

## Region 9 Report

**Director:** Bess Bruton, TX

### ***2025 Spring Executive Board Meeting, April 22-23, Lexington, KY***

Seems the norm - an early arrival of spring in Region 9. Shows, clinics, and seminars are all underway. GMOs are busy planning and holding educational events. Hope that all members will take advantage of the opportunity to participate. GMO's are an integral part of USDF. Thanks to all the volunteers who run them !!!

As always... alot going on...

Region 9 had several members who traveled to Florida in January for the USDF Trainers Conference. It is always very educational.

Ingrid Klimke Masterclass was held in Tyler, Tx. at the Texas Rose Horse Park in February. Those attending had rave reviews to report.

SEDA held a fun Lauren Spreiser Seminar in Folsom, LA.

Dallas Dressage Club held its annual judges freestyle seminar on March 8th with Joan Darnell. All attendees gained valuable experience and had fun too.

Houston Dressage Society just finished with Session D1, D2 & the Final exam for a dedicated group of L program candidates.

Coming up on the calendar:

Dallas Dressage Club is holding a Judging Dressage Seat Equitation the end of March.

Alamo Dressage Society riding clinic with Judge Cesar Torrente in May. ADA has recently held several learning seminars for volunteers.

Oklahoma Dressage Society Spring Symposium with Willy Arts first part of April. And a GMO Educational Initiative Symposium, also in April.

SFS Dressage and Wild Oaks Ranch is hosting Michael Klimke toward the end of March. Beneficial for our members...more GMO's are hosting educational events, and many private barns bring in well-known national and international clinicians too.

Our yearly Region 9 Summer (in-person) Meeting is slated for July 18-20, 2025 in New Orleans, LA. french quarter, and hosted by Southern Eventing and Dressage Association. Besides the business portion, and networking session, we have options for a tour of the Garden District, or a food tour. A ghost tour, jazz dinner/cruise on a steamboat paddlewheel river boat, going out to excellent restaurants, and lots of camaraderie and fun. SEDA will also be celebrating their 50th Anniversary. Le Bon Temps...let the good times roll !!

The following information (several paragraphs) can be found with more detail in the Region 9 Omnibus (electronic version) on the Region 9 Website: including shows, past and present awards presented, list of judges, TD's, L Grads, Certified Instructors, R9 Board members, GMO Presidents, etc.

With over 33 recognized shows, of note is the Houston Dressage Society (HDS) 2025 Edwards De Mata Law PLLC CDI2\*/1\*/Am/YH/Y/J/PCH and Spring Classic. It is the only CDI in our region. We appreciate HDS and the enormous effort they put forward to hold such a prestigious event.

HDS also hosts the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Region 9 Dressage Championships and SWDC Championships & HDS Autumn Classic, to be held October 2-5, 2025. This is another huge undertaking, and we truly appreciate and respect all who help to make it a success.

Of the eighteen Region 9 board member positions, we welcome Sarah Denham, as our new Teaching Excellence Award (TEA) chairperson.

Stepping down from the Region 9 board, after at least 2 decades of dedicated service is Meg Flemming. The TEA was the brainchild of Meg, who is passionate about teaching dressage correctly and with excellence - hence the name of the award. In its 16th year, it has awarded more than \$75,000. We will greatly miss Meg, but thank her profusely for her forward thinking idea, which will carry on for years. And thank you to The Dressage Foundation for housing and overseeing this prestigious award.

We have thirteen GMOs - of those we welcome 4 new presidents: Alamo Dressage Association (ADA) Claire Oxley, Brazos Association of Classical Horsemanship (BACH) Cynthia Werner, Central Plains Dressage Society's (CPDS) Nora Wert, and Houston Dressage Society (HDS) Jody DeStefanis. We appreciate the service of the outgoing presidents, Jim Humphreys (ADA), Jinny Johnson (BACH), Chris Cashel (CPDS), and Jane Holman (HDS).

Our twelve USEF licensed judges stay busy traveling the states, with some going overseas.

Of the six USEF licensed technical delegates, one is new - congrats Christina Harmon for becoming a "r".

We are graced with 23 USDF L graduates in our region.

The region is also proud of the 10 USDF certified and associate instructors.

Since the 2024 fall report, we held a regional Zoom meeting in November, with 25 attending. Several reports were given: the Region 9 eNews sent out by Nicole Miller around the middle of each month has approximately 600 subscribers, with a 50% open rate. Nicole also manages the Region 9 Facebook page and website. And I send out emails to the GMOs, updating them on information of interest for their members.

We recognized our 2024 Region 9 Horse Person of the Year, Betty Beebe. She serves on the Region 9 board as the Adult Education Chair. She periodically writes articles for our newsletter, and is extremely involved with Central Texas Dressage Society - wearing numerous hats. Congrats Betty for many years of volunteerism, and many more to come.

And congrats to Nicole Miller for the winning design for our annual 2024 Region 9 t-shirt. We sold the most t-shirts ever... with a new color, and cool design.

