

Beyond Apples: or Adventures of My Equine Epicureans

By Diane Brault

One day last summer, a good friend of mine who always carries a slew of sliced carrots with her when she goes to see her

mare, nonchalantly mentioned to me that her mare loves bread! I couldn't believe it. But my friend assured me, "White bread, wheat bread, any kind of bread. Try it. I bet your horses will eat it, too!"



After my surprise died down, memories of my youth filtered through my brain. My cousin and I would rent horses from a little riding stable in Two Rivers, WI for \$0.50 an hour. A spunky strawberry roan mare named Pearl was my favorite, since she liked to "go!" We'd ride the horses bareback through the north side of town, across a couple of highways, and into Point Beach State Forest. The trail led to dual bands of tall sand dunes, with more trails along the ridges of the dunes. We named them, "The Roller Coasters" (for good reason!). Then we'd gallop along the beach looking for washed up logs to jump, and maybe take the horses into Lake Michigan to slosh along on the first sandbar. Always great fun!

While riding among the dunes one sunny day, we stopped for lunch under the cool shade of a small grove of cedar trees, overlooking one of the rivers that emptied into Lake Michigan. There was a nice, steep bank by the cedars that made it easy to remount after

eating. (I was never athletic enough to swing up onto a bare back without help, like a "real" cowgirl would do!) After finishing my sandwich, I reached for my bag for my orange. No bag. No orange. I grabbed my now ripped

brown paper bag and found my red licorice bar was also missing! It didn't take much looking around to find the candy bar cellophane mashed into the sand by Pearl's hooves. Sneaky little Pearl had munched up both my orange and my licorice

bar! I remember how amazed horses would eat such things!

I was then, that

With that memory in mind, I decided it might be kind of fun to follow up on my friend's suggestion regarding the bread. Bread is made from a grain, so maybe it's possible my "girls" would eat it. It was easy to grab a couple of heels at the ends of a loaf of Italian bread and tear them up into some large pieces. Cradling my cache, I trotted out to the paddock and presented them to my three little Arab mares. My oldest mare, Barbie, took one sniff and promptly gobbled up as many as she could get her lips around! The other two girls followed Barbie's lead. Wow! That bread disappeared in a flash! Soon, I was experimenting with other grain products – stale English muffins, bagels and such. They loved them all! (Never thought of leftover cooked pasta. It's a grain, too. I wonder.....)

Continued on next page

Beyond Apples Continued

Remembering how old, livery stable Pearl ate my orange and licorice, I smilingly expanded my experiments to other past-their-prime foods. I discovered my mares love pears, and would mob me when they heard the crinkle of a bag of wrinkling grapes. They could hardly wait for me to pull grapes off the stems and kept trying to jostle each other's muzzles away so each could try to join my hand in the bag! And citrus? None could wait for me to peel oranges or tangerines. They gobbled them up, peel and all! Same with bananas – with or without the peels! And, yes, orange peels and banana peels without the coveted fruit inside were also on their dessert list. They loved strawberries and cantaloupe. (Hey, did you know what cantaloupe has to do with horses? Cattle and lope! Ha! Okay, okay.) Oh, but watermelon! I chunked up some watermelon rinds and thought they would lose their minds! (Catch the rhyme?) They practically did handstands! Or should I say, levades? It was time to start watching out for my fingers a lot more carefully.

The fun had just begun.

One calm evening, my husband and I strolled out to the paddock to visit our girls before feeding them their evening flakes of hay. Barbie, my most adventurous eater, took a curious sniff of my husband's wine glass. Liking what she smelled, her upper lip carefully stretched out over the rim of the glass. Surprised, my husband pulled back his wine glass, not wanting it to become contaminated with horse slobber. (Such a wuss.) At my suggestion, he poured a bit of his favorite Shiraz into his hand, and Barbie licked it clean! Jealous that Barbie was getting something they weren't, the other two mares crowded in to see what was so yummy. Each got a taste and loved the smooth, dark red wine so much that they glued themselves to us as we walked in



the paddock. We were twisting our arms around trying to protect our drinks from them! I'd heard that many horses love beer, it being another grain product, but I didn't realize wine also would be on their beverage list!

My mares had learned any time they saw me coming with a paper plate, plastic bag or plastic Cool Whip™ tub, there would surely be something interesting in those containers. You could just see them crowd each other at the gate, ears pricked, anticipation in their eyes. That anticipation may be why they had become willing to taste absolutely anything I brought to them. The paper plates and plastic bags had become fair game, too. During especially yummy, competitive feeding frenzies, they sometimes weren't so good at differentiating between the paper plates, plastic bags, food or fingers that provided it all! My fingers had to learn to get out of their way in a hurry!

