



Midwest Dressage Association Newsletter

December 2025 / January 2026

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From the President

Happy New Year to everyone!

This year is the Year of the Horse, and I don't know about you all, but I hope someone lunged it first! As we begin the new year, I want to reflect on where we've been and share my optimism for where we're going.

This past year brought many changes and opportunities. The awards program expanded to include categories such as virtual, leadline, and eventing dressage, while updated volunteer requirements resulted in over 450 service hours to the community! After lowering fees for competition organizers, MDA supported 53 days of Participating Schooling Shows across 10 venues and donated more than \$2,000 to educational clinics while hosting a musical freestyle clinic. We are proud of what was accomplished and see no signs of slowing down.

Building on last year's momentum, we are planning to host a USEF/USDF Recognized show May 16th -17th. Our goal is to provide an affordable, fun, and welcoming event that benefits our members and the dressage community.

I'm proud to be on this board alongside an amazing group of horsewomen and am excited for the year ahead. We are dedicated to supporting and growing our membership. Thank you for your continued commitment and passion for the sport. If you have ideas, suggestions, or concerns - please reach out to us at info@midwestdressage.org.

I wish everyone straight lines and flawless transitions in the coming year!

Kind Regards,
Mykal

Meet the Board



Mykal Roth, President

mykal@midwestdressage.org

president@midwestdressage.org

Mykal is entering her 4th year on the board. She brings a strong and well-rounded equestrian background rooted in both eventing and dressage. Actively involved in the local Pony club, she is passionate about supporting youth education and horsemanship. She is a proud parent of two young daughters, Evelyn (13) and Nora (7) who made their MDA debut in 2025.



Alexandra Pollack, Vice President

alexandra@midwestdressage.org

vicepresident@midwestdressage.org

Alexandra is the owner of Thistle Run Online Horse Shows. With a strong focus on accessibility and affordability, her goal is to make showing more inclusive, especially for riders who may have limited access to traditional competitions, while still maintaining an encouraging, educational, and fun showing experience from home.



Katie Bratschi, Secretary

katie@midwestdressage.org

secretary@midwestdressage.org

Katie has been involved with the Midwest Dressage Association for several years as both an active competitor and volunteering on the Board of Directors. She enjoys promoting non-traditional breeds in dressage, specifically Morgans, and looks forward to showing her horse Chief this season!



Meghan Connolly, Treasurer

meghan@midwestdressage.org

treasurer@midwestdressage.org

Meghan returned to riding a few years ago after a long hiatus after college. She is rediscovering her love for dressage with her horses Possum, Roo, and Mouse.

Photo Credit: [Meghan Cole Photography](#)



Jordan Irwin

jordan@midwestdressage.org

Most people know me as the counterpart of the one-of-a-kind draft dressage diva / eventing extraordinaire / 2025 Clydesdale World Champion hunter over fences, Tilly the Clydesdale. We love showing off all that a heavy horse can do! Now living the adult ammy life, I enjoy being involved with and giving back to the equine community through the MDA.



Valyn Dall

valyn@midwestdressage.org

Valyn's first dressage lesson on a retired saddleseat horse over 20 years ago showed her why, "Dressage is for every horse." With her current saddlebred, Paddyngton's Golden Glory (Teddy), she is working toward a USDF Bronze Medal and Freestyle Bar (two-thirds there!). Please feel free to email or say hello to her and Teddy at Albion or Waterloo during the 2026 season.

Photo Credit: [Lisa Michelle Dean Photography](#)



Madeline Flynn

madeline@midwestdressage.org

Madeline discovered her love for dressage through WI 4-H, competing with her horse, Sidekick. After moving to Michigan in 2020, she began volunteering with the Midwest Dressage Association, bringing a tech-oriented background to support the website and newsletter. She currently serves as the newest member of the Board of Directors and is excited to continue getting more involved in Michigan's equine community!

Member Kudos & Community Spotlights

We love celebrating our members – big wins, small victories, and everything in between! Have you earned an award, reached a personal milestone, or want to congratulate a fellow rider, volunteer, or barn mate? We'd love to share it. Submissions don't have to be USDF-focused and can include any dressage-related accomplishments. Photos are encouraged!

We're also looking for newsletter content from our members. If you have an article idea, barn news, event recap, or something you'd like to share with the MDA community, we want to hear from you!

