

Region 9 Report

Director: Sherry Guess, OK

2015 Fall Executive Board Meeting, December 2 & 5 Las Vegas, Nevada

Our 2015 Great American Insurance Group /USDF Region 9 & Southwest Dressage Championships and HDS Autumn Classic were again held at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center, in Katy, TX. We continued the trend of increasing attendance. With more than 370 horses in attendance, we surpassed our 2014 number, which had been our largest to date. It has been exciting to see the improvement in our riders, their horses, and their scores!

Houston Dressage Society also organized the Shoofly Farms CDI3*/1*/YH/Y/J/P/U-25 and Houston Dressage Society Spring Classics I and II held April 23-26, 2015. This was the fifth CDI HDS produced in our region and interest continues to build. This year more than 20 horses competed – up from three the first year!

Houston will host the CPEDI3* and CPEDI1* 2015 USEF Para Equestrian Dressage National Championship in conjunction with their Deep in the Heart of Texas Shows I and II on October 29 – November 1, 2015. This will be the first to be held in our region.

Several Region 9 individuals received special recognition this year.

Started in 1993 to recognize those who have provided outstanding service to our region, the 2015 Region 9 Horse Person of the Year, went to two individuals! Inez Campbell and Ed Lavallee were honored for their dedication and productive work on behalf of our NAJRYR group.

During her 10 years as regional coordinator, Inez has worked tirelessly to provide funds for our teams, raising approximately \$200,000 during that time in a variety of ways. Ed Lavallee served as chef d'equipe for five years for the group, earning the Patsy Albers Award in 2014.

Through the efforts of these two individuals, our group has grown each year to become one of the largest in the nation with a deep and educated field of competitors.

Becky Brown was selected to receive the Teaching Excellence Award which is managed by The Dressage Foundation. Established by Meg Flemming, this is the seventh year this award has been presented. The recipient is awarded \$5,000 for their special contribution to the sport of dressage.

Kai Handt will continue as the U.S. Para Equestrian Dressage chef d'equipe/Technical Advisor through 2016. Over the past six years, Handt has worked within the Para-Dressage world where he trained and sponsored the late Paralympian Jonathan Wentz. Handt helped Wentz ride to his full potential and reach his goals which included representing the U.S. Para-Dressage Team at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, winning the USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage National Championship in 2011, and becoming the highest individual ranking U.S. rider that competed in London at the Paralympics. Handt will work closely with all current and potential para-dressage athletes preparing each rider and their horses for international competition. Kai Handt is an advocate for the para-dressage discipline and enjoys encouraging other sponsors,

riders, and trainers to get involved with the sport. The ultimate goal of each high-performance discipline is to win medals.

Education continues to be a strong focus for our region. Each GMO has produced a variety of educational offerings, schooling shows, and recognized shows. In addition, the Region 9 Education Fund has financially helped our GMOs produce several of the following events.

- Austin Dressage Unlimited held its sixth annual “Improving Your Judging Eye & Showing Skills” featuring Wim Erns. In spite of ice in much of our region, more than 100 participants enjoyed the presentation at Southwest University campus, Georgetown, TX on January 10-11, 2015. The venue includes a lecture hall with theater seating and a cafeteria where not only is the food plentiful, varied, and tasty, but also dealt with in a ‘green’ manner. ADU will continue their quest to bring top international judges to educate the judges and riders of Region 9 and beyond in 2016 when they feature Katrina Wuest on January 9-10, 2016. Their dedication to bringing international quality education to Region 9 is providing a tremendous broadening experience for all.
- The USDF Region 9 adult clinic with Kathy Connelly and Betsy Steiner was held April 11-12, 2015 at Windy Knoll Farm in Magnolia, TX and hosted by Houston Dressage Society. Eight riders and more than 60 auditors were appreciative of the helpful and humorous approach taken by the two clinicians. Fran Dearing-Kehr donated not only her facility, but also provided free stabling for the demonstration riders.
- Central Texas Dressage Society presented a riding seminar with Sarah Geike “S” on January 29-February 1, at Silver Hills Stables in Manor, TX. She explained the goals and benefits of the exercises she selected for each horse/rider demonstrator. This included a daily lecture and nine lessons with explanations to ensure all understood the goals and methodology.
- February 27-March 1, 2015 Houston Dressage Society presented a symposium with Conrad Schumacher of Germany at Isabella Farms in Cypress, TX. Following their seminar, they have arranged for Schumacher to return two-three times per year for a “FEI Training Series” to provide Region 9 FEI riders the training tools to ride at a higher level and become more competitive in the FEI classes.
- Fort Worth Dressage again offered their adult camp with Whit Watkins.
- Dallas Dressage Club will be presenting a lecture featuring the musical freestyle, delivered by Joan Darnell on November 14, 2015.

The young people of our region are an active group.

- George Williams was the Platinum Performance/USDF Jr/YR clinician January 31-February 1, 2015 at North Texas Equestrian Center, Wylie, TX.
- The Region 9 Youth Schooling Show Challenge is a certificate and patch program for recognition of scores earned by youth at any of our region’s schooling shows. This past year five riders submitted scores and qualified. They were also recognized on our website.
- The junior and young riders sold jackets, t-shirts, and jewelry to fund their trip to NAJYRC in Lexington, KY. Art work on the garments was designed by FEI Bronze Medalist and 2012 junior team member Kalie Beckers. They also have a used tack sale that is held at three shows throughout the region.

Dallas Dressage Society hosted our Region 9 summer meeting August 1, 2015 in Rockwall, TX.

The Region 9 Board has continued to serve this year with all members remaining in position. Next year the board will be joined by our new FEI Jr/YR chef d'equipe Benny Pfabe and FEI Jr/YR coordinator Kathy Jones.

The Region 9 Omnibus celebrates its 20th year of publication in 2016. Arlene Gaitan and Veronica Moody head this endeavor. The USDF, USEF and FEI tests will be a part of our Omnibus due to the generosity of Sue Malone Casey who underwrites the cost of publishing these tests. We appreciate all our advertisers, who continue to make it possible to underwrite activities in our region. The Omnibus will also be available for free viewing on our Region 9 website.

We are fortunate that Nicole Landreneau continues to serve as our webmaster. She also sends out news blasts to all members and serves as historian.

We have filled all our six delegate positions.

It takes many volunteers giving hundreds of hours to keep our region running smoothly. Thanks to all for their time and dedication.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherry Guess
USDF Region 9 Director