EQUESTRIAN VAULTING
Official Publication of the American Vaulting Association
USA WEG Vaulting GOLD!
GO FOR THE THRILL

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FACE would like to thank the following people for their contributions in helping us win America’s first vaulting team gold medal at this year’s 2010 World Equestrian Games:

Sydney, Richard, & Susan Frankel for their unwavering support and use of their property, Craig Coburn, the most diligent of Chef d’Equipes, Sarah D’Auriol and Karly Frankel-Newman for being such great teammates through the US Selection Trials, Chris Littmann for all the WEG van driving, Dr. Stacey Kent for being such a thorough WEG vet, Ed & Patty Kahl for their consistent hospitality, all the FACE parents for their tremendous support, Grant de la Motte for lending us his wife for the year, the Jaeckle Center for the use of their Tennessee horse spa facility, Katie Peuvrelle for helping our bodies and minds perform at their best, Kerrits, succeed, Pennfield and Grand Meadows for their products, Meineke for supplying our horse tack, and lastly, the Face 2008 team & Fame 2006 team for building momentum toward this year’s team gold medal.

Thank You
Dear AVA Members:

As we start 2011, the U.S. vaulting community has a lot to be proud of. In a recessionary economy, our U.S. clubs and vaulting programs have endured. While some have shrunk in size, we have, for the most part, stayed extremely stable, with some clubs even bucking the trend and growing substantially.

And, also in the middle of a recession, the 2010 World Equestrian Games organization, tirelessly supported by the United States Equestrian Federation and the United States Equestrian Team (USA’s fundraising arm), pulled off a strong showing at the Kentucky Horse Park this past Fall, with overall attendance numbers at the 2010 World Equestrian Games far exceeding the dire predictions of the naysayers and proving again that die-hard equestrians, especially those in the United States, will move heaven and earth to support their sports. Vaulting, with its sold-out finals, was no exception.

It was especially gratifying to meet WEG spectators who came to watch vaulting for the first time, with hardly a clue about what was in store for them. What did they know in advance? Not much, except for the rumor that vaulting was bound to be exciting.

And it was. Among our individuals, we had one of our strongest overall showings ever, with all three of our women, none of them strangers to a world championship level event, in the top ten overall (Mary McCormick in fourth with Sir Anthony Van Dyck, Megan Benjamin in fifth with Urfreund Rosengaard, and Ali Divita in seventh with Giovanni). Two of our three men made round II (veterans Todd Griffths with Lanson 16 finished in 10th and Kenny Geisler with Jacadi de Rox finished in 13th), and first-time World Championships vaulter Kristian Roberts, 17, with Highwater Bay, also had a strong finish for a newcomer. They made us all proud.

Over the past three decades, individual U.S. vaulting has grown on the backs of such American individual vaulting greats as Jeannette Boxall (the first American woman to win a medal—silver—at the Vaulting World Championships), Kerith Lemon (the four-time World Championships individual medalist and nine-time American champion), Devon Maizo (the USA’s first men’s vaulting gold medalist at the 1998 World Equestrian Games in Rome, four-time individual medalist and two-time team medalist) and Megan Benjamin (2006 WEG Women’s gold medalist and Team USA silver team medalist, and 2008 World Championships bronze team medalist). In addition, Americans gained momentum over 20 years in the team arena with medals at five Vaulting World Championships starting with Nancy Stevens-Brown’s Timberline Vaulters in 1990, Isabelle Bibbler’s Woodside Vaulters in 1998, Katahina Alongi’s Coast Line Vaulters in 2004, Emma Seely’s and Devon Maizo’s Free Artists Mt. Eden (FAME) in 2006, and Devon Maizo’s Free Artists Creative Equestrians (FACE) in 2008.

It was finally the right time for American team vaulting this past October 10th, on the final competition day of the two-week World Equestrian Games, when our USA’s FACE Vaulters won gold following a nail-biting final round of freestyle competition. When the Star Spangled Banner played and the eight-member team stood atop the podium (ninth member and equine partner Palatine was also close by) American team vaulting hit an important new apex, where we are no longer underdogs in individual nor team international competition. We are so proud of our own FACE Vaulters for bringing home the gold!

And what does this mean for us in the American Vaulting Association? First, interest in vaulting seems to have increased as a direct result of WEG. NBC’s coverage of the WEG sports, and the substantial media coverage generated by WEG, is working in our favor, and we can see through Google Analytics that more people than ever are accessing our AVA public website.

As we go into 2011 and the spring vaulting season, I call on ALL of our AVA members—all vaulters, all parents, all coaches, all trainers/lungers, all judges, all alumni, all vaulting enthusiasts, to take it upon ourselves personally to “beat the drum” on American vaulting. At a loss on how to do that? Ask your coach, ask your regional supervisor or send me a quick email (sbenjamin@americanvaulting.org). I’m sure we, together, can think of many, many ways we can help spread the word on and grow American vaulting!

Sheri Benjamin
AVA President
Get ready to learn AND have a great time at this year’s AVA Annual Convention in beautiful, affordable and fun Las Vegas, Nevada, March 3-6.

This 2011 convention, with the theme “Team Building Across America,” is designed for all levels of coaches and vaulters, with plenty of educational opportunities and fun for parents and vaulting supporters nationwide as well!

“We designed this year’s convention to ensure that even more AVA members could afford to come,” says Connie Geisler, Region I Supervisor and head of this year’s convention committee. “With low air prices in and out of Las Vegas, very reasonable hotel rates, lots of low-cost restaurant choices, a free fitness center and a complimentary shuttle to and from the airport, this year’s convention is a must-do educational and fun event for all AVA members.”

For coaches, club managers, parents, judges and vaulting enthusiasts, the convention will feature a range of educational sessions, including new information from the Technical Committee on upcoming AVA rule changes, roundtable brainstorming discussions on recreational vaulting, and how-to sessions on club marketing, accounting basics for 501 (3)(c) AVA subordinate clubs and club fundraising. The Technical Committee will also hold its ever-popular Open Judges Forum.

In addition, the Circle of Friends Alumni Club will be offering some special events including a sightseeing trip to Hoover Dam on Friday and a special Circle of Friends Tea as well.

For all level of vaulters, six sought-after clinicians will teach four days of group and individual sessions. On Saturday, a full-day round-robin horse and barrel vaulting course, or the Strip’s glittering neon. The hotel offers 10 dining options, a 16-screen movie theater, 64 bowling lanes, and live stage shows. The hotel also has a heated pool, a 24-hour fitness room with cardio and weight machines, and a game room. Complimentary scheduled shuttle service is provided to and from the airport and the Strip, so renting a car may not be necessary for those flying in and out of Las Vegas!

The hotel dining options on-site include a bagel store, a Seattle’s Best Coffee (owned by Starbucks) featuring a wide range of espresso and coffee drinks and pastries, an old fashioned ice cream shop, several large buffets, a family Italian
Get ready to learn AND have a great time at this year’s AVA Annual Convention in beautiful, affordable and fun Las Vegas, Nevada, March 3-6.

Clinic at Erik Martonovich’s home club of Big Horse Productions will feature 2010 Vaulting Team Gold Medalist and Coach Devon Maitozo, 2010 Women’s National Champion and WEG 4th place finisher Mary McCormick, former Men’s National Champion and many time world championships participant Kenny Geisler, award-winning coach Nancy Stevens-Brown and former Men’s National Champion and world championships participant Erik Martonovich.

In this combination all-day group horse and barrel clinic, these experts will divide vaulters into small groups and focus on everything from compulsories, (including an important new concept on balance and flight recently discovered by Nancy Stevens-Brown, which will be taught on the horse), performance enhancement and freestyle. For those who want to try something totally different, showman extraordinaire Erik Martonovich will teach Roman Riding! The other days (Friday and Sunday), individual clinicians Devon, Mary, Kenny, and Nancy will be joined by former Women’s World Vaulting Champion (2006 WEG, Aachen, Germany) Megan Benjamin for individual barrel clinics, concentrating on compulsory exercises and freestyle, technical test moves, and choreography. All coaches and parents registered for the convention are welcome to audit the all-day vaulting workshop on Saturday, as well as any private vaulting barrel lesson taken by one of their vaulters.

On Saturday morning, vaulters will also work with Megan Benjamin and get introduced to the AVA’s Vaulter Fitness Program, a 2011 pilot program modeled after the successful and long-standing AVA Medal Test and President’s Physical Fitness programs. The new test program is designed to encourage increasing levels of fitness in vaulters by rewarding and recognizing their fitness accomplishments. A similar session will also be held for coaches, who will play an important part in this Vaulter Fitness Pilot Program.

For the newest, most complete and updated information, and to register online, go to www.americanvaulting.org/convention11.

Plan on joining us in the Las Vegas this coming March!

