



WDEA Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet

By Caryn Vesperman

The WDEA awards banquet was held during a fun and educational event at the Osthoff Resort, planned and managed by many in the Eastern Chapter including Nicole Trapp and Jessica Kaczmarek who led the charge. The organizing team did a great job getting sponsors, vendors and donations, making the event fun and educational.

Besides the educational portion (more on that in an article by Jessica Kaczmarek)), the event featured a great silent auction. The photos on the following pages don't begin to show even a fraction of all the items that were there to bid on. Thanks to everyone who donated!

In addition, prizes were given for our membership drive winners. In the photos at the bottom of this page, Ingrid Krause holds a saddle pad as the winner of our Early Bird drawing, and Celeste Pauli (left) presents the Grow Your GMO award to Nicole Trapp (right).

The Awards Banquet wrapped up the day. Many, many hours were spent calculating scores and planning by Celeste Pauli, along with out-going awards chair, Sandra Malott. The awards included some beautiful wood tack boxes made by Celeste's husband. Huge thanks to him for donating his time and talents.

Thanks to all who worked so hard to bring an event like this to WDEA members and guests.



A Focus on Rider Wellness

By Jessica Kaczmarek, Co-Organizer
jessica.a.kaczmarek@gmail.com

Dressage is hard. REALLY hard. The time and money we spend on keeping our horses happy and healthy for our challenging sport is mind boggling. From saddles to bits, proper shoeing to chiropractic, injections, PEMF, massage, acupuncture, animal communicators, vet visits, vet visits, more vet visits.....

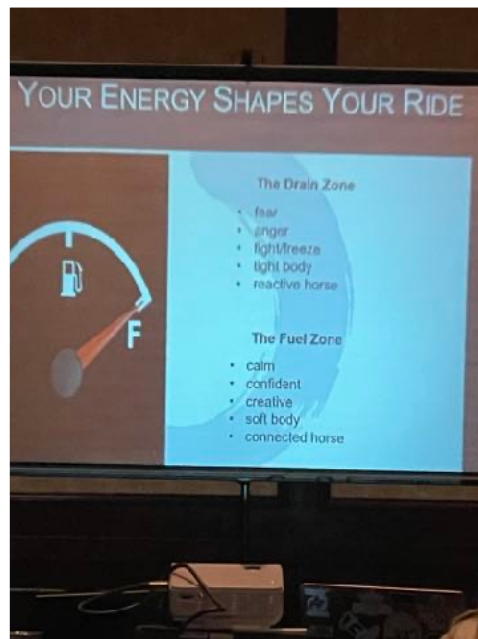
Oftentimes, the efforts we place on the health and well-being of our beloved equine partner is at the expense of our own. We pour our heart, soul and pocket book into making sure we have the equine athlete of our dreams, and lose our own physical and emotional health in the process. We truss ourselves up in clothing that we spend more money on than our wedding dresses and become discouraged when we are unable to physically meet the needs of the athletes underneath us. We are tired, frustrated, and begin to question our overall sanity in choosing this most difficult discipline in riding.

With this in mind, WDEA set out to put together an opportunity for riders of all levels to come together and spend some time and effort on themselves. To make their own emotional and physical health the priority to be the best athletes for our beloved horses. After all, riders *are* athletes, and it's necessary to care for ourselves, if we want the partnership we work so hard on to shine as brightly as we dream of.

The Osthoff Resort and Spa in Elkhart Lake, WI was the setting chosen to feature not only our Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet, but our forum on Rider Wellness, featuring three outstanding speakers addressing multiple aspects of importance in being the best riders we can be. Each speaker presented for 45 minutes, and prior to dinner, we had a panel discussion with all three to further explore questions and ideas not addressed in the initial conversations. Despite the impending "Snowmageddon 2026," we had a wonderful turnout! We were also treated to a wonderful (and rather extensive) group of vendors including L'Equestre Chic, Cleansing Spirit Bodywork, Canter and Cadence Saddle Solutions, Sentinel Feeds, EquiPT, Horse Emporium and



The speakers, who focused on well-being with a sports emphasis, were (l-r) Lindsay Fenci, a registered dietitian with expertise in women's health, sports nutrition, fitness and community wellness; Cathy Penrod of Equicoach, a certified COR.E Performance Dynamics specialist who works with equestrians; and Suzanne Galdun, one of only 13 certified rider biomechanics coaches in the U.S.



