

# The CONTACT

March 2024



## Inside:

- 1 Letter from the Editor
- 2 Presidents Message
- 3-4 The LEC Barn Blog
- 5 Changes to Year-End Awards Reporting
- 6 2nd Annual Education Kick-off
- 7-8 Diamond in the Rough
- 9 Board & Committees
- 10 New Dressage Seminars Program
- 11 This N' That
- 12 NDA Calendar

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

### Welcome 2024!

By Carrie Cross

Our dressage newsletter has long been a source of inspiration, education, and camaraderie for dressage enthusiasts at all levels. It has been a pleasure to witness the growth of our community and to witness the dedication and talent that exists within it.

Furthermore, we are committed to showcasing the vibrancy and diversity within our dressage community. We encourage you, our readers, to share your success stories, training achievements, and the challenges you've overcome.

Your unique experiences will inspire and motivate others who share your passion for dressage.

As we continue to evolve and grow, we want to hear from you. Your feedback, suggestions, and ideas are invaluable to us. If there are particular topics you would like us to explore or if you have insights you would like to share, please reach out to us. This newsletter is for you, and we are dedicated to providing the content you desire.

Thank you for being a part of our dressage community. Your passion, dedication, and love for this incredible discipline are what make it thrive. Together, let's continue to elevate the art of dressage in Nebraska and inspire one another to reach new heights of excellence.

Carrie Cross

## Letter from the President

Welcome to another year of NDA!

2023 was a year of challenges and accomplishments for NDA. There were a large number of schooling shows this year. We also had a successful Schooling Show Championships in September. The NDA JR/YR put on a successful Emily Miles clinic in December at Legacy Dressage. It was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for both USDF and NDA. NDA's Awards Banquet celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> year with a wonderful presentation by Margo Hamilton about our history. Omaha hosted the USDF convention. Several of our members attended and we also had an NDA information booth. Thank you to everyone who helped staff the booth and give a great Nebraska welcome!

Although the Cornhusker Classic was small, we received a lot of positive feedback and are incorporating a number of changes in order to make the show better for our competitors.

The biggest change is moving the Cornhusker Classic Schooling show back to Lincoln. It will be Sunday May 19 at Salt Creek Wranglers show grounds close to Pioneers Park. This will address the problem several barns had transporting both schooling show and rated show horses to Omaha.

The Classics I and II will be Saturday and Sunday May 25-26. We have added a new ribbon division for 2024. It is for riders who are 55 or older (55+). This is a Region 4 initiative to recognize and encourage those of us over 55. To encourage friendly competition and build camaraderie among fellow dressage enthusiasts, we are adding The Cornhusker Classic Scramble team competition for the Saturday show. You will have the ability to create your own 3-4 person team or you will be assigned to one if you don't sign up as a team with your entry. These teams are open to JR/YR, AA and non-members in Opportunity classes. Medals will be awarded to the teams with the highest averages (top 3 persons scores). More details about the scramble will be in the Cornhusker Classic Prize list. We are also planning to bring back the competitors party on Saturday.

We have several educational events for our members.

On March 9-10 there will be a USDF Region 4 Outreach Clinic for JR/YR with Anne Cizadlo as the clinician at Stillwaters Equestrian Center in Hickman, NE. Several of our NDA riders have been chosen to ride in the clinic. JR/YR and their designated chaperones can audit the clinic for free. Adult USDF members may audit the clinic for \$20/day and adult non-members may audit for \$40/day.

Auditors register at the clinic.

On Saturday, March 16, we will be having our Second Annual Education Kick-off! This fun event will include a Nutrition seminar, What to know about NDA Year-End Award, as well as a presentation on TDF grants that are available. There will also be a Chili and Soup contest. A great opportunity to meet your fellow NDA members and get ready for the show season! Details are in the notice found in this newsletter.