For more info:
www.americanvaulting.org/news/convention11 (to register online, and for updated, complete details)
www.suncoastcasino.com (hotel info)
www.kayak.com (airfares)
www.expedia.com (airfares)
www.southwest.com (airfares)
http://www.mccarran.com/airlines.aspx (list of airlines servicing Las Vegas airport)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>ROOM/SITE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8–9:30 am</td>
<td>ACTIV Meeting</td>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–11:15 am</td>
<td>Teaming up with AVA’s Accounting Pros: Accounting 101 for Clubs</td>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 –11:30 am</td>
<td>Development Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 am–12:30 pm</td>
<td>AWA and Your Club—Teaming Up for Subordinate Non-Profit Status: What’s In It for Clubs?</td>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
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<td>11:30 am–1:30 pm</td>
<td>Constitution and Bylaws Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15–1:30 pm</td>
<td>LUNCH BREAK (on your own)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 –3 pm</td>
<td>Club Marketing 101: Easy-to-Implement Social Media/ Publicity Ideas to Grow Your Club</td>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–4:30 pm</td>
<td>Insurance Committee Working Group</td>
<td>Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–6 pm</td>
<td>Open Judges Forum Part I</td>
<td>Meeting Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30–6 pm</td>
<td>Awards Committee Working Group</td>
<td>Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>8–10 am</td>
<td>National Championships Meeting</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 am–6 pm</td>
<td>Private Barrel Lessons for Vaulters</td>
<td>Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>9am–noon</td>
<td>Sightseeing Trip to Hoover Dam</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 –11:30 am</td>
<td>Competitions Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am–1:30 pm</td>
<td>Regional Supervisors Lunch Meeting</td>
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<td>11:30 am–1:30 pm</td>
<td>LUNCH BREAK</td>
<td>Sign up for Buddy Lunches or on your own</td>
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<td>1:30–3 pm</td>
<td>Rec. Vaulting Roundtable/Brainstorming</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<td>3–5 pm</td>
<td>AWA Rule Changes with Technical Committee</td>
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<td>5 pm</td>
<td>USEF Meeting with USEF Vaulting Director Pam Lane</td>
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<tr>
<td>7–9 pm</td>
<td>NOC Working Group Meeting</td>
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<td>7–9 pm</td>
<td>Bowling Social for All</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>8–11 am</td>
<td>Open Judges Forum Part II</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>8–9 am</td>
<td>Vaulter Fitness Pilot Program for Vaulters</td>
<td>Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–9:30 am</td>
<td>Travel to Arena</td>
<td>Arena</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 am–4 pm</td>
<td>Vaulter Horse and Barrel Round-Robin Clinics</td>
<td>Arena</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 am</td>
<td>Club Fundraising Roundtable (TBD)</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>12–1:30 pm</td>
<td>LUNCH BREAK</td>
<td>Sign up for Buddy Lunches or on your own</td>
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<td>1:30 –4:30 pm</td>
<td>AVA Board Meeting</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3 pm</td>
<td>Competition Volunteer Jobs: A How-To Session</td>
<td>Room B</td>
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<td>3 pm</td>
<td>Parent Jeopardy (TBD)</td>
<td>Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 pm</td>
<td>Vaulter Clinic Ends – Travel back to Hotel</td>
<td>Arena</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30–5:15 pm</td>
<td>Vaulter Fitness Pilot Program Intro for Coaches and Parents (Megan Benjamin)</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 pm</td>
<td>2010 National Champions Special Reception</td>
<td>Room B</td>
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<tr>
<td>6–9 pm</td>
<td>Recognition Banquet</td>
<td>Ballroom</td>
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<td>8–10 am</td>
<td>Website Working Group Meeting</td>
<td>Suite</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15–11:15 am</td>
<td>Balance and Flight for Coaches (Nancy Stevens-Brown)</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<td>8–11 am</td>
<td>Private Barrel Clinics</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am–1:30 pm</td>
<td>Brainstorming and Annual Meeting of AVA Members Brunch</td>
<td>Room A</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am–1:30 pm</td>
<td>Vaulting Extravaganza and Brunch with Nancy Stevens-Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–4:30 pm</td>
<td>Private Barrel Clinics</td>
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2011 AVA ANNUAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION
MARCH 3-6, 2011, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Please register **ONLINE** at [www.americanvaulting.org](http://www.americanvaulting.org) 
(for credit cards and faster service)

**Registration Deadlines:**
- **Early Bird:** January 31
- **Regular:** February 7
- **Late:** After February 8

All registrants (except those attending the banquet only) must be current AVA members (any type). Please fill out one registration form per person.

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Region</th>
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**Full Registration** (All meetings, workshops, banquet, members brunch): $135 / $160 / $185  
(All prices refer to Early Bird, Regular and Late Registration Fees)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Meetings Only (Adults):</th>
<th>Saturday Vaulter Round-Robin Clinic Only:</th>
<th>Recognition Banquet Only (13 and over):</th>
<th>Recognition Banquet Only (12 and under):</th>
<th>Member or Vaulter Sunday Brunch Only:</th>
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<tr>
<td>$120 / $150 / $170</td>
<td>$105 / $130 / $155</td>
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**ADDITION EVENTS:**
- **Open Judges Forum** (Part I and Part II): $50 / $55 / $60  
  (NOT included with Registration Packages. Proceeds support the Judges Training Program)
- **50-minute Private Barrel Clinic:** per person $65 / $70 / $75
- **50-minute Semi-Private Barrel Clinic:** per person $40 / $45 / $50

**Indicate Clinician:** ___ Megan Benjamin ___ Kenny Geisler ___ Devon Maitozo ___ Mary McCormick ___ Nancy Stevens-Brown

Register early; these clinics fill quickly. Vaulter Level: __________________________

For Semi-Private clinic you may request a partner: ____________________________  
(otherwise a partner of the same level will be assigned)

- **Hoover Dam Sightseeing Trip** (3 hours): $30
- **Bowling Social Night:** $12.50 (includes shoes and games)

**TOTAL:**

Make check to the **AVA** and mail to **8205 Santa Monica Blvd. #1-288, West Hollywood, CA 90046**

Questions about the convention? Email: **convention@americanvaulting.org**

Questions about online registration? Email: **nationaloffice@americanvaulting.org 323-654-0800**
Fifteen years ... and a performance track record that borders on a miracle. But then vaulting is a miracle, right? From that very first frisson, that electric body thing that happens when you “let go” on a horse for the very first time, the first mount all by yourself, and the amazing rush when a difficult move is accomplished perfectly at the canter, to the music that is the roar of thousands. When that happens ... there is nothing quite like the thrill of vaulting.

The Friendship Vaulting Team has been sharing that “wow” now for 15 years. It’s an easy thing to list the fabulous venues that have been privileged to host the FVT, but that’s just a list. It doesn’t even begin to account for the impact of vaulting, the intense challenges that the team participants encounter, nor the lasting lifetime benefits of those challenges.

If you ask the vaulters, their coaches, the FVT volunteers or even those hosting the Friendship Team, you will get a symphony of positive responses. There seems to be no downside. Even mud, missing unitards and practical jokes evoke warm memories and laughter. Real friendships are formed that stay alive for a lifetime.

Starting with a Dream

The first ever demo by the official Friendship Vaulting Team was at the Rolex Kentucky Three Day Event, one of the nation’s most prestigious equestrian events, in 1995. Vaulting mom Priscilla G. Faulkner founded the FVT to temporarily bring vaulters together from clubs across the nation, for the express purpose of showcasing our sport at large events. Sisters Lucinda and Priscilla B. Faulkner were the coaches, and members of clubs from both coasts formed the team that performed originally on Ureon, a rock-steady horse owned by Alice Olford and permanently loaned to the Friendship Team.

It was the first of five events in that initial year. Included were the Atlanta Cup, the Hampton Classic, the opening of the Georgia International Horse Park and the California Dressage Society Annual Show. The event line-up was partially set up as practice for the upcoming Olympic Games in Atlanta in 1996. What an opportunity!

“My mom (Priscilla G. Faulkner) started the Friendship Team in 1995 with nothing more than a dream and no idea how to pull it off,” remembers Lucinda Faulkner. “She had no vested interest other than to create a fantastic performance with the vaulters and horses who were there. No one will understand the behind-the-scenes work that Mom put into each one. She worked her butt off and schmoozed like nobody’s business, and everyone who encounters her loves her.’

AVA’s own Jan Weber (now VP Development) and Sydney Frankel (long-time board member) have been staunch supporters throughout the years. Jan has been the AVA exhibits manager for many, many years— bringing the AVA booth across America to support these events, distributing brochures, writing talking points for the demonstrations and acting as the spokesperson for vaulting. Sydney Frankel has also been a long-time supporter, contributing not only financial but also important emotional support to the contingent over the decades. “This is very important work,” she would remind Priscilla G. during difficult times.

For everyone involved, the Friendship Vaulting Team is a labor of love.

Krystal Solarzano started with the FTV when she was eleven years old. The Olympics were coming, the Friendship Team had been...
invited to perform, and Krystal planned for it. At nine she had earned her AVA Bronze Medal, at eleven her AVA Silver Medal, and by twelve she was an AVA Gold Medalist. Performing at the Olympics? Now that’s an incentive. That’s fulfilling a dream. Mom Michelle says of the Friendship Team “You can’t find a greater family, more organized, and prepared to take your child and change their life!” That’s a pretty strong and positive answer and one that reverberates throughout the roster of FVTers.

FVT: Trust and Camaraderie

The Friendship Team’s inaugural performance at their first World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky was no exception. “There were people watching us from all over the world!” says 17-year-old vaulter Cate Thomas. That was her comment after their afternoon performance on a sunny afternoon at the Horse Park. So from back in 1995 to 2010, the enthusiasm has not diminished. And why should it? Putting together the electric, risky, challenging, synchronized kind of performance with kids from all over the country, in concert with a horse not their own, directed by a different coach at a huge event ... in just two days? This year’s World Equestrian Games at the Kentucky Horse Park is a great example. From start to finish in each demonstration, after performances were over, at their accommodations, at dinner and breakfast and lunch, the vaulters were a team.

Eileen Jassowski, wearing the hat of mom with the Friendship Team parents in addition to her usual role as event photographer said, “It’s such a great way to promote vaulting and encourage new friendships among teams. There was a lot of camaraderie and teamwork on and off the horse. It was wonderful to see the vaulters walking as a group all over the park.”