In November, George Williams came to Paragon Farms in Magnolia, TX, as instructor for the USDF Region 9 FEI Youth Clinic. Everyone learned a lot and had fun.

Marsha Lewis, our Region 9 FEI Youth Coordinator, is busy planning the 2025 FEI youth clinic that will be held in the fall with Anne Gribbons.

And Marsha is the go-to person for the North American Youth Championships (NAYC) (coordinating, helping the riders, etc.). She also supervises fundraising for both the Region

9 FEI Jr/ YR's and youth. And has other ideas coming down the pipeline for educational opportunities.

Region 9 welcomed with open arms USDF members and delegates to the 2024 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention in Houston, Texas. For the first time in several years Region 9 provided lapel pins for all convention attendees. They were proudly worn, and are collector items.

Besides the educational sessions, and meetings, one of the highlights of the convention included a night of line dancing with the "Howdy Dancers". What happens in Houston, stays in Houston! And 3 members won coveted GMO baskets: Betty Beebe, Ruby Lewis, and Bess Bruton.

We held a 31 in attendance, in-person Region 9 meeting. Our 2025 Region 9 Finance Working Group was elected: Claire Oxley, Elizabeth Clifton, and Sarah Jane Martin. Most of the meeting was convention information and discussion about the items coming forward for a vote at the Board of Governors (BOG) meeting. There was discussion about the other meetings and educational seminars being offered as well.

We were fortunate to have all six PM delegates represent us at BOG: Arlene Gaitan, Barbara Lewis, Betty Beebe, Carolyn VandenBerg, Marilyn Kulifay, and Sarah Jane Martin. Our GMO delegates were Claire Oxley, Christina Harmon, Joanne Baum, Joanne Homeyer, Lynne Smith, Sarah Denham, and Nicole Miller. And each of our PM delegates did double duty carrying a GMO proxy. We appreciate all our delegates!

Thanks to the following Region 9 GMOs for helping to sponsor the convention in Houston: BACH; SEDA; CTDS; CPDS; ODS; DDA; FWDC; ADA; ADU; and HDS.

Alecia Daniel, our region's Nominating Committee representative, is busy looking for PM delegates for the 2025 convention to be held in Lexington, Ky., and will be contacting the GMOs later in the summer for their delegates.

With the new year comes new members to the USDF national committees. New this year, Leslie Rohrer on the Regional Championship Committee.

Other members of the national committees include: Bess Bruton - Bylaws Committee; Jennifer Jarvis – GMO Committee; Alecia Daniel – Nominating Committee; Marilyn Kulifay – Competition Management and Technical Delegates Committees; Tina Wentz - Para Dressage Committee; Sarah Denham – Adult Programs Committee; Elizabeth Clifton – Awards Committee; Marsha Lewis – FEI Youth Committee; and Regina Milliken - Sport Horse Committee. Thanks to all these members who help USDF forge a promising and bright future.

The Dressage Foundation (TDF) is an important source of funds for both our GMOs and members. Every year we turn to them for help. We had several Century Club riders inducted this past year, along with recipients for both GMO and individual grants. Congrats to all!

TDF helps with two major Region 9 grants: Evie Tumlin Memorial Fund for Region 9 Adult Amateurs, (the 2024 recipient was Danielle Aymond), and the Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award for instructors. Information about TDF is published in our monthly regional e-newsletters.

Also in our monthly newsletters we help our youth stay informed by providing information to encourage them along their journey. Included is the Dressage4Kids calendar and

updates. The D4K Team program has two clinics scheduled in Fulshear and in Hutto, Tx this spring.

Our *Region 9 Omnibus* is the region's best fundraiser, supporting many grants and monies for the region GMOs and members. Due to its 29 years of publication, the region is very financially stable. We are very appreciative of the many sponsors and advertisers who support and have supported us through the years. Thank you!! Some of the regional funds available include: Adult Education Fund for GMOs, Youth Education Fund, Jr/YR Fund, Travel Funds for smaller GMOs, and members to attend the summer meeting and national convention.

It takes dedicated volunteers to put together the omnibus. We are already working on the 2026 edition, "Celebrating 30 Years", which is due out in October.

We are always excited when our members and GMOs achieve recognition through individual and GMO awards. The 2024 USDF Region 9 GMO Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Janelle Williams of Edmond, OK - Central Plains Dressage Society.

SEDA won 1<sup>st</sup> place for a GMO Newsletter Award, and a GMO Website Award - GMOs with 75-174 members.

Several of our members attended and did well at the 2024 US Dressage Finals held in Lexington, KY. Congratulations to everyone! And I had the good fortune to attend to volunteer in hospitality. It was fun and rewarding.

Recognizing all our volunteers in all aspects of our sport is important. Without volunteers there would be no GMO's, no shows, no clinics, no seminars. They are necessary for the wheels to turn. Please be kind and thank them !!!

Respectfully submitted,

Bess Bruton  
USDF Region 9 Director