On a personal note, on December 30, my heart horse, Goldhills Gemini passed away from colic. I was devastated, but was so amazed and appreciative of all of the support that I received from my dressage community. I also retired at the beginning of January and when anyone asked me what I was going to do when I retired, my first response was "Ride my horse more". So, I decided that I needed to think ahead and start my search for my next dance partner. Again, my friends sent me links to all sorts of wonderful horses. I found my new horse at the end of January in Oregon. He is a 5-yr-old 14.2 hand buckskin Welsh Cob gelding named Windsongs Addonis. I hope to show him at Intro level at a couple of schooling shows this year.

I am looking forward to a very busy, educational, fun year for NDA. Please reach out to either me or any of the NDA board if you have questions, suggestions or concerns. We want to make sure that all NDA members feel that they are heard.

Kathy Hanford  
2024 NDA President



## THE LEC BARN BLOG

musings and lessons from around our community



### I HATE SOCIAL MEDIA

February 20, 2024

This is not the post on Facebook that tells you I am taking a break from Social Media because I'm just so stressed out by the pressure to look a certain way or do a certain thing. Nope, this is the post on Facebook and my website that is me telling you I completely suck at Social Media. I just can't keep up anymore. My Social Media game really started flailing badly when Reels became the standard across all industry and media.

#### **This is not a cry for help. It's a stance.**

I am in a state of continual awe of my younger counterparts who have these amazing Social Media presences. I love their pages, their humor, their videos. I'm in awe of the people who are sponsored riders and have the wherewithal to be great spokespeople for various equestrian products and wares. Truly, and I REALLY appreciate their discount codes!! But I am not these people. I am a middle aged woman, whose self-conscious about her looks. I hate having my photo taken. I live in a world of denial trying to take my own selfies knowing that I am the Social Media Accounts Manager of my business and boy...does that lady need to take some classes.

I simply can't bring myself to do it. And it's not because I'm not trying. I will take videos here and there. I have ideas for things and maybe in the future you'll see those ideas come to fruition. It is fun to do, when there is time. The Social Media Sphere changes really quickly. I notice these changes on a day to day basis, and as I mentioned previously, I can't keep up. Also, I don't want to. I literally DO NOT want to keep up with the latest songs, themes and viral trends. I don't have time, my mind sees the trends, my mouth laughs at them, my thumb hits the like button and I move on.

Perhaps this confession is shocking to you. "OH MARGO NO!!! NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT YOU CAN DO THIS!! HERE I WILL HELP YOU MAKE REELS IT'S NOT THAT HARD!!!" I'm sure you can. But it's okay. I do know how to edit videos. I have, somewhere, a selfie stick. I have equipment. I'm sure I can watch YouTube to figure out how to find good angles and make attractive videos. I bet there is an app somewhere I haven't heard of that will do the bulk of this for me provided I have some raw content.

...and of course there is AI. I could have our future Robot Overlords churn this stuff out for me. But I won't. I have told you, and been truly honest about my feelings on Social Media. It's a valuable marketing tool, fun, entertaining. I have, to my mind reasonable explanations that apply only to me and perhaps others of my age and budget. I can't and don't stay totally on trend with Social Media at all times because my mind, at 45 years of age, doesn't think about doing it. And what I'm about to say IS NOT MEANT TO BE AN INSULT TO THE PEOPLE WHOSE MINDS DO WORK IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA REFLEX WAY...I already told you I admire them greatly. All kudos to these women. Keep up the good work. I totally mean it.

I am not saying I'm old or uncool or morally and intellectually superior. What I am saying is that I am different. And per usual, I would like to assure all my other "different" people out there that it is okay. While Social Media is an affordable option for advertising and **EVERYTHING is content** there is this part of me that is quite stubborn. The part of me that puts a lot of work into my barn, spending a lot of time looking at my horses, talking to my clients. Getting to know both horse and rider. Figuring out what their daily needs are and making those things happen. There is also a part of me, the part that reads the New Yorker, finds a think piece, engaging. Interesting. I appreciate it when people take a moment to communicate their thoughts. Visual communication may be taking over the world, but I am traditional and still like to write. So here we are. Social media...  
Throwback style!