Friendship Team member Tessa Divita agreed. “We just met on Friday and we’ve all become like best friends. So, meet on Friday and ... suddenly we’re a team.” Vaulters who’ve never worked together don’t just hop on and perform doubles and triples on a cantering horse. It’s the combined effort of intense training, lots of trust, and then there’s
strength, suppleness, stretch and balance. If you can stand up on a cantering horse, you can pretty much do anything. And what the audience doesn’t see is the effort it takes for vaulters to get to the AVA Silver Medal level that is a requirement for application to the FVT.

Each spring the invitation goes out to all the AVA members with at least an AVA Silver Medal. The invitation states that the purpose of the FVT is to: 1) promote the sport of vaulting in the United States, 2) reward vaulters who have sacrificed other sports and other activities to progress to this level, and 3) have an ‘on call’ group for special exhibitions. They have fulfilled these goals admirably for 15 years.

Ambassadors for Vaulting

What’s the secret? There must be something that has kept this intangible positive energy so strong over the last 15 years—starting with the coaching, the attitude, the presentation. Lucinda Faulkner, one of FVT’s original coaches, says that the off-the-horse part is just as important as the actual performance. “One of the things I coach them on is presentation at all times,” she explains. “The vaulters might by on-site at each event for up to 10 hours a day, so we practice answers to questions people might ask or comments they might make. For example, I never thought ‘thank you’ was enough when someone went out of their way to compliment them. I made them practice something like ‘Thank you so much. We’re glad you enjoyed it; we certainly had a good time performing.’ We talked about how for many spectators, especially the youth, it took courage to approach the vaulters, and that courage should be rewarded. The vaulters were always to seem approachable - never in their own clique, unaware of the public.”

Not a bad approach to...life!

She continues “We needed everything to be safe and things to work, every time; we wanted everyone on the Friendship Team to get to feel like they played an important role, to feel like they shone at something.” Every vaulter who has participated with the FVT knows what it takes to get there and do what they do. They definitely shine.

These exciting young vaulters are the ultimate ambassadors for the sport. It’s obvious that they’re having the time of their lives and that their enthusiasm has been instrumental to the growth of the sport. The name says everything. There’s only ‘positive’in Friendship and Team. Together Everyone Accomplishes More!

It doesn’t get any better than that.

About the Author: Carole Dwinell is a long-time AVA member and horse enthusiast who has successfully fielded a California vaulting club and now spends her days making art and writing articles for popular equestrian websites like discoverhorses.com. She is also a tireless volunteer who continues to spread the vaulting word at every chance she can! You can contact her at horse123@aol.com.

FRIENDSHIP TEAM 2010 WOWS WEG CROWD

Six horses, six lungers, two coaches, 36 equestrian vaulters, along with assorted chaperones and long-time AVA Friendship Team mastermind Priscilla Faulkner descending on the prestigious World Equestrian Games in October to perform a series of eight vaulting demonstrations, both at the site of WEG, Lexington’s Kentucky Horse Park, as well as at the International Equestrian Festival, a celebration in downtown Lexington that offered more than 120 hours of horse demonstrations and equine celebrities.

The 2010 Friendship Team vaulters came from 11 different states, encompassed all six of the AVA’s regions, and are AVA Silver Medal level vaulters or above (with the exception of the fliers). The contingent was led with a firm hand and a warm heart by Mrs. Priscilla G. Faulkner, who had a vision 15 years ago to bring together vaulters from clubs across the United States to showcase vaulting at important events throughout America.

The WEG performances featured AVA horses Colonel Mustard (owned and lunged by Michelle Solorzano), Cheval (owned by Sydney Frankel and lunged by Priscilla B. Faulkner), Gumby (owned by Priscilla B. Faulkner and lunged by Rosanna Lamb), Gustauff (owned by Frank Pace and lunged by Tom Pritchett), Leonitus (owned by Michelle Solorzano and lunged by David White), and Prophet (owned and lunged by Patti Skipton).

Our 2010 Friendship Vaulting Team, chosen for not only their vaulting level but for their ability to be an ambassador for our sport as well, was composed of Delany Altman (Orangevale, CA), Lindsey Anderson (Monrovia, CA), Ryan Barbee (Redmond, WA), Mikalah Bowman (Littleton, CO), Tessa Divita (Redwood City, CA), Anna Erickson (Camano Island, WA), Ashley Fajardo (Roseville, CA), Joey Gadd (Saratoga, CA), Rob Faulkner (Covington, GA), Malik Finney (Lawrence MI), Eric Garcia (Novato, CA), Ellie Gifford (Woodside, CA), Ruthann Goodrich (Wilmore, KY), Peyge Greene-Galvan (Antioch, CA), Shannon Hoke (Petaluma, CA), Shelby Janes (Stanwood, WA), Laura Jassowski (El Dorado, CA), Alexandria (Gator) Jaynes (Arlington, WA), Jacqueline Lobdell (Hanford, CA), Roxanne Mitchell (Redmond, WA), Katrina Nibbi (Woodside, CA), Julia Overtin (Stanwood, WA), Kaleb Patterson (Stanwood, WA), Miranda Prints (Orangevale, CA), Emily Reed (Henderson, NV), Danielle Rynning (Camano Island, WA), Alex Schaubhut (Manchaca, TX), Matthew Shubert (Sandia Park, NM), Greta Shryock (Cedar Crest, NM), Bali Solorzano (Citrus Heights, CA), Krystal Solorzano (Citrus Heights, CA), Leticia Solorzano (Citrus Heights, CA), Anna Brook Thomas (Newtown, VA), Cate Thomas (Nashville, TN), and Jamie Wantland (Stanwood, WA).

Thanks to the entire AVA Friendship Vaulting Team— including not just our vaulters but our coaches, horses, lungers, chaperones, schedulers, cooks, grooms, financial patrons and event masterminds— for being such wonderful ambassadors for our sport at the World Equestrian Games 2010, and throughout the decades!

Note: If you’re interested in becoming part of the 2011 AVA Friendship Vaulting Team, all AVA Silver Medal vaulters automatically receive an invitation each year to participate, and must complete the Friendship Vaulting Team application and return it to be considered.
FACE THE WORLD

By Megan Benjamin

“FACE is a group of inspired individuals from all over the country who come together to vault and compete at the elite level with hopes of conquering the world. And they did just that!”

On the final day of the World Equestrian Games 2010, in Lexington, Kentucky, the seven members of Free Artists Creative Equestrians (FACE) along with horse Palatine and lunger Carolyn Bland made vaulting history by winning the Team Vaulting gold medal at the most prestigious international equestrian event in the world, oftentimes referred to as “the Equestrian Olympics.” Edging out Team Germany by just 19 thousandths of a point, FACE proved to the world (and thousands of curious Kentucky onlookers) that vaulting is finally, after decades of European domination, an American team sport too.

But FACE’s golden performance in Kentucky was hardly an anomaly for this internationally successful club. FACE began to push the envelope at the 2002 World Equestrian Games, where they famously performed their routine to a single piece of powerful music. In 2006, FAME (Free Artists Mount Eden, a composite team consisting of FACE and Mt. Eden Vaulting Club members) changed the game again with a freestyle focused on innovative dance, intricate choreography, harmony with the horse, and interpersonal theatrical chemistry. Despite de-emphasizing high-flying triples, FAME famously clinched the silver medal, missing the gold by just thousandths of a point. Then in 2008, FACE The Dark Side of the Moon earned the bronze medal at the World Championships in Brno, Czech Republic.
with an edgy freestyle set to the music of Pink Floyd. Winning three medals in four World Championships, FACE is certainly a powerhouse of international American vaulting.

A Creative Vision
FACE’s storied medal-winning performances all began with a dream from Devon Maitozo’s father, Mathew Maitozo. A music and voice teacher, Matt envisioned a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering talented children to learn and perform together musically—Free Artists Creative Enterprises. Matt succumbed to illness and passed away without realizing his dream, but Devon understood that his father’s dreams of musical theater and his own passion for performance on horseback were very much in sync. As a tribute to his father’s passion for artistic education of young people and performance through music, Devon continued his father’s legacy with his own innate passions for performance through vaulting.

“Music is an integral part of what inspires our craft,” Devon says. “A simple change from ‘Enterprises to ‘Equestrians’ and I felt I was making a bridge between my father’s dreams and my own. It felt right. It makes me proud every time I think about it.”

And so the legacy was born—a legacy in which performance, artistic development, creativity, and passion for the sport of vaulting have inspired FACE vaulters to push the envelope of what is possible and what is expected of a team freestyle both in this country and beyond.

Not Your Average Vaulting Club
FACE functions differently from most vaulting clubs. The majority of the club’s time, money, and effort balloons around World Championship years, with little or no team activity happening in between. Although some FACErs (as they’re called) remain loyal and dedicated to the club during non-Championship years, many return to their home clubs to compete individually or even take the year off from vaulting altogether.

“I don’t see FACE as a vaulting club in the classic sense,” says Craig Coburn, FEI “I” judge and the Chef d’Equipe at this year’s World Equestrian Games. “FACE is a group of inspired individuals from all over the country who come together to vault and compete at the elite level with hopes of conquering the world. And they did just that!”

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For the Love of Performance
There is something special about FACE that inspires its vaulters to make amazing sacrifices.

2002: Fifth Place
2002 World Equestrian Games
Jerez, Spain
FACE with Czar Ivan and Ulla Dietz
Still in the days of nine-member teams and five-minute freestyles, FACE famously vaulted to a seamless piece of music by Bond. For the first time ever, the team freestyle became about the music and the performance, not just about the moves themselves.

