



Meet an Instructor and WDEA Member: Penny Wahlgren

“Joy with Horses Feeds My Soul”

By Diane Brault

Penny Wahlgren has been riding since the age of 12 and now teaches dressage enthusiasts and beginning riders at Debra Stephenson’s Plum Lake Equestrian Center near Sayner, WI.

“Plum Lake is a beautiful place that causes people to take in a deep, peaceful breath,” says Penny who has been teaching riding part-time for the last 10 years. She also values her full-time work with special needs students in the high school classroom and helps them transition to life after graduation.

Penny earned a Bachelor of Science degree with equine emphasis from UW-River Falls. Interestingly, she also spent time being a zoo keeper at the Indianapolis zoo! Working with a wide variety of

animals at the zoo helped her learn how to train animals (and people) with operant training concepts. She learned to be highly observant of behaviors in all creatures. Penny finds out what is rewarding to each individual and breaks things down into small steps to foster success.

Penny maintains that her horse, Flash O’ Perfection, is the most beautiful horse in the world! Flash is a Friesian/Anglo/Arabian cross.

Continued on next page



Photos of Penny’s summer camp

Instructor Continued

In addition to being gorgeous, she says he is sensitive, but still allows her to ride him safely after a long lay off. And like any intelligent horse and human duo, they are always teaching each other.

Although Penny didn't buy her first horse, Flash, until the age of 40, she spent many years riding horses for owners who didn't have enough time to spend with their mounts.

"Riding a variety of horses before buying my own made me a better rider," she explains. This paid off royally during a riding vacation in Ireland where she was comfortable and successful in riding Irish Cobs previously unknown to her. Her knowledge and experience with many types of horses ensured that gallops on the beach and over the green hills were carefree and joyful!

For that reason, Penny encourages her students to wait to purchase their first horses until they have

had many experiences with a variety of horses. Preferably, she likes to see them take lessons at a boarding barn and learn to ride many different mounts. Sometimes students can find a horse who an owner who doesn't have much time to spend with their horse and is happy to find a familiar student to exercise it.

Penny has taught many beginning riders from the ages of 5 to 72, and everything in-between. Watching her students overcome their fears and develop confidence with horses motivates her instruction. Showing them the joys of horses is one of Penny's loves. "Being the catalyst for an awesome experience" and, "seeing that joy with horses feeds my soul," she says.

Some words of wisdom from Penny to her students: "Everyone has something to teach you."

Penny lives in St. Germain, WI and can be reached by phone at (715) 892-2216 or email pwahlgren13@gmail.com.



**(Top two photos)
Penny's horse, Flash, in the pasture
and in the barn.**

**(Bottom two photos) Two horses
Penny rode on her Ireland trip.**



Caryn Vesperman Editor

All advertisements, articles and photographs should be submitted by the 15th of the preceding month of publication, unless prior arrangements are made for additional time.

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

Payment should be submitted via PayPal through the WDEA website (newsletter@WiDressage.org) or mailed to the editor with a check made out to WDEA.

CONTACT

Caryn Vesperman
newsletter@WiDressage.org

Call/text:
(608) 695-9914



President's Message

First, thanks to all of you who responded to our member survey! I presented the results to the board at our February meeting. In future board meetings, we'll be discussing the results and actions we can take over the next year.

Survey Results and Action Plan

Some of the actions we could take, based on survey results, may be as simple as the article our awards chair, Celeste Pauli, is writing to dispel some of the myths and confusion with our two awards programs (the Recognized Dressage program and the Schooling Show program) and how to avoid the accidental mistakes made in signing up or reporting scores. I'll never forget my goof at forgetting to send in my scores years ago when I finally—FINALLY—reached Grand Prix. That was a bummer, but completely my fault! Anyway, watch for Celeste's article, as I'm sure it will help you understand our two programs better, especially since the Schooling Show Awards program is so new.

One of the comments made in the survey was members not knowing who to contact with questions. You can always contact me at president@Wldressage.org, and if the question is better answered by another board member, I'll direct the question or concern to them. In addition, our website has a "Contact" page listing all the board members—some with phone numbers, but all with email links on their names. The **Contact** page can be found when you click on the menu (three white lines under our logo in the upper right-hand corner of the home page): <https://wdcta.org/jupgrade/index.php/contact>.

Members at Large Initiative

When I became president, a thought I had was what could the Members at Large (MALs) focus on over their terms. These board positions have been around for years and are to serve as conduits from the board to members to bring forward concerns or ideas. We have more of these positions now because we only have one chapter left in our organization. The other chapters dissolved, due to the difficulty of finding volunteers to fill the chapter positions of president, vice president, treasurer and/or secretary. Without chapters, we have a gap in some areas—even more so in the northern and western regions of our state. (A chapter can be revived in the future, if enough interest and volunteers surface.)

So...a few weeks ago, I asked the six MALs to get together and divide the state into areas to help develop the WDEA community among area members and communication between the board and those area members. The idea is to develop dressage- and eventing-related educational and social activities in these chapter-less areas.

To be clear, the MALs are not the ones who will organize events and social gatherings for you. But they *will* help you figure out how to kick-start activities—from organizing a barn demo, riding clinic or educational panel. They'll help you figure out what board resources are available (from scholarships to assistance with funding), how to develop a budget with expenses and income (if needed), communication options to reach WDEA members in the area, and more. If you've never put on an event, even a simple social gathering in someone's home or barn, it can seem overwhelming! Watch for an email from me, introducing you to the MAL who will be supporting your local area. I'll be honest—I don't know if this will work, because it still requires volunteers to step forward, but I sincerely hope it helps jumpstart camaraderie, ideas and enthusiasm in your local area. If you have other thoughts on how we can spur activities, let me know.

Lastly, the next nine pages of the newsletter show the results from the Member Survey. I look forward to hearing from you!

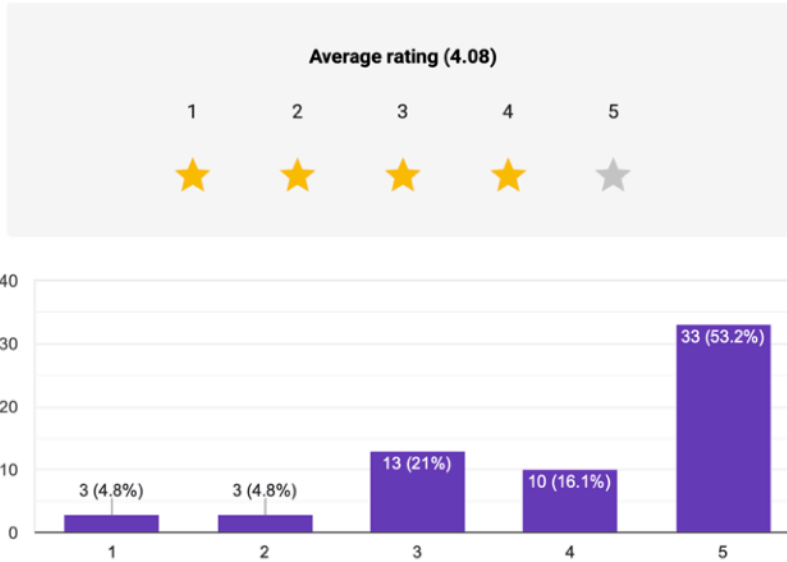
Caryn

Future WDEA Programs Feedback Survey

84 responses

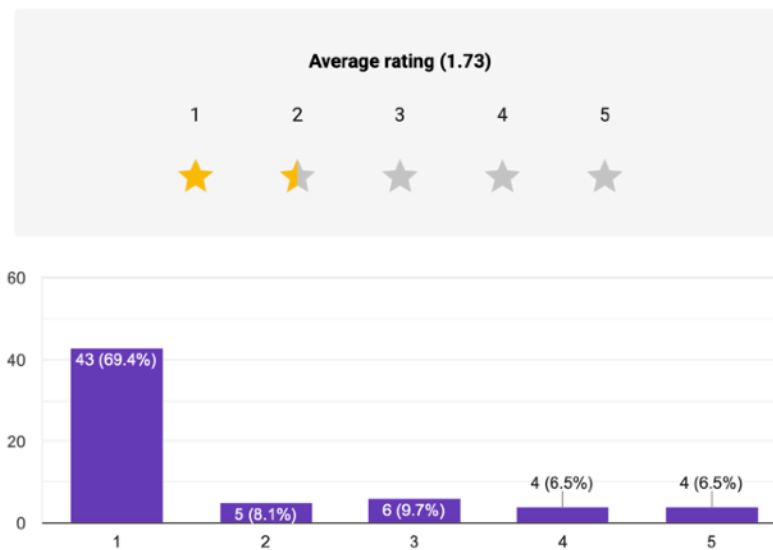
Overall, how interested would you be in participating in a WDEA-sponsored **dressage** clinic? One is "Not at all Interested" and 5 is "Very Interested."