Now, like it's 2004, I will TELL YOU WITH WORDS I have a great many wonderful, viable, relevant skills you as horse owner and potential client would appreciate. I've been with horses coming 40 years now. I've watched them, cared for them, ridden them. I can spot a colic quickly. I so consistently feed our herd of horses I have the entire feed list memorized and can go through it without missing a beat or a supplement or medication. I have a lot of tricks for getting horses into trailers, and shower stalls. I'm a whiz with currycombs and saddle soap. I can recommend excellent saddle pads, shampoos, and fly sprays. Just ask me! I'm not irrelevant, I'm vintage.

I know each horse and each rider in my barn very well, both are important to me and I consider both horse and owner my client. I can tell if either one of them is off. To me, I don't know how to put chirpy music behind a video of me having a conversation in the barn with the Mom whose daughter is going through a tough time with her chronic illness. I don't know that me watching a horse walk a little funny in the arena trying to decide if he's lame or if there is a dip in the footing would make good content. It might but some of the most important moments in the barn are personal or spontaneous. Without hiring a film crew to keep track of us all the time, many awesome moments get missed by cameras because we are living them. In the moment, as it happens.

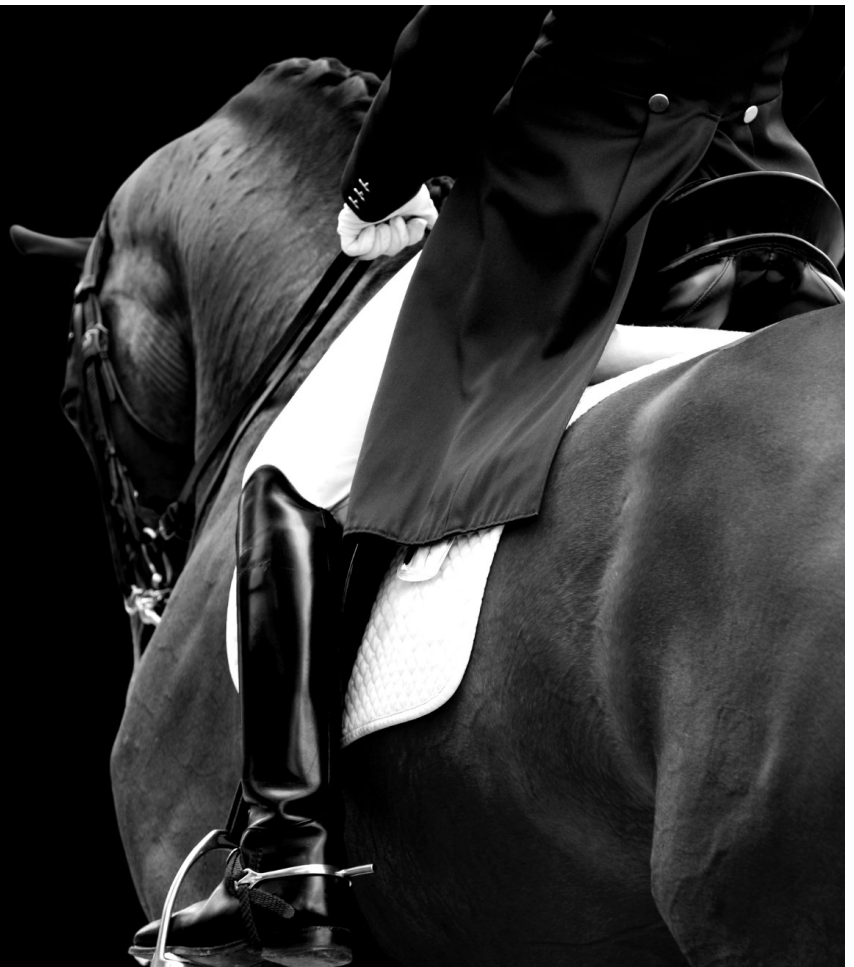
It is because I am very present there, at the barn consumed with the horses and people we care for is why my digital accounts are sometimes wanting. I am, right where I am, doing what I am very best at, having totally forgotten to make a reel for Instagram. And I think that's how it should be.

