

## Adequan/USDF FEI Level Trainers Conference

# No Matter the Level, It's About Contact and Balance

By Caryn Vesperman

*This was one of the best Trainers Conferences I've ever attended, and I've been lucky enough to attend at least seven. A special thank you to WDCTA for giving me a scholarship to cover most of the registration costs. For more on the four presenters (David Hunt, Lilo Fore, Henk van Bergen and Linda Zang) and a list of the demo riders, go to the next page. David and Henk worked primarily with the riders, while Lilo and Linda were more the MCs and answered questions from the audience.*

Connection and balance: The entire symposium focused on these two critical components of good training. It doesn't matter if it's Training Level or Grand Prix, the horse must be forward, relaxed and both accepting the connection over the back, which includes balance.

### **Linda Zang: Basic Steps to Attain Balance and Thoroughness at the Lower Levels**

Linda Zang led off the symposium by explaining what is expected at the basic levels:

"At Training Level, the horse must be forward and relaxed," said Linda. "At First Level with leg yields, which train the horse to use its inside hind leg to outside rein, the rider is demonstrating the horse has thoroughness. As you move up the levels, the inside hind leg comes further under the horse's body, developing more forwardness from behind.

"At Second Level, the shoulder-in shows the first steps of collection and how the outside rein is used to straighten the horse more. At Third Level, when half-passes are shown, the rider develops even more engagement and uphill frame.

"At Fourth Level, there should be even more forward propulsion with improved gaits and greater understanding of thoroughness—without over-bending the neck."

### **Lilo Fore: Relaxation, Response, Respect**

Lilo also agreed the horse's balance when engagement is required, is critical: "Without impulsion, you can't have collection. Horses can't move correctly with their hocks out behind. It's not the correct balance."

Lilo also talked about understanding our horses mindset. "Horses usually don't do things that are unkind," said Lilo. "Usually it's because they are unbalanced or confused."



Continued on next page

## Trainers Conference continued

### David Hunt: Partnership is About Balance

Working with the first rider, David Hunt talked about partnership being the most important aspect between a rider and his horse. "Nothing should be done by force," he said. "It's about getting the horse to 'buy into' it with confidence and acceptance of the bit. Yes, the rider

needs to "control every step," but that means helping the horse find the "correct balance at all levels."

Balance involves rhythm, accuracy and acceptance of the bit. "Riders must guide the horse *where* they want the horse to go and *how* they want the horse to get there." He also cautioned: "Whatever you do, you should not take away the basic quality of the gaits."

Even during a walk break, the rider needs to guide the horse. "The horse has to stay in tune with you, not take over or look like he's in a funeral march," said David.

To attain balance, transitions are key. Transitions do nothing unless they improve things. As an example, David said if a horse backs up in the halt, the horse is only holding himself in a shape and is not truly balanced. That's why riders need to be more effective in controlling every step. Examples he gave about controlling and maintaining balance with the horse included:

- Don't pull in the horse, but close from behind.
- Don't let the horse out of its shape or take over. This includes when the horse coughs or sneezes: "Otherwise, they take control of the contact."
- If you push for more energy from behind, but you let it escape out through the front, "you've accomplished nothing."
- "Keep the energy coming forward to your contact in the canter so the horse's head doesn't move too much up and down."
- Horses MUST respond immediately in transitions. "No dribbling or letting the horse's frame lengthen. Transitions must be clear and immediate."
- For better balance, riders should "look between the horse's ears in the shoulder-in, not down the track."
- "Don't shove with your seat. The seat should just influence the balance."

Regarding contact, David explained if the horse fishtails (hindquarters weave left and right instead of following straight), the issue is the *contact* and can't be fixed with the rider's legs. In addition, if the rider's legs are too far back, the legs lose their effectiveness. Also, in a walk-to-canter transition, a horse should not try to evade the contact even slightly.

With hot horses that get too short in the neck, David said to get their hindquarters underneath them. "There is no use in letting the horse's neck out if the hindquarters are way out behind," he said. "Engagement brings the neck out. Expressive horses especially need to learn to handle their basic gaits before the rider pushes for more expression."

Along this line, always test self-carriage. Can you give the reins away and take them back without the horse running or changing its carriage?

## Presenters

### **David Hunt** - *International rider, judge, coach.*

- Trained four different horses long-listed for the Olympics, from Montreal in 1976 through Atlanta in 1996.
- Coached countless riders to national and international success.
- Helped establish the FEI Judging Supervisory Panel to promote best practice and maintain consistent high standards in judging at the international championship level.

### **Lilo Fore** - *rider, breeder, trainer, judge*

- Earned US "Horse of the Year" at every level with a self-trained Thoroughbred she bought for \$1.
- Shortlisted for the USET in 1976.
- Involved with breeding, training and coaching.
- Is a FEI 5\* dressage judge and has been a member of the Ground Jury for numerous international competitions including World Cups, Olympics, Pan American Games, and World Equestrian Games.

### **Henk van Bergen** - *trainer, coach, judge*

- Coached the Dutch Olympic Team.
- Helped develop the British Team in 2012.
- Sits on the FEI Judges Supervisory Panel.

### **Linda Zang** - *rider, judge, trainer, technical delegate*

- International rider, competed at World Championships, Pan Am Games and 1980 Olympics.
- FEI 5\* judge, officiating in 21 countries including for the Olympics, Aachen, six World Cups and the World Equestrian Games.
- Conducted seminars all over the world to educate FEI judges and tested them for promotion.
- Honored by President Gerald Ford as a sports ambassador and received the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal of Honor, among many other awards.