62 responses



Overall, how interested would you be in participating in an **eventing** clinic? One is "Not at all interested" and 5 is "Very Interested."

62 responses



Survey Respondents Were Interested in the Following Dressage Clinicians:

(Not listed in order of popularity; all received about the same number of mentions, except for some with more mentions and are marked with **.)

- Jec Ballou
- Paul Belasik
- Anna Buffini
- Erin Chelstrom
- Shelly Day
- Jan Ebeling
- Lilo Fore
- Janet Foy**
- Laura Graves
- Scott Hassler
- Baren Hellman
- Carl Hester
- Gerd Heuschmann
- Cindy Ishoy
- Ingrid Klimke
- Jennifer Kotylo
- Kate/Martin Kuhn**
- Natalie Lamping
- Olivia Lagoy-Weltz
- Tik Maynard
- Amelia Newcomb**
- Tom Noone
- Claudio Oliviera
- Endel Otts
- Stephen Peters**
- Brett Parbery
- Shelly Reichart
- Jeremy Steinberg
- JJ Tate**
- Christopher Taylor
- Nicole Trapp
- Jennifer Truett
- Suzanne Von Dietz**
- Meg Williams
- Cindy Wylie
- Any who are FEI judges
- Local trainer

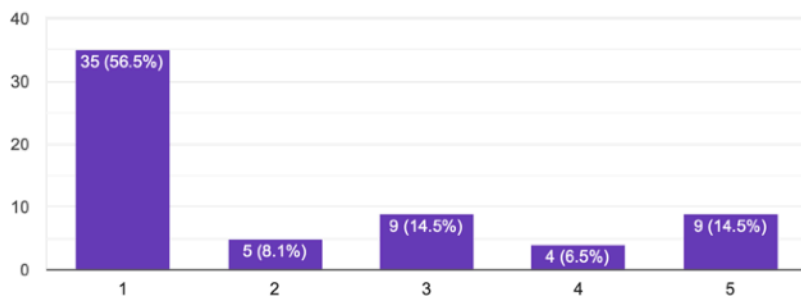
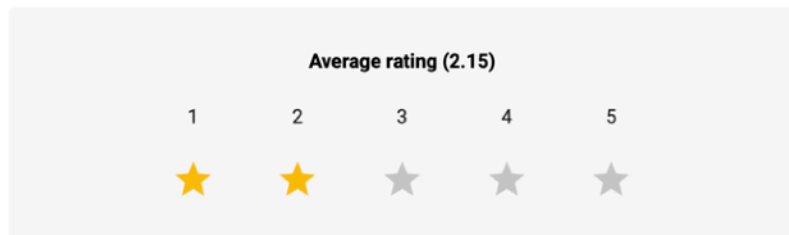
Eventing Clinicians Mentioned:

- Lainey Ashker
- Chris Burton
- Leslie Chelstron
- Brad Hall
- Ali Kuhn
- Boyd Martin**
- Dom Schramm
- Sharon White

Overall, how interested would you be in participating in a **Western dressage** clinic? One is "Not at all Interested" and 5 is "Very Interested."



62 responses

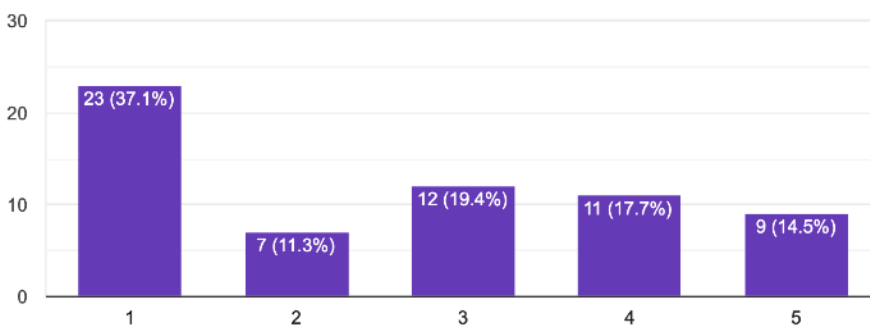
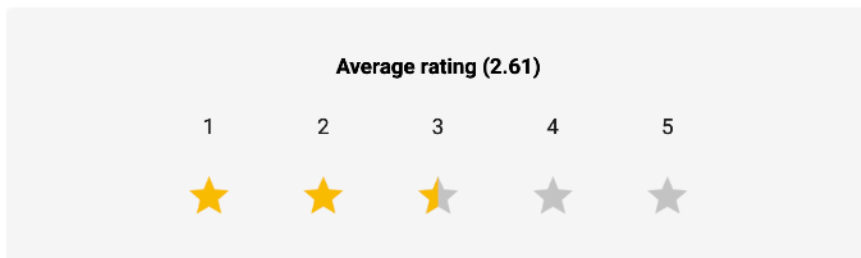


Western Dressage Clinicians Mentioned:

- Cindy Butler
- Joanne Coy
- Bobbi Eisenberg
- Heather Londo
- Joann Williams **

How interested would you be in participating in a **Virtual Dressage Test** (send in video of you riding a test, get a USEF/USDF-recognized judge's score and comments)? One is "Not at all Interested" and 5 is "Very Interested."

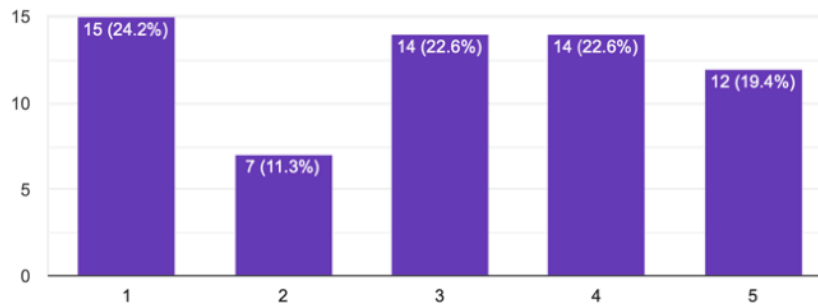
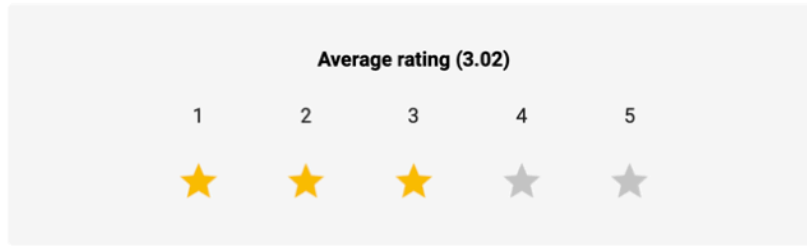
62 responses



How interested would you be in participating in a **Ride & Review Test** (send in a video of you riding a test, get a USEF/USDF-recognized judge's score, comments and *further suggestions* (which judges can't express at recognized shows) about exercises and other ideas to help improve? One is "Not at all Interested" and 5 is "Very Interested."