By now I had learned my horses love anything in the grain or fruit family, but what about the all-important vegetable group in the food pyramid? Maybe their learned expectation that treats were coming when they saw me carrying a bag, plate or plastic container made them more excited and less discriminating when tasting anything new, because I was to be quite surprised at the vegetables they were willing to eat.

I thought about the unused produce in my garden. Off I went foraging for more fun foods to offer my horses.

They munched on cauliflower leaves, crunched on sugar snap peas that had lost their snap, and lunched on kohlrabi leaves. They vied for fingers of past-their-prime green beans. They inhaled rusty edged lettuce and floppy celery. They slurped up cucumbers, but only if I cut them up into bite-sized chunks. (Maybe they finally remembered they are elite little Arabians and ought to

eat with more delicacy and better manners....) Similarly, only Barbie relished the empty cobs of steamed sweet corn, but insisted I cut them into chunks that better fit into her diminutive mouth.

My mares and I have been having an exciting time with their adventures into eating freaky foods. I love seeing their ears prick up and their eyes widen with exuberance and anticipation whenever they see me coming while carrying a container. They love most of the yummy treats I provide.

You and your horse also may enjoy embarking upon the journey, beyond apples. If you do decide to give it a go, you may want to avoid cruciferous veggies, since they can cause gas, which may be uncomfortable for your equine buddy.

And, watch your fingers!

NOTE: Tomatoes can be toxic to horses, as can other food items. See links below regarding feeding horses treats of a different kind:

<https://petkeen.com/can-horses-eat-tomatoes/>

<https://ker.com/equinews/feeding-treats-horses/>

Note: WDCTA doesn't recommend or endorse feeding horses any specific foods. Before feeding your horses something out of their "normal" fare, consult your veterinarian or other reliable equine website.



Caryn Vesperman Editor

All advertisements, articles and photographs (with photo release) should be submitted by the 15th of the preceding month of publication, unless you make prior arrangements for additional time.

Calendar of events will appear in both the eQuester and on the WDCTA website.

Payment for advertisements should be submitted via PayPal through the WDCTA website (wdcta.org) or mailed with a check made out to WDCTA and mailed to the editor.

CONTACT INFO

(608) 695-9914
W1619 King Road
Brooklyn, WI 53521
newsletter@wdcta.org



This Season's Championships

Besides the Regional Championships in the next few months, the Festival of Champions was just held at Lamplight Equestrian Center in Wayne, IL. This was one of the first years I haven't been able to go for even one day, but I watched it via live streaming and on demand. Here's the link to the [class schedule page](#) where you can check on results and watch rides on demand.

Laura Graves Wins at the Festival of Champions

Since the Southwest Chapter is organizing a symposium with Laura Graves, I made a point of watching the classes she competed in. On Monday, she won the Prix Georges class on Sensation HW with a score of 75.117%. Her test was accurate, fluid, correct and just plain a pleasure to watch. Here's a [link to the class](#); Laura rides at about the 1-1/2-hour mark in the class.

She also won the Intermediate I class on Sensation HW with a 74.793%. Here's a link to that [test](#), which is at the 1 hour 40-minute mark.

And, she took Reserve Champion in the Intermediate I freestyle with a score of 76.005%. Her ride is at about the 2-hour mark in the [test](#).

Overall, Laura was named Intermediate I Champion with a 75.104%, based on the combined percentages across all three classes.

If any of these links don't work, go to the USEF website, click on US Dressage Festival of Champions, and then you can click on the specific class you want to watch.

Good luck to all competitors at **Regional Championships!** Stay in, stay on and have fun.

Caryn



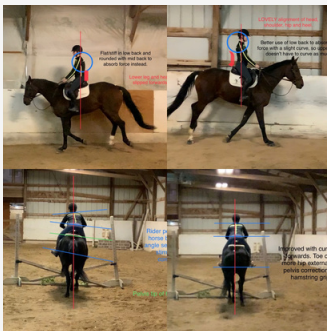
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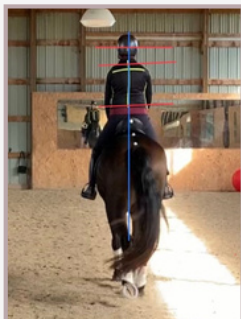
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Details on
sponsorship
and vendor
opportunities,
rider application
and auditor
registration
coming in early
September!

