you like to keep your horse safe at night. "It is very dark there at night so bring flashlights! We used duct tape and glow sticks on our mares blanket last year so that we could find her in the dark if she got loose!" says organizer Cat Luce, NE ADS Rep. Contact catprints2@aol.com

Horse Campsite includes fireplaces, picnic tables, water, pit toilets, horse show ring, and trails. Dogs allowed on leash.