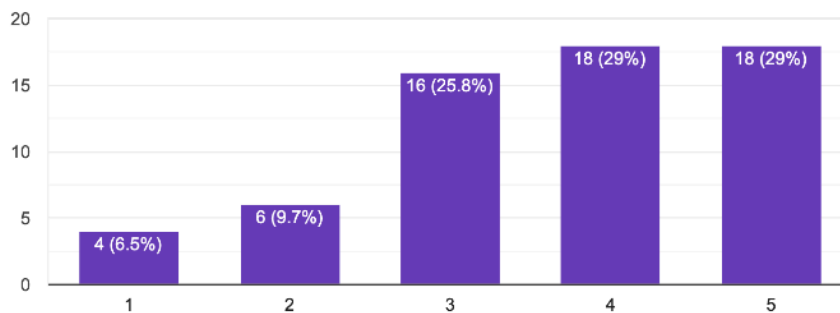
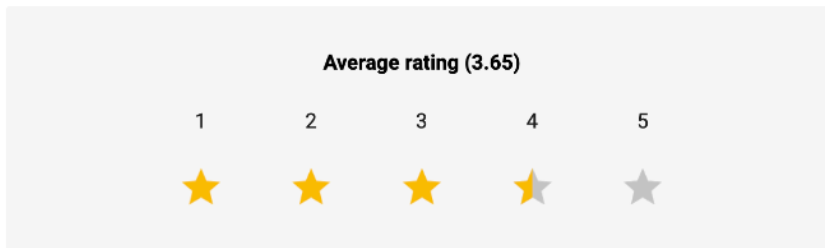
62 responses



Overall, how interested would you be in attending in-person or barn demos for WDEA social gatherings?

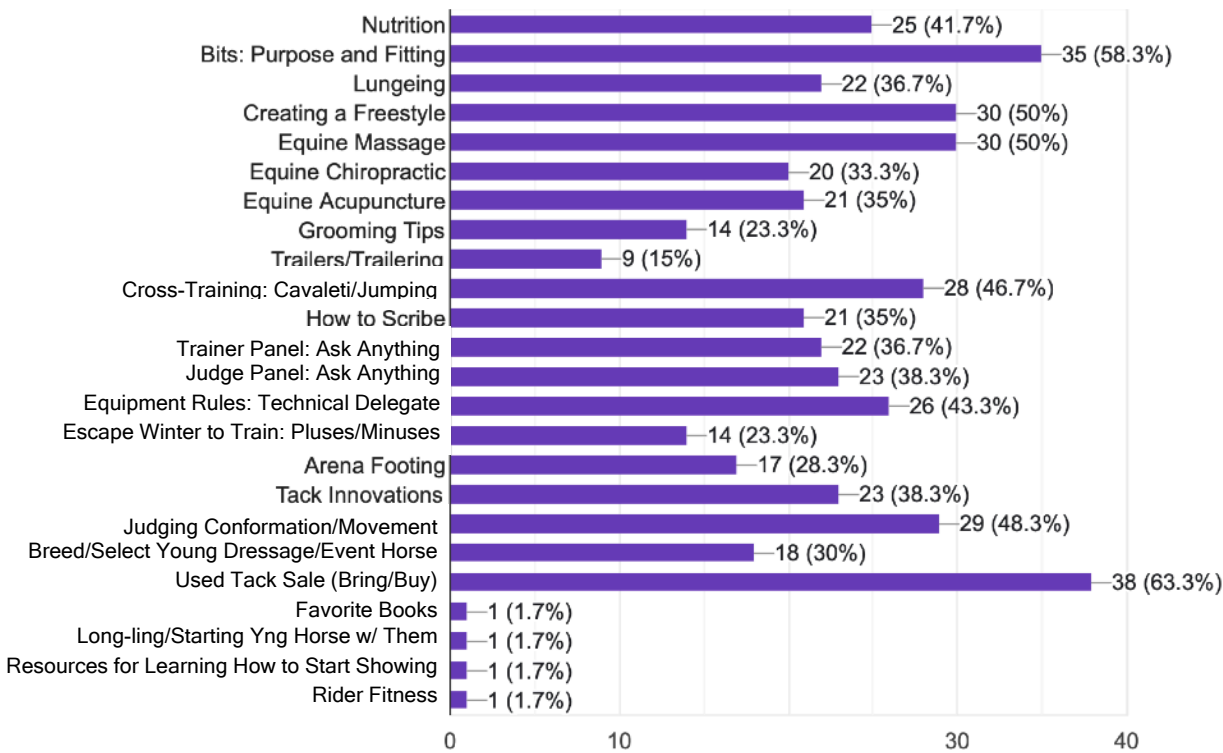


62 responses



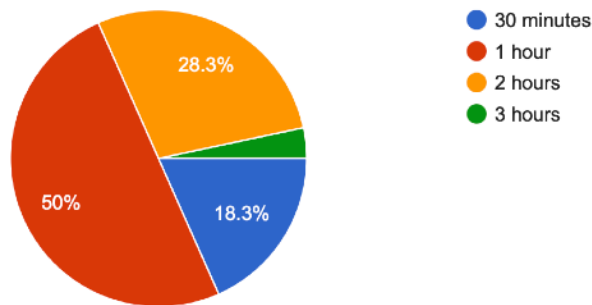
Please check all topics you'd be interested in a social gathering or meeting to learn about. (Check all that apply.)

60 responses



How far would you be willing to drive to attend an in-person event?

60 responses

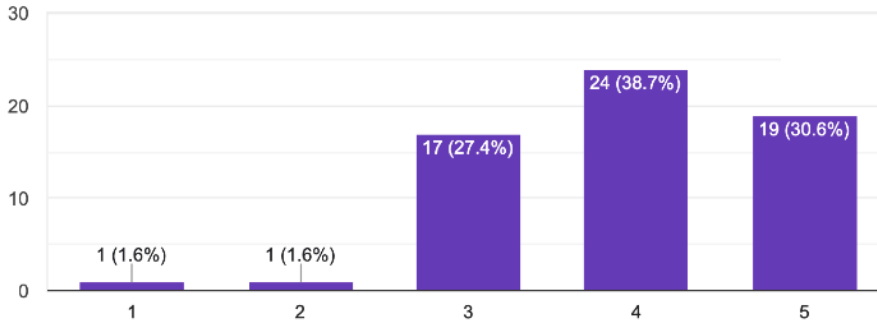
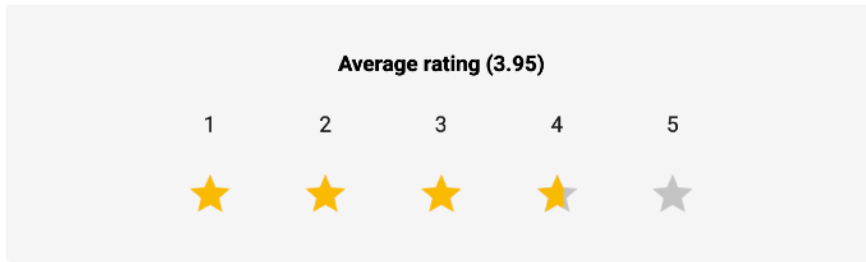


Which of the above topics would you be interested in accessing as a Zoom meeting or access later from the WDEA website?

- * All of them
- * Bits, bit fitting
- * Bits, nutrition, arena footing, judging conformation and movement.
- * Scribing
- * Sport horse lameness and trends in diagnosis and treatments.
- * Any that don't require hands-on or interaction.
- * I'm most interested in attending events in person. I like social interaction.
- * If the topic doesn't require hands on or interaction.
- * I think all should be recorded and made available on the website.
- * All, assuming the moderator is interested and to the point.
- * I don't Zoom. Unable to Zoom.

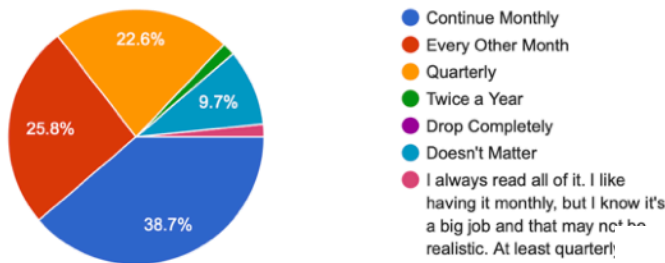
On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being highest, how do you rate the value of WDEA's newsletter?