Send submissions to: newsletter@midwestdressage.org

Membership

The 2026 season is just around the corner, and now is the perfect time to renew your membership. Your MDA membership helps support local dressage shows, educational opportunities, Year-End awards, and a strong regional dressage community. Whether you compete, volunteer, or simply enjoy staying connected to the sport, renewing ensures you won't miss out on the benefits of the upcoming season.

How to Renew:

1. Visit www.midwestdressage.org/join-renew
2. Complete the membership form
3. Pay membership dues securely through the website
The MDA Website utilizes PayPal for all payments, so your information is safe & secure

MDA offers four membership types to fit every rider and supporter: Open, Adult Amateur, Junior, and Social.

We encourage all members to renew early so your membership is active for the full 2026 season. Thank you for being a part of the Midwest Dressage Association! We look forward to another great year together!

2026 Bylaw Changes

At the November General Meeting, members approved several bylaw updates that will take effect for the 2026 season. These changes are intended to support effective governance, continuity, and shared standards.

Approved 2026 Bylaw Updates include:

- Updated Board size requirements and added expectations for knowledge transfer during Board Transitions (*Article VII, Section 1*)
- Revised quorum definition to reflect proportional Board participation (*Article VIII, Section 5*)
- Removal of the Professional Advisors Committee (*Article X, Section 2*)
- Adoption of a formal MDA Code of Conduct applicable to all members (*Article XI*)

The complete bylaws may be found at www.midwestdressage.org/bylaws

Upcoming Events & Deadlines

January 24: End of Year Awards Banquet

When: January 24th, 2026, at 11am EST

Where: Zehnder's of Frankenmuth

Details: It's official! The MDA will be returning to lovely Frankenmuth to celebrate the 2025 Year End Awards. Save the date for this fun change to congratulate our awesome riders, friends, family, and sponsors on another year of dressage excellence.

Tickets are Sold Out!

To be added to the waitlist, please reach out to alexandra@midwestdressage.org

Qualified Rider List

The Qualified Rider list is available at the end of this newsletter.

Attention: Award Recipients

If you are unable to attend the Year End Banquet this year, please make arrangements to receive your award. Questions can be directed to awards@midwestdressage.org

April 1: Education Grant Applications Due

When: April 1st, 2026, at Noon EST

Details: Education Grant applications are now open! The MDA Education Grant Program supports members offset the cost of dressage-related education. Eligible members are encouraged to apply before the deadline.

More information is available here: www.midwestdressage.org/education-grant-program
Questions? Contact grants@midwestdressage.org

May 16-17: MDA Rated Show

Where: Ingham County Fairgrounds

When: May 16 through May 17, 2026

Details: Mark your calendars! This USDF Rated Show, organized by the MDA, is designed for riders entering the rated arena for the first time, as well as experienced competitors looking for a quality early-season show. Additional Information, including the prize list and entry details, will be released soon.

USDF Annual Convention

The Midwest Dressage Association (MDA) was proud to be represented at the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) Annual Convention, with MDA President Mykal Roth attending on behalf of the organization.

MDA Submitted entries in every category for the 2025 GMO Awards and is pleased to share several recognitions:

- Madeline Flynn was named Regional GMO Volunteer of the Year for Region 2
- MDA received an Honorable Mention for the GMO Photography Award (Best Amateur Photograph) for Alexandra Pollack's featured image (see below)
- Judge feedback was provided for categories where awards were not received, offering valuable insight to strengthen future submissions.

We are grateful for the continued dedication of our volunteers and members whose efforts support MDA throughout the year.



Many of the presentations revisited topics from last year's convention, with expanded discussion around the concept of "*social license to operate*", or the continued public acceptance of equestrian sport. Animal welfare remains a central concern influencing public perception, and both the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and USDF emphasized their ongoing commitment to the safety and welfare of horses and competitors.

Representing USEF, David O'Connor discussed the implementation of the Warning Card system. This program provides officials with a tool to address unsafe riding or poor horsemanship in a way that encourages education and improvement, rather than focusing solely on punitive action at the time of an infraction.