The Distinguished Rider. Our participants had a fabulous opportunity to shop and learn between speakers and the Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet.

Lindsay Fenci, RD, CD is a Registered Dietician with expertise in Women's Health, Sports Nutrition and Community Wellness. Her focus was on the basics of good nutrition and the necessary requirements needed for an active, healthy body. She also discussed topics specific to women going through menopause and those utilizing GLP-1 medications to assist with physical well-being. Ultimately, eating clean, whole foods, as well as making sure we are meeting the required protein needs of our bodies, were the highlights of her talk. She provided me with her Power Point presentation, and I'm very happy to

share it with all those interested. (See email under my byline.) Lindsay brought forward really super information and was met with many great questions!

Cathy Penrod, of Equicoach is a certified COR.E Performance Dynamics Specialist (CPDS) and Energy Leadership™ Index Master Practitioner (ELI-MP). With

Continued next page



Following our panel discussion, Vice President Stephanie Severn stepped in for our new president, Caryn Vesperman, to present the Annual Meeting, as well as thank our past president, Melinda DeLuca, for all of the time and effort she has dedicated to WDEA over the last several years. Our Annual Meeting is a vital part of keeping our members aware of where WDEA stands in the attention it gives to the membership voices, transparency of financial health, changes within the board members, and upcoming events and activities.

more than four decades of riding, plus 29 years of leadership experience and a proven track record in fostering results, her focus is to help equestrians excel in their chosen discipline. She brought a wealth of knowledge and passion for the importance of mastering your feelings of worry, fear, self-sabotage, distractions and overthinking in order to become the confident riders we all dream of. She stressed how incredibly sensitive horses are to our emotional state, expectations of both our and their behaviors, and our vital signs such as breathing and heart rate. The importance of believing the best in ourselves and our partners was a key takeaway to creating a truly successful relationship with our horses. Participants were educated in strategies to change negative thinking and self-talk to create a more calm and confident presence for our horses. This presentation was just outstanding and a great reminder to give ourselves as much praise and confidence we do for our partners.

Suzanne Galdun, Certified Rider Biomechanics Coach of Positively Dressage, wrapped up our afternoon with an interactive experience focusing on the importance of breath and position in relation to our riding. Suzanne is one of only 13 rider biomechanics coaches in the world, currently holding level two accreditation by Mary Wanless in her Ride With Your Mind method. She is based out of Chicago, and is a highly sought after clinician, teaching all levels of riders and horses, helping riders make small changes in their body to facilitate positive change in the horse. She brought a wealth of knowledge, humor—and balloons—to assist in educating participants in developing an improved sense of their breathing and physical selves, both statically and dynamically to create an optimal saddle position. This was also a fantastic and eye-opening presentation that generated a great deal of interest and inquiry.



Ending our night was the Awards Banquet. The 2025 awards are featured in their own article in this issue, so I will encourage you to pay close attention to that! I would like to personally thank Sandra Malott and Celeste Pauli for all their hard work putting together some beautiful and thoughtful awards for our winners this year. I would also like to remind our membership that we have awards not only for recognized dressage shows, but Western dressage, eventing, and our new category specifically for those who focus on schooling shows!

Despite the weather, we had a great turn-out for our Sunday morning session (supposed to be yoga but pivoted to Pilates) that I had the pleasure of leading. We were all educated on different breathing techniques, how



those techniques impact different aspects of our spine and body, as well as basic Pilates Principle Movements. I'm grateful to all the attendees for their patience, as I'm just beginning my journey as a Pilates instructor, and they were a great first class!

Several attendees assisted in the clean up of the event when it was finished. I don't want to forget anyone, so I won't attempt to list them all, but please know you were so appreciated!

I also would like to personally thank my co-organizer, Nicole Trapp, who worked tirelessly to ensure we had an amazing venue, created all the back office spreadsheets and kept me on task (which if you know me, is its own job) and was just generally a pleasure to work with! If you see her, thank her. She's a tremendous asset to WDEA.

WDEA is grateful to all those who attended and made the trip despite the weather. We look forward to seeing you next year!

Thank you to our generous supporters!