62 responses



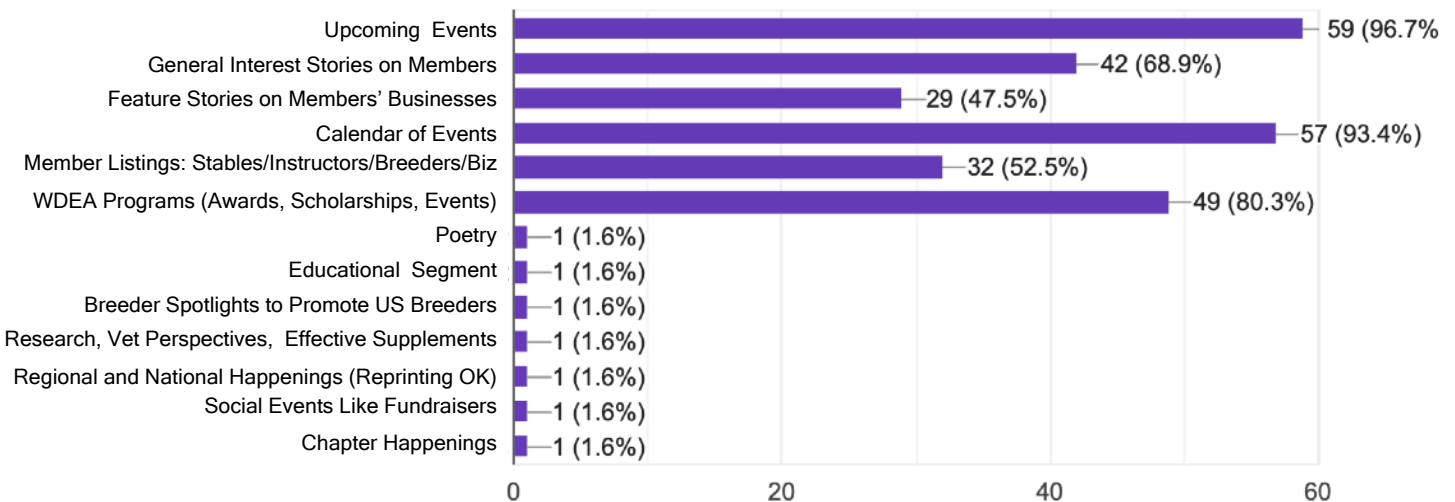
How often would you like to see the newsletter be published?

62 responses



What content would you like to see in the newsletter?

61 responses

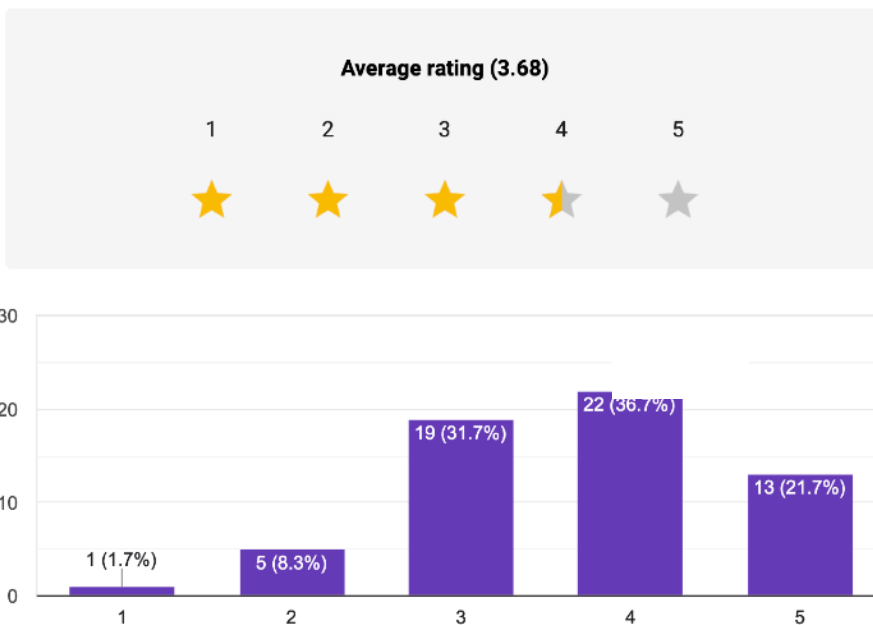


What improvements in the newsletter would you suggest?

- * Higher resolution. It's often grainy/pixelated.
- * Convince others to contribute. How??
- * Links to other equine interest events such as Festival or other big shows and learning opportunities. Perhaps even partnering with IDCTA.
- * None. It is well done.
- * I think (the editor) is doing a great job. I would like to see what is going on in other divisions. Perhaps a breakout about what is going on in the Eastern division.
- * Publish items submitted to the editor. Have sent in USDF awards 3 times & editor has not published. Like articles from other members. (The editor's) stuff ok but there other stuff out there.
- * It's great.
- * I think the format is fine — but since most people get their info on WDEA from the Facebook page, I think a quarterly newsletter is sufficient.
- * I don't care for the advertising for barns and trainers but get it's a revenue stream.
- * More stories from members about members and their dressage journey.
- * I stopped reading it because it seems like the articles didn't really pertain to someone at my level.
- * More "how to do" for those with limited trainers near them.
- * Getting involvement from other members, but I know this is something that is always encouraged. List out members/give stats on membership. How many are there? Where is everyone located? Etc.
- * More in detail, some of us don't understand what or how some topics work.
- * Locations reporting on their activities. A side column on future events by area: east, central. North central, etc.
- * More articles about members and rider fitness.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being highest, how do you rate the value of WDEA's website?

60 responses



Do you have any suggestions for improvement to WDEA's website?

- * More members sending articles!
- * Easier navigation.
- * It's hard to find things!
- * If there is a way to publish past year award winners!
- * There seem to be a lot of glitches to the website; could look more professional and be more user friendly.
- * Only time I access it is to renew my membership.
- * Still a couple of glitchy issues with forms.
- * Breeder spotlights to promote US-breeders.
- * I think the Facebook page is visited more.
- * Information about clinics.
- * Only time I access it is to renew my membership.
- * Information about clinics.
- * Don't ever use.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being highest, how do you rate the value of WDEA's Facebook pages?

56 responses



On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being highest, how do you rate the value of WDEA's **Recognized Show Awards** program?

55 responses

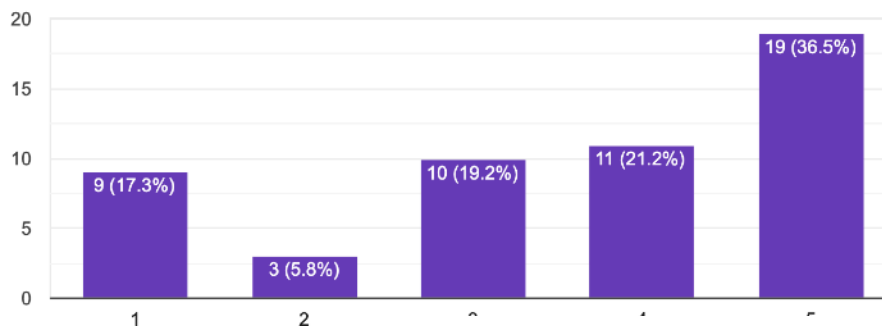
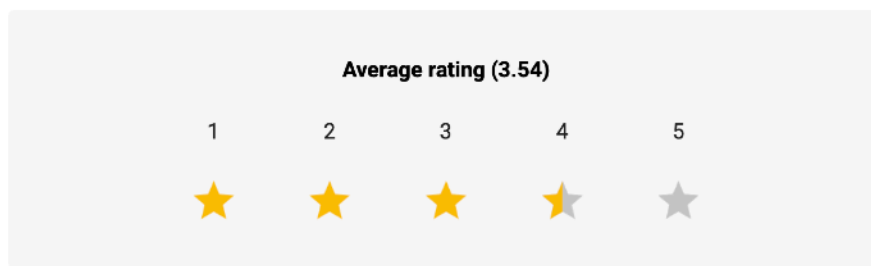


What suggestions would you have to improve WDEA's Recognized Show Awards program?

- * Recognized shows are too expensive.
- * It has a lot of rules to qualify for the already high costs.
- * Don't participate, show mostly in SC.
- * Great, but deadlines for 1st timers were late by 1 day; chairperson said would not accept them. I said give everybody a 1 time oops I late. Nope would not budge. Because of this WDCTA lost 2 members.
- * We need more participants to increase the budget for awards.
- * The awards have been awesome. So much better than any other GMOs' awards. Keep it up!
- * Add Dressage Equitation as a category. Add Vintage Amateur for riders over 50yrs old.
- * Spend more money on teaching those interested in learning about "dressage" and "eventing."
- * Having better prizes- gives more incentive to joining. Why aren't there beautiful, big ribbons?
- * Shows are too expensive and not really worth it for western dressage.
- * Only for the rich.
- * Not accepting breed restricted shows is why I am leaving WDEA. Sad that breed shows are not included.
- * Doesn't affect me because I only afford to show at 1-2 shows, and I find more value in clinics.
- * I don't compete, so not important to me. However, I recognize its value for those who do.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being least and 5 being highest, how do you rate the value of WDEA's **Schooling** Show Awards program?