Laura Graves started out with a pony and a dream. Later, with determination, work and a horse she bought as a foal off a video, she became an international rider, representing the United States at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro (earning a Bronze team medal) and numerous World Cup Finals all over the world. She was also ranked #1 in the world with a record-breaking musical freestyle performance.

Eight riders will be selected to ride, and auditors will enjoy the clinic, as well as shopping at the vendor fair—all under one roof at the climate-controlled venue, the Alliant Energy Center.

For more information on applying to ride, auditor registration, and being a sponsor or vendor at this event, follow the WDCTA Facebook pages and the WDCTA website at wdcta.org.

Join WDCTA and receive discount fees for this event, as well as updates in the WDCTA monthly newsletter.

This event sponsored by

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“Help GROW Our GMO!” Drawing

**WDCTA is looking for new members!
You can help and earn a chance to be rewarded!**

You can earn one chance to win the drawing for each new member you refer who joins WDCTA by Sept. 25, 2022. The prize for the 2021 Grow Our GMO drawing is a dressage pad with the WDCTA logo.

Growing Together

Rules for the drawing:

1. A “new” member is defined as someone who was not a WDCTA member in 2021.
2. The new member must include your name as their Referring Person on their membership form when they send it in.
3. We will not be adding referral names retroactively, after the membership form has already been submitted.
4. Referring members must be current 2022 adult members of WDCTA to qualify for this drawing.
5. New members who joined before this announcement, who already included the name of their referring member, will automatically have their referring member’s name included in the drawing.
6. Successful referral of one Individual or Business membership will give you one chance in the drawing. Successful referral of a Junior or Young Rider (they must give their birth date on their application form!) will earn you two chances in the drawing. A successful Family membership will earn you one chance for the new adult members plus two chances for each qualifying Junior or Young Rider. (Again, birth dates are required for Juniors and Young Riders.)
7. Junior and Young Riders must include their birth dates on their application form when they send it in.
8. There is no limit to how many entries you can earn by successful referrals of new people who join WDCTA.
9. All new memberships and payments must be received *no later than Sept. 25, 2022!*

**Talk to your friends and boarding buddies who may be interested in the many benefits of being a WDCTA member.
Encourage them to join! You could be our winner!**

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Calendar of Events

WDCTA Events

May 20-21, 2023

Laura Graves Symposium
Sponsored by the WDCTA
Southwest Chapter
Location: Alliant Energy Center

More info coming in the next few weeks about vendor/ sponsorship opportunities, rider applications and auditing. Watch this newsletter and the WDCTA Facebook pages!

Other Events

Sept. 8-11

Region 4 Regional
Championships
National Equestrian Center
Lake St. Louis, MO

Sept. 14-18

Region 2 Regional
Championships
Waterloo Hunt Club
Grass Lake, MI

Nov. 10-13

US Dressage Finals
Kentucky Horse Park
Lexington, KY

Member Listings

STABLES

Grand Prix Farm
Jackie Luebke-Puetz
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cvestor@aol.com
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Tracey Dikkers - USEF/USDF "r" Judge
W4835 Aspen Court
Wild Rose, WI 54984
(608) 220-2628

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Caryn Vesperman - USEF/USDF "r" Judge
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touchstonefarm@gmail.com
(608) 455-2208

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*

Member Listings

INSTRUCTORS

Tracey Dikkers
W4835 Aspen Court
Wild Rose, WI 54984
(608) 220-2628

USEF/USDF Silver and Bronze medalist on self-trained horses, trained through FEI. 25+ years of experience training and instructing. Will teach beginners to FEI. Will travel.

Jackie Luebke-Puetz
15034 Co. Rd. X
Kiel, WI 53042-9706
cvestor@aol.com
(920) 693-3367

Will teach through 2nd level, earned USDF Bronze medal, trained through 4th Level. Served in the past on USDF education committee, USEF steward. Will travel.

Megan McIsaac
Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum
4246 Schneider Drive
Oregon, WI 53575
lindhofllc@gmail.com
(608) 445-8531

FEI trainer, USDF-certified instructor thru 4th Level, 2014 national champion with Kingsley. USDF Gold, Silver, Bronze medalist, all USDF bars. Competed four horses at GP. Competed successfully at Dressage at Devon and West Coast Festival. Year-end USDF, USEF, WDCTA awards. 15+ years teaching experience. Students competed through GP, earned rider awards and medals. Travel for lessons and clinics.

Andrea Schten
W350S6890 Ulrickson Road
Eagle, WI 53119
(262) 470-4557
aschten@hotmail.com
www.andreaschten.com

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