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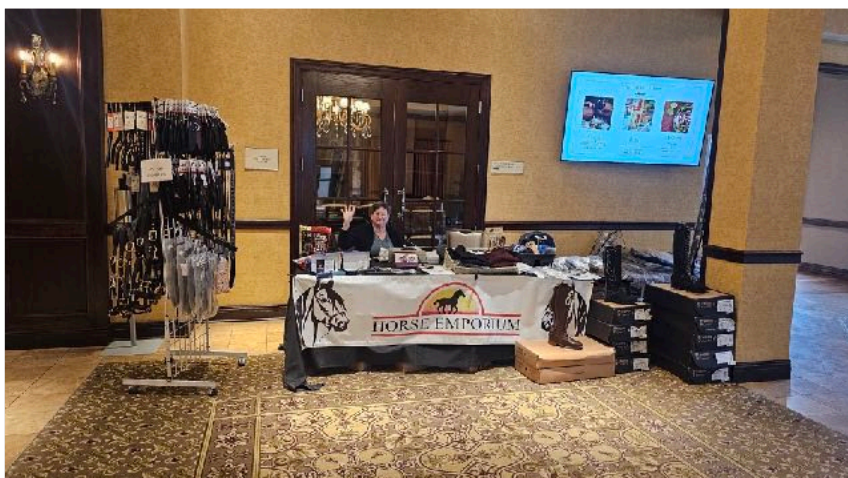
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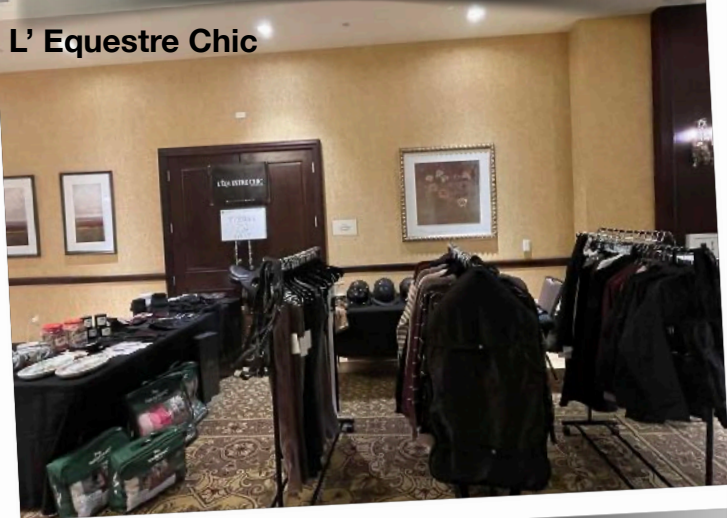
(Above) \$500 Sponsor: Canter Cadence Saddle Solutions
(Below) One of four \$250 Sponsor: Horse Emporium
(Remaining Photos) Shopping!



More Vendors....



L' Equestre Chic

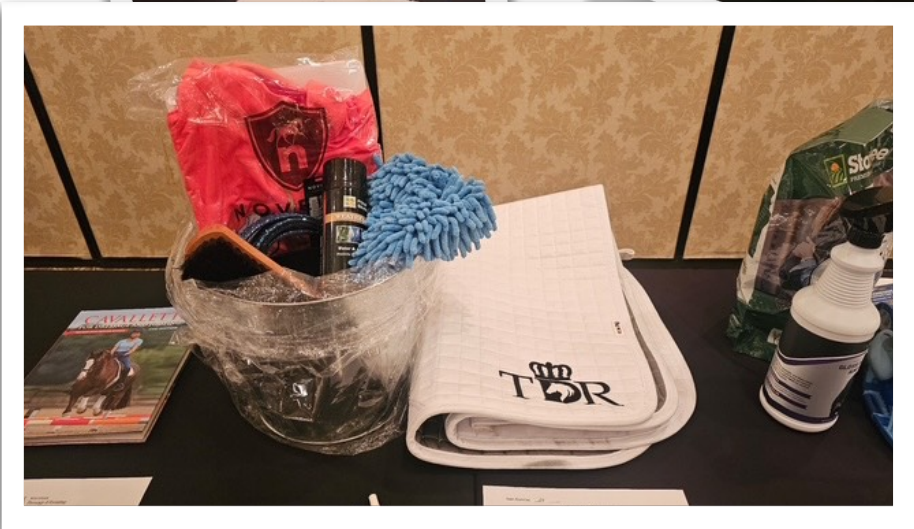
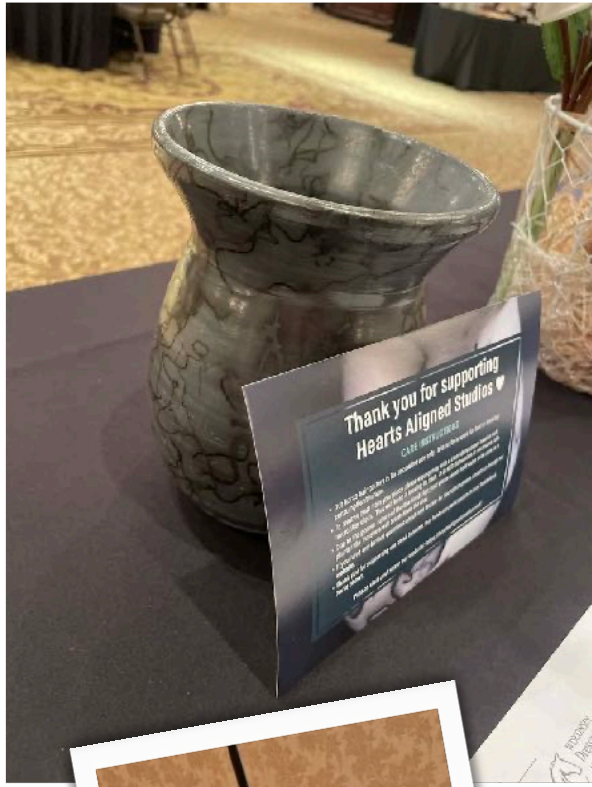