52 responses



What improvements would you suggest for WDEA's Schooling Show Awards program?

- * Why must it include a recognized show if it's schooling show awards? That doesn't make sense.
- * Really unfortunate you don't offer virtual scoring and that the owner and rider have to be members.
- * More help to organize and set up for the show. Seems to be the same people which can cause burn out.
- * There do not seem to be very many shows! Doesn't seem to be central place to get info about them.
- * Did not apply to me because they did not recognize online shows, lacking of western dressage classes.
- * Schooling shows are also expensive to attend.
- * Need more guidance on how to get ready/train for a schooling show. Encourage newcomers to attend.
- * Include an Open division.
- * Again, better prizes.
- * Include Western Dressage.
- * Sad that breed shows ARE included.
- * Never heard of it.
- * I am not interested in shows so it isn't of value to me.

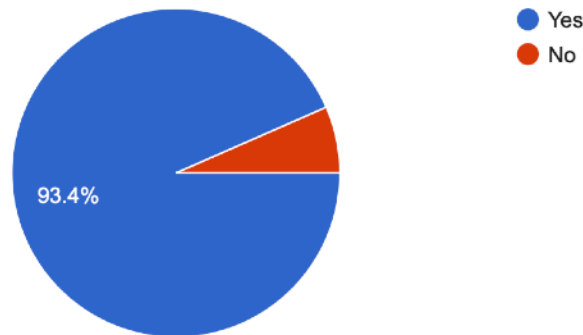
What suggestions do you have overall that WDEA should consider to help better meet your needs as a member?

- * WDEA needs to host/sponsor more events itself. Right now only the Eastern chapter is really doing events.
- * Keep schooling show awards schooling shows only. Allow cash/check payments for those of us who don't have credit cards.
- * Human/live get-togethers.
- * More affordable opportunities. There is a lot of money available in the accounts. The state and chapter needs to spend it down and then fundraise and spend to a budget that uses the money.
- * Showing appreciation for facility hosts and the time it takes to organize and prepare for clinics. When there is a complaint, supporting the organizer and shutting down the drama that ultimately tears down the community and willingness to volunteer again.
- * Breed shows with USEF/ USDF rating should be considered rated.
- * For awards — recognition of online WDAA shows.
- * More communication on clinics and happenings.
- * More educational events and activities.
- * Continue to bring in clinicians and provide learning opportunities.
- * Provide more "real" amateur support.
- * Make sure members understand how to participate in Western and Eventing awards programs.
- * There should be a place to advertise tack and things for sale. Currently there is only the WI Dressage page, but why isn't there an easier place for members to connect and do so. Also, there are way too many connecting places—have one place.
- * It would be nice to know who we are supposed to go to with questions or inquiries about things throughout the year? I've taken concerns to leaders in the past, and I am basically told I am causing trouble—not getting my concerns addressed.
- * Help me get more involved, an advocate in my area.
- * I like learning about horses rather than showing them.
- * This survey should help, it's great!

Now a little about you...

Are you a current member (or planning to be):

61 responses



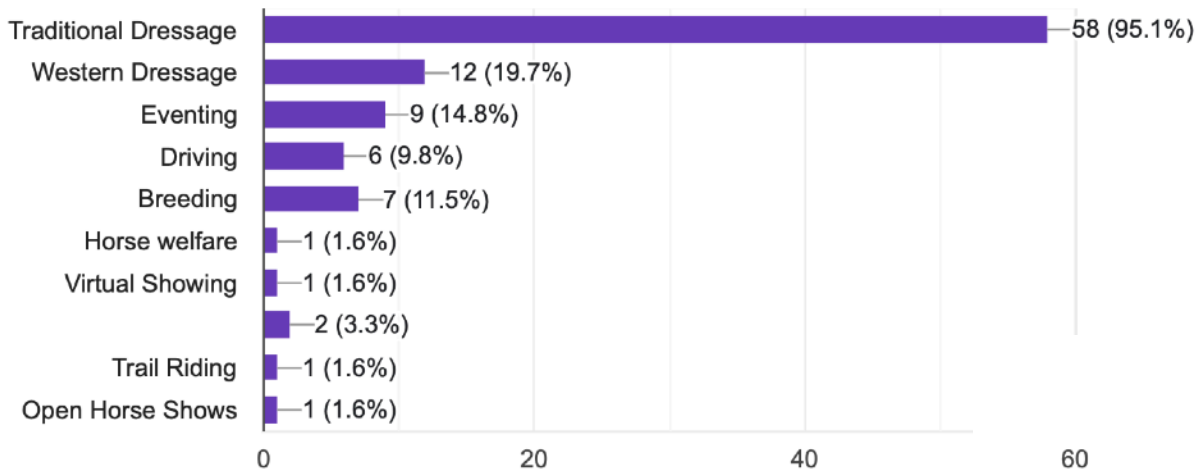
If you aren't currently a member, please indicate why you didn't
rejoin:

9 responses



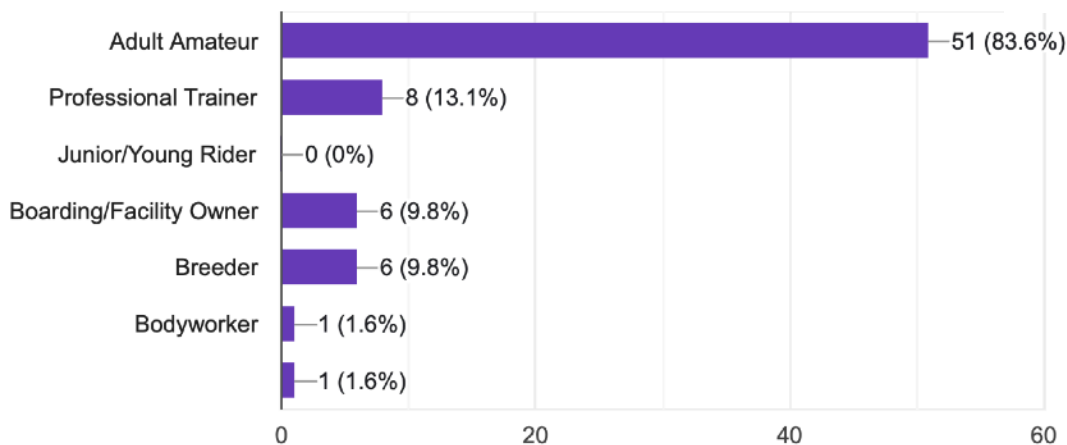
What is your current area(s) of interest: (Pick all that apply.)

61 responses



Check all that apply: Are you...

61 responses



Do you have any ideas to help encourage members to volunteer?

- * Specific needs, time commitments and openings.
- * A year end award/scholarship for the top three accrued hours for Volunteers beyond just the Volunteer of the Year.
- * Require a certain number of volunteer hours to be eligible for years end awards.
- * Could we give volunteers "credits" they could use toward WDEA clinics and things? I would be willing to pay an increased entry or registration fee to create the possibility of awarding participation to people who are spending time for our benefit.
- * Find their passion.
- * Encourage and support small teams or barns to come together to host opportunities.
- * Discounts.
- * Credits that can be used on learning opportunities.
- * Offer to exchange volunteer hours for a discount on membership.
- * Discounts on clinic or event.
- * I wonder if people are shy about volunteering or think they don't know enough to volunteer. Maybe we need to be proactive and contact all members asking if they'd volunteer and what they'd like to help with.
- * Drawings for WDEA merchandise, and special recognition at banquets/events.
- * Discounts on clinics, free stall at schooling shows, reimburse gas? Financially it's hard for me to volunteer at events because it would require a hotel and significant mileage.
- * Somehow, give them more recognition.
- * Simple roles leading to more complex roles. Growth opportunities...
- * Getting people together to create a social bond often leads both to volunteerism and opportunities to identify people to invite/encourage to volunteer.
- * Being more open and friendly when new people come to meetings. I had tried to become more involved but was met with unfriendliness/close perspective when I gave suggestions which discouraged me. With that being said, I still am a member but chose to move to more friendlier groups.
- * Don't make it so intimidating, step by step.
- * We should have a booth at Midwest Horse Fair in Madison. I mean what is with the attitude to not be there. Past leadership was not supportive of Madison events and a penny pincher. Always the budget. Look at the results. I am hopeful for the future. Volunteer hours count towards credit for end-of-year awards. Most helpful, most thoughtful. Make up a bunch of categories for FUN. Most cheerful. Past leadership. In Madison, did not welcome any new ideas and not in budget was very difficult to hear. In my opinion, people have to feel welcome. Not everything should be virtual. But I like virtual in the cold months. Thank you (newsletter editor) for your thoughtfulness, and I appreciate your newsletter, and I am grateful for the new leadership. Thank you. Put out a sign-up sheet for Horse Fair booth. Start there. And build on it.
- * Earn points to go towards paying for membership or year-end awards.