## Demo Riders

- Lehua Custer on FJ Ramzes
- Kimberly Herslow on Feymar OLD
- Chris Hickey on Valentin
- Jan Lamontagne on Kentucky
- Anna Merritt on Censational
- Endel Ots on King's Pleasure
- Kristin Stein on Elbrasco
- Cindi Wylie on Amado XXXV

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## Trainers Conference continued

Grand Prix is about compression, not going slower. When schooling piaffe, riders should ask for short walk steps to piaffe not long steps. “Asking for long steps undoes the compression and can cause croup-high movement,” he said. The same is true in the pirouette. Keep the compression in the pirouette, but don’t lose the canter. The canter is still the most important aspect, not the pirouette itself.

If a horse won’t let you prepare for the pirouette or flying change, “Don’t do it,” he said. “You will never fix it within the movement.”

A good exercise for flying changes is to do a six-loop serpentine with changes over the centerline.

“Learn to be a perfectionist in requests and the result,” David said. Or, as he also explained: “The best way to ruin your horse is to ride like you don’t want to ruin your horse. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes. You have to be the driver.. You have to set the agenda. Raise your expectations.”

### Henk van Bergen: Balance and Simplicity

“Dressage is the systematic development of the horse’s natural abilities,” said Henk Van Bergen.

From the start of the session, Henk emphasized that balance is the main criteria in proper training: “Only when a horse is in balance can we train him...There is no French school or German school, there is only proper training.”

Henk explained his philosophy about the half halt. “First, it only works when a horse accepts the bit. Second, the rider must have a reason to use it: to rebalance or fine-tune. You only do as many half halts as you need to accomplish your reason.”

Henk likened riding half halts to the “half halts” a tight-rope walker uses. “He uses ‘half halts’ to correct

balance or fine-tune his movements as he balances across the tightrope.”

Henk said leg yields are both an exercise of understanding, obedience and balance. “If the horse doesn’t go sideways, he’s avoiding the leg aid.” While leg yields help test a horse’s responsiveness to the leg, it’s also a test of balance. “That’s why you have to make sure he’s not just falling over his outside shoulder.”

Breeding has gotten so much better, acknowledged Henk. “Through training, we can build up strength, but we can’t develop the tendons and ligaments—that’s nature. We have to be careful not to build up more power than the tendons can handle.” The opposite is true too—we can’t “baby them until they are 10,” he said.

With hot horses, Henk advised riders to use leg; lazier horses do not need much leg, as it can make them duller.

He advocated transitions as the best exercise for helping improve balance: “That’s when we have the most influence over the horse, so make as many as possible—good ones,” he added. “

We also should not keep doing an exercise until there’s a mistake. “Stop while it’s good,” he said. Along the same line, when working on medium or extended trot, Henk said to bring the horse back “as soon as he starts to run. That might be only three steps. The distance doesn’t matter. What’s important is to stop the running and keep the balance.”

Riders must have control over rhythm and position—including relaxation in the poll—to achieve proper balance. He said when you



see a horse with too much cadence in the trot (more “passage-like”), it is not correct because there is tension in the topline. The rider has lost relaxation and suppleness.

Henk said basic work is important at all levels, not just the lower levels. “Rhythm, control and acceptance of the bit are important in pirouettes, piaffe, passage. Riders should always be making adjustments to these basics,” he said. “At any time, a rider should be able to place the horse’s neck in any position at any time.”

That’s also why riders need to understand the difference between flexion and bend. “You can flex without bending, but you can’t bend without flexion,” he stated.

Regarding flying changes, Henk had several key points. First, don’t let the horse take over. Use the corners to set up the tempes at the beginning and end. The corners are part of the exercise. Second, keep the quality of the canter and the quality of the changes in mind. If the horse doesn’t accept your aids, don’t do the changes. It’s quality not quantity.

The piaffe and passage are two separate exercises. Make sure to differentiate between the two. The principles are the same: over the back, ride to hands, keep the forward and the connection.

**Continued on next page**

## Trainers Conference continued

“The secret to good teaching is to make it simple.” This statement was interesting because Henk said we can make things too complicated for ourselves and our horses. To illustrate, he talked about the three possibilities when an exercise goes wrong:

- (1) The horse doesn't understand the aids;
- (2) The horse understands but can't do it physically (missing suppleness or strength);
- (3) The horse understands but gives the rider the middle finger.

The rider needs to understand which of the three it is and address it correctly.

“Love your horses, but for one hour a day, they are your business partners.”

In addition, we need to be fair to our business partner. “Dressage riders almost kill their horses in the warm-up,” he said. “They repeat and repeat until the horse is nearly exhausted. Jumpers know how to warm-up their horses better. They get them loose in their body, jump a few jumps and go in.”

Henk had some additional advice when preparing for competitions. “Work on making canter pirouettes smaller only the week before a competition. Same for the piaffe and passage—keep them more moving until the competition.”

One of his comments that elicited a lot of laughs from the audience was about the joy we get from riding our horses. “The good feeling in a ride is so special,” he said. “It's like an addiction. You want to feel it again and again. It's like being addicted to cocaine... but horses are twice as expensive.”



### WDCTA

## Join Us for a Fun Get-Together Saturday, March 11, 2023 Presentation, Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation

Come join us for a presentation by Lisa Borzynski, DVM, who has worked as the equine veterinarian at the Olympics, WEG and FEI competitions from Tryon to Tokyo.

Preparing Horses for shows



The event is free for all WDCTA members and \$10 for guests (payable at the door).

