



## E-News

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March 2010

### President's Message



Happy 50th Anniversary, LAHJA! In 1960, a small group of horsemen gathered to form the Los Angeles County Horse Show Exhibitor's Association. Their goal was to organize the local one day horse shows, provide some

consistency among the various classes, and award year end championships. This effort was led by Bob Jones, who served as a founding member and later as President. From this small group of people and handful of horse shows, LAHJA has grown over the years and developed into one of this country's strongest local horse show associations. The name and the leaders have changed, but LAHJA remains focused on supporting quality horse shows and meaningful awards in the Los Angeles area.

Throughout this year, we will celebrate LAHJA's 50 years of horse shows, memberships, and year-end awards.

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### Did you Know...

**If you join LAHJA before April 15th, you can get one horse registration for free!**

### Upcoming Dates:

[Mar 28: Elvenstar March B](#)  
[Apr 2-3: Verdugo Hills Spring](#)  
[Apr 9-11: Gold Coast 2](#)  
[Apr 18: Camelot Spring Fling](#)  
[Apr 24-25: Foxfield Spring](#)  
[Apr 25: Elvenstar April B](#)

### Important Update on LAHJA Points

In 2010, there has been a major overhaul of the LAHJA point system for year-end awards. While you will earn points from the very first show where you place in a class, you will not be eligible for year-end awards until you earn points at five shows in each section (i.e., A Equitation 14 and Under, A Pre-Green Hunters, etc.). In addition, the points will be dependent on the number of riders in each class.

When you check your points on the website, you will not see any point totals until you have earned points in the five required shows for that section. However, please note that your points are still being tabulated and are accumulating. They will all appear after you have met the five-show requirement. Until then, you will be able to confirm your placings and calculate your points by looking under “Members” or “Horses” at the top of the page. To see your current standings, go to <http://www.lahja.org/points.php>.

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## **USHJA Trainer Certification Program**

**By Marnye Langer**

The USHJA has launched its Trainer Certification Program and is holding a number of symposiums throughout the country to provide instruction and education to professionals. In February, almost 100 professionals of all levels gathered in Thermal for three days where George Morris, our country’s national coach, led two days of instruction, followed by one day of hunter-focused instruction given by John French.

There were several demonstration riders for Morris’ instruction for both equitation and jumper riders. My trainer Jenni McAllister and I participated in the jumper sessions. As a rider this was a great opportunity, but unlike a riding clinic many of us are familiar with, this clinic focused on the teachers and how to teach. It didn’t matter if a rider made a mistake; Morris explained how to teach certain concepts, what concepts were important, and what level of mastery is needed to occur in order for a horse and rider to progress. True to form, Morris kept going back to the basics no matter how refined the exercise or advanced the concept. Morris repeatedly demonstrated the crucial importance of mastery of the American system of riding in order to progress.

I was gratified to see several LAHJA member professionals in attendance, including Karen Perlow and Kevan Husky. Husky had pages of notes, and Perlow was inspired by all she was learning. They both plan on seeking their Level 1 certification as soon as possible, and I hope a number of other LAHJA professionals join them. Please note that these symposiums are open to everyone, and as a junior or amateur rider there is plenty to learn from these master horsemen.

Kevan loved the idea of the symposium, noting that it’s been a long time coming. She particularly enjoyed Morris’ sessions.

Karen Perlow felt the Symposium was well worth the investment of time and money, although both she and Husky agreed that a two-day program might generate more interest, since it would not create as much financial difficulty in getting away from the barn to attend. However, she noted that the instructors provided great exercises for horses and riders, explaining how some of them might work for one type of horse but not another and how to determine what a horse might need. She said the program is valuable for everyone—juniors, amateurs and professionals—to improve their horsemanship and network. She feels it is very important, especially for up-and-coming trainers, to get a good education outside of their own barn, and this program is an excellent way to get it.