Team Members: Jackelyn Adkins, Blake Dahlgren, Bethany Haas, Adrian Matsumoto, Shannyn Poer, Leah Smith, Tricia Thompson (Dahlgren), Rachel Torrez, and Sterling Weatherly

2004
2004 Vaulting World Championships
Stadl Paura, Austria
Due to a now defunct rule that all team members must be 18 or younger to compete internationally, FACE chose not to assemble a team of inexperienced competitors and instead sent two individuals to the World Championships, Blake Dahlgren and Devon Maitozo. Coastline Vaulters (along with current FACE member Rosalind Ross) represented Team USA and brought home the bronze medal.

2006: The Silver Medal
2006 World Equestrian Games
Aachen, Germany
FAME (Free Artists Mt. Eden) with Grand Gaudino and Dr. Silke Bartel
In an attempt to create the best team the world had ever seen, FACE and Mt. Eden Vaulting Club combined under coaches Devon Maitozo and Emma Seely to form FAME. Working with music by composer Johannes Brahms in addition to beats partially composed by Devon, FAME earned the highest scores in the world with their dramatic and intricately choreographed freestyle.

Team Members: Megan Benjamin, Blake Dahlgren, Elizabeth Ioannou, Devon Maitozo, Katie Richie, Rosalind Ross, and Annalise VanVranken
Whether it’s traveling from East Coast to West Coast on a bi-monthly basis, moving to an altogether new home, or investing time, money, and resources at the expense of all other hobbies, the opportunity to create and perform art on horseback keeps its members coming back time and time again. Or perhaps there’s also a little bit of a competitive nature in each and every FACEr that keeps them coming back for more.

“I came back to FACE for one reason,” says Mari Inouye, vaulting veteran and member of the bronze medal-winning 2008 FACE team. “I wanted to win gold in our home country!”

Mary Garrett, a newbie to the international scene, had a bit of a different outlook on vaulting with FACE. “I knew I wanted to be on this team since I saw FAME’s performance at Nationals in 2006. I witnessed the power and control they had over the audience and how their beautiful, innovative style was going to change the sport as we knew it,” she says. “I wanted to be surrounded by the abundance of talent that was oozing from every pore of this team.”

The Long Road
Oozing talent and competitive nature aside, creating the world’s best freestyle takes thousands of man-hours. Whenever a new FACE vaulting season begins, the team spends much of the early fall exploring their potential through improvisation and meticulous effort. A favorite creative activity at FACE practices is the improvisational warm-up. While Devon blasts a favorite track or album through his speaker system, team members take turns leading the group through an improvised dance routine incorporating balance, stretch, and movement. Pre-practice warm-ups look a lot more like a modern dance troupe than a regimented gymnastics class.

Practices throughout the season are all geared toward creating the perfect freestyle, but as Devon says, “it is typical
for little to be typical about any particular FACE training session."

The one constant in nearly every FACE training session, however, is the sheer number of hours FACEers spend together on the barrel. Inspired primarily by modern dance videos and old material from previous years, they try things over and over again, tweaking and finessing the freestyle, but he also composed about a quarter of the team’s freestyle music himself on his computer. “Garage Band has really helped me streamline my creative process musically,” he says.

The team took a loose reading of Romeo and Juliet in choreographing their freestyle, focusing primarily on the romantic tragedy of the two star-crossed lovers. Devon, drama-king extraordinaire, was Romeo. Rosalind was Juliet. “I don’t think I was so much ‘chosen’ to be Juliet, as it seemed the natural thing,” Rosalind says. “Devon and I just feel comfortable on the horse together. I never have to think twice about whether or not he is holding me, which gives me the freedom to indulge in the performance.”

Unlike previous years, this FACE team stuck to the same freestyle structure through all four selection trials and the World Championships. The typical FACE freestyle tends to arrive at competitions in drafts, each very different from the previous in both structure and content until ultimately, usually in time for a World Championship, the freestyle is in its most perfect form. This year, FACE seemed to get it right the first time, making only subtle choreographic changes and adding difficulty throughout the season. This gave them the confidence to perform and peak at the most important competition of the year—the World Equestrian Games.

Winning it All
After training for a month together in Tennessee, the team felt prepared for the Games. With a few added tricks up their sleeve, a perfectly choreographed routine, and stellar compulsories, the team finally began to taste just how close they were to that gold medal. The competition, however, didn’t go entirely according to plan.

Everyone loves to talk about the unique power of a FACE freestyle, but let’s not forget that this team also won the compulsory round at this year’s (and 2008’s) World Equestrian Games—and by a huge margin of more than two tenths of a point at that! With a lead over the competition (mainly Germany and Austria), FACE felt ready and confident to show the world their freestyle.

But when it came time for Round I freestyle, something was amiss. Forced to warm up in an arena adjacent to the driving horses due to inadequate warm-up space closer to the vaulting arenas, Palatine had been spooked by the commotion of carriages and never quite calmed down. FACE’s warm-up was marred with falls, and everyone was on edge before they entered the competition arena for their freestyle performance.

“I was trying to think calm thoughts for Paly,” says Emily Hogne, FACE’s highest-flying team member. “Of course, I was also thinking about what would or wouldn’t be possible if our horse wasn’t going perfectly.”

That first round freestyle started off cautiously and slowly, with each and every FACEr trying to help ease Palatine into the mayhem of a World Equestrian Games environment he had never before experienced. As the freestyle wore on, things started to flow more smoothly and Palatine seemed to relax into the freestyle with his teammates. Then suddenly, during the team’s highest flying, most

Although FACE’s training emphasizes its athletes’ development of artistic expression, training is coupled with an intense work ethic that is geared toward creating strong, flexible vaulters capable of exploring their creativity with precision and confidence.

mechanics and choreography repeatedly to try to make each move, each transition, and each moment perfect.

“With Devon’s vision for the freestyle leading the way, and everyone else adding ideas here and there, the freestyle almost has a life of its own,” says Anna de la Motte, co-coach of the 2010 FACE team. “The vast amount of creative brain power that went into the freestyle throughout this past year is mind-boggling!”

Although FACE’s training emphasizes its athletes’ development of artistic expression, training is coupled with an intense work ethic that is geared toward creating strong, flexible vaulters capable of exploring their creativity with precision and confidence. Whether it’s running the Woodside trails, improv dancing in the studio, training in the gym, conditioning at practice, meditating, mental training, or practicing thousands upon thousands of compulsory drills, FACE vaulters are more than fit enough to experiment with new and daring freestyle exercises with their horse.

The 2010 Season
For FACE, this past year unfolded much like the previous few. With eyes and hearts set on the gold medal, things really started coming together when Devon showed up to practice one day with a piece from Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet. After listening to the music, the team unanimously agreed that it was “the one” and they began constructing a more concrete version of the freestyle they would eventually perform at the US Selection Trials and the World Equestrian Games.

“I take on the music as a very personal project of my own,” says Devon. Not only did Devon find and edit the piece for the four-minute
insecure triple, Palatine caught a glimpse of the TV camera following him around the circle and cut into the circle just enough to knock all three athletes to the ground.

No one was injured, but it was surely a kick to the team’s confidence. After that round, FACE moved from first place to third. Only the most perfect of performances, combined with mistakes from both Team Germany and Team Austria, would allow FACE to win the gold medal they coveted so badly.

The stars seemed to be aligned for FACE on October 10th, the final round of team competition. Despite feeling crushed from their first freestyle performance, the team jointly agreed that they no longer cared which medal they wore around their neck at the end of the day, so long as they gave Kentucky the performance of a lifetime.

Lunger Carolyn Bland emphasized a calm warm-up for Palatine and did everything in her ability to keep him focused and happy. Clad with cotton ball earplugs and a hat, Palatine felt less affected by the audience’s cheers. The team lined up in front of the moving camera, blocking it from Palatine’s vision. Annalise VanVranken raised her hand for the music, it started, and from there, the audience indulged in the purest of theater, art, dance, and performance on horseback. Each moment felt suspended in time, fluid and perfect.

Although the team never performed several of the tricks they had up their sleeves (including a huge front flip, pictured), it didn’t matter. The judges awarded FACE for their brilliant performance with soaring scores and a German fall and many Austrian “touch grounds” assured the team’s position at the top of the world.

“Standing on the podium with a gold medal was something I had always dreamed about. After winning silver at WEG in 2006, I was unsure I would ever get this chance again,” says Blake Dahlgren, the team’s “compulsory expert.” “I’m very proud of our efforts and thankful I was able to make a contribution.”

“Performing to sold-out crowds in the Alltech Arena, FACE and this year’s World Equestrian Games proved that vaulting is interesting to the general public and that we must be responsible for continually trying to reach them,” says Craig Coburn.

FACE has brought American vaulting into the lives of thousands. Now it’s our responsibility to bring American vaulting, from tiny tots to elite, into the lives of thousands more.