**RSVP to Melinda DeLuca: [ijdmcd@gmail.com](mailto:ijdmcd@gmail.com) by Monday March 6th**

#### Agenda

11:30 to Noon	Enjoy Lunch
Noon to 1 pm	Lisa Borzynski, DVM, “FEI competitions From Tryon to Tokyo”
1 to 1:30 pm	Annual Meeting
1:30 to 2:30	Awards Presentation with handing out awards

#### Location

Genesee Town Hall  
S43 W31391 Highway 83  
Genesee Depot, WI 53127  
[Town Hall Location](#)



# Wellington is a Dressage Bubble (And I Mean that in a Good Way)

Everywhere you go in Wellington—gas stations, grocery stores, banks or the mall, you see people in breeches. About two months ago, I went to a hair salon for a desperately needed haircut. Turns out the stylist I use also does Nancy Later’s hair. Nancy is the one WDCTA has hosted two informative Zoom calls with on training and showing. Recently I went in for another haircut. (I don’t know why—I mostly have a helmet on my head and it’s not like I’m going to any fancy or work-related function!) This time as I sat there, I heard a person tell the receptionist, “Adrienne Lyle.” I turned around and said, “Hello,” and chatted with her for a bit. After Adrienne went to the other side of the salon, my stylist asked who that was.

Here’s how our conversation went.

Me: *“That’s Adrienne Lyle. She’s an Olympian in dressage.”*

Stylist: *“An Olympian! But she’s so tall. Don’t they have to be short?”*

Me (Realizing she was thinking about jockeys): *“You can be any height for dressage. (Then gave her my two-minute elevator speech about dressage including music freestyles.)*

Stylist: *“Wow, that’s so cool”*

Me: *“You can watch the musical freestyles Friday nights at Global.”*

Stylist (Who has now left my side and gone to other stylists, whispering): *“She’s an Olympian!”*

I’m thinking two things. One, I just helped spread what dressage is, and two, I just blew Adrienne’s chance to keep getting her hair done incognito.

Ride on and spread the joy of dressage!

*Caryn*

## Caryn Vesperman Editor

All advertisements, articles and photographs (with photo release) should be submitted by the 15th of the preceding month of publication, unless you make prior arrangements for additional time.

Calendar of events will appear in both the eQuester and on the WDCTA website.

Payment for advertisements should be submitted via PayPal through the WDCTA website ([wdcta.org](http://wdcta.org)) or mailed with a check made out to WDCTA and mailed to the editor.

### CONTACT INFO

(608) 695-9914

W1619 King Road

Brooklyn, WI 53521

[newsletter@wdcta.org](mailto:newsletter@wdcta.org)



## Laura Graves Rider Application

**has been EXTENDED to Mar. 15**

*Due to the unexpected need to change our web host (causing delays in accessing the application form) and hearing from riders about getting vaccinations done, the deadline for applying has been extended two weeks.*

Questions? Contact Caryn Vesperman at [riders@wdcta.org](mailto:riders@wdcta.org) or (608) 695-9914.

# Calendar of Events

## WDCTA Events

**Mar. 11**

### **WDCTA Awards Luncheon**

Guest speaker, Dr. Lisa Borzyynski, equine veterinarian for Olympics, WEG and FEI events from Tryon to Tokyo.

Lunch: Free to WDCTA members; \$10 for guests

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Location: Genesee Town Hall, Genesee Depot, WI

RSVP by Mar. 6: Melinda DeLuca: [jjdmcd@gmail.com](mailto:jjdmcd@gmail.com)

**May 20-21**

### **Laura Graves Symposium**

Location: Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI

See details for rider applications and auditor registration at end of this newsletter.

## Other Events

**April 29**

### **2023 Tests w/ Anne Cizaldo "S" judge**

Hosted by Eastern Iowa Dressage & CTA

Link for info: [easterniowadressageandeventing.com/events/new-test-symposium-with-anne-cizaldo](http://easterniowadressageandeventing.com/events/new-test-symposium-with-anne-cizaldo)

### **Rafael Soto Andrade Clinic**

Director of The Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art for 40 years. Competed in three Olympic games, five European championships and three World Cups.

Location: Tempel Farms, Old Mill Creek, IL

Cost: \$30/day pre-registration; \$35/day at door

Audit Registration: Call (847) 244-5330; email:

[info@tempellipizzans.com](mailto:info@tempellipizzans.com) or visit [tempelfarms.com](http://tempelfarms.com)

**June 18-Sept. 3**

Tempel Lipizzan Performances—65th Anniversary Year

**June 18, 21, 28; July 9, 12, 23, 26; Aug. 6, 9, 20, 23, 30;**

**Sept. 3**—Summer Matinee Performances

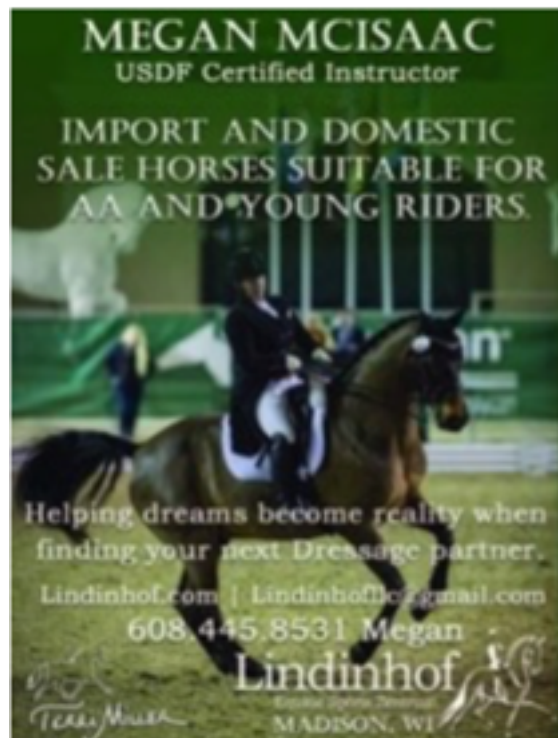
**June 24; July 15, 29; Aug. 12, 26**—Summer Evening Performances