Thank You!

The WDEA Board thanks those who participated in the survey. The board will be discussing all these statistics and suggestions. Congratulations to Carolyn S. on winning the \$50 Dover Saddlery gift certificate in the random drawing for those who wanted to participate in the survey drawing.

Whether you participated or not in the survey, the board welcomes your suggestions and ideas, as well as your attendance at the board meetings, which are open to the membership. The board meetings (other than the one at the Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet) are virtual. If you'd like to attend, please contact the WDEA president at president@WIdressage.org.

A Focus on Rider Wellness & Awards Banquet

Saturday, March 14, 2026
The Osthoff Resort - Elkhart Lake, WI



101 Osthoff Avenue
Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
(800) 876-3399
osthoff.com

JOIN US FOR A DAY FOCUSED ON RIDER HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOLLOWED BY OUR ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING, DINNER AND AWARDS BANQUET. FOR THOSE STAYING UNTIL SUNDAY, JOIN US FOR A MORNING YOGA SESSION TO START THE DAY OFF RIGHT!

SPEAKERS:

Lindsay Fencl, RD, CD - Aurora Baycare Medical Center, Green Bay, WI

- A Registered Dietician with expertise in Women's Health, Sports Nutrition and Community Wellness
- Passionate about helping individuals of all ages and fitness levels achieve their health goals.
- Focuses on optimizing performance, supporting hormone and gut health, managing and preventing chronic conditions, navigating menopause, and promoting overall well-being.

Cathy Penrod, - Equicoach

- A certified COR.E Performance Dynamics Specialist (CPDS) and *Energy Leadership™ Index Master Practitioner* (ELI-MP).
- Over four decades of riding, more than 29 years of leadership experience and a proven track record in fostering results, she helps equestrians excel in their chosen discipline.

Suzanne Galdun, Certified Rider Biomechanics Instructor - Positively Dressage

- One of only 13 rider biomechanics coaches in the US
- Accredited by Mary Wanless in her Ride With Your Mind method.
- Educated in related fields such as hoof care, human and equine anatomy and physiology.

ROOMS AVAILABLE AT SPECIAL RATES FOR WDEA MEMBERS:
2 QUEENS: \$169.00 2 BEDROOM SUITE: \$209.00 CALL: 1 (800) 876-3399

A Focus on Rider Wellness & Awards Banquet

Saturday, March 14, 2026
The Osthoff Resort - Elkhart Lake, WI



101 Osthoff Avenue
Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
(800) 876-3399
osthoff.com

REGISTRATION FORM/SCHEDULE

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

WELLNESS PRESENTATIONS: *Non-Member \$50* _____ *Member \$25* _____
12:00-3:30

Light snacks and beverages served throughout.

SHOPPING/SILENT AUCTION OPENS/SOCIAL HOUR: 3:30-5:30
Hors d'oeuvres Provided/Cash Bar

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: 5:30-6:00

SPEAKER PANEL DISCUSSION: 6:00-7:00

DINNER: *Non-Member \$60* _____ *Member \$40* _____
7:30-8:00
Balsamic Glazed Chicken _____ *Pan Seared Salmon* _____ *(Vegetarian) Roasted Mushroom and Ricotta Ravioli* _____
Please alert us if dietary restrictions are necessary

AWARDS 8:00-9:00

SILENT AUCTION CLOSES 8:30

GRAND TOTAL: \$ _____

SUNDAY MORNING YOGA WITH COMPLIMENTARY CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST FOLLOWING
PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WILL BE JOINING US FOR YOGA (no charge) _____

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO: WDEA **OR PAYPAL:** WISCONSIN DRESSAGE AND EVENTING ASSOCIATION

MAIL TO: WDEA ANNUAL MEETING/JESSICA KACZMAREK
N1924 ROCHELLE COURT GREENVILLE, WI 54942

CONTACT: jessica.a.kaczmarek@gmail.com (920) 619-3419 OR trappnl@hotmail.com (920) 960-6930
(WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS)

Meet Your WDEA Board of Directors: **Morgan Winter, Treasurer**

This series with both horse and non-related horse questions and answers is intended as a "get to know" your volunteers on the WDEA Board.



Why do you volunteer for WDEA:

I volunteer with WDEA as a way to be more involved in my favorite sport and utilize my financial services background in a way that benefits others.

Horse(s): Since losing my heart horse, Smoothie, in 2021, I have had the great privilege of riding Mikasa's Bold Storm (George) who is owned by Debby Zangl. George is an

Arabian Sporthorse schoolmaster that my trainer, Becky Rutkowski, showed through Prix St. George and is 25 years young! Under Becky's guidance, George has been an amazing teacher, helping me re-learn how to ride after double hip replacements and correctly apply aids. In January, I began my first "young horse" journey and brought home a four-year-old Arabian Sporthorse, PR Independence Day, otherwise known as "Goose." I'm so excited for where this next chapter will take us!

Adult amateur or professional: Adult Amateur

Job, retired and/or horse business: My background is public accounting, and I currently work on a family of venture capital-style funds that invest in improving the aging experience.

Current trainer and/or clinician whom you enjoy working with and why: I currently train with Becky Rutkowski out of Rosebury Farm in Mukwonago. Rosebury hosts Martin Kuhn as a clinician—he is so energizing to ride with and always gives us plenty of homework!

Highest level you ride/competed: I have competed at First Level.

Most interesting, fun or odd thing to ever happen to you when riding: Horses are always doing the strangest things! One pretty funny thing happened at my first show with George a few years ago. While I tend to get some nerves in the show ring, George is a seasoned general who has truly done and seen it all. Right after the judge's whistle blew, and I was about to go down centerline for the first time in years and with a new set of hips, a bullfrog from a neighboring pond let out the biggest RIBBIT. George, usually unflappable, took off in a quick extended canter around the ring. While I might have called the test there, my trainer Becky calmly read for me to enter at

A and halt at X, and while it wasn't our best test, we got it done! To this day we joke about how George is pretty much bombproof unless there is a horse-eating bullfrog around.

What's something people don't know about you:

I had double hip replacements at age 24 following hip dysplasia surgeries as a kid, and it was the best thing I've ever done for my riding!

Favorite book or movie: My favorite movie is *The Princess Bride*.

Favorite horse book or training book that gave you an insight about riding: I loved the novel, "Horse" by Geraldine Brooks.



Morgan's new horse, PR Independence Day, who is known as Goose around the barn.

Training in Harmony: A Toolkit for Both Horse and Rider



By Caryn Vesperman

In January, I attended a fundraiser for Lendon Gray's non-profit organization, *Dressage4KidsTM*. The evening featured a panel discussion with (in order of photos above) Ali Brock, Christoph Koschel, Adrienne Lyle and Lars Petersen—all top international riders. Following are the questions and answers from the panelists.

Has the training changed today because the horses are bred specifically for dressage?

Lars: Today's horses are much more bred to be athletes—almost like they know dressage. But people forget to do the basics because these horses are so naturally talented for dressage. Some do passage when they're young, but that can't and shouldn't carry like that when they're young. They must develop the strength so these young horses don't get injured.

Ali: When we have super moving horses, we must remember they are young. They may move freakishly beautiful, but that doesn't mean they're ready for higher work. Pay attention to their bones—plus their brain is not there! Take the time.

Christoph: With horses that are pushed, where are they later? Take the time to let them grow into their body and their mind. Just because they offer it, doesn't mean we should do it.

