

Dressage University - Long Line Clinic
Nancy Leverenz

On January 29th Willow Woods hosted a long line/driving line clinic with Dave McWethy from Port Townsend, Washington. Dave has been carriage driving for over thirty years. He has driven singles, pairs and four-in-hand carriages. He has competed in combined driving events all over the United States. In addition to competing, Dave drove his pair of Fjord Ponies across the country from coast to coast. The trip took him 18 months.

We had a great Saturday afternoon watching Dave demonstrate the techniques for using driving lines and long lines. Dave related his driving techniques to benefit us as dressage riders. Primarily, the horse must go forward when asked. He must go willingly into a light constant contact, not coming behind the vertical, bending when asked, maintaining the contact and stop without any conflict. He used the driving lines (which are the shorter ones) to be closer to the horse to have more control, standing next to the hip and moving with the horse. When using the long lines he remained in one spot while the horse moved around him, more like lunging, but with two reins.

During the clinic Dave worked with two very different horses, one of which he just met that day, in order to show us how quickly you can gain control and get the horse listening to you. Many of those who attended the clinic got the opportunity to try both horse and both types of reins. Dave made it look simple, but we soon realized it was an acquired skill and an art that would take some practice.

Dave would be happy to come back again and work with people individually with their own horses. If anyone is interested please let me know.

Thanks to Lynn Boice for hosting the clinic, to Dian Seabury for the use of Gray Pony, and Rhea for not disappointing us! Thank you for all coming. And most of all thank you to Dave for sharing his expertise with us.

Dave & Rhea



Dave, Ann Baldwin & GP