*By Margo Hamilton*



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## Changes to Year-End Awards in NDA Handbook

We are changing how scores for both eligibility for Schooling Show Championships and Year-End Awards are submitted. Currently, it is up to each NDA rider to fill out a paper forms and mail-in for both of these. We are now going to require that NDA recognized show managers submit their schooling show results within 30 days of their show in an Excel spreadsheet that will be available for download on the NDA website. These spreadsheets can then be used by the Awards committee to both determine eligibility for the Schooling Show Championships in September and year-end awards. Riders will no longer have to submit any forms!!

Here are more details about the changes that will be made to the NDA handbook for Awards:

For both classical and Western Dressage, only scores from in-person shows will be considered.

For Schooling Show Awards, all riders/horses that rode in NDA schooling shows **and meet the year-end awards criteria** will be considered for year-end awards.

- All NDA schooling shows will submit their results to the NDA Award's chair using a specific excel format (which will be provided on the website) within 30 days of their show. These will be used for both determining eligibility for Schooling Show Championships, as well as year-end awards for schooling show medal series and rider rosettes, and any other awards that they are eligible for.
- Prior to October 5, a list of all eligible year-end awards horse/rider combinations will be posted on social media and the NDA website. If an eligible horse/rider combination does not want to be considered for year-end awards, they should send an email opting out of the year-end awards to the Award's chair or designated person by October 7.
- Each rider/horse combination will still need to fill out a form that will be available on the NDA website for Rider rosettes and QRM and verify that they have met the volunteer requirement.
- Rider/Horse scores for Western Dressage Rated shows will still need to be submitted to the Award's chair.
- Rider/Horse scores for Classical Rated shows will still need to be submitted to the Award's chair. A legible printout of the USDF Score Report should be submitted in place of the form.
- Forms and USDF Score Reports can be submitted either by US mail (post-marked by October 5) or by email (received by October 7) to the Award's chair or designated person.

Please send any questions that you have to Kathy Hanford ([Kathy.hanford@unl.edu](mailto:Kathy.hanford@unl.edu)) .  
These changes will be implemented for the 2024 show season.



# Nebraska Dressage Association's

2nd Annual  
Education Kick-Off

Saturday, March 16th  
Starting at 10 am

Nutrition seminar  
What to know about NDA Year-End Awards  
TDF Presentation on available grants!  
PEMF Demo & Information

Chili & Soup contest!

**LOCATION:  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
840 S 17TH ST  
LINCOLN, NE 68508**

**AMPLE FREE PARKING IS AVAILABLE  
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**KINDLY RSVP TO: [EDUCATION@NEBRASKADRESSAGE.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@NEBRASKADRESSAGE.ORG)**

## Diamond in the Rough

By Jane Fucinaro

It all started with a vague Facebook post in our local equestrian group, saying something to the effect of, “Andalusian stallion with potential for dressage, project horse. Experienced trainers only.” My friend Paula had shared it.



Photo by John Borys Photography

I thought, “This is my chance to own my very own Andalusian to develop!” At this point, I had a couple of Andalusians in my barn, and I loved their trainability, athletic build, and, mainly, how sane they all seemed to be. But as I messaged with Paula, my heart began to sink. She is an experienced horsewoman who had taken this stallion onto her property to put weight on him, at the request of his owner. When she first met Galán, he was skin and bones. As he put on weight under her care, the docile stallion became neurotic, dangerous, and quite the liability.

Galán was born and raised in Mexico on a family farm that breeds “Mexican Dancing Horses,” or Azteca horses. Galán is  $\frac{7}{8}$

Andalusian and  $\frac{1}{8}$  Quarter Horse, and his early developmental years were spent in parades and parties with an overarching theme of chaos. Contrary to dressage training, these horses are trained to become reactive and explosive as they “dance,” which resembles a backward piaffe – tense and quick. Galán was moved to the United States as a four- or five-year-old, but he was primarily turned out, and was only ridden occasionally in parades or on trails around Nebraska and Iowa. What happened during the next two years of his life is a mystery to us, but he had clearly been neglected.

I had my mind made up ahead of time that I’d likely be bringing this horse home with me, and he’d be a success story in no time. I figured I should bring my husband along, like any responsible partner would, just in case I needed a hand. I played it cool and left the truck and trailer at home.

