

## Carriage Association of America's Driver Proficiency Program

You are invited and encouraged to take part in the Carriage Association of America's (CAA) Driver Proficiency Program. It's an excellent way to improve your knowledge of driving, safety, and equine care. For the first level of the program you do not have to be a CAA member.

The Driver Proficiency Program is based upon an increasing set of skills regarding safety and commonsense horsemanship skills as relates to driving. It covers choosing, fitting and maintaining the correct harness and vehicle; balancing a cart; grooming and care of the equine; and safe driving practices. A study syllabus is available for each of the three levels. The program has been adapted from the well-recognized British Carriage Society's evaluation program.

Level 1 and the Road Driving evaluation is a basic safety primer and anyone who aspires to drive safely on the road or in the show ring should possess this knowledge. To date almost 500 people have successfully completed Level 1 in the U.S. and Canada.

Level 2 gets deeper into the types of appropriate harness for different vehicles, a better understanding of equine health, driven dressage skills and cones tests, harnessing and driving an animal unknown to you and submitting a resume of your experience in various driving disciplines.

Level 3 requires that you possess the knowledge to start an equine in harness, the ability to organize and manage a barn, a thorough knowledge of common diseases and how to treat them and have the skill to drive a pair, a tandem or four-in-hand to a high degree.

Upon successful completion of each level you receive a certificate of accomplishment and a pin from the CAA. Level 1 would be an excellent program for all of us who drive! If you would like to take advantage of this program and further your knowledge of basic driving skills and safety you will need to do the following:

1. Order the Level 1 & Road Driving syllabus from the CAA. Cost of the syllabus is \$18. [www.caaonline.com](http://www.caaonline.com) or call CAA office at 859-231-0971
2. Study the syllabus. If you drive, you will already know much of the material. Other information that you'll need to know is readily available from books or internet sources. Practice.
3. Submit your \$75 fee for level 1 and \$30 for road driving totaling \$115 plus the application for the evaluation. The evaluation takes about 90 minutes, including the driving portion.

**Muffy Seaton has agreed to come to the recreational drive at Black Star Saturday, September 23, to perform evaluations.** I took my level 1 evaluation during the October 2016 National Drive at Horse Park in Lexington, Kentucky. Speaking from experience, I found a much higher level of confidence about driving after completing Level 1 and strongly recommend it to all who drive. Also it was for the benefit of my beloved mare Tess.

If you have any questions about the program please don't hesitate to contact me. I'll be happy to visit with you about it and what the evaluation is like.

If a group of you would like to get together and do this, I am willing to give you a presentation, go through the syllabus and help you prepare for the evaluation. It is something well worthwhile that you can do for yourself and your driving equine.

Sheryl Lunz  
[slunz@usa.net](mailto:slunz@usa.net)  
972-977-4080 (cell)  
903-259-6197 (hm)