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**About the Author:** Megan Benjamin is a recent Cornell University graduate. A Mt. Eden Vaulting Club member, she is the 2006 World Equestrian Games Women’s Vaulting Champion, and a member of the AVA Board of Directors.
Free Artists Creative Equestrians (FACE) Vaulters
2010 World Equestrian Games Team Gold Medalists
Lexington, Kentucky, USA
Some of our WEG 2010 Vaulting USA contingent, decked out in their Ariat-provided gear (right down to the boots!) before the opening ceremonies of the World Equestrian Games. Standing (left to right): Jessica Ballenger, Emma Garrod Seely, Blake Dahlgren, Mary Garrett, Annalise VanVranken, Rosalind Ross, Emily Hogye, Devon Maitozo, Kristian Roberts, Julie Divita, Jill Palmer, Megan Benjamin, Lasse Kristensen. Front row: Mary McCormick, Ali Divita, Mari Inouye, Katharine Wick, Julie Keville Young, Pam Lane.
The World Equestrian Games 2010 would not have been possible without the support of the 200 or so AVA members and vaulting enthusiasts, some of whom launched into their volunteer duties well over a year before the Games. Many of these volunteers also worked non-stop, 12-15 hours a day, starting the week prior to WEG, until the closing ceremonies and beyond. A big thank you to each and every volunteer who worked in any way, shape or form at WEG 2010. In particular the AVA would like to thank the following people:

- Our arena, security, and judges table staff and ever flexible hand man to the chief steward, as well as Bill Brown, Patty Poor, Timothy Price-O’Brien, Amy Purcell, Susan Rudolph, Faireira Sabounchi, T.A. Sampson, Tom Sayles, Stefan Schaudt, Nic Schober, Michael Schreiber, Virginia Schultz, Shari Stapleton-Smith, Kelli Stearnman, Nancy Stevens-Brown, Elizabeth Strauss, Mike Strauss, Kay Strauss, Alex Thomas, Rejeana Thompson, Valerie Trimble, Karina Vltava, Cathrin Walker, Lenora Walden, Istar Walls, Tina Walters, Bob Webster, Jan Webster, Eric Webster, Lauren Webster, Janice Welch, Karen White, Jennifer Williams, Kathy Wilson, Anne D. Windland, Alia Lynne Zagyva, and Lisa Zielenks.

- Our WEG 2010 vaulting contingent had 221 years of collective vaulting experience with 32 prior World Championships performances under their belt.

- Our FEI steward crew: Bob Webster, who acted as the right-hand man to the chief steward, as well as Bill Brown, Patty Littmann, Rachel Markels Webber, Janice Welch and Jen Williams.

- Our Show Office and Scoring Personnel: Sharon Leaf, Nicole D’Auriol, Kim Beisecker, Kay Strauss, Carol Beutler, John Land and Carol Land; Music Men Paul Caskey and Tom Sayles; color commentator Nancy Stevens-Brown; production specialist Shari Stapleton-Smith; hospitality queen Susan Frankel.


Lastly, we are grateful for our very talented American athletes, who made us proud to be associated with our sport and who all came up the AVA ranks themselves to become top international competitors and role models to all our vaulters in the United States:

- Our Individual Athletes, their lungers and their horses—Kristian Roberts, lunger Jill Palmer and Highwater Bay (owned by Jill Palmer); Mary McCormick, lunger Carolyn Bland and Sir Anthony Van Dyck (owned by Sydney Frankel); Todd Griffiths, lunger Jessica Ballenger and Lanson 16 (owned by Garrod Farms); Kenny Geisler, lunger Julie Young and Jacadi de Rox (owned by Julie Young); Ali Divita, lunger Julie Divita and Giovanni (owned by the Divita family); and Megan Benjamin, lunger Lasse Kristensen and Urfeund Rosengaard (owned by Voltigeklubben Thommysminde).

- And our Gold Medal winning Team USA—FACE—vaulters Blake Dahlgren, Mary Garrett, Emily Hoge, Mari Inouye, Devon Maitozo, Rosallind Ross, and Annalise VanVranken; lunger Carolyn Bland, coaches Devon Maitozo and Anna de la Motte, and horse Palatine.
Freestyle is fun, but learning a new move can be daunting. Fortunately there are some simple tricks to help vaulters learn those new moves more quickly and effectively. Used individually or in combination, these methods will help any vaulter show off their new skills on the horse with confidence.

**Photo Finish**

To learn any new move, it helps first to define what the finished pose is supposed to look like. Since vaulters experience a lot of physical stimuli while on the horse, they often have an incorrect sense of what it is they are actually doing. Whenever possible, have a photo or video of another vaulter successfully doing the target move. Then photograph or video the student practicing the new skill on the ground or barrel and discuss what they are aiming for to perfect that move. These photos and videos give a real-time honest visual and show the vaulter whether or not they are on the right track. Once the vaulter moves to the horse, photograph the move at gait (be it walk, trot, or canter) and compare those results side-by-side with the previous pictures. The vaulter will immediately see how close they came to producing the desired and finished look.

**No Excuse Zone**

Establish a “No Excuse Zone” for practice. Almost anything you set your mind to can be accomplished by planning for success. Vaulters worldwide continue to imagine and perform feats of strength and balance that years ago would have been thought impossible. Never plan for failure by giving the vaulter the privilege of “optional ways” to do a move. Too often I hear coaches or vaulters say, “This is going to be ‘so-and-so’ on the horse but I don’t do that on the barrel.” Or “I’ll do it this way if it does not work on the horse.” This wishy-washy practice discipline sets the vaulter up for inconsistency and failure. Avoid excuses for something being slower or less sharp on the horse than it is on the barrel. The horse should add to the quality of the move by giving focus, strength, lift, and beauty when properly practiced. The more focused a vaulter is on producing the target move as defined, the more quickly they will succeed. It is important to be especially disciplined when trying a new move—no excuses, options or alternative plans; just do it! If after several attempts on the horse the vaulter is not succeeding as planned, only then redefine the move to a more basic approach. Though it’s critical to consider the comfort and safety of horse and vaulter, quitting too soon or randomly changing a move midway instills doubt in both horse and vaulter and prematurely thwarts essential muscle memory development necessary for the move’s future and consistent success.

**Rewind!**

One key to enhancing any move is literally to rewind that position by going both into and then backward out of the pose with equal tension and purpose. Instead of going from point A to B and then to C in a routine, the vaulter should practice going from A to B and then back to A (the starting pose). Example: A vaulter cartwheels from the neck to the pad then “rewinds” and returns through that same pathway and cartwheels back on to the neck. By passing back and forth through the move, the vaulter builds complete control in all phases of the move while their body acquires valuable muscle memory of the entire sequence. When a vaulter practices a freestyle only from beginning to end, they develop a one-way “all or nothing” approach that will not cultivate total centeredness and form in each element. If the vaulter has trained by rewinding the move, they are much more prepared to make the instant corrections required to maintain the best control, should balance or rhythm be lost during a performance.

**Strike A Pose**

Another simple way to make any move more solid is to practice holding it for longer than required. This builds awareness, strength, balance and confidence while allowing the vaulter time to sense where they are and what they are doing to remain so steady. Shifting the focus to counting strides brings the vaulter back to the basic need to be in rhythm with
For Freestyle Success

the horse. Best of all, holding any move longer than the required four strides gives the coach a real look from many angles, providing the perfect chance to help further refine the finished look the vaulter seeks to express.

**Slow Down – Go Fast!**

Another surefire way to boost the strength of a move is to experiment with the delivery speed. Super slow motion or dynamic quickness can be used with equal effect to make a move or sequence stand out from the rest of the routine. Of course music will suggest tempo, but the option of presenting a move very slowly or lightning fast should be considered for the greatest possible control and individualized “Wow Factor”.

**Top It Off**

When a vaulter finishes holding a move, they should exit that pose by further stretching and tightening an extra ounce and inch more. The EPA discourages topping off your gas tank for fear that the extra gas will spill out, but when a vaulter tops off a move, the improved control spills into the next move. Topping off has the dual advantage of letting the last thing the audience sees be the most stretched, elevated, and strongest, while at the same time lifting and carrying the vaulter through their transition with maximum control. Topping off the finish of each move throughout the entire routine creates flow with no loss of form or tension by increasing balance, control, and polish.

**More Than One Way…**

Freestyle is just another word for creativity! So whenever working on a new move, experiment! Every vaulter and horse is different, so it pays to remember that there is no right way. The best trick is the one that works for you! So have fun, mix, match, explore, and always… Vault On!

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**Interested in discussing this article with others in our vaulting community? Do you have a question, a comment, or an alternate point of view? Let’s “talk”! Go to the AVA members-only website, click on Forums (your same user name and password) and then find the section for Equestrian Vaulting magazine. Click on the article title and join in or start a dialogue with other members about what you just read!**

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**About the Author:** Since 1970 Nancy Stevens-Brown has continuously coached all levels of vaulting, and her Timberline Vaulters won countless National Championships, AVA medals (including Nancy’s own gold medal), as well as exciting international successes. With innovative methods and boundless energy, Nancy encourages every vaulter to recognize and tap into their individual strengths and creativity to unleash their own distinctive style and potential.
GENERAL IMPRESSION & SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES

In competitive vaulting, judges must score general impression only in Team Events. Teams are judged on their entry into the arena, their exit out of the arena, their salute before beginning the performance, the comportment of the team, and the turnout of the team (including horse and lunger). There is no general impression score in any other mounted event. Or is there?

Judges are human, and as such, they are influenced by their senses. If you are in the competition arena, it is assumed that your desire is to be competitive and you want to earn the best scores possible. The following points are "one judge's opinion" of things each of you can do to improve the judge's general impression of you—whether or not you find a general impression score on your score sheet.

1. Make Your Horse Shine.
Brushing and Show Sheen only go so far. Bathe, trim, polish and neatly braid your horse before entering the competition arena. Every horse looks stunning when properly prepared and presented!

Make sure your tack is clean, oiled, and in good repair with all loose straps tucked or taped in. Keep your leg wraps/boots and pad clean for competition by covering them during warm-up or thoroughly brushing them off before entering the competition arena. If possible, your horse’s bridle and surcingle should be the same color. The lunge line and pad should also be the same color. Too much color mixing and matching can be distracting.