We pulled up and spent five minutes chatting with Paula, watching this crazed lunatic of a stallion pacing and screaming the fence line. His feet were months overdue, with only one shoe barely hanging on. She had done an excellent job feeding this horse, but now he was plump and crazed. Through my lifelong journey with horses and our five years of barn ownership, my husband, Nick, and I have dealt with some fairly dangerous situations, challenging horses, and less-than-ideal circumstances, but this trumped it all. I began questioning my judgment about this horse.

Nick insisted I stay back and just coach him on how to halter and handle Galán. The universe put trainers in my life who offered the perfect combination of methods for this horse, and luckily, Nick took instruction very well in that moment. This horse was feral, dangerous, and scared.

We made the decision to have Paula trailer him to our place to get him into our spare arena with more space. It took hours, and he damaged the trailer on the twenty-minute drive to our farm, but we got him unloaded and set him loose. After a few hours of quiet liberty groundwork, he was standing calmly with us, and we softly haltered him.

## Diamond in the Rough, Continued

To this day, my husband says that this was the first time he has heard a horse speak to him; he says, “A wave of gratitude, thankfulness hit me.” Nick decided he would be ours in October 2021.

We spent at least three to five hours a day with this stallion for months, often into the night hours when my busy training barn was quiet so we wouldn’t disrupt the “normal” horses. Our groundwork sessions progressed to occasionally sitting on him. By April, I had my first “true” ride on him. He has so much trauma associated with mounting, taking the bit, and much, much more. We spent months building up from riding bitless into a leather bit. We also decided to geld him in April, as it seemed any progress we’d make would get instantly set back with the smallest little set-offs.



It was also in April 2022 that I found out I was pregnant.



So many thoughts went through my head about whether or not to continue working with him while pregnant. We’d made miles of progress, but his stallion and trauma behavior would resurface frequently, especially with environmental changes. As I began to show, he became increasingly more interested in my baby bump, nudging it, sometimes even aggressively grooming my growing belly.

However, as my pregnancy went on, Galán became softer and quieter. He became the only horse I trusted with my life – and my baby’s life. We rode trails at the lake, babysat green horses and riders on a cross country course, and worked on our bitless dressage work at home in the arena. Our last ride while I was pregnant was at eight months along in a freshly harvested field.

He has become such a special horse to me. He still can be the barn terror, and we deal with the effects of his trauma on a daily basis. We competed at our first dressage shows throughout 2023 at Introductory and Training Levels, and – despite frequently having to diffuse his anxiety – we had many successful moments both in and out of the show ring. We are the proudest when he can lead safely around the grounds.

Our goal in 2024 is to attend more shows and off-site trail rides to assure him that he has no reason to worry, wherever he is. While he has much more talent inside of him, his emotional integrity is first and foremost in his development. We will continue to push his training at home and encourage his confidence on many field trips to come!







# CODA CAVALLO

## DRESSAGE

## JANE FUCINARO

USDF Certified Instructor  
"L" Graduate with Distinction



Omaha, NE / [jfequestrian.com](http://jfequestrian.com)

Come for the dressage education, stay for the incredible facility and culture of Coda Cavallo

Education and horse care are the top priorities at Coda Cavallo. Jane has carefully developed a community that thrives on layering classical dressage with equine science and biomechanics to produce healthy horses and self-sufficient riders. The facility stands out with its many amenities, but allows 24/7 turnout with full access to forage. Coda Cavallo is the perfect balance of performance dressage with equestrian mindfulness and welfare. Work with a trainer that brings in experts in dressage monthly, but also prides herself on her own continuing education through USDF programming. Have a great year, and don't forget our Dressage n Dash Schooling Show on June 8!

