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Certified Horsemanship Association Instructor Wins *Practical Horseman Magazine* Contest – Week of Training with Olympian, Lendon Gray

(December 2009) Two-time Olympian and internationally recognized dressage trainer, Lendon Gray, has selected Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) Instructor, Karen Pikovsky, Owner and Trainer of Darby Downs Equestrian Center in Irwin, Pennsylvania, as the winner of a weeklong dressage training session.

Contestants in the 2009 *Practical Horseman* magazine/Bates Horsemastership Sweepstakes/Contest Program submitted 250 word essays as to why they would like to win the training session. Karen's essay was chosen by Lendon out of hundreds of entries. As winner of the contest, Karen was also awarded a Bates Innova dressage saddle. In November, Karen had the opportunity to meet with Lendon during a United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) riding clinic held at Fire Stone Farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. During the clinic, Karen gained insight into Lendon's instructional theories and practices, as well as having the opportunity to interact and watch the young dressage riders who will hopefully represent our nation in the future.

Karen is excited about the opportunity to train with Lendon so that she can offer more educational opportunities to both the youth and adult riders in her area. In December 2009, Karen was awarded her United States Dressage Federation (USDF) University Diploma for completing 33.5 USDF University Credits. Karen plans on continuing in the USDF University Program to achieve the next recognition level.

Karen is no stranger to awards and has won national recognition for her instructional skills. In 2006 Karen was awarded the CHA Instructor of the Year. She and her husband, Joe, just celebrated their 10 year anniversary of owning and operating Darby Downs Equestrian Center which is a full-service facility providing instruction for youth and adults in the disciplines of dressage, hunter/jumper and low-level eventing and hosts many educational programs for youth and adult horse enthusiasts throughout the year.

The purpose of CHA is to promote excellence in safety and education for the benefit of the horse industry. CHA certifies instructors and trail guides, accredits equestrian facilities, publishes educational manuals and hosts regional and international conferences. For more information on the Certified Horsemanship Association, please visit www.CHA-ahse.org or call toll free 1-800-399-0138. To find a certified horseback riding instructor or accredited equine facility near you visit www.CHAINstructors.com. The 2010 CHA International Conference will be held in Lake City, Florida at The Oaks Equestrian Center – an O’Connor Signature Facility on October 21 – 24, 2010. This event is open to all horse enthusiasts.

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