

Dear Dressage for Kids Scholarship Committee,

Thank you for your generosity. This past weekend I participated in a TEAM clinic at Riding Right Farm and am grateful to have received a Dressage for Kids scholarship to help cover the cost.

My mount for the clinic was my horse Dasi, an eight-year-old Holstiener x mare. Before I bought her she had little training and no knowledge of dressage. I have owned Dasi for a year and have since been working on developing obedience, confidence, and balance. I am happy to have had the opportunity to learn from Lendon's instruction and have since been applying it to my riding. I rode first on Saturday, our focus was to have a "baseline of obedience," as Dasi did not have a respect for my aids. During this ride we did a lot of trot-walk transitions to get her listening to my aids. I found it very helpful when Lendon instructed me to walk in place of a half-halt. Sunday I could feel a difference in my control and Dasi's responsiveness. Our focus in this ride was in canter transitions. Because Dasi is green our departs in and out of canter are not very clean, and often result in a rushed imbalanced trot. To correct this Lendon advised me to ride my downward transitions: canter-trot-walk-trot. This exercise made her anticipate the walk after the canter instead of running out of it. We also had a hard time picking up the correct right lead. The exercise that corrected this was to ask for the canter while approaching the wall on a small circle. This dramatic bending forced her to pick up the correct lead. I had a lot of takeaways from these two rides and have seen our improvement as a result in my recent rides. I am not accepting any more mediocrity in my riding.

The lectures during the weekend were Dr. Nina Deibel on equine dentistry, Larry Hume on hoof maintenance, Monica Celli de Movellan on yoga for riders, and John Fahey on natural horsemanship. Unfortunately, because of my ride schedule I was not able to participate in the first two lectures. The yoga session we did at the closing of Saturday's rides. I really appreciated that Monica Celli was an equestrian and able to relate every exercise to riding. This session inspired me to add yoga into my daily routine. John Fahey brought two of his horses and did a liberty demonstration and explaining his training process. I was very impressed that his horses were so responsive to his every move and cue.

What was special about this clinic, is that I was able to watch my Riding Right teammates improve and learn from them as well. Thank you again for making this clinic possible and granting me the funds to participate in it.

Sincerely,

Adelle Woodcock