**July 19 & Aug. 16**— How a Lipizzan Stallion Learns to Dance

Location: 17000 Wadsworth Road, Old Mill Creek, IL

Tickets: [tempelfarms.com](http://tempelfarms.com)

# Business Members



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## **Tempel Farms**

- Performances
- Sales
- Lipizzan Stallions at Stud

17000 Wadsworth Road  
Old Mill Creek, IL 60083  
(847) 244-5330

[info@tempellipizzans.com](mailto:info@tempellipizzans.com)  
[tempelfarms.com](http://tempelfarms.com)

## **GRAND VIEW FARM**

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Contact Rebecca Lewison at (608) 437-4776

# Member Listings

## INSTRUCTORS

**Megan McIsaac**  
**Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum**  
**4246 Schneider Drive**  
**Oregon, WI 53575**  
**[lindinhofllc@gmail.com](mailto:lindinhofllc@gmail.com)**  
**(608) 445-8531**  
**[lindinhof.com](http://lindinhof.com)**

FEI trainer, USDF-certified instructor through 4th Level, 2014 national champion with Kingsley, USDF Gold, Silver, Bronze medalist, all USDF bars. Competed four horses at GP. Competed successfully at Dressage at Devon and West Coast Festival. Year-end USDF/USEF and WDCTA awards. 16+ years teaching experience. Students competed through GP, earned riding awards and medals. Travel for lessons and clinics.

**Raul Vadillo Roa**  
**Tempel Lipizzans**  
**17000 Wadsworth Road**  
**Old Mill Creek, IL 60083**  
**(847) 244-5330**  
**[info@tempellipizzans.com](mailto:info@tempellipizzans.com)**  
**[tempelfarms.com](http://tempelfarms.com)**

Tempel Lipizzans is a Lipizzan breeding and full-time dressage training facility, located in northern Illinois, just an hour from Chicago or Milwaukee.

**Andrea Schten**  
**W350S6890 Ulrickson Road**  
**Eagle, WI 53119**  
**(262) 470-4557**  
**[aschten@hotmail.com](mailto:aschten@hotmail.com)**  
**[andreaschten.com](http://andreaschten.com)**

USDF Bronze, Silver and Gold medalist. Qualified for regional championships: Training through Grand Prix on self-trained horses. Multiople students have earned Bronze and Silver medals. School-masters available. Trailering in for lessons welcome. Available for clinics. Will travel for lessons.

**Kate Van Sicklen**  
**110 Merrill Crest Drive**  
**Madison, WI 53705**  
**[katherinevansicklen@gmail.com](mailto:katherinevansicklen@gmail.com)**  
**(608) 669-0148**

40+ years of teaching experience. British Horse Society instructor certification. USF "L" graduate with distinction. USDF Associate Certified Instructor. USF Silver Medal. Shown through Prix St. George. Will teach through 4th Level. Specialize in teaching horses and riders correct basics. Will travel.

## STABLES

**Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum**  
**Megan McIsaac**  
**4246 Schneider Drive**  
**Oregon, WI 53575**  
**[lindinhofllc@gmail.com](mailto:lindinhofllc@gmail.com)**  
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**Eagle, WI 53119**  
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Heated barn and tack room, dry lots and large pastures. H/C wash stall, 10 x 12' stalls, Theraplate, indoor and outdoor arenas.

## BUSINESS

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**Tempel Lipizzans**  
**17000 Wadsworth Road**  
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**(847) 244-5330**  
**[info@tempellipizzans.com](mailto:info@tempellipizzans.com)**

Tempel Lipizzans is a Lipizzan breeding and full-time dressage training facility, located in northern Illinois, just an hour from Chicago or Milwaukee. Stallions at stud. Horses for sale Our performances, set to music, run between June and September, Behind-the-Scenes Tours can be scheduled year-round.

**Caryn Vesperman - USEF/USDF "r" Judge**  
**W1619 King Road**  
**Brooklyn, WI 53521**  
**[touchstonefarm@gmail.com](mailto:touchstonefarm@gmail.com)**  
**(608) 455-2208**

USDF Gold, Silver and Bronze medalist. Shown through Grand Prix. Available for USEF/USDF-recognized dressage, eventing and schooling shows.

## BREEDERS

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**[info@tempellipizzans.com](mailto:info@tempellipizzans.com)**

Four Lipizzan stallions are currently standing at stud. Horses for sale. Tempel Lipizzans is a Lipizzan breeding and full-time dressage training facility, located in northern Illinois, just an hour from Chicago or Milwaukee.

WISCONSIN DRESSAGE & COMBINED TRAINING ASSOCIATION  
2023 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP TERM: December 1 – November 30



\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_ NEW - Referred by \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

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FARM OR BUSINESS NAME \_\_\_\_\_

New members: Please tell us how you learned about WDCTA:

- \_\_\_ Clinic or Event
- \_\_\_ Midwest Horse Fair
- \_\_\_ USDF \_\_\_ USEF
- \_\_\_ USEA
- \_\_\_ Pony Club
- \_\_\_ Facebook
- \_\_\_ Current WDCTA member (name) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Web Search
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Would you like to receive other horse-related mailings that are not affiliated with WDCTA? YES NO

DISCIPLINES:

- \_\_\_ Dressage
- \_\_\_ Eventing
- \_\_\_ Breeder
- \_\_\_ OTHER

RIDER STATUS:

