

# Campbell Springs Farm

12830 River Rd., Chesterfield, VA 23838, (804) 590-3400 [www.campbellspringsfarm.com](http://www.campbellspringsfarm.com)



## Welcome

**Leslie Jones and Eggo**  
to the North Barn.

**Margorie Bevans and Goldie**  
to the North Barn.

**Megan McKee and Woody**  
to the South Barn.

**Renee Parker and Charlie**  
to the North Barn.

## Farm Happenings

**More stalls are being built** behind the Covered Arena to accommodate horses during shows and clinics. This 10-stall shed row barn will be completed in March and will be used by visiting horses attending shows and clinics. Keep an eye on the newsletters for updates about improvements around the farm!

**The first meeting of the Barn Management Board** last month was a smashing success. Your North Barn representatives are Gail Grasso and Leslie Farmer; your south barn representative is Ken Guilliams. Please feel free to talk to Wayne or any of your barn representatives about issues to bring up at the next meeting. THANKS to Gail, Leslie, and Ken for volunteering to be such an important part of decision making on the farm. The January meeting included discussions of the new barn being built, handling ring-sharing issues during shows, and many other hot topics. If you've got a question, qualm or idea, call us, email the office, drop it in the payment box or talk to us and we'd be happy to bring it up at the next meeting.

**CSF is thrilled to introduce Abby Johnson, our new riding instructor!** Abby is a British Horse Society Certified Stage III rider now accepting students in Hunter/Jumper & beginning eventing. She specializes in working with young horses & their riders. Call Abby at 598-5836 to schedule your next lesson.

## CSF Riders Win Big at Shows

Congratulations to GRHSA winners! CSF riders took home loads of prizes from the 2005 Great Richmond Horse Show Association - way to go!

### **Tyler Ann Childs**

5th Place Short Stirrup

### **Brittany Kneidenger**

3rd Place Green Hunter

### **Kaitlind Williams**

Champion Open Working Hunter

Reserve Champion Low Hunter

3rd Place Junior Pleasure Horse

### **Victoria Hobson**

2nd place Baby Green Hunter

3rd place Low Hunter

6th place Green Hunter

Congratulations to CSF Instructor **Laura Berne**. Laura & Sridhar awarded VADA State Championship Senior Training Level Recognized Show with a Median score of 75.49%.

### **Kenzie Grasso**

Champion Pleasure Pony

Champion Green Pony

5th place Pony Hunter

5th place Pony Equitation

### **Brandy Boggs**

5th place Open Working Hunter

7th place Green Hunter

7th place Children's/Adult Hunter

Congratulations to VHSA winner **Kenzie Grasso** who competed in the VHSA Finals in Nov. and earned 5th place, 8th place, and 8th place in Pleasure Pony; and 4th place in Green Pony Over Fences!

Congratulations to everyone who competed in Round One of the Old Dominion Challenge Cup Series Dressage & Combined Training show on January 21st!

### **Laura Specter on Dusty Rose**

6th place in Dressage Training Level Test 1

2nd place in Dressage Training Level Test 2

### **Cathy Dewsbury on Zeus**

1st place in Dressage First Level Test 1

1st place in CT Beginner Novice Senior

### **Gail Grasso on Steal My Kisses**

1st Place in Dressage Intro Test A

4th place in Dressage Intro Test B

### **Danielle Bryant on Mona Lisa**

7th place in CT Dressage in Baby Novice Senior

### **Victoria Hobson on Fortune's Halo**

2nd place in CT Beginner Novice Junior

### **Taska Parker on Mission Impossible**

4th place in CT Beginner Novice Senior

*Don't forget to get your show pictures online from Moments in Focus at [www.millersalbums.com](http://www.millersalbums.com).*

*Enter event code 52079wjump.*

# All About Bits

## Types of Bits

By Jayne Pedigo, *Equisearch.com*

**Most tack stores offer a bewildering array of bits for sale. Knowing what each of them is will help you decide which type of bit is right for your horse.**

**Too Many Choices** A popular feature of many tack shops is the "Bit Wall". This is usually a rather intimidating array of different types of bit, each with different features designed to work in a slightly different way. Trying to decide which is the right bit for your horse can be confusing, but when you look closely, you'll see that there are only two basic types of bit: the Snaffle Bit and the Curb Bit.

Most people assume that because the snaffle is usually a jointed bit and the curb usually is not, the mouthpiece is what determines whether a particular bit is a snaffle or a curb. However, according to veteran horse trainer, Jessica Jahiel, the difference between snaffles and curbs has nothing to do with the mouthpiece. The difference between the two types of bit is that the snaffle is a non-leverage bit and the curb is a leverage bit.