3. Dress to the Nines.
We all know that vaulters should be in uniform with their hair done for competition, but the lunger must dress professionally, too. Lungers should wear appropriate clothing and footwear (polished paddock boots or flat dress shoes will do), tuck in loose shirttails, and neatly tie back long hair. Generally the lunger’s attire should complement the vaulters’ uniforms.

Vaulters should be lined up at the entrance gate approximately 30 seconds before entry time to avoid delaying the competition. While awaiting the bell to enter, the vaulters should be focused and standing quietly.

5. Show Off That Elegant Discipline.
At the bell, horse, lunger, and vaulters should run in step to the center of the circle to salute Judge A. Lungers should always run in step with the horse. A crisp salute and an efficient and clean whip handover from vaulter to lunger are the marks of experience and practice. The horse should stand quietly during the salute. Upon finishing the performance, the lunger should stop the horse on the opposite side of the circle from Judge A, go directly to the horse, and bring him straight back to the center of the circle. Vaulter should again line up to salute Judge A, making eye contact when possible. The salute should be clean, the exit should be in step, and vaulters, lunger, and horse should be well out of the arena and out of sight of the judge before celebrating. When beginners and advanced vaulters alike pull off a clean entry, bow, and exit, it shows preparedness and respect for the sport.
6. Exude Confidence.

The lunger and vaulters should always stand with proper posture—standing tall, core engaged, and chin lifted. Vaulters should approach the horse with their heads and eyes up. This gives the judge the impression that something good is about to begin, and they will sit up and pay more attention to your performance.

7. Practice Good Horsemanship.

Good horsemanship is the result of hundreds of hours of practice and work at home. The horse and lunger should be focused only on each other—an effective lunger and an obedient horse give the impression of experience. Lungers should put the horse out on the circle quietly and efficiently, making sure the lunge line is straight and untwisted. The horse should trot calmly until given the cue to canter (or continue trotting as the case may be) and should stay out on the line with good contact, a regular circle size, and a regular tempo throughout the performance. Lungers should attempt to stand in one place while lunging and avoid too much walking around. All lunge aids should be subtle—avoid wild whip waving, loud whip cracking, and jerking on the lunge line with each stride, for example. Avoid having a buddy horse standing by on the side of the ring. Although buddy horses are not illegal, per se, the necessity of having one sends the message that the horse in the arena is not well trained and perhaps not a safe mount for the vaulters.


Make sure everything is set to go before entering the competition arena. Avoid adjusting equipment after entry unless safety or common sense demands it. Although the horse and vaulter warm-up is legal by the rulebook, it is considered by most judges to be a waste of time and an over-use of the horses. For me personally, the first time a horse comes into the arena, I am comfortable with a warm-up. After that, I consider it a “lunger” warm-up, and I lose a small amount of respect for the trainer, especially if a warm-up is taken every time the horse comes into the arena—whether it’s twice or twenty times. While many say that this is a safety issue, that again is a message to the judge that the horse is not well trained and perhaps should not be in the arena at all. (There can be exceptions to this depending on outside conditions. The judge is always agreeable to making sure of safety, so use common sense.)


During Compulsories, both Team and Individual, there is no bell between vaulters. Do not wait for the bell, because if the judge is following the rules, there won’t be one. It is best to pick one piece of music for all vaulters during a particular compulsory go. Music is not part of the score for compulsories, and too many music changes between vaulters can be distracting to the judge, and can interrupt the flow of the competition.

The above information is, again, one judge’s opinion, and the truth is there are no rules you will be breaking by disregarding any of the above. However, each time you enter the arena you are giving the judge visual messages. If your tack or horse are not clean, if your lunger is dressed too casually, if your vaulters run in haphazardly and line up gazing off into the distance and avoiding eye contact, the message is one of lack of respect for the sport and/or the judge. Judges are trained to begin judging when the vaulter touches the grips (in all but the Team Event), but in the competitive world, every attention to detail adds value to your performance. Good luck!

Interested in discussing this article with others in our vaulting community? Do you have a question, a comment, or an alternate point of view? Let’s “talk”! Go to the AVA members-only website, click on Forums (your same user name and password) and then find the section for Equestrian Vaulting magazine. Click on the article title and join in or start a dialogue with other members about what you just read!

Exude confidence! Joanne and John Eccles of Great Britain looking poised before beginning a winning freestyle at the 2010 World Equestrian Games.

Show off that elegant discipline! Team Germany saluting Judge A at the 2010 World Equestrian Games.

About the Author: An AVA judge since 1990, Suzanne Detol became an FEI “O” judge in 2001, and is well respected in the international judging arena. She is on the AVA board of directors, and is the organization’s Medal Test Secretary and Competitions Secretary.
The most amazing place vaulting has taken me is Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Laura Jassowski, 20
Tambourine Vaulters
Rohnert Park, CA
Vaulting has taken me to some amazing places all over the country, but it seems to take me to Las Vegas time and time again. I am not quite 21, so fortunately vaulting provides other entertaining things to do in Vegas. Among my favorites (other than vaulting, of course) are Roman Riding, the Sandou Theatrical Circus School, and honing my skills on the lyra or silks. Without vaulting I wouldn’t have met such wonderful people, gone to Vaulting in Vegas every year, or eaten at so many delicious buffets!

Eve von Mangan, 15
Scarlet Wolf Vaulters
Lansing, NC
I have enjoyed all the geographical places I have travelled for vaulting. But honestly, the most exciting place I go feel likes the sky. When I vault, the possibilities are endless.

Rowan Bender, 11
Zero Gravity Vaulters
Snohomish, WA
Vaulting has taken me everywhere from Chilliwack, Canada to Santa Barbara, California by way of the Redwood Forest. I loved going to my first National Championships this year. My family and I were so inspired by what we saw at Nationals that we started our own club—Zero Gravity Vaulters. I can’t wait to do it all over again this coming year.

Emma Seely
Mt. Eden Vaulters
Saratoga, CA
Hmm. . . is it the Orange State of South Africa? The metropolis of Taipei? The tropical warmth of Brazil? Or maybe it’s the beauty down under in Australia? Every place that I have had the opportunity to travel to has had wonderful horses, enthusiastic athletes, intrigue, new friends, and life enhancing experiences. Who knew that a farm girl who started vaulting on an old pack horse would get to have so many fabulous experiences and friends all over the world?

“WHERE IS THE MOST INTERESTING PLACE VAULTING HAS TAKEN YOU?”

Kerith Lemon
Alumna
Soquel, CA
The most amazing place vaulting has taken me is Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.
Celeste von Mangan, 47
Scarlet Wolf Vaulters
Lansing, NC
It was not until I started vaulting two years ago that past injuries (mostly from training sport horses in South Africa and Namibia), and decades of wear and tear evaporated. When I am vaulting, I am transported to a timeless place somewhere in my younger years!

Kristi Dueber, 42
Rainbow Vaulters
Glendora, CA
undoubtedly Knotts Berry Farm. Our team was invited to perform at Knotts for an entire summer one year. We all had SO much fun in between performances!

Rosie Brown
Lone Star Vaulters
Austin, TX
Vaulting has taken me all across the world, and I have had the opportunity to attend WEG three times now. But the most interesting place vaulting has taken me is into the lives of my vaulters and their families here in Texas. Whoever said you cannot choose your family was not a vaulter.

Emily Gleason, 25
Northwind Vaulters
Portland, OR
Without vaulting, I would not be doing what I have been doing for the past six years—performing as a theater artist across the U.S. I made a seamless transition from competitive vaulter to physical theater actor here in Portland. I began this new adventure by touring around the U.S. for two years as a company member of Imago Theater. I have since continued to train as an acrobat, clown, singer, dancer and actor, performing everything from Shakespeare to avant garde new work. It was equestrian vaulting that first instilled my love of performing. It has jump-started a career and lifelong passion for me, and I’m eternally grateful!

Eric Weber, 29 (on right)
Cavalier Vaulters
Groton, MA
Vaulting has taken me many interesting places, both around the world and around the country! I’ve gone to hot springs outside of Calgary, Canada, backpacked across the Czech Republic, and ended up in USA body paint in Mannheim, Germany. Back home in the U.S, I’ve gone behind the scenes at the Olympics in Atlanta and had two cross-country road trip adventures. On my most recent trip, I made a three-week stop in Lexington, KY for the World Equestrian Games.

Gabe Aniello, 19 (second from right)
Woodside Vaulters
Sunnyvale, CA
Last year, vaulting took me to Aachen, Germany. It was my first time competing internationally with my team and we ended up winning the small final Prize of the Sparkasse! It was great to see the sport of vaulting on such a huge scale in Germany and to share the experience with my teammates and friends.
Sprinting: Anaerobic Training

Sprinting allows athletes to improve power, speed, strength, and force over a short period of time. Improvements in these areas help support proper technique for mounts and dismounts, flight exercises, leaps, and anything else that requires controlled power and speed.

Depending on your vaulting level, plan to incorporate sprinting into your vaulting/fitness routine 2-4 times per week. Practice sprinting different distances (50, 100, 200, 400, and 800 meters), varying your distances to keep things interesting. Race your teammates or time yourself, seeking to improve upon your previous times.

Sprinting as a training tool is different than racing on the playground. Here are a few basic sprinting drills to help improve your sprinting technique:

Arm Swings
Stand with your feet parallel and shoulder-width apart. Position your arms at a 90-degree angle with your hands flat and open. While maintaining this angle, swing one arm back and down to your pocket line and the other forward and up to your chin line. Swing arms forward and back to mimic sprinting. Start by moving slowly, and then progressively pick up the pace to sprinting speed while maintaining form. Do this exercise for 30 seconds.