- \_\_\_ Professional
- \_\_\_ Adult Amateur
- \_\_\_ Young Rider (\*age 18-21)
- \_\_\_ Junior Rider (\*age 17 or less)

\* Age as of January 1

CHAPTER AFFILIATION:

- \_\_\_ Southwest (SW Wisconsin, Madison and surrounding area)
- \_\_\_ Upper Peninsula (Upper Michigan and northern WI)
- \_\_\_ Central (Portage, Green Bay, Stevens Point, and central area)
- \_\_\_ Kettle Moraine (Milwaukee, Sheboygan, FDL and southeast WI)
- \_\_\_ General Member (No chapter designation)

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION AND FEES

**\$164 BUSINESS Membership** – Includes one USDF Group membership; emailed newsletter; one voting privilege; recognition & business card ad in eQuester, listing & logo on WDCTA website. Also, INCLUDES Stable, Instructor, Breeder & Business listings (choose one or all four) in both eQuester & website.

**\$64 FAMILY Membership** - Includes one USDF group membership; emailed newsletter; two voting privileges. USDF requires that an additional USDF membership be purchased for each additional family member. Add \$10 for each additional family member.

**\$10** Add'l family member name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date if age 21 or less \_\_\_\_\_

**\$10** Add'l family member name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date if age 21 or less \_\_\_\_\_

**\$52 INDIVIDUAL Membership** (Age 18 & over) . Includes one USDF group membership; emailed newsletter; one voting privilege.

**\$39 JUNIOR Membership -- Birth date** \_\_\_\_\_ (must be age 17 or less as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. Do not use in conjunction with a Family Membership. Includes one USDF group membership; emailed newsletter; one voting privilege.

**\$42 NEW MEMBERS ONLY** (not a member in the previous year), **JUNE MEMBERSHIP** -- joining after June 1<sup>st</sup>. Includes USDF group membership.

As a member of WDCTA, I may choose to volunteer for Association responsibilities or activities. I expressly agree that my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I am not an employee of the Wisconsin Dressage & Combined Training Association. I am neither entitled to nor expect any present or future salary, wages, or other benefits for these volunteer services. I agree to abide by the WDCTA Standard of Conduct: to act honestly, fairly, ethically and with integrity and treat all WDCTA members with respect and courtesy.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**WDCTA STABLE, INSTRUCTOR, BREEDER, BUSINESS LISTINGS** -- Listings on website & eQuester. **Must fill out listing form available on WDCTA website and include payment.** (These listings are free when purchasing a Business Membership.)

- \$10 Stable listing
- \$10 Instructor listing
- \$10 Breeder listing
- \$10 Business listing
- \$35 for all four listings

Make check payable to **WDCTA** & mail to Diane Brault, 5184 County Road HH, Barneveld, WI 53507  
[membership@wdcta.org](mailto:membership@wdcta.org) or 608-924-1808

## AUDITOR INFO & REGISTRATION

# OLYMPIAN LAURA GRAVES DRESSAGE SYMPOSIUM

May 20-21, 2023 - Madison, WI

### FORMAT AND SHOPPING

Over two days, up to 11 riders, working on skills from Training Level to Grand Prix, will train with Laura for 45-minute sessions. Laura also will ensure auditors learn from the work she does with each horse and rider.

The vendor area promises to be a great shopping adventure with a variety of tack, clothing and barn necessities. The vendors will be located next to the riding arena and will be open during the entire event.

All of the activities will be under one roof—climate-controlled for your comfort!



*Sponsored by the Southwest Chapter of*



### DAILY SCHEDULE

- 7:30 a.m. Registration and Trade Fair Opens
- 9 a.m. Welcome/Introduction
- 9:15 a.m. Training
- 10 a.m. First Level
- 10:45 a.m. Second Level
- 11:30 p.m. Third Level
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch/Shopping
- 1:15 p.m. Fourth Level
- 2:00 p.m. Prix St. Georges
- 2:45 Intermediare I
- 3:30 p.m. Intermediare. II, Grand Prix
- 4:15 p.m. Wrap-up
- 6:00 p.m. Trade Fair Closes

*Schedule subject to minor changes*

### LAURA GRAVES

#### 2019

- Finished second at the FEI World Cup Dressage Final.

#### 2018

- Defended her World Cup Finals individual silver medal at the competition in Paris.
- Earned team silver medal and individual silver medal, Grand Prix Special, at the World Equestrian Games.
- Ranked #1 in the world in a record-breaking freestyle performance.

#### 2017

- Earned the silver individual medal at World Cup Finals in Omaha.

#### 2016

- Competed at her first Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, winning a bronze team medal and placing fourth individually.

#### 2015

- Placed fourth at the FEI World Cup Finals, Las Vegas.
- Won a team gold medal and individual silver medal at the Pan American Games in Toronto.

Currently Laura is competing Sensation HM. She had a very successful outing at the 2022 Festival of Champions including earning the Intermediare I Championship title.

### SYMPOSIUM LOCATION

The Alliant Energy Center ([alliantenergycenter.com](http://alliantenergycenter.com)) is the home of the Midwest Horse Fair, one of the top three horse fairs in the United States. It's conveniently located off the Madison beltline. The New Holland Pavilion is an excellent venue for equestrian events because the climate-controlled space contains an indoor arena, stabling, vendor booth areas and concessions, all under one roof. Some camping slots are available for a fee—contact Alliant Energy Center directly.

Alliant Energy Center  
New Holland Pavilion I  
1919 Alliant Center Way  
Madison, WI 53713  
(608) 267-3976  
[alliantenergycenter.com](http://alliantenergycenter.com)

### FEES

See registration section for costs.

- Limited seating. First come/first serve.
- Due to limited seating, priority admission goes to those auditing both days.

### KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS

Check the WDCTA website ([wdcta.org](http://wdcta.org)) and WDCTA's two Facebook pages to keep up with the latest news about vendors and the symposium.



## LAURA GRAVES DRESSAGE SYMPOSIUM AUDITOR REGISTRATION FORM

### FEES:

#### WDCTA Members

- ~ Through Feb. 28\* — \$55/day or \$95/both days
- ~ Mar. 1 - May 12\* — \$75/day or \$135/both days
- ~ At The Door — \$75/day or \$135/both days

#### Non-WDCTA Members

- ~ Through Feb. 28\* — \$65/day or \$115/both days
- ~ Mar. 1 - May 12\* — \$85/day or \$155/both days
- ~ At The Door — \$85/day or \$155/both days

#### Youth (Under 16 years)

- ~ \$35/day or \$65/both days

*\*Postmarked or online payments no later than May 12. After that date, please pay at the door to ensure we don't miss your payment.*

*If not sold out, tickets will be available at the door. See WDCTA website for updates.*

*Lunch is not included in price. Food available on site.*

*Free parking at the Alliant Energy Center. Some camping spots available for rent; contact the Alliant Energy Center for more information on camping and reservations.*

### One Auditor Registration Per Form. Sorry, No Refunds.

Auditor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Attending:

\_\_\_\_\_ Both Days

\_\_\_\_\_ One Day — Which Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday

**Total Auditor Fees Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to volunteer to help.

### CONTACT AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION

**Online registration** can be done via eventbrite at <https://LauraGravesOnlineReg.eventbrite.com>

Questions about **online** registration? Contact Caryn Vesperman at [onlinereg@wdcta.org](mailto:onlinereg@wdcta.org).

**Or mail this registration form, waiver and check made out to WDCTA Southwest Chapter to:**

Donna Thomas, 5996 Co. Rd. A, Brooklyn, WI 53521

Questions about **mail-in/paper** registration? Contact Donna at [paperreg@wdcta.org](mailto:paperreg@wdcta.org).

*Photos of Laura Graves from World Equestrian Games, Tryon, NC. Photo with Verdades - Rebecca Lewison. Head shot - CarynVesperman*

**Register via mail  
OR  
online at:**

**[https://  
LauraGravesOnline  
Reg.eventbrite.com](https://LauraGravesOnlineReg.eventbrite.com)**

**WISCONSIN DRESSAGE & COMBINED TRAINING ASSOCIATION  
WAIVER, RELEASE, AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT**

In consideration for my participation in the WDCTA Laura Graves Symposium, May 20-21, 2023, (hereafter, "the Activity"), I (the "Participant") hereby acknowledge and voluntarily agree to the following (hereafter, "Agreement"). "Participation" includes, but is not limited to, riding, handling, instructing, or spectating.

**1. Acknowledgment of Inherent Risks of Equine Activities.** I acknowledge and understand that there are numerous inherent risks of participating in equine activities, including, *but not limited to*: (a) the propensity of an equine or other animal, irrespective of its training, to behave in ways that may result in injury, harm, or death to persons on or around them (for example, jump, run, kick, buck, bolt, spin, rear, strike, or bite); (b) the unpredictability of an equine's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movements and unfamiliar objects, persons or other animals; (c) certain hazards such as conditions at or below the surface or ground, whether seen or unseen; (d) collisions with other animals or objects; (e) the potential for another person participating in an equine activity to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to me, or to others, such as failing to maintain control over the equine or not acting within his or her ability; (f) the breakage or failure of tack or other equipment; (g) the potential that an equine or other animal may cause injury or harm to the rider or to other persons or animals in the vicinity; and (h) sickness and disease (including communicable diseases). *I understand these risks and further acknowledge that I am not relying on the Wisconsin Dressage and Combined Training Association (hereafter, "WDCTA") to list in this document all possible inherent risks of participating in equine activities or the Activity.*

**2. Acknowledgement that Participation in the Activity is Voluntary and Requires Personal Judgment.** I acknowledge and understand that riding instruction by its nature requires that the instructor issue directions in the form of "commands." I understand that while I should consider such commands, I must and will use my own judgment during my participation in the Activity. I understand that while participating in the Activity that: the commands and all activities engaged in as part of the instruction are entirely voluntary; that the instructor is not entitled to nor requests absolute obedience; that I may elect not to comply with any command or suggested act; and that I am expected to at all times be alert and thinking while participating in the Activity. I represent that both my equine and I have the requisite level of physical fitness and mental alertness to enable us to participate in the Activity, and are in good health and free from injury, illness or other defects which may impair our ability to engage in the Activity.

**3. Waiver and Release of Liability.** I understand and voluntarily accept the inherent risks of engaging in equine activities, including risks from my voluntary compliance or noncompliance with instructor commands associated with the Activity. I voluntarily agree to hold harmless, release, waive, and covenant not to sue Laura Graves, WDCTA, its officers, members, non-members that pay an auditing fee, Alliant Energy Center, as well as all other participants in the Activity ("Released Parties") from any and all injuries, sickness and disease, death, liability, or damage to person or property arising from my participation in the Activity, unless caused by Released Parties' reckless, intentional or willful misconduct. Thus, I understand that this waiver and release is effective even if the injury, sickness and disease, death, liability, or damage to person or property is caused or contributed to by the *negligent* action or inaction of Released Parties.