Views of the Awards...



The Silent Auction...

(This is only a fraction of the items!)



2025 WDEA Awards Winners

SCHOOLING SHOW AWARDS PROGRAM

The Schooling Show Awards was a pilot program this year, with the board making the decision to add it as a permanent fixture to our awards profess. The next two pages feature our inaugural winners.

Introductory Level

Champion: Celeste Pauli & Hadassah FLF - 63.43%

Reserve: Rosanne Peterson-Brandt & Rosie - 60.68%

Maiden Champion: Sandra Galaszewski & Tierney - 65.21%



Schooling Show Awards Continued

Training Level

Champion: Kristin Beckford & Lazaro - 63.07%

Maiden Champion: Celeste Pauli & Hadassah FLF - 62.44%

First Level

Champion: Sandra Galaszewski & Dagger - 68.35%

Reserve: Kristin Beckford & Lazaro - 63.14%

Maiden Champion: Sandra Galaszewski & Dagger - 68.35%

Reserve: Kristin Beckford & Lazaro - 63.14%

Second Level

Champion: Yvonne Campanelli & Dalayna Design - 62.85%

Maiden Champion: Yvonne Campanelli & Dalayna Design -
62.85%

Yvonne & Dalayna Design



Kristin & Lazaro



Sandra & Dagger



RECOGNIZED SHOW AWARDS PROGRAM

Training Level - Adult Amateur

Champion: Helen Smith & Furst Freddy - 71.07%

Maiden Champion: Helen Smith & Furst Freddy - 71.07%

First Level - Adult Amateur

Champion: Jolene Last & Cruisin Ta Caimen - 63.79%

Reserve: Lynne Schramer-Miller & Triggers Twister Vegas - 61.17%

Second Level - Open

Champion: Megan McIsaac & Free Dance - 65.55%



Lynne & Triggers Twister Vegas



Helen & Furst Freddy



Jolene & Cruisin Ta Caimen

Megan & Free Dance



*Franko
Photo Design*

Second Level -Adult Amateur

Champion: Angela Genin & Wicked Cute - 66.66%

Reserve: Tammy Risseuw & Dreamweaver - 63.25%

Prix St. Georges - Adult Amateur

Champion: Caryn Vesperman & Tanqueray MRF - 61.72%

Maiden Champion: Caryn Vesperman & Tanqueray - 61.72%

Intermediare II - Adult Amateur

Champion: Caryn Vesperman & Diamond Dureza - 62.50%

Maiden Champion: Caryn Vesperman & Diamond Dureza - 62.50%



Tammy & Dreamweaver



BORYS



Caryn & Tanqueray



Caryn & Diamond Dureza

Grand Prix - Adult Amateur

Champion: Jessica Kaczmarek & Calgary JG - 60.94%



WESTERN RECOGNIZED SHOW AWARDS PROGRAM

WDAA Basic

Champion: Abigail Lemke & Elysium Boanerges GHC - 67.19%

Reserve: Becky Schultz & Brenner's Lil Magnolia - 66.22%

WDAA Level 1

Champion: Becky Schultz & Brenner's Lil Magnolia - 65.33%

Reserve: Abigail Lemke & Elysium Boanerges GHC - 64.80%



Members of the Year

Nominees for Member of the Year can be sent in to the board by any member of WDEA. This year, the WDEA board voted to select two members for the award. The award was a glass, engraved picture frame, ready for their favorite photograph. Congratulations!