Knee Drives
Stand facing a wall with your feet 6-8 inches from the wall. Stand on the balls of your feet with your hands out in front of you, leaning on the wall. Start by slowly hopping from one foot to the other, driving the knee to hip height with the foot flexed and aligned with the bottom knee. Speed up the exercise, maintaining form, and repeat 4-8 times.

Running & Sprinting

Running may not be quite as exciting as handstands on horses, but both sprinting and distance running are fundamental aspects of vaulter fitness.

About the Authors: Megan Benjamin is a recent graduate from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. A Mt. Eden Vaulting Club member, she is the 2006 World Equestrian Games Women’s Vaulting Champion, and a member of the AVA Board of Directors. Stacey Page Burnett (pictured) is a Certified Personal Trainer based out of the San Francisco Bay Area. She has been training vaulters and riders of varying fitness levels since 2005. For further information on how you or your vaulters/riders may become more fit, contact her at staceypburnett@gmail.com.
A-March This exercise combines Arm Swings and Knee Drives. Take a normal stride forward onto one foot while driving the knee up to hip height with a flexed foot. Simultaneously swing the opposite arm up to chin level at a 90-degree angle. Switch and continue for 10-15 yards. Repeat 2-4 times.

A-Skips This is a faster version of A-March. Repeat the movements of A-March but add a hop-skip between transitions. Continue for 10-15 yards and repeat 3-6 times.

Back Pedaling While maintaining a flat back, lean your chest forward and push your hips back. Walk slowly backward while maintaining the initial set-up position, reaching your feet behind you. Attempt slowly first, then increase speed. Continue for 10-15 yards, and repeat this drill 6-10 times.

Build-ups Give yourself plenty of space to run. Start with a very slow, technically exaggerated jog. Build up speed gradually over the distance you’ve chosen, reaching maximum sprinting speed toward the very end. Slow down gradually. Repeat 6-10 times.

Running the Distance: Aerobic Training

Contrary to popular belief, vaulters don’t need to be able to run a marathon to be in shape. In fact, about 3 miles is the maximum distance most non-endurance athletes should run. Anything significantly farther than this can cause a breakdown in the body’s fast-twitch muscle fibers and weakens the body’s ability to perform properly for explosive exercises.

Depending on your vaulting level, incorporate distance running into your vaulting/fitness routine 2-3 times per week, and practice running distances between 1-3 miles. Try to aim for at least one distance workout per week lasting between 20-30 minutes.

There are no set standard times in which you should be able to run a mile; however, you should seek to improve upon your mile time with each attempt. The following are some rough guidelines to help you start setting mile time goals based on your vaulting level:

- Trot: 10-15 minutes
- Copper: 8-12 minutes
- Bronze: 8-10 minutes
- Silver: 7-9 minutes
- Gold: 5:30-7 minutes
- Elite: below 5:30 minutes

It is important to train both capacities of anaerobic (sprinting) and aerobic (distance) running, since training both sprinting and distance running actually complement each other. In fact, anaerobic training has been shown to affect an athlete’s aerobic capacity more positively than aerobic training alone. Both aerobic and anaerobic training are essential for maintaining the lean fast-twitch muscles necessary for vaulting, so get out there and run!
Coaches place enormous emphasis on vaulter posture and core strength, because it is easy to see and feel the advantages both proper posture and a strong core bring to a vaulter’s balance, fluidity of movement, and subsequently the security and beauty of a vaulter’s performance. Thus, it makes sense that we must address the posture and core strength of our horses, too.

Equine posture and core strength are complicated matters to say the least, but let’s start with the halt. We know from dressage principles that the halt is fundamentally a “forward” movement. In the halt, the horse is at attention and ready to spring into action when urged by the rider. Therefore, the halt is technically an engaged movement.

What would happen if we spent a little extra time each day and taught our horses to stand square, consistently addressing the way our horses halt? The fact is, horses can be taught to stand square in all situations, whether under saddle, on the lunge line, or simply at the cross ties while tacking up!

Think about it. We have all heard of and some of us even practice carrot stretches and tummy/rump lifts with our horses to engage and stretch certain muscles, but we are all guilty of letting our horse rest a hind leg, stand parked out behind, or a hundred other sins we readily accept while we are grooming and tacking up. Now is a great time to change that bad habit!

You can teach your horse to engage his core by using the verbal command “stand” or “square up” (the actual command can be of your own choosing). When giving the command, the horse should understand you mean for him to stand still and stand square, with his weight evenly distributed on all four feet.

Before you begin your grooming routine, first teach your horse to stand bearing weight on all four legs (but not necessarily square yet). Use your verbal command (with conviction) while you simultaneously address a resting hind leg. If he’s resting his right hind leg while you are on his left side, lean against him and push his haunches to the right until he puts weight on his right leg. If you’re on his right side, use his tail to pull his haunches toward you.

Reward your horse immediately each and every time he stands on all fours with a comforting pat and a verbal “good boy.” When he goes back to resting a leg, calmly, quietly, and matter-of-factly use your verbal command “square-up” and correct him again. With repetitions, your horse will stand square and still for longer and longer periods at a time. Each small accomplishment will build on the horse’s understanding of the command and his proper muscle memory of standing evenly on all fours. After a few days, you should be able to have your horse correct his stance by simply tapping or tickling the resting leg. Don’t smack or use a hard slap, since this could make your horse tense or nervous; standing still and square is about engaged relaxation.

Once your horse understands that he must stand in the cross ties with his weight on all fours, the next step is to make sure he stands square. This can be obtained first by picking up each foot and putting it into place (remember to use the verbal command, too). If your horse is not

The horse rests his right hind leg and his right foreleg is behind his balance point. Because he is not bearing weight evenly, he does not exhibit proper bone over bone alignment nor engaged posture.

Square in front and back. Nice posture with proper bone over bone alignment.
nervous about a whip, you can eventually tap the misplaced leg until the horse picks it up and places it in the desired spot by himself.

Teaching a horse to stand still and square can be tedious and requires patience and persistence. Eventually you will be rewarded when your horse stands beautifully square with proper equine posture!

**Interested in discussing this article with others in our vaulting community? Do you have a question, a comment, or an alternate point of view? Let’s “talk”! Go to the AVA members-only website, click on Forums (your same user name and password) and then find the section for Equestrian Vaulting magazine. Click on the article title and join in or start a dialogue with other members about what you just read!**

Carolyn Bland is a renowned vaulting and dressage trainer. She lunged Palatine and Team USA to an historic victory at the 2010 World Equestrian Games, where she earned a Gold medal. Carolyn was the 2006 AVA Trainer of the Year for her extraordinary work with Mozart and F.A.M.E. and has continued to turn out exceptional vaulting horses since she joined the sport in 1996.

**USEF Rule DR102:**

**The Halt**

1. At the halt the horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless and straight with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs being by pairs abreast with each other. The neck should be raised, the poll high and the head slightly in front of the vertical. While remaining on the bit and maintaining a light and soft contact with the rider’s hand, the horse may quietly chomp the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the rider.
A well-running vaulting program is a lot like any other type of youth athletic club: whether it’s an AVSO soccer league for elementary school-age kids coached by parents, or Bela Karolyi’s national gymnastics program for elite athletes, the mission of any club/team/program is to meet its goals and to create a satisfying experience for its participants—whether the goal is as simple as “let’s get exercise and have fun” or as complex as “we want to send a third of our athletes to the next two Summer Olympic Games.”

Crucial to any organization’s success, both small and large, is communication. When a club is small (perhaps only a few individuals vaulting, or maybe a single team) communication is often achieved simply by word of mouth, because it is practical and immediate. As the organization gets larger (and before you know it!), communication gets more complex and needs to be more deliberate.

If you’re a club coach, club officer or “just a club parent,” here are a few communications ideas that can help provide everyone in the club with an experience that will keep them coming back for years of vaulting fun!

**Build a Culture of Sharing the Work**

As the club coach, it’s especially gratifying to watch your labor of love pay off as more and more enthusiasts discover vaulting and your club starts to grow. However, with that growth comes added work beyond coaching vaulters and lunging horses.

As your club grows, make a conscious decision to build a culture of sharing the administrative and communications workload with parent volunteers and older vaulters. Often, parents and older vaulters are happy to help but at a bit of a loss on how to do it without getting in the way. Parents, if you see your club growing and your coach in need of a helping hand, offer to assist in organizing the club and then collaborate with your coach on ways that will work for everyone. In a growing club, each person will have his or her own unique talents (including the coach!) and sharing the administrative workload, including communications, will build a stronger and more enduring club.

**Decide What Works for Your Situation**

Since each program and club has different needs, it’s important for your organization to put together a communications plan (just a few bullet points will do!) that works for all of you. For example, if many of you are internet savvy, perhaps a website/team collaboration tool works best for your club for everything from last minute email notices to online team parent chats to web-based calendaring. Or, if your club is made up of folks who aren’t on the web more than once or twice a week, maybe a combination of “long term” items on the web (such as the yearly planning calendar), a paper “take it home from practice” monthly newsletter, and a simple team-by-team phone tree for last minute notices works best. When in doubt, a club meeting at the beginning of each season with parents and vaulters will solicit the input you need to make the decisions for “what works best for us”.