What are some tips for getting the horse in front of the leg?

Lars: Remind yourself that your aids are 80% seat, 15% leg and only 5% hand. Guiding the horse mostly comes from your seat/core/lower back. The more they are tuned into that, the better they move off your leg.

Ali: The rider can't be tight in the seat. You can't stop a following seat and only use the leg aid.

Adrienne: Check how responsive the horse is from pressure given on the ground. How quickly does the horse move away from that?

Christoph: If a horse is a bit lazy, you need to get them to push to the bit. Make horse sensitive to the leg through transitions. They must get more "self-going."

How do you get a horse to reinback?

Christoph: Help the horse understand the reinback with a helper from the ground. You're using something they know from being handled around the barn, so use the assistance when you're in the saddle.

Adrienne: Use turn on the forehand and incorporate aids for reinback when the horse is moving.

Ali: Start with having the horse respond from the ground. They eventually can do that easily. When you do it from the ground or in the saddle, do not pull on the mouth to get them to back up. If the walk in the reinback gets lateral, take one step back, turn on the forehand, repeat. Keep strides slow.

Lars: First, check that the horse isn't sore. Then just make sure the horse doesn't get tight in the back as you ask for the reinback.

How do you get a square halt consistently?

Christoph: Why is something so hard when we've been halting our horses since they were young?! First, the horse must be straight. Start trotting then walk—keeping the horse straight. Then walk to halt, and trot to halt. Start on the wall to

help, then move to the quarter line and then centerline, always focusing on straightness. This is an exercise that can be practiced every day.

Adrienne: If horse halts square in front, then tap hind leg to square up. Do it in the same place in the arena.

Ali: Close up to the halt with your seat and lower legs. Don't halt with the reins!

Lars: Think transitions, which is always a signal for a horse to gather up.

What do you do for a horse that is stiff on one side?

Lars: Dressage is meant to make horses even. The more a horse goes crooked, the more likely an injury will occur. Every horse is stronger or stiffer on one side. Getting a horse even is the most important thing in training. You can't fix this by pulling on the stiff side. A good exercise to do is shoulder-in to renverse (haunches out). Switch the bend constantly. You can't just work on the hard side for the entire long side of the arena.

"Don't panic if it doesn't go well.... Remember, tomorrow is another day."

- Christoph Koschel

Continued on next page

Harmony continued

Ali: Check to make sure the rider isn't contributing to the crookedness. Remember, do not push and pull at the same time.

Adrienne: Let the horse's body warm up. After the warm-up, don't immediately go to the stiff side—you might get defensive. How would you feel if someone cranked on your neck?

How do you correct a late behind flying change?

Ali: You need to check several things including how easy and correct are your simple changes (canter-walk-canter), does your horse go easily forward and back in canter and counter-canter, how easy does your horse leg yield off the wall.

Then when doing the change, think about *not* letting the horse change in front.

Adrienne: Think about what happens immediately after the attempted change (loss of impulsion, loss of balance, loss of tempo). The canter must remain the same before and after the change. Never do the change on the diagonal when the horse is learning—just like I never do the piaffe where it is in the test. This creates tension and anticipation.

Christoph: Try to figure out why the change is late. Maybe it's the lack of activity in the hind leg that will carry the change; then try to make that hind leg more active. Check the horse's straightness: where is the ribcage? If it's bent to the direction of the existing canter and doesn't change its bend (counter flexion) or become straight, the horse can't get the new inside leg forward enough.

How do you stop steps from sticking in walk pirouettes?

Lars: Horses are either pushing to the inside or outside leg when they do a walk pirouette incorrectly. So in the training, make the pirouettes bigger. Go straight, then turn, straight, then turn.

Ali: Make sure the horse is in shoulder-fore. Keep them upright on their inside shoulder. They stick because they are out of alignment.

Adrienne: At any time it starts going wrong, I walk out. The horse must always be forward-thinking.

Christoph: Don't make a big thing out of it. Try to think about turning the shoulder around. The inside hand indicates the turn. Keep it simple. You're simply steering the shoulders around.

How do you correct a horse who spins in the pirouettes?

Lars: All horses are better on one side versus the other. Even as a young horse, riders must detect which hind leg is stronger. The "hollow" inside means the horse is more likely to spin in that direction. Work on developing equal strength in both hind legs.

Ali: Keep thinking of inside leg/outside rein. A horse spins because they get too straight and fall in because they lose balance. Ride the pirouette as a shoulder-fore, Don't let them turn on their own accord—stop them by riding straight after a few steps. Then start again. Break the pirouette apart.

Adrienne: Get your weight to the outside shoulder. Also, the canter must be controlled and must collect. Too often riders come into the pirouette way too big.

Christoph: A little trick horses have is they like to lean on something.

One thing you can do is

canter around a person. Horses know they shouldn't run over a person, so they seem to take care of that person.

What's the hardest thing in training?

Lars: Making a horse even.

Ali: Having a horse in front of the leg on demand, under pressure—truly having a horse with me. Most of the time it's not the horse's fault. It's the rider's position. Maybe they're clamping down, rigid, hips stuck and pulling. The horse can't go when this happens. Riders have to ride better.

Adrienne: Riders need to have more accountability. If you can't explain what you're doing in simple terms to another person, how can the horse understand?

Christoph: Riders have to question themselves. Have they set up their horse correctly? Don't panic if it doesn't go well. Be happy with one good change in a line of tempe changes. There should be harmony. Remember, tomorrow is another day.

"If you can't explain what you're doing in simple terms to another person, how can the horse understand?"

- Adrienne Lyle

Member Listings

INSTRUCTORS

Andrea Schten-Achtenhagen
Colt's Neck Equestrian Center
N76W36158 Saddlebrook Lane
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
aschten2000@yahoo.com
(262) 470-4557

Background experience: Has worked with multiple Olympic trainers. Ridden through Grand Prix. USDF Gold, Silver and Bronze medals, plus multiple regional championships. Will teach Intro to Grand Prix. School horses available. Will travel.

Jesse K. Kassner
DressurSPORT, llc
6333 Briarcliff Lane
Middleton, WI 53562
jesse@dressursport.com
kassner.j.k@gmail.com
(608) 358-1125
dressursport.com

Riding since 1984. Trained in U.S., UK and Germany from 1998-2011. Classical dressage instructor for beginner thru Grand Prix since 1994. Teaches classical and western dressage and dressage for eventers. Instruction focuses on anatomy and biomechanics of rider and horse as a pair. Will travel.

Jackie Luebke-Puetz
Grand Prix Farm
15034 Co. Rd. X
Kiel, WI 53042-9706
cvestor@aol.com
(920) 693-3367

Have taught riding for many years, ridden thru Prix St. Georges. Will teach thru Second Level. Will travel.

Megan Mclsaac
Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum
4246 Schneider Drive
Oregon, WI 53575
lindhofllc@gmail.com
(608) 445-8531
lindhof.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.

Debra Stephenson
Plum Lake Equestrian Center
8177 Plum Lake Station Rd
Sayner, WI 54560
(414) 312-1630
plumlakeequinectr@gmail.com
plumlakeequestriancenter.com

A 60-acre north woods venue for your special event: workshops, retreats, weddings, fundraisers, barn dances, hiking, biking, trail riding, horse camps and more!

STABLES

Colt's Neck Equestrian Center
Andrea Schten-Achtenhagen
N76W36158 Saddlebrook Lane
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
aschten2000@yahoo.com
(262) 470-4557

Heated 20 stall barn, heated 72' x 200' indoor arena, safe board turnout with pastures, large outdoor arena.

Countryview Equestrian Estates
5151 Beaver Dam Road
West Bend, WI 53090
vonfrankenberga@gmail.com
(262) 388-4302

Boarding barn with lessons and training available. Well-lit, huge, insulated indoor arena and view-ing lounge. Lighted outdoor arena. Round pen with sand footing. Wash stall with heat lamp and hot/cold water. Heated bathroom in both barns. Heated and air-conditioned full kitchen and tack rooms. Stalls in two barns offer automatic waterers, matted stalls, slow-feed hay nets and small paddocks attached to the stalls. Private trails.

