

Region 9 Report

Director: Sherry Guess, OK

2019 Fall Executive Board Meeting, December 4 and December 7 Savannah, GA

Our 2019 Great American Insurance Group /USDF Region 9 Dressage Championships & Southwest Dressage Championships, and Houston Dressage Society (HDS) Autumn Classic were again held at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center in Katy, TX . It is exciting to see the improvement in our riders, their horses, and their scores! We had 320 horses entered, down from 370 in 2018. Our extremely hot and humid summer may have been the cause, since several shows reported lower than normal attendance. The proximity of the Region 4 championships to the northern part of our region also pulled a number of riders/instructors who would normally have attended. We also have to consider that the Western Dressage Association of America holds their World Championship in Oklahoma the same weekend as our regional championships and some instructors who would normally show at our regionals take students to that event.

HDS also organized the Tex-Over CDI2*/1*/YH/Y/J/P/CH/U-25 and HDS Spring Classics I and II, held April 25-28, 2019. This is the first year for Tex-Over Farm in Conroe, TX to be the named sponsor and we appreciate their support. This was the ninth CDI HDS has produced in our region and numbers remain high. This CDI was the first in the US to offer the new FEI Young Horse Seven-Year-Old division and the FEI Children's division (12-14 year old riders on a horse or pony). Starting in 2016, the FEI expanded the Adult Amateur division through Grand Prix and HDS offers the full complement of classes for the Adult Amateurs.

There were 24 horses that entered this CDI, our largest so far, with some riders entering more than one horse. CDI prize money has increased to over \$15,000.

The Region 9 Board again issued a \$5,000 challenge to the GMOs for matching funds to help support the CDI. Alamo Dressage Society, Austin Dressage Unlimited, Central Texas Dressage Society, Dallas Dressage Club, Fort Worth Dressage Club, Oklahoma Dressage Society, and Southern Eventing and Dressage Association all responded. Our region is proud to offer and support the only CDI not located on one of the coasts!

A particularly fortunate aspect of the Tex-Over Farm CDI is that it provides opportunities and training for judges and other FEI officials who are seldom given a chance to officiate at the coastal CDIs.

2019 marks the 31st year for our Southwest Dressage Championships (SWDC). Generally held in conjunction with the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 9 Dressage Championships, they actually pre-date them! Their "Classic Combination" High Score Award is offered to Adult Amateur and Open divisions. The award goes to the highest combination of age of horse and age of rider in a SWDC championship ride.

Sydney Lipar, Gage Miles, Skye Simpson, and Emma Claire Stephens (all from Texas) won a team bronze at the North American Youth Championships (NAYC)! Tracy Augustine, coordinator, and Benjamin Pfabe, chef d' equipe, will continue to serve next year. Tracy hosts a Jr/YR breakfast each year at our regional championships and the

Battle of the Barns auction is filled with extravagant baskets that are a major fundraiser for them.

Our Region 9 Board is populated by those on various USDF committees (Donna Meyer, Jan Colley, Tracy Augustine, Susan Howard, Jennifer Jarvis, Marilyn Kulifay, Leslie Rohrer, Alecia Daniel, Carolyn VandenBerg, Regina Milliken and Anne Kuhns) and those holding Region 9 offices (Carolyn VandenBerg, Horse Person of the Year; Arlene Gaitan, Omnibus Advertising; Nicole Miller, Omnibus Editor, Webmaster, e-Newsletter, Historian; Meg Fleming, Teaching Excellence Award; Sarah Jane Martin, Secretary; and Nettie Olsen, Treasurer). All Region 9 members who attend our meetings are eligible to vote.

Memphis Area Dressage and Eventing Society in Mississippi closed last year, which brings the number of GMOs in Region 9 to thirteen.

Started in 1993 to recognize those who have provided outstanding service to our region, the 2019 Region 9 Horse Person of the Year went to Sherry Guess for her drive to advance dressage in our region.

Each year a trainer is selected to receive the Teaching Excellence Award, which is managed by The Dressage Foundation. Established by Meg Flemming and Bess Bruton, this is the eleventh year this award has been presented. Unique to Region 9, the recipient is awarded \$5,000 for their educational contribution to the sport of dressage. This year's winner was John Mason from Tex-Over Farm, Conroe, TX.

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 their events. Grants of up to \$500 are awarded to help support education for our members. This year, grants were awarded to Central Texas Dressage Society for their "Put the FEI in Training Level" Symposium with Lauren Spreiser, and Oklahoma Dressage Society for "Training Exercises Used to Progress Through the Levels" with Christine Traurig. The USDF GMO Education Initiative was used to defray expenses by the Tri-State Dressage Society for a Rider Biomechanics Clinic with Mary Mahler, held in Benton, LA.

"Upgrade Your Judging Eye" with Kathy Rowse, offered by Alamo Dressage Society, and a freestyle symposium with Joan Darnell, offered by Dallas Dressage Club, provided continuing education for judges.

Central Texas Dressage Society hosted the D1 and D2 and final exam for L Education Program attendees. New Region 9 graduates for this program include Crystall Forsell, Noell Lacy, Danielle Myers*, Grace Anne Owsley, Ashley Shaw, Bre Dorsett-Tamminga* and Rebekah Wesatzke (**with distinction*). Many thanks to Tina Zehnder and Betty Beebe for their efforts in organizing these events.

HDS hosted our Region 9 summer meeting August 3, 2019 in Magnolia, TX at the lovely Haras Hacienda. Included was a tour of the grounds, including their 15 Lusitano stallions. Haras will also be presenting a Master Class with Isabel Werth this fall.

During the meeting, Nicole Miller's design was selected from the many talented Region 9 member submissions, and will be placed on the 2019 Region 9 Championships T-shirt. These shirts are sold as a fundraiser for the region. Southern Eventing and Dressage Association will host our 2020 summer meeting in Louisiana.

The Region 9 Omnibus celebrates its 24th year of publication in 2019. Arlene Gaitan, Nicole Miller, and Veronica Moody head this endeavor. USDF, USEF, and FEI Tests will be a part of our Omnibus. 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 Miller continues to serve as our webmaster. She also sends out news blasts to all members and serves as historian, as well as monitors our Facebook.

Two members received recognition through the USDF Group Member Organization Awards. USDF Region 9 Volunteer of the Year was Deryn Stewart from Ponca City, OK, Central Plains Dressage Society. Nicole Miller won two awards for her contributions to "The Bleep", April 24, 2019, the Southern Eventing and Dressage Society newsletter: for GMOs 75-174 members and the GMO Photograph Award (Best Amateur Photographer) and GMO Newsletter Award (First Person Experience Award) for "The View from C".

Our USDF Participating Member delegates for the 2019 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention are Tracy Augustine, Betty Beebe, Elizabeth Clifton, Jan Colley, and Marilyn Kulifay.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Guess
USDF Region 9 Director