USDF shared several confirmed USEF dressage rule changes, effective December 1st, 2025. This list is not exhaustive, and riders are encouraged to review the official rulebook for full details. Key updates include:

- Updates to tack and equipment rules in select qualifying classes (including martingales, breastplates, and cruppers)
- Clarifications regarding nose nets, bridle numbers, and scheduling requirements

- New spacing requirements between riders on the same horse
- Updated scribe eligibility at upper levels
- Allowing stallions in Dressage Seat Equitation classes for riders 18+
- Expanded allowances for ear plugs and ear muffs, along with clarified veterinary therapy rules

Link to official USEF Rule Book: usef.org/compete/disciplines/dressage/rules--equipment

Note: A proposed rule change that would restrict the use of double bridles at Third Level was discussed at the convention. Members are encouraged to follow updates directly through USEF as proposals move through the review process. Go to usef.org/compete/resources-forms/rules-regulations/rule-changes for more details.

As always, competitors are responsible for ensuring compliance with current rules and should consult the USDF/USEF rulebook for the most up-to-date and complete information.

2025 Qualified Riders List

Please see the next pages for the 2025 Qualified Riders List.

2025 QUALIFIED RIDER LIST

RECOGNIZED SHOWS				VOLUNTEER REQ FILLED
Teresa Golip	Ali May	Training	JR/YR	YES
Kimberly Robbins	DIF Aftensang	Training	Open	YES
Pamela Bauer	Francisca	Training	Open	YES
Olesya Stadnik	Uncidor de Amtuna	Training	Open	YES
Mary Snodgrass	Hitachi HD	Training	AA	YES
Heather Vitta	Laird	Training	Open	YES
Nicola Tucker	Pandora	Training	AA	YES
Paige Emerson	Simi OVS	Training	AA	YES
B. Heidi Hakken	Ridley's Royal Reserve	Training	AA	YES
Candace Hearn	Hidden Valley Peaches	First Level	JR/YR	YES
Daphne Rasegan	Elton J	First Level	JR/YR	YES
Pamela Bauer	Mikey Can Do It	First Level	Open	YES
Olesya Stadnik	Uncidor de Amtuna	First Level	Open	YES
Karen Suit	Penny's Worth	First Level	Open	YES
Stephanie Mussmann	Siglavy Aga	First Level	AA	YES
B. Heidi Hakken	Ridley's Royal Reserve	First Level	AA	YES
Candace Hearn	Hidden Valley Peaches	Second Level	JR/YR	YES
Daphne Rasegan	Elton J	Second Level	JR/YR	YES
Karen Suit	Penny's Worth	Second Level	Open	YES
Valyn Dall	Paddyngton's Golden Glory	Second Level	AA	YES
Valarie LaDuke	Quality Time HW	Second Level	AA	YES
Stephanie Mussmann	Siglavy Aga	Second Level	AA	YES
Shannon Dempich	Maximus Malin	Second Level	AA	YES
Lucia Barber	Gigant E	Second Level	AA	YES
Kennedy Parker	Leeuw	Second Level	AA	YES
Laura Gutierrez	Polar Express	Third Level	JR/YR	YES
Valarie LaDuke	Quality Time HW	Third Level	AA	YES
Janice LaQuiere	Risonho	Third Level	AA	YES
Kennedy Parker	Ijsdraak	Third Level	AA	YES
Laura Gutierrez	Polar Express	Fourth Level	JR/YR	YES
Janelle Deisig	Pair A Dice	Fourth Level	Open	YES
Iris Foote	E-ROS	Fourth Level	AA	YES
Janelle Deisig	Pair A Dice	Prix St. Georges	Open	YES

Iris Foote	E-ROS	Freestyle-Fourth	AA	YES
Valyn Dall	Paddyngton's Golden Glory	Freestyle-First	AA	YES
Valyn Dall	Paddyngton's Golden Glory	Freestyle-Second	AA	YES
Valarie LaDuke	Quality Time HW	Freestyle-Third	AA	YES
Stephanie Mussmann	Siglavy Aga	Freestyle-First	AA	YES
Stephanie Mussmann	Siglavy Aga	Freestyle-Second	AA	YES
Janice LaQuiere	Risonho	Freestyle-Third	AA	YES
Paige Emerson	Simi OVS	Freestyle-First	AA	YES
Karen Suit	Penny's Worth	Freestyle-First	Open	YES
Janelle Deisig	Pair A Dice	Freestyle-Fourth	Open	YES

Amanda Agemak	Winterlake Tristan	Freestyle-Interme	Open	YES
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Schooling Shows