Grand Prix Farm
Jackie Luebke-Puetz
15034 Co. Rd. X
Kiel, WI 53042-9706
cvestor@aol.com
(920) 693-3367

Indoor arena w/ mirrors, heated barn and bathroom, H/C wash stall, screened facility—no bugs, all turnout in PVC fencing. Trails. Lessons available.

Lindhof Equine Sports Zentrum
Megan Mclsaac
4246 Schneider Drive
Oregon, WI 53575
lindhofllc@gmail.com
(608) 445-8531

80x200' heated indoor w/ mirrors. New stalls and client tack room w/ individual lockers. Individual and group turnout. Wash stall. Solarium. Theraplate. Numerous trails. Individual training programs. Lessons and leasing options on FEI school horses, month training for horses and riders. FEI trainer on site.

Member Listings

BUSINESS

Barn Besties

Stephanie Severn/Megan McIsaac
4246 Schneider Road

Oregon, WI 53575

(608) 213-8925

barnbestiesllc@gmail.com

[https://www.youtube.com/](https://www.youtube.com/@BarnyardBestiesWI/featured)

[@BarnyardBestiesWI/featured](#)

Stephanie and Megan have created Barn Besties to build an online community. They provide videos on running and managing horse farms. Videos include building a facility, fencing, arena footing, equipment, barn tours and much more. Check out their YouTube channel.

Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum

4246 Schneider Drive

Oregon, WI 53575

lindinhofllc@gmail.com

(608) 445-8531

lindinhof.com

Importing top quality dressage horses from Europe. Contact us to find your next dressage star.

DressurSPORT, llc

6333 Briarcliff Lane

Middleton, WI 53562

jesse@dressursport.com

(608) 358-1125

dressursport.com

Dressage/eventing website, online equestrian community and forum with classifieds of used tack and gear and imported tack and apparel, calendar of events and results, articles on riding, tack/saddle selection, fitting/maintenance, arena design/construction/maintenance.

Plum Lake Equestrian Center

Debra Stephenson

8177 Plum Lake Station Rd

Sayner, WI 54560

(414) 312-1630

plumlakeequinectr@gmail.com

plumlakeequestriancenter.com

A 60-acre north woods venue for your special event: workshops, retreats, weddings, fundraisers, barn dances, hiking, biking, trail riding, horse camps and more!

Caryn Vesperman

USEF/USDF "r" Judge

W1619 King Road

Brooklyn, WI 53521

touchstonefarm@gmail.com

(608) 455-2208

USDF Gold, Silver, Bronze medalist. Continuing education includes scribing for international levels with U.S. and foreign judges (including World Cup in Omaha), accepted into the "R" judge program, and current two horses competing at FEI levels — were unstarted and brought up the levels. Available for USEF/USDF-recognized dressage shows, eventing and schooling shows.*

BREEDERS

Jackie Luebke-Puetz

Grand Prix Farm

15034 Co. Rd. X

Kiel, WI 53042-9706

cvestor@aol.com

(920) 693-3367

Standing Section B Welsh stallion, Too Cute to Shoot, bay, 13.2 h, cuter than a bug's ear and several times qualified for USDF breeding championships. In 2018, was third in halter for Welsh Association.*

Calendar

WDEA Events

March 14

**WDEA Rider Wellness
Annual Meeting and Awards
Banquet**

Osthoff Resort
Elkhart Lake, WI

An afternoon of presentations on improving your health for the benefit of riding and your life, followed by dinner and awards banquet.

See registration in this newsletter or on our website.

Other Events

April 17-19

Midwest Horse Fair

Madison, WI

Aug. 26-30

Festival of Champions

Lamplight Equestrian Center,
Wadsworth, IL

Festival of Champions
(Includes young horse
championships)

Sept. 17-20

Region 2 Championships

Lamplight Equestrian Center
Wayne, IL

Oct. 1-4

Region 4 Championships

National Equestrian Center
Lake St. Louis, MO

Oct. 29-Nov. 1

US Dressage Finals

World Equestrian Center

Wilmington, OH

DRESSURSPORT.COM

A monthly resource and online dressage and eventing community

- Calendar of USDF and USEA clinics, shows, events
- Links to event results
- Articles and new product reviews by industry pros:
 - Training and techniques for riders and their mounts
 - Tack and saddle selection, fitting, maintenance
 - Apparel
 - Arena and course design, construction, maintenance
 - Current news
- Submit articles or suggest topics for future articles
- Reader forum to respond to articles or create new topics
- Market for tack/apparel imported from the UK and EU
- Online market to buy/sell used equipment (*Coming soon!*)

CountryView Equestrian Estates, LLC



Email: vonfrankenberga@gmail.com

or see us on Facebook!

Phone: 262-689-0090

Phone: 262-483-1414

countryviewee.com

5151 Beaver Dam Road

West Bend, WI 53090

Ernst & Annette VonFrankenberg

**Ride Along for Advice From Trainers
& Farm Owners, Tour Farms, Learn
to Avoid Common Mistakes When Building
Your Dream Farm**

Farm
Fresh
Advice



Learning
All The
Things!

BARN BESTIES

YouTube: @BarnyardBestiesWI

Lindinhof
Equine Sports Zentrum

Horseback Riding Lessons in Oregon, WI

Lindinhof boasts a well organized lesson program with safe school horses and three fantastic instructors. Several of our students have gone from starting on the lunge line or Kid's Camp to schooling all upper level movements of dressage on our well trained school horses.

- Young Rider & AA Friendly
- Safe Environment
- Goal - Oriented

Contact us Today to set up your first Lesson!

Phone: (608) 445-8531

Email: LindinhofLLC@gmail.com

Oregon, Wisconsin

With Thanks to Our 2026 Business Members!

Colt's Neck Equestrian Center - Andrea Schten

CountryView Equestrian Estates - Madeleine VonFrankenberg

JKK Dressur, LLC - Jesse Kassner

Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum - Megan McIsaac

Plum Lake Equestrian Center - Debra Stephenson

Join as a business member today!

It's not too late to convert your current membership to a business membership.



WISCONSIN
Dressage & Eventing
ASSOCIATION

NOTE OUR NEW NAME AND NEW PAYMENT INFO

**WISCONSIN DRESSAGE & EVENTING ASSOCIATION
2026 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

MEMBERSHIP TERM: December 1 – November 30

___ RENEWAL ___ NEW - Referred by _____

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ MI _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE _____

ZIP CODE _____ PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

FARM OR BUSINESS NAME _____

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

- ___ Clinic or Event
- ___ Midwest Horse Fair
- ___ USDF ___ USEF
- ___ USEA
- ___ Pony Club
- ___ Facebook
- ___ Current WDEA member – (Name) _____
- ___ Web Search
- ___ Other: _____

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

DISCIPLINES:

- ___ Dressage
- ___ Eventing
- ___ Breeder
- ___ OTHER

RIDER STATUS:

- ___ Professional
- ___ Adult Amateur
- ___ Young Rider (*age 18-21)
- ___ Junior Rider (*age 17 or younger; age as of January 1)

AFFILIATION:

- ___ Eastern Chapter
- ___ General Membership

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION AND FEES

- \$164 BUSINESS Membership** – Includes one USDF Group membership; emailed newsletter; one voting privilege; recognition and business card ad in WDEA's newsletter, *eQuesta*, listing and logo on WDEA website. Also, INCLUDES Stable, Instructor, Breeder & Business listings (choose one or all four) in both *eQuesta* and WDEA 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 or older) Includes one USDF group membership; *eQuesta* newsletter; one voting privilege.
- \$39 JUNIOR Membership -- Birth date** _____ (must be age 17 or younger as of January 1st. Do not use in conjunction with a Family Membership. Includes one USDF group membership; *eQuesta* newsletter; one voting privilege.

As a member of WDEA, I may choose to volunteer for association responsibilities or activities. I expressly agree my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I am not an employee of the Wisconsin Dressage & Eventing 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 WDEA Standard of Conduct: to act honestly, fairly, ethically and with integrity and treat all WDEA members with respect and courtesy.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

WDEA STABLE, INSTRUCTOR, BREEDER, BUSINESS LISTINGS -- Listings on website and *eQuesta*. **Must fill out listing form available on WDEA 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 WDEA and mail to:

Diane Brault, 5184 County Road HH, Barneveld, WI 53507

membership@Wdressage.org or (608) 924-1808

Date Received _____ Check # _____ Amount \$ _____