**What Does That Mean?** On a snaffle bit, the rein attaches directly to the mouthpiece. The bit acts with a nutcracker action (provided it is jointed) on the bars of the mouth (the area of gum between the front and back teeth), the corners of the mouth and the tongue. As the rider takes a contact on the rein, the horse feels an equal amount of contact on the bit in his mouth. On a curb bit, the rein attaches to a shank or cheekpiece which adds leverage. When the rider takes a contact on the rein, the horse feels a greater amount of contact, depending on the length of the shank. Following the basic physics of leverage, the longer the shank, the greater the leverage. The curb bit works on the bars of the mouth, as well as under the chin (by way of the curb chain which is attached to the bit) and over the poll.

**Types of Snaffles** The gentlest type of snaffle bit is the Eggbutt snaffle. The name comes from the somewhat egg-shaped connection between the mouthpiece and the bit-ring. The mouthpiece of an eggbutt can be made of a variety of materials (as can any bit), including copper and synthetic (either solid or covered). The reason this bit is so gentle is that it doesn't pinch the corners of the mouth.

Another style of snaffle bit is the D-Ring snaffle. The name is self-explanatory in that the ring of the bit is in the shape of a "D". In the Loose-Ring snaffle, the mouthpiece is attached to a full-round ring, and can slide around on it, allowing the bit to lay in the most natural position, whatever horse it is used on. Some snaffle bits, such as the Full Cheek Snaffle, have cheek-pieces which prevent the bit from being pulled through the mouth.

**Types of Curb Bit** A basic Western Curb Bit has a gently ported mouthpiece and shanks to which the reins attach. As the rider takes a feel of the reins, more leverage is exerted on the horse's mouth and also on the poll (where the bridle goes over the head, behind the ears). By increasing the amount of port on the mouthpiece, pressure is applied to the roof of the mouth also. Since Western horses are ridden on a loose rein, the longer shank allows the rider to utilize the leverage by giving extremely light rein aids and attaining the same result as a rider using a snaffle on a firmer contact. In the English Curb Bit the port can also vary in severity. In general the shanks on English bits are shorter than on Western bits - four to five inches on an English bit as opposed to up to eight or nine inches on a Western one. The English Curb bit is often used in a double bridle. In the double bridle, two bits are actually used. One is the curb, called the Weymouth and one is the snaffle, called the Bridoon. Both of these bits are used together to refine the aids in the higher levels of dressage competition.



Curb Bit



Dee-Ring Snaffle Bit



Loose Ring Snaffle Bit



Curved Mouth Full Cheek Bit



Pelham Ported Barrel Bit

## What do the experts say?

“The snaffle bends and controls the horse, while the curb keeps the horse collected... This takes a very good rider with an independent seat... Before you stop a horse in a curb bit, let him know your intentions. You first indicate a stop with your body, shifting your weight back a little bit... Pick up the reins gently so your horse feels it and gets ready. Then give the command with your voice and a touch and release on the bit. Nothing makes a horse as miserable as someone hauling back on a curb bit... If you keep hauling back and not using a touch-and-release, his mouth will eventually go numb. Then you'll really have problems. The fastest way to ruin a horse is to pull hard and long on the curb bit; you'll have a ruined horse in a week.”

-Pony Club instructor Susan Harris in an article for [www.horses-and-horse-information.com](http://www.horses-and-horse-information.com), *Hot Topic, Hot Solution* by Rebecca Colnar

“What is the purpose of a bit? For many people, a bit is primarily a set of brakes. If these brakes don't work, then they get a bigger set - something with more leverage, a thinner and sharper mouthpiece, or maybe even a twisted mouthpiece... For people who think like horsemen, a bit is strictly a communication tool. It is intended for sending a subtle message to a sensitive place on the horse, in a sensitive way in order to elicit a willing response.”

-Pat Parelli, *A Bit of Savvy When, Where and Why to Use a Bit*, [www.parelli.com](http://www.parelli.com)

“You must use a full corridor of pressures that the horse feels and understands as a specific shape... The optimum communication between two individuals must exclude violence and punishment and must be based on both individuals' feelings and opinions. When you choose a bit to communicate with the horse, your first choice should be one that can never speak louder than your seat and legs.” - trainer Ron Meredith for Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre, *Loud Bits Destroy Communication*, [www.equisearch.com](http://www.equisearch.com)

# Relaxing Your Horse On the Ground and Under Saddle

by CSF Instructor Karen Bell

***Relaxing your horse on command is a requirement for training, and an often overlooked aspect of horsemanship. I meet many people whose “behavioral problem” horses simply need the owner to help them relax and learn to focus on them. Relaxing your horse requires only a few simple steps that any child or adult rider can learn. In this article, two well-known techniques are described, head down and rein combing.***



The 'head down' method teaches the horse to lower their head in response to pole pressure. This is taught by putting steady, not heavy, pressure on the pole with a few fingers, or by using downward pressure of a lead rope or reins, letting go immediately in response to any slight drop of the horse's head. By releasing the contact for any movement away from the pressure, the horse is rewarded and will learn to repeat this behavior in response to pole pressure. Shaping of the behavior continues during training, each time rewarding the horse only for dropping their head farther toward the ground. Over a period of weeks, the horse will learn to drop their head faster and lower each time. Eventually, the horse will learn to keep his or her head down as low as possible, nose in the dirt, for as long as required by their handler. A horse is unlikely to exhibit untoward behaviors if his or her pole is below the top of the withers. This technique is especially useful for teaching the horse to stand still during mounting and during ferrier visits or for relaxing horses when excited by environmental stimuli such as other horses or unknown situations.