Jill Dunbar

Jill Dunbar has been instrumental in the fundraising for the Eastern Chapter schooling show. She has created the spreadsheets and forms used to reach out to businesses and donors. She has helped follow up on those letters with businesses and donors to make sure the chapter gets the donations that help provide a great show for exhibitors. Jill created signs that were displayed at the show to give our sponsors the advertising they deserve. She was self-motivated, organized and communicated with all the parties involved. The Eastern Chapter is forever indebted to all of Jill's dedication to the show.

Monika Wieckowski

The Eastern Chapter could not have a schooling show without her help. Monika dedicated numerous hours before

the show to learn the ins and out of the show, and then spent three long days being the secretary at the show. She was phenomenal in dealing with people and all the questions that arise as show secretary, especially with this being her first year. She jumped in with two feet and handled every-thing like a seasoned veteran. She also earned the chapter a large donation because of her volunteer hours for the show, and we were honored that this was her chosen organization. On top of that, she has taken on the role of our chapter treasurer. She will do a great job in this role, as her attention to detail is awesome.



Thank You to Outgoing WDEA President, Melinda DeLuca



The beautiful, custom cherrywood tack box, built by Celeste Pauli's husband (and too beautiful to use in the barn!) was given to Melinda DeLuca, honoring her years of volunteering, including her pulling double-duty as WDEA President and Secretary when no one was prepared to volunteer for either position. Thank you, Melinda, for keeping WDEA going. As we all know, being a volunteer *is* rewarding, but sometimes seems like a thankless job. WDEA only stays viable when volunteers generously take on roles, whether on the state or chapter boards or working on events. Thank you, Melinda, for giving your time to WDEA!

President's Message



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



I have to start this column by thanking the Eastern Chapter for putting on a wonderful Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet at the Osthoff Resort. Even Mother Nature spared the unleashing of her harsh weather until after this event was over!

I wish I had all the names in the Eastern Chapter who helped with this event, but two names I know for sure are Nicole Trapp and Jessica Kaczmarek. I also want to thank Stephanie Severn for stepping in on my behalf to lead the annual meeting at the event. I'm grateful that as vice president, Stephanie is there to back me up—not to mention the hours she devotes to our website.

Thanks also goes to Celeste Pauli and our outgoing awards chair, Sandra Malott, for the hours they spent organizing, number-crunching and shopping to come up with awards and ribbons—and getting them to the event in time. These members are only a few examples of the volunteers who work hard, giving up so much personal time, to make WDEA function.

That's what I find amazing—and have for many years: volunteers take on roles in non-profits for *no pay*, devoting time that takes away from their personal lives, and have to keep their heads up and smiles on their faces when there are complaints, urgent matters and so many other stresses. Sometimes it requires a bit of a thick skin....which it shouldn't. I consider myself fortunate that for many, many years, I've been honored to work alongside so many awesome volunteers who have taught me so much.

As the newsletter editor (still!), this issue is one of my favorites to put together. I enjoy seeing the photos of the partnership between the riders and their horses, working together to accomplish personal riding goals and clearly having fun too. Horses are my favorite animal, and I'm touched by what they do for us with a touch of a leg, a shift of our weight, some pressure on a rein, and they're right there trying for us, when there really is no reason for them to do so.

It looks as if this column is really about *partnership* —with our horses and each other as volunteers and members, all who impact our lives in so many positive and rewarding ways.

So....when things get frustrating in the saddle, or frustrating as a member or volunteer, when things aren't going as smoothly as one would hope, we need (myself included) to remember two things: assume good intentions of each other, and keep in mind about why we are passionate about this sport. Then, as the saying goes...

“Hold on to what makes you happy. If it tries to buck you off, just hold on even tighter.”

-Anonymous

As always, send your newsletter submissions (articles, calendar of events, kudos, photos, etc.) to newsletter@Widressage.org. If you have thoughts, concerns or suggestions for WDEA as our organization, send to president@Widressage.org,

Now hold on—consistent warmer weather is almost here!