## NOW ACCEPTING TRAINING HORSES & HAUL-IN LESSONS



**2024 NDA Officers & Board Members**

President - Kathy Hanford  
 Vice-President - Jen Weaver  
 Secretary - Karen Stricklett  
 Treasurer - Carrie Cross  
 Jr - Darian Kauk

At-Large:  
 Linda Smith  
 Jena Vogt  
 Lareen Van Norman  
 Sara Loeske

**2024 NDA Committees****Awards**

(Chair)  
 Jen Weaver  
 Carrie Cross  
 J. Schumacher  
 Jami Kment  
 Kathy Hanford

**Club Historian****Competitions**

(Chair) Mike Smith  
 Amy Blum  
 Kathy Hanford  
 Jennifer Rawlinson

**Education**

Co - Chair - Karen Stricklett  
 Co-Chair - Linda Smith

**Equipment**

(Chair) Ken Timmerman

**Fundraising**

(Co-Chair) Carrie Cross  
 (Co-Chair) Jena Vogt

**Finance**

(Chair) Carrie Cross  
 Kathy Hanford  
 Sara Loseke

**Junior/Young Rider**

Chair - Darian Kauk

**Publicity/Communications**

(Chair) Carla Rogowsky  
 (Webmaster) Carla Rogowsky & Carrie Cross  
 (Newsletter)  
 (Handbook)

**Membership**

(Chair) Angie McClelland

**Volunteer**

(Chair)  
 Karen Stricklett  
 Linda Smith

**Western Dressage**


(Chair)  
 Amanda Percival  
 Carrie Cross

Volunteers are the lifeblood of NDA. We would not be able to function without them! Volunteering for one of the NDA committees gives you an opportunity to make new friends, get a better understanding about the different functions of NDA, and earn hours toward year-end awards! You do not need to be a member of NDA to be on a committee.

Youth are also encouraged to volunteer! So if you would like to volunteer for a committee or you have already volunteered and we left your name off the list, please feel free to contact either the chair of the committee you would like to be on or one of the NDA board members.

NDA will be getting a new set of 12 dressage arena letters thanks to these wonderful letter sponsors!

M – Margo Hamilton  
K & H – Kathy Hanford  
F – David & Diane Fucinaro  
V - Karen Stricklett in honor of Vivian  
C – Karen Stricklett in honor of Ava Claire  
E - Dr. J Schoemaker  
R – The Rawlinson Herd  
A – Amy Blum  
P & S – Providence Farm  
B – Darcy Beck



Are you an individual or business and interested in supporting NDA? Check out the sponsorship packages on our website for more information!

<https://www.nebraskadressage.org/our-sponsors.html>

## USDF Announces First Dates For New Dressage Seminars Program

### PUBLISHED

- February 29, 2024
- 10:41 am

### WORDS BY

[Edited Press Release](#)

The U.S. Dressage Federation has announced the first dates for the newly established Dressage Seminars, part of the USDF Instructor/Trainer Development Program. These two-day seminars are open to anyone seeking to gain knowledge, with the first day being geared toward a larger general audience and featuring demonstrating horses and riders and the second day designed for a smaller group and featuring a hands-on educational experience for the participants. Currently there are seminars scheduled in the Northeast (Connecticut) and the Midwest (Nebraska):

### Midwest (all held at Coda Cavallo Dressage, Omaha)

- June 29-30: Riding seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie
- July 6-7: Teaching seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie
- Oct. 19-20: Longeing seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie

### Northeast (all held in Connecticut)

- April 21-22: Longeing seminar with Ann Guptill and Vicki Hammers-O'Neil at Fox Ledge Farm in East Haddam
- July 14-15: Riding seminar with Bill McMullin and Vicki Hammers-O'Neil at Weatogue Stables in Salisbury
- Aug. 10-11: Teaching seminar with Sarah Geikie and Bill McMullin at Sperry View Farm in Bethany

These newly designed seminars provide a unique educational opportunity and USDF encourages anyone interested in furthering their dressage knowledge to participate, regardless of any aspirations related to becoming a certified instructor/trainer. For complete information on these [seminars](#) or the newly revamped USDF Instructor/Trainer Development program, visit the [USDF website](#) or e-mail [instructorcertification@usdf.org](mailto:instructorcertification@usdf.org).