Another useful relaxation technique is rein combing, in which the rider runs their index finger through both reins. This is done by slowly running alternately index fingers through the reins starting halfway down the neck back to the withers (while doing this, the rider should not bend over and lose their position). In an attempt to rid themselves of the annoying and irritating bit vibration, the horse pushes down on the bit, lowering the head and stretching their neck. At this moment, the rider immediately discontinues the rein combing, beginning again only at the moment his or her horse raises their pole above their withers. Poorly trained horses that retract away from the pressure by shortening their neck and slowing their gait may require leg or whip aids and/or voice commands to encourage them to continue to move forward and take the bit. If rein combing is done properly, the slightest rein pressure will result in the horse taking the bit and dropping their head automatically. This technique is best taught initially at the walk, but it can also be useful at the trot and canter. The stretched neck and lowering of the head encourages engagement of the hindquarters and a swinging back (schwung), resulting in freer movement and relaxation. In the end, these training techniques result in horses that are safer to work with on the ground and under saddle. For more on rein combing, see **An Expert's Guide to Basic Dressage**, by Jean Froissard (1971). For help using these techniques with your horse, contact me at 804-339-5927.

## 2006 CSF EVENTS

### JANUARY

Old Dominion Challenge Cup Series - Round 1 21st  
*Dressage & Combined Training Show*

### FEBRUARY

Enlightened Equestrian 4th

Old Dominion Challenge Cup Series - Round 2 18th  
*Dressage & Combined Training Show*

### MARCH

Campbell Springs Hunter Classic Series - Round 1 4th  
*Hunter Show*

### APRIL

Pat Parelli Natural Horsemanship Clinic 27th-1st

### MAY

Spring Horse Trials 6th

### JUNE

Old Dominion Challenge Cup Series - Final Round 17th  
*Dressage & Combined Training Show*

### JULY

Campbell Springs Hunter Classic Series - Round 2 15th  
*Hunter Show*

### SEPTEMBER

Fall Horse Trials 2nd

### OCTOBER

Campbell Springs Hunter Classic Series - Final Round 7th  
*Hunter Show*

Registration information about all of our shows will be available at [www.campbellspringsfarm.com](http://www.campbellspringsfarm.com) as the shows get near.

## The First Round of the Old Dominion Challenge Cup Series was A Big Success

76 competitors rode in the January 21st Dressage and Combined Test show at the farm. This first show of the season for CSF was a smashing success thanks in large part to our many volunteers! Volunteers helped with preparing for the show, registering riders, doing the bit check, announcing, and overseeing every aspect of the event. We received many compliments on how quickly the show went and how smoothly the event ran - thank you volunteers! We also owe a big thank you to the companies and individuals that supported this show with their contributions and donations:

- ?? **Horse Express**, your local tack and feed shop just west of Woodlake on Hull Street, call (804) 639-2327.
- ?? **Trish Drummond of Moments in Focus photography**, call (804) 639-0343.
- ?? **Farm Bureau Insurance**, Across Virginia, your family or business can take advantage of the life, auto, health, and homeowner's insurance that millions trust every day, online at [www.vafb.com](http://www.vafb.com).
- ?? **Nicole Smith, Realtor**, of Prudential Realtors, your local expert in buying and selling fine homes, online at [www.nicolesmithrealtor.com](http://www.nicolesmithrealtor.com) or call (804) 320-1391x4043.

*Round 2 for this exciting series is February 18th. Registration opens Feb. 3rd and closes Feb. 15th at noon. See you there!*

*"It should not be believed that all things exist for the sake of the existence of man. On the contrary, all the other beings, too, have been intended for their own sakes and not for the sake of something else."*

*-Maimonides, medieval Jewish philosopher*

## Corporate Sponsors at Campbell Springs

**Get Noticed and Get Involved** as a 2006 annual corporate sponsor! Hundreds of upper-income horse enthusiasts visit CSF each season, giving you great exposure to consumers who take note of companies that care. You can make a real difference to a horse or rider, help promote responsible agriculture, and take action to make Virginia a better place to live. Sponsorships start at \$50 per show and can include a link to your web site on the farm's internet site. Call us today at (804) 590-3400 and we'd be happy to tell you how you can get noticed and get involved! Visit [www.campbellspringsfarm.com](http://www.campbellspringsfarm.com) to learn more about how you can make a difference. Your opportunity is waiting.



Sponsorship banners prominently displayed at the Covered Arena during the 2005 Spirit of Vaulting Conference hosted by the American Vaulting Association.

*Thank you for your support*