**4. Equine Activity Liability Law.** I acknowledge that I have read the State of Wisconsin's notice regarding equine activities:

**Notice: A person who is engaged for compensation in the rental of equines or equine equipment or tack or in the instruction of a person in the riding or driving of an equine or in being a passenger upon an equine is not liable for the injury or death of a person involved in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, as defined in section 895.481 (1) (e) of the Wisconsin Statutes.**

**5. Governing Law.** This Agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Wisconsin. Any controversy, dispute, or claim arising out of or related to this Agreement, shall be resolved exclusively through proceedings filed in the federal or state court in Madison, WI. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision or sentence of this Agreement shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision or sentence of this Agreement, which shall remain in full force and effect.

***I have read this waiver, release, and hold harmless agreement, fully understand its terms, understand that I am assuming risks inherent to my participation, and agree to be fully bound by its terms. I understand that I am free to consult with any counsel about the terms of this agreement.***

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(or parent or legal guardian of behalf of Participant, if Participant is under 18 years of age)

Name of Participant (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## RIDER APPLICATION

# OLYMPIAN LAURA GRAVES DRESSAGE SYMPOSIUM

May 20-21, 2023 - Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI

*All located under one roof in the climate-controlled New Holland Pavilion I*

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Over two days, up to 11 riders, from the lower levels to Grand Prix, will work with Laura in a symposium setting.

7:30 a.m. Registration and Trade Fair

9 a.m. Welcome and Introduction

9:15 a.m. Training

10:00 a.m. First Level

10:45 a.m. Second Level

11:30 a.m. Third Level

12:15 p.m. Lunch and Shopping

1:15 p.m. Fourth Level

2:00 p.m. Prix St. Georges

2:45 Intermediare I

3:30 p.m. Intermediare II/Grand Prix

4:15 p.m. Wrap-up

6:00 p.m. Trade Fair Closes

*Schedule subject to minor changes.*



### Opening Date for Rider Application

**Jan. 1, 2023**

### Deadline for Rider Application

**Mar. 15, 2023**

This is your chance to ride with Laura Graves, one of this country's top international riders, who started out, just like most riders, with a pony and a dream. Add to that, is Laura's persistence and determination through some tough times with her partner, Verdades, because he was not easy as a young horse. Together, they became Olympians and international stars. In early 2020, Laura announced the retirement of Verdades. Currently she is competing SenSation HW at Prix St. Georges and has some up-and-coming young horses. She had a very successful outing at the 2022 Festival of Champions with many wins including Intermediare I Champion.

Laura's experience and the opportunities she has had with top trainers over her career, will help give you tools for training your horse and, if an instructor, give you ideas for helping your students.

**For updates about the symposium, visit:**  
[www.wdcta.org](http://www.wdcta.org) or our two Facebook pages.



## RIDER SELECTION PROCESS

The following horse/rider combinations are needed:

- 2 Training Level
- 2 First Level (amateur riders preferred)
- 2 Second Level
- 1 Third Level (green to this level is fine)
- 1 Fourth Level
- 1 Prix St. George (green to this level is fine)
- 1 Intermediare I
- 1 Intermediare II/Grand Prix

Only online applications will be accepted. For the application, go to [https://www.wdcta.org/index.php?option=com\\_rsform&view=rsform&formId=10](https://www.wdcta.org/index.php?option=com_rsform&view=rsform&formId=10).

The four reserve horse/rider combinations to back up the above selections are: Training/First Level, Second, Third/Fourth Level, and FEI. These combinations will be selected from the pool of riders not selected for the actual symposium riding slots. **Laura Graves will be selecting the riders.**

Riders need to submit a complete application to include all of the following:

- USDF/FEI Performance Record from the past two years or a letter of recommendation from trainer if the rider/horse combination do not have scores. (A letter of recommendation can be submitted even if one has the scores.)
- A summary explaining why the rider would like to be chosen
- A five-minute YouTube video showing the movements at the level applying for
- Current Coggins Test and record of current year vaccinations
- Rider release form
- Payment (which will not be processed until a rider has been selected and notified)

### NOTE:

- Riders must ride the horse listed on the application.
- Riders may apply with more than one horse.
- ASTM/SEI helmets are mandatory.

Applications and videos are not reviewed until after the deadline submission of **March 15, 2023**. We will notify all applicants upon receipt of their entry AND as soon as the selection process is complete, no later than April 15. We will not publish or release the names of applicants who are not selected.

If you are **not** selected to ride, we hope you'll join us by auditing. You may want to sign up to audit now to make sure you have a spot in case you are not selected as a rider. If you are selected as a rider, we will refund your auditor application fee. In addition, if you are selected as a reserve horse/rider and you accept, we will refund the difference between the two costs.

## FEES AND CANCELLATIONS

- ~ The 2-day clinic fee for Training through Second Level is: **\$400 for WDCTA members and \$450 for non-WDCTA members.**
- ~ The 2-day clinic fee for Third Level through Grand Prix is: **\$600 for WDCTA members and \$650 for non-WDCTA members.**
- ~ The fee for the four reserve riders is **\$100** for both WDCTA and non-WDCTA members. This includes admission for rider, a stall for the horse and a tack stall. (*No groom registration fee included. Lunch is also not included.*) If selected as a reserve rider, WDCTA will subtract \$100 from the submitted rider fee and refund the difference.

**The accepted rider fee (NOT reserve rider) includes a ride on both days, a horse stall, a tack stall and one auditor/groom pass for someone other than the rider, but does not include lunches. Stall mats are available for \$65/stall from Showtime. (Stall mat information will be sent to the selected riders.)**

Payment will be processed within 7 days of selection. Should checks/payment not be good, we will assume the rider has cancelled and the first alternate will be selected to take his/her place. (There is a \$50 charge to cover any insufficient fund fees.) Riders who need to cancel after their participation has been confirmed, should notify Caryn Vesperman, the rider coordinator, immediately. Riders canceling will receive a refund, minus a \$25 processing fee, if a replacement rider can be found. If no replacement is available from the applications, the rider will not receive a refund unless a medical or veterinary emergency can be verified.