Caryn

Meet Your WDEA Board of Directors:

Jessica Sims, Member at Large

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 am eager to volunteer with WDEA to build meaningful professional connections and engage with the broader dressage community. I believe that contributing to the organization is the best way to support the sport, while networking with fellow riders and enthusiasts.



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

Outside of the arena, I serve my community as a Special Education Teacher. This professional background provides me with a unique perspective on individualized learning, patience and the ability to tailor my instruction to meet the specific needs of every student—whether human or equine.

Horse:

Harmony is my seven-year-old OTTB, currently transitioning into her second career.

Adult amateur or professional:

Professional

Job, retired and/or horse business:

As a dedicated dressage professional and the founder of Riding in Harmony LLC, I specialize in developing the horse and rider through the time-honored principles of the German Cavalry Style. My training philosophy centers on the foundational importance of seat schooling, offering comprehensive training and lessons, designed to achieve true athletic synergy.

Current trainer and/or clinician whom you enjoy working with and why:

I am currently training under Kerstin McNiesh at The McNiesh Barns and Stables. Learning from Kerstin is a privilege. Her experience as a former member of the German Riding Team and an FEI-level competitor provides a wealth of knowledge. Our work is deeply rooted in the German Training Scale and cavalry-style riding, with a strict focus on bio-mechanical correctness to ensure the longevity and performance of the horse.



Pet peeve:

Loud chewing or gum chewing!

What's something you always have in your refrigerator:

Chocolate and ice coffee!

Favorite book or movie:

Newsies: The Broadway Musical. (Because who doesn't love incredible

choreography and a great underdog story?)

Favorite horse book or training book that gave you an insight about riding:

My favorite training resource: *H. DV. 12 German Cavalry Manual*. I'm a firm believer in the timeless principles of the German cavalry tradition and use this manual as a roadmap for developing biomechanically correct athletes.

Riding advice that really helped you:

The best advice I received was from my trainer, Kerstin McNiesh: While not every horse needs to be able to passage or piaffe, every horse must learn to move straight and forward. Correct training should always enhance a horse's soundness and well-being. Our work in the saddle should leave the horse better than we found them. Above all, you need to ride the horse you have in the moment, not the one you wish you had.

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- Market for tack/apparel imported from the UK and EU
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Jessica Sims
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📍 N4555 WI-76, Shiocton, WI 54170

With Thanks to Our 2026 Business Members!

Colt's Neck Equestrian Center - Andrea Schten

CountryView Equestrian Estates - Madeleine VonFrankenberg

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Plum Lake Equestrian Center - Debra Stephenson

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Member Listings

INSTRUCTORS

Jesse K. Kassner
DressurSPORT, llc
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Middleton, WI 53562
jesse@dressurспорт.com
kassner.j.k@gmail.com
(608) 358-1125
dressurспорт.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 McIsaac
Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum
4246 Schneider Drive
Oregon, WI 53575
lindinhofllc@gmail.com
(608) 445-8531
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.

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.

Jessica Sims
Riding in Harmony LLC
413 E. Irving Ave.
Oshkosh, WI 64901
(920)509-4045
ridinginharmony26@gmail.com

Will teach beginner to intermediate, five years training experience. Specialize in dressage, with a training philosophy influenced by the German cavalry style and a focus on seat schooling. Dedicated to improving riders' partnership with their horses, whether pursuing competitive goals or enhancing their foundational skills. School horses available. Limited travel lesson spots are available within the Fox Valley.

Debra Stephenson
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<https://www.youtube.com/>

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

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Caryn Vesperman
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Brooklyn, WI 53521
touchstonefarm@gmail.com
(608) 455-2208

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

BREEDERS

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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

June 6-7
Eastern Chapter Schooling Show
Ozaukee County Fairgrounds,
Cedarburg, WI

Other Events

April 6 at 7 p.m.
IDCTA: Better Health and
Wellness through Massage and
Acupressure
Lola Michelin, Director of Education,
Northwest School of Animal Massage
<https://idcta.org/events/better-health-and-wellness-through-massage-and-acupressure-with-lola-michelin-of-director-of-education-northwest-school-of-animal-massage/>

April 17-19
Midwest Horse Fair
Madison, WI

Aug. 26-30

Festival of Champions
Lamplight Equestrian Center,
Wadsworth, IL
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