Meghan Connolly	KSD Dreamweaver	Intro	AA	YES
Lindsey Scheer	Encanto	Intro	AA	YES
Denise M. Arbaugh	Bella Fortuna	Intro	AA	YES
Katie Bratschi	KSD Dreamweaver	Intro	AA	YES
Carolyn McKay-Pfeiffer	Hidden Treasure	Intro	AA	YES
Dorothee Kurian	The Devil Wears Gucci	Intro	AA	YES
Emily Pawlowski	Chryso Fili	Intro	JR/YR	YES
Evelyn Roth	Dakota Comet	Intro	JR/YR	YES
Kimberly Robbins	Donna Bella FS	Intro	Open	YES
Kimberly Robbins	Moneyline	Intro	Open	YES
Alicia Harbin	BH Gemini Twist	Intro	Open	YES

Heather Vitta	Laird	Training	AA	YES
Andrea Becker	Cinders SF	Training	AA	YES
Nicole Wozniak	Tranquillitas	Training	AA	YES
Sue Pelto	Chasing Dreams	Training	AA	YES
Paige Emerson	Simi OVS	Training	AA	YES
Meghan Connolly	KSD Dreamweaver	Training	AA	YES
Myla Rau	SIR LIAM IV	Training	JR/YR	YES
Lily Brown	Allocatearising Star	Training	JR/YR	YES
Lena Whittaker	Titan	Training	JR/YR	YES
Stella Cowen	Em Chalk One Up	Training	JR/YR	YES
Kimberly Robbins	Moneyline	Training	Open	YES
Kimberly Robbins	Wintersong	Training	Open	YES
Kimberly Robbins	Schonheit	Training	Open	YES
Pamela Bauer	Francisca	Training	Open	YES
Amanda Agemak	Alphabet soup	Training	Open	YES
Pamela Bauer	Mikey Can Do It	Training	Open	YES

Cynthia DeRousie	Gin and Tonyx	First Level	AA	YES
Anna Dahlgren	Mystical Design	First Level	AA	YES
Donna Genyk	Lucky Sevens	First Level	AA	YES
Juliana James	Cinderella	First Level	JR/YR	YES
Teresa Golip	Ali May	First Level	JR/YR	YES
Jordan Irwin	Tullamore Dew	First Level	Open	YES
Kimberly Robbins	DIF Aftensang	First Level	Open	YES
Macie Taylor	MSU Zingaro	First Level	Open	YES
Pamela Bauer	Mikey Can Do It	First Level	Open	YES

Jennifer Herron	Pacific Pepel	Second Level	AA	YES
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Holly Zecchin	Too Boss	WD Intro	Open	YES
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Annalisa Wilkinson	Cameo of Maidenview	WD Basic	JR/YR	YES
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Holly Zecchin	Too Boss	WD Basic	Open	YES
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Kimberly Wahl	Whinston	WD Level 1	AA	YES
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Kimberly Wahl	Smokin Hollywood Pep	WD Level 2	AA	YES
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Kimberly Wahl	Whinston	WD Level 2	AA	YES
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Bonni Hazen	Eden	WD Level 2	Open	YES
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Kimberly Wahl	Smokin Hollywood Pep	WD Equitation	AA	YES
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VIRTUAL SHOWS

Shana Canre	Confetti Dream	Intro	AA	NA
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Desiree Randazzio	For Saki's Sake	Intro	AA	NA
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Rebecca Hail	Doc's Hollywood Dream	Intro	AA	NA
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Shana Canre	Confetti Dream	Training	AA	NA
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Christy Wicke	Dazzling Star	Training	AA	NA
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Olesya Stadnik	Unsidor De Amtuna	Training	Open	NA
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Christy Wicke	Dazzling Star	First Level	AA	NA
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Megan Braun	Julius C'Czar	PD Grade 1	AA	NA
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Elizabeth Holm	Serene Sweetness	PD Grade 2	AA	NA
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Veronica Kohler	Maxemilio Al Ex	WD Intro	AA	NA
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Kimberly Wahl	Smokin Hollywood Pep	WD Level 2	AA	NA
Robert Pollack	Monties Strawgirl Suzie	Virtual Leadline		NA
Charlotte Pollack	Monties Strawgirl Suzie	Virtual Leadline		NA

LEADLINE

Nora Roth	Leonida's Windfall	Leadline
Payton Irwin	Tullamore Dew	Leadline
Robert Pollack	Monties Strawgirl Suzie	Leadline
Charlotte Pollack	Monties Strawgirl Suzie	Leadline