## RIDER COORDINATOR

**Caryn Vesperman: [riders@wdcta.org](mailto:riders@wdcta.org) - (608) 695-9914**

*Photos of Laura Graves from World Equestrian Games, Tryon, NC. Photo with Verdades - Rebecca Lewison. Head shot - CarynVesperman*

## Sponsorship and Vendor Opportunities



This symposium and trade fair will be all under one roof at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, WI. The event is expected to attract more than 300 enthusiastic attendees and generate national publicity.

### Registration/Trade Fair:

- Opens at 7:30 a.m.
- Closes at 6 p.m.
- Located in the New Holland Pavilion I— same building as riding clinic

### About WDCTA

The Wisconsin Dressage and Combined Training Association (WDCTA) is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization run by volunteers. We are a charter member of our national organization, the United States Dressage Federation. Events like this help fund scholarships and future educational opportunities. Visit our website at [wdcta.org](http://wdcta.org) or look for us on Facebook.

**For information about the sponsorship or vendor opportunities, contact:**

**Mary Hanneman**  
[vendors@wdcta.org](mailto:vendors@wdcta.org)  
Phone: (608) 712-0975

**Donations under \$100 will be gratefully acknowledged in the event program.**

## Sponsorship & Vendor Options

### Platinum \$2,500

- Double Vendor booth space (10 x 20' space)
- No registration charge for up to 2 vendor staffers
- 2 large banners (exceeds 3' in height/width) hung in riding arena
- Full-page advertisement in event program (inside front or back cover) — first come, first choice
- Full-page advertisement in 12 issues of the *eQuester*, WDCTA's monthly newsletter
- Banner ad on WDCTA website for 1 year
- Sponsorship recognition in program listing
- Pre- and post-event publicity in WDCTA newsletter, website and Facebook pages

### Gold \$1,500

- Single Vendor booth space (10 x 10' space)
- No registration charge for up to 2 vendor staffers
- 1 large banner (exceeds 3' in height/width) hung in riding arena
- Half-page advertisement in event program
- Half-page advertisement in 12 issues of the *eQuester*, WDCTA's monthly newsletter
- Banner ad on WDCTA website for 1 year
- Sponsorship recognition in program listing
- Pre- and post-event publicity in WDCTA newsletter, website and Facebook pages

### Silver \$1,000

- Single Vendor booth space (10 x 10' space)
- No registration charge for up to 2 vendor staffers
- 1 large banner (exceeds 3' in height/width) hung in riding arena
- Quarter-page advertisement in event program (inside front or back cover)— first come, first choice
- Quarter-page advertisement in 12 issues of the *eQuester*, WDCTA's monthly newsletter
- Banner ad on WDCTA website for 1 year
- Sponsorship recognition in program listing
- Pre- and post-event publicity in WDCTA newsletter, website and Facebook pages

### Bronze \$500

- 1 small banner (less than 3' in height/width) hung in riding arena
- No registration charge for one attendee, both days
- Business card advertisement in 12 issues of the *eQuester*, WDCTA's monthly newsletter
- Sponsorship recognition in program listing
- Pre- and post-event publicity in WDCTA newsletter, website and Facebook pages

### Vendor Booth Only

- Single booth space (10 x 10'): \$250
- Double booth space (10 x 20'): \$500
- No registration charge for up to 2 vendor staffers

### Business Card Only \$100

- Business card ad in event program

# LAURA GRAVES SPONSORSHIP/VENDOR FORM

## ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER - NEW HOLLAND PAVILION I

### Yes! We want to participate:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Platinum — \$2,500      \_\_\_\_\_ *Yes, I would like the booth included with my sponsorship.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gold — \$1,500      \_\_\_\_\_ *Yes, I would like the booth included with my sponsorship.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Silver — \$1,000      \_\_\_\_\_ *Yes, I would like the booth included with my sponsorship.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bronze — \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Single Vendor Booth — \$250
- \_\_\_\_\_ Double Vendor Booth — \$500
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Booth Space: \$500 initial booth space, plus \$100 for every 10 feet of additional space. Total number of 10' spaces (*including* \$500 initial space): \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Business Card — \$100
- \_\_\_\_\_ Donation (Amount): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Free 3 MG Wi-Fi  
is available at the  
Alliant Energy Center**

**\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed**

### Additional Info:

Please check all that apply:

- I need an electric hook-up for my booth.
- I need table(s) with my booth. (Two 8' tables come with double booth; one table with single.)
- I need chairs with my booth. (Four chairs come with double booth; two chairs with single.)
- Please provide me with updates on the symposium. My email is listed below.

### Please complete the following:

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Deadline for sponsorship or booth reservations: April 1, 2023

*Note: The sooner we receive your commitment, the sooner we can begin advertising you as a sponsor.*

Please send the following to [newsletter@wdcta.org](mailto:newsletter@wdcta.org) by April 1:

- **Platinum, Gold and Silver sponsorships:** Your full-, half- or quarter-page ads and logo (PDF or JPEG)
- **Bronze sponsorships:** Your logo
- **Business card sponsorship:** Your business card

Banners should be mailed to [Mary Hanneman](#) by **May 1** at the address below.

For questions, contact [Mary Hanneman](#) at [vendors@wdcta.org](mailto:vendors@wdcta.org), or to reserve a sponsorship or booth, return this form with a check made out to **WDCTA-Southwest Chapter**:

**Mary Hanneman, N8160 Smith Road, Brooklyn, WI 53521**

**Phone: (608) 712-0975**

*Thank You for Your Support*