## This N' That

**Reminder about Vaccines.** As you schedule spring shots/wellness exams for your horses, remember that if you plan to show at any United States Equestrian Federation show in 2024 you must be able to provide proof of rhino/flu vaccine being given within 6 months of the show date. In addition, most facilities used by NDA for shows and clinics require a negative Coggins within 1 year of the show/clinic date. Some of the facilities also require the proof of vaccines. So be prepared!



**Newsletter Submissions.** We are always in need of articles and write-ups for the newsletter. If you read a good book, saw a good video or DVD, or went to a clinic, please write up your notes and send them in to Carrie at [newsletter@nebraskadressage.org](mailto:newsletter@nebraskadressage.org). There is no deadline...whenever articles come in, they go in one of the upcoming newsletters. Thanks!



**SafeSport:** Is your USEF Safe Sport continuing education due to be renewed? As we all should know by now everyone participating in a USEF Recognized competition must be up to date with their Safe Sport training. That means all officials, trainers, riders, and owners, so check out your USEF account for your Safe Sport tile to stay current. To check your SafeSport status, or to complete the training package, go to your USEF log in and find your SafeSport tile which will show your expiration date. That is also the portal to do your SafeSport training.



**USDF University.** As an NDA member, you are also a USDF member and can access many educational videos and training sessions on line at [www.USDF.org](http://www.USDF.org). You will need to create a log in for yourself (if you haven't already done so). You will need to know your USDF number (you should get a card in the mail from USDF or an email with your number) but if you don't know your number you can contact our Membership Chair Angie McClelland for your number.

Or you can check this website link for member numbers:

<https://www.usdf.org/clubs/people.asp?GroupPass=406&RegionPass=4&TypePass=GMO>

Once you create your log in, then you have access to USDF University and other Educational items. Go to the Education Tab on the top of the USDF website and start exploring. I'm going to ask members (listen up, I'm asking) to share with me their favorite "finds" on the USDF website, and we will share them in each upcoming newsletter.



**USDF Regional Championship:** Region 4 Championships will be held October 10-13, 2024 at the National Equestrian Center, Lake St. Louis, MO. Check the USDF website for more information on qualifying scores for Junior, Amateur and Open and your qualifying season. Use this website link for more information: <https://www.usdf.org/competitions/competitions-championships/regionals/index.asp>



Are you looking to fill your volunteer hours? NDA has different options for you coming up. May 19th, the Classic Schooling show and May 25-26 the Cornhusker Classic I & II. Just scan the QR code below to sign up to volunteer!



May 19th, Cornhusker Schooling Show Sign-up



May 25-26, Cornhusker Classic I & II Show Sign-up

# Calendar of Events

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## March

March 9 - 10     **USDF Region 4 Outreach Clinic**  
with Anne Cizadlo  
Still Waters Equestrian Academy

March 11 -     **NDA Board Meeting**  
6:00 pm     Scooters Coffee @70th & Pioneers  
All NDA Members Welcome

## April

April 8 -        **NDA Board Meeting**  
6:00 pm     Scooters Coffee @70th & Pioneers  
All NDA Members Welcome

April 20        **Spring Fling Schooling Show-**  
Lancaster County 4-H Horse Program  
Sandhills Global Event Center -  
Judge: P.J. Koehler

## May

May 4          **Shaggy Horse Dressage Show**  
Sandhills Global Event Center -  
Lincoln, NE

May 13        **NDA Board Meeting**  
6:00 pm     Scooters Coffee @70th & Pioneers  
All NDA Members Welcome

May 19        **Cornhusker Classic Schooling Show**  
Salt Creek Wranglers Arena, Lincoln

May 25 - 26   **NDA 2022 Annual Cornhusker Clas-**  
                         **sic I & II**  
Quail Run Horse Center  
Elkhorn, NE

For More events please go to: [www.nebraskadressage.org/calendar](http://www.nebraskadressage.org/calendar)

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The Dressage  
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community.



Photo by Susan J Stickle:  
Olivia LaGoy-Weltz,  
2015 Lavell Advanced  
Prize Recipient

Your contribution to The Dressage Foundation is an investment in your dressage community. Thank you!