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## Perpetual Trophies

LAHJA is in the process of creating perpetual trophies for the year-end awards. A big thank you to the sponsors we have received so far! If you would like to sponsor a perpetual trophy or know someone who does, please contact Marnye ([marnyelanger@gmail.com](mailto:marnyelanger@gmail.com)).

Sponsors and trophies we've received so far are:

Shining Star Trophy - A Equitation 14-17

Jigsaw Farms - A Equitation 13/under

[Martin McAllister Training](#) - Jr/AO Jumper

[Ever Wood Stables](#)/Ginny Plancke – Large Pony Hunters

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### **The Equestrian Minute**

**By Sandrine Seifert**

**LAHJA Education Committee Chairman**

Education is one of LAHJA's cornerstones, and the LAHJA Equestrian Minute provides tips in each monthly e-news. We will cover a wide spectrum of topics from horse care to horse show rules, and plenty of information in between. If you have a topic you would like covered, e-mail me ([ddstables@gmail.com](mailto:ddstables@gmail.com)) and perhaps you will see your tip addressed in the LAHJA E-News.

Last month we learned a little bit about rules in the jumper ring, so let's talk a little bit more about them. Do you know your jumper tables? Do you understand the difference between Table II, 2b and Table II, 2c? Here are few helpful tips to make your jumper rounds even more successful:

1. The next time you pick up a prize list, check out the jumper classes offered. The prize list is a great resource because it provides information about class specifications, fence heights, and certain rules specific to jumpers.
2. If you want more specifics go to the [USEF Rule Book](#). Any question you have about how the various types of jumper classes are scored, the fence heights for particular sections (like Children's or Amateur Owner), and all the technical rules pertaining to jumpers are in the USEF Rule Book. Take a little time to read through these rules. Many times exhibitors are frustrated by an experience in the jumper ring caused by not understanding the rules. If you don't understand a rule, ask a jumper judge when you are at a show. A steward can set up an appropriate time for you to ask your question. Plus, if you see Larry Langer at the show, he loves talking about jumper rules!
3. Watch and learn! Too many people ignore this most valuable source of learning and understanding. Take advantage of being at the horse show. Go to the jumper rings and explore. Look at the posted courses. Each class number, table, and time allowed information is written on each course. Watch some riders, listen to the announcer, try to figure out a rider's score before it is announced, and observe some jump-offs. You will be amazed at how much you learn by actively observing and how much it will help you when you are on course.

Next month... What is the difference between loose reins, long reins, and riding on light contact? (Answer this to yourself now, and see if you are correct when we discuss this next month.)

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### Member Profile: Leah Gunn

Readers might recall from the January edition of the e-news that 15-year-old Leah Gunn won the hands-on portion of the Horsemastership three-phase test, placing second in the overall competition. Let's get to know her a little better!



**LAHJA E-News:** How long have you been riding, and how did you get started?

**Leah:** I have been riding since I was six years old. I began taking lessons at Foxfield but then switched to Elvenstar when I was nine. My passion for horses was unearthed when my horse crazy aunt showed my two cousins and me a video on horses. From that day on, I begged my parents for a horse, riding lessons, or anything in that category. Since riding lessons are so expensive, my parents wanted to wait six months to try to tell if this was a phase or not. It soon became clear that this was no phase, and in fall of 2000 I took my first riding lesson. I have now been riding for 10 years.

**LAHJA E-News:** Tell us a little about your horses.

**Leah:** I am blessed with two outstanding horses that I love so much. I have a feisty 10-year-old bay Thoroughbred named Conlee. He is a show horse but a trail horse at heart. He also has a rearing habit when we get near a turnout because he gets so excited. He loves to test me every step of the way, and I love that aspect of him. He has enough character to suit 10 ten horses. I also have a spunky eight-year-old palomino named Dancer. I have had her for four years, and she is the love of my life. She even had a paddock at my bat mitzvah just outside the party room. She has been there every step with me and I love her more than words can say. She is also a magnificent escape artist (especially when she knows I'm not looking) and as my trainer always said, "She is too smart for her own good." Some of my favorite memories include the countless hours of homework I have done in her stall.