**Consider Using the Tools**

If your coaches, parents and vaulters are even the least bit internet savvy, get past the one-page handout and paper schedule and communicate via the web! Several companies now offer do-it-yourself and easy-to-use websites and team management tools that allow vaulters, coaches, lungers and parents to connect and communicate online quickly and easily on a website that is safe, private and secure. (See sidebar article.) Most have basic features that are free, including the ability to create team rosters (and have team members/parents update them as necessary), create calendars, promote and track your fundraising goals, send email messages to vaulters and parents team-wide or club-wide, post photos and videos, post maps, share documents, send automatic email reminders about events, allow for RSVPs and attendance tracking, create team or club message boards, keep statistics on competitions, medal testing, etc., and for a small fee some websites even allow clubs to collect vaulter fees online.

**Complete the Loop**

While communication from coach to vaulters, or coach to parents, is always appreciated, remember that the most important communications are dialogues, i.e. back and forth communication, and not just one-way directives. As you think about your program’s communications going forward, strive to complete the communications loop as often as possible by giving information, and then getting information back. This could be as simple as an occasional face-to-face parent meeting after a team’s practice. For the technology-savvy club, these types of meetings can take place virtually, in secure online chat rooms or on bulletin boards.

As a feedback tool, clubs might want to consider sending out an annual club survey. Such a survey can be anonymous or not, and can be sorted by team, gender and experience level, to provide important information crucial to a club’s ongoing health and growth.

The AVA uses an easy online survey tool called SurveyMonkey when soliciting feedback from its members on topics ranging from dates for an event to recommendations for improvements and changes to the National Championships, and has had good success asking for and receiving honest, anonymous feedback on a variety of topics.

Starting in 2011, the AVA will offer each of its clubs the opportunity to send out a general feedback survey once a year to its members, getting each member’s (vaulters, parents,
lungers, coaches) confidential feedback on a variety of topics, ranging from safety and efficient use of lesson time to team/club morale and communication. These club surveys will provide important information to help coaches and club managers run even more successful vaulting programs, and will remain confidential to those clubs. To learn more about this important new membership benefit for AVA Clubs, go to the members-only portion of the website, click on “member services” and then click on “Annual AVA Club Survey.”

The beginning of a new year is a great time to review your club’s communications practices and to reset the bar even higher for more consistent, frequent dialogue among all club members.

Interested in discussing this article with others in our vaulting community? Do you have a question, a comment or an alternate point of view? Let’s “talk”! Go to the AVA members-only website, click on Forums (your same user name and password as for the members-only login) and then find the section for Equestrian Vaulting magazine. Click on the article title and join in or start a dialogue with other members about what you just read!

INTERNET TOOLS FOR VAULTING CLUBS

In the past few years, internet tools for sports teams/clubs have improved greatly and are very reasonably priced. Check out a few of the most popular ones for possible use by your club:

Eteamz
A website for anyone responsible for managing a youth or adult sports team, league or group that offers convenient “do it yourself” website and team management tools. The granddaddy of sports collaboration websites with three million teams currently using the eteamz websites: www.eteamz.com.

Sport Ngin
Pronounced Sport Engine, this is a powerful website platform encompassing sophisticated yet easy-to-use content management and member management: www.sportngin.com.

Teampages
A newer player, Teampages has more than 25,000 teams signed up: www.teampages.com.

TeamR
A collaboration website that allows clubs to send out invoices and also allows for PayPal payment processing. It has an accounting function to manage expenses and accounts in a single interface: www.teamr.com.

Team Zone Sports
Another powerful collaboration tool that also allows for the collection of fees: www.teamzonesports.com.
## EVENTS CALENDAR

### 2011

**JANUARY 22**  
**Region II Clinics and High Point Awards Dinner**  
Flying Cloud Farm: Petaluma, CA  
Megan Grove: meggrove@saber.net

**FEBRUARY 11-13**  
**Vaulting Getaway**  
Thermal, CA  
Carolyn Bland: whimby4@aol.com

**FEBRUARY 20-23**  
**CHA Vaulting Coach Certification Clinic**  
Warm Beach Camp: Stanwood, WA  
PSkipton@warmbeach.com

**FEBRUARY 26-27**  
**Region IX Spirit of Vaulting Conference**  
Morven Park: Leesburg, VA  
elizabethmbrigham@gmail.com

**FEBRUARY 20-23**  
**CHA Vaulting Coach Certification Clinic**  
Warm Beach Camp: Stanwood, WA  
PSkipton@warmbeach.com

**MARCH 3-6**  
**AVA Annual Convention**  
Suncoast Hotel & Casino: Las Vegas, NV  
Marianne Rose: marianne@mariannerose.net

**MARCH 19**  
**Nu Balance Fest**  
Citrus Heights, CA  
Michelle Solorzano: ccrcircle25@yahoo.com

**MARCH 19-20**  
**Mt. Rainier Vaulters' Winter Warm Up**  
Donida Farm: St. Auburn, WA  
Nicole Guiler: (253) 891-0249  
guiler@venture.com

**MARCH 26**  
**Valley View Vaulters Barrel Competition**  
11295 Orcas Ave. Lake View Terrace, CA  
Virginia Hawthorne: vvvirginia@ca.rr.com

**APRIL 30-MAY 1**  
**Mountain Wind Fest**  
Kettle Falls, WA  
Tammy Denault: tdenault@oz.net

**MAY 1**  
**The Riding Academy’s Fun in the Sun Fest**  
30300 Garbani Road Menifee, CA 92584  
Sarah Hill: theridingacademy@hotmail.com

**MAY 7-8**  
**Region IV May Fest**  
2252 County Road 21 Ft. Lupton, CO 80621  
Sarah Hill: theridingacademy@hotmail.com

**MAY 14-15**  
**Garrods Spring Classic**  
Garrods Farms: 22647 Garrod Road  
Saratoga, CA 95070  
Marianne Rose: marianne@mariannerose.net

**JUNE 4**  
**Lompc Vaulters Spring Kickoff Fest**  
Location TBD  
Peggy Van Hook: peggy.vanhook@gmail.com

**JUNE 4-5**  
**Woodside Vaulters’ Spring Fest**  
Woodside, CA  
Linda Bibbler: lbibbler@gmail.com

**JUNE 11-12**  
**Region IV Championships**  
Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Posse Grounds: 10308 2nd St. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114  
Merry Cole: merryvault@gmail.com

**JUNE 24-26**  
**CVI, ** Saratoga  
Garrod Farms: 22647 Garrod Road  
Saratoga, CA 95070  
Marianne Rose: marianne@mariannerose.net

**JULY 2-3**  
**Region IX Championships**  
Virginia Horse Center: Lexington, VA  
Elizabeth Brigham: (240) 506-3011  
elizabethbrigham@gmail.com

**AUGUST 8-14**  
**USEF/AVA National Championships**  
National Western Complex: Denver, CO  
Linda Bibbler: (650) 851-7751  
lbibbler@gmail.com

**SEPTEMBER 17-18**  
**Great Falls/Topaz Fall Fest**  
Frying Pan Park: Herndon, VA  
Jen Williams: williams@highfleet.com

**OCTOBER 2**  
**Morning Star/Willow Tree Harvest Fest**  
Novato, CA  
Carolyn Conner: carolyn.conner@verizon.net

**OCTOBER 30**  
**Mt. Eden’s Halloween Fest**  
Garrod Farms: 22647 Garrod Road  
Saratoga, CA 95070  
Marianne Rose: marianne@mariannerose.net

### 2011 AVA CONVENTION: LAS VEGAS!

Join us! The AVA Annual Convention will be held March 3-6, 2011 at the Suncoast Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (www.suncoastcasino.com), hosted by Region I. See pages 6-9 in this issue for more Convention Information.

### LONGEUR, LUNGER, LOUNGE CHAIR

How the heck do you spell the name of the trainer in the middle of the circle who’s responsible for controlling the vaulting horse? Well, if you’re a purist and a good speller, you still use the French term, longeur. If you never took French lessons or aren’t that great at a spelling maven, you probably spell it longer, lunger, or even the famous lounger (as in BarcaLounger). To make things simpler, we at the magazine have chosen to spell the word “lunger”—as the United States Equestrian Federation spells it in its rulebook. Being a lunger is an important position in the vaulting world, and we felt when it comes to spelling, the simpler, the better, especially for a word that gets misspelled literally 90 percent of the time. And for those of you who want to use all forms of that word, here they are: lunger, lungeing, lunge line, lunched.

### YOUR PHOTOS WANTED

The American Vaulting Association encourages vaulting enthusiasts to share their photos for publication in upcoming issues of Equestrian Vaulting magazine, and on the website as well!

We welcome the following types of photos:

- **Vaulting in action shots:** both recreational vaulting photos and competition photos.
- **Day in the Life of Vaulting shots:** photos showing vaulters, coaches, judges, lungers, parents in photos other than those above.
- **"Artsy" shots:** silhouette shots, ultra close-ups, of anything having to do with vaulting.
- **Photos that represent our sport as an activity (both recreational and competitive) for all ages, that’s safe, fun, exciting, and team-oriented.**

We want photos of both sexes and all ages! We want photos of beginners, intermediate and advanced vaulters! We want photos from small clubs and big clubs, and from every region! (Sometimes we do not have a good geographic representation of our vaulters in each issue, and this is mostly because we do not receive photos that meet our requirements from that region.)

For a complete list of our photo criteria, go to www.americanvaulting.org, click on Membership, then click on Get Involved.

Errata: Our Fall 2010 issue of EV magazine contained an error. Pictured here are the Texas Stars (Gold Star Pacesetters/Lone Star Vaulters Composite Team), the true 2010 Preliminary 2-Phase Team Vaulting Champions!
Vault On with GrettaWear!

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