**LAHJA E-News:** What do you like to do when you're not at the barn?

**Leah:** When I am not at the stable, my favorite thing to do is read. I love all novels and my favorite ever was *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I love the symbolism in the novel. I am equally passionate about writing. I am constantly writing poems, and I faithfully keep a journal. I love music of all sorts and am extremely social. I am blessed with some of the best friends on earth and we are constantly hanging out outside of Oak Park High School, where we attend.

I also work at Ride On Therapeutic Horsemanship. Those children are the sweetest I have ever met, and their courage and will despite their circumstances make them my heroes. I am also involved in student government and participate in my school's comedic improvisational team called Comedy Sportz. In addition, I am helping Jim Hagman start a nonprofit organization called Giddy Up that allows youth to assist the elderly in experiencing the outside world despite financial restrictions that they may have.

**LAHJA E-News:** What are your goals for this show year, and for the future?

**Leah:** I am heading into my junior year and will be focusing on school. I wish to be an editor or author as my profession and my school of choice is most definitely Stanford. I know this will take a lot of discipline, so I will take a year off from showing and reassess next year.

Do you know a LAHJA member we could profile? E-mail Marnye Langer at [marnyelanger@gmail.com](mailto:marnyelanger@gmail.com)

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### From the Judge's Box

**Question: In a hunter or equitation class, do you have a preference on whether the horse walks in the ring and strikes up the canter? Trots and then canters? Trots, walks, and then canters?**

“I would rather not see them trot, walk and then canter. The other two are fine.” -- Debbie Sands

“I personally don't care which of the above approaches a rider takes in terms of starting the course, however I want them to do whatever shows off the horse (hunters) or themselves (equitation) to best advantage. If the horse has a beautiful trot, then showing that off at the beginning of a hunter round is never a bad idea but if the canter is your horse's best gait then walk in and strike a canter.

“I am always astounded when a rider who sits the trot poorly begins an equitation round with a lengthy sitting trot because that is what everyone else has done. Do what you do best and that will get my interest piqued. If your horse canters beautifully from the walk, then show me that. I think the entry should be purposeful and it is a moment to get the judge's attention so doing whatever you do best is always the best idea.” -- Shelby French

“Walking through the gate then picking up the trot or the canter is okay with me. I prefer that they do not break back down to the walk from the trot because it interrupts the flow. However, I do not penalize the trot to walk transition as long as the connection does not fall apart and the walk is active. My biggest peeve is when the back gate is moving fast and the riders do not even check to see if the judge is ready. Many just enter and take off. Riders need to be in charge of their ride and discretely make sure that the ring and everything in it is ready for them. Be prompt but not careless. Every move in the ring must be complete.” -- DiAnn Langer

“The important thing to me about coming in the ring is being ready to ride the course. In a hunter class I'd like the horse to walk in, possibly trot a couple of steps, pick up the canter (on the correct lead) and go right to the course. Every horse has a rhythm that works for that horse. Establishing that rhythm is the purpose of the preliminary circle or the canter to the first fence. Of course, a preliminary circle (at the canter) is acceptable under the rules, but if the first fence is way up ring, then I think that the horse should trot, canter, and go to first jump. In a handy hunter class, if possible, the horse should walk into the ring, then pick up the canter and go directly to the first fence. In equitation, a little sitting trot is okay as long as the canter (correct lead) is picked up in a reasonable amount of time.” -- Penny Carpenter

“I do not have a preference. I will walk, trot and canter; whatever makes your entrance

impressive and your horse pleasant to watch.” -- Betty Beran

“I have no preference as long as they do not walk the entire length of the ring before they begin.” -- Susie Schoelkopf

If you have a question for From the Judge’s Box, please send it to Marnye Langer at [marnyelanger@gmail.com](mailto:marnyelanger@gmail.com).

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