



# Midwest Dressage Association Newsletter

September 2024

## From the Board

Hello members! My apologies for the short hiatus on the newsletter the past few months. As it seems for many people, I ended up with a few too many plates spinning, and a couple of them inevitably dropped.

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer with their horses, whether it was at shows, on trail rides, or anything in between. I was able to attend a few schooling shows myself this summer. It was great seeing people come out have some fun and support the schooling show programs. For me, I was able to get my three-year-old gelding to a couple local shows to start getting him acclimated to the show scene for next year. He was the best boy at both shows. I'm definitely looking forward to it next year.



The MDA needs you! We are still looking for volunteers to join the Board of Directors this year. We will also have vacancies next year, for anyone that may not have time right now, but will in the future. If you have questions about what is involved in being part of the Board, please reach out to any of the current Board members and we'd be happy to chat!

We will also be looking for volunteers to help with the banquet for year end awards in January. If you are interested in helping,

please reach out to a Board member. The MDA's success is dependent on its volunteers.

Finally, I'm looking for members that are interested in writing! In order to continue to provide you with content for the newsletter, I'm looking for anyone that might be interested in assisting with content. Do you have a passion for

something horsey? Tell us about it! Did you go to an awesome clinic this year and want to share what you learned? Let me know! The newsletter is here to provide a space for our members to share their wins, educate one another, and so much more.

Our goal is to provide you with content that is helpful, enjoyable, and educational. I welcome your feedback, good, bad, or otherwise, as we continue to develop the newsletter across this year. If there is additional information or content you'd like to see, please let me know. If you are interested in contributing an article or would like to be featured in one of the sections, please reach out to me at [meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org).

Meghan Connolly  
Board Member



## Meet the Judge

*This section is designed to introduce MDA Members to some of the fantastic member judges and trainers that we have throughout the State of Michigan. If you are a judge or trainer and interested in being featured, please reach out to [meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org).*

Sadly, I have no judges or trainers to introduce this month. If you are a judge or trainer who wishes to be featured, please reach out to me so you can be included in an upcoming newsletter.

## Meet the Members

*This section is designed to introduce some of our wonderful members! If you are interested in being featured, please reach out to [meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org).*

Sadly, I have no members to feature this month. If you are interested in being featured, please reach out to me. We'd love to meet you!

## Meet the Board- Holly Zecchin

**Position on the Board:** 2023 & 2024 President; 2020 - 2022 Chairperson  
Year End Awards Committee

**How long have you been a member of MDA:** I believe the first year I joined was around 2014. Until 2020, my membership had been sporadic, based on whether I had a horse competing in schooling dressage shows or not.

**How long have you been riding:** I started riding when I was 8 years old. I took lessons at the Grosse Pointe Hunt Club.

**Do you ride traditional or western dressage:** As a professional, I have students doing traditional & western dressage as well as eventing, fox hunting & trail riding. My personal horse does western dressage.

**What got you interested in Dressage:** Dressage was always my strongest phase while I was eventing. It was an evolution for me to focus more and more on dressage. Spending a year and a half as a working student in Belgium really helped my dressage & lit a fire to develop my feel & understanding of dressage.

**Tell us about your horse(s):** Hawkeye (AKA Amodei) is a 10-year-old OTTB. I got him from Turning for Home, one of the track-based TB re-homing groups. I intended to do traditional dressage with him when I acquired him, but he was extremely fussy and agitated with his mouth. I tried him in a bitless bridle so I could help him figure out his balance and develop a foundation for his new job. Hawkeye went so well in the bitless bridle, I kept going with it. Ultimately, I decided to start competing him in Western Dressage because we could do it bitless. A year and a half later, Hawkeye won the Level Two Open Championship at the WDAA World Show.

Hawkeye has an unusual confirmation that doesn't make him ideal for dressage. But his athleticism & desire to please are impressive. And he has a wonderful presence that judges seem to appreciate. Bringing him up the levels of Western Dressage has been a challenging and super rewarding journey for me.

**What has been your most memorable moment as a member of MDA:** My most memorable moment as an MDA member was at the MDA Year End Awards luncheon last year when my student, Ella Spiers, won several awards on her OTTBs. I've taught Ella since she was in junior high school, and I'm so proud that she's developing into a top competitor and horsewoman.

**What would you tell someone considering joining MDA:** I enjoy meeting my fellow members at MDA Participating Schooling Shows and events. There's a sense of community when we have the opportunity to share stories about our horse obsession. It's reassuring to listen to other people's challenges & victories, especially when I'm struggling with some dilemma or issue of my own. Dressage is too difficult of a journey to travel alone. Being part of the MDA community can be a very rewarding way to support your objectives for better riding, horse management and mental health.

## Upcoming MDA Events



## Upcoming Clinics

### October 5-6- Karen Fulcher-Mindset Equestrian



Karen Fulcher from Mindset Equestrian will be giving a clinic at Heart Pond Stables in Williamston, MI. Karen is an L Graduate and Bronze medalist. She focuses on positive education in the equine community. She has a background in both traditional and western dressage, jumping, and open shows. She welcomes all breeds and levels to her clinics.

Rider spots are currently full, however auditing spots are still available. Cost to audit is \$10/day or \$15 for both days. Lunch both days will be a pot luck. **Please note this is a nut-free facility.** Please contact Amanda Cramer at [etandbear@yahoo.com](mailto:etandbear@yahoo.com) for more details.

You can find out more about Karen and Mindset Equestrian on her website:  
<https://www.mindsetequestrian.com/>

She was also recently featured on the USDF Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/LPB9DXuw9syxdNwy/>

## 2024 MDA Recognized Schooling Shows as of July 2024

Please Note: Additional shows may be added. Be sure to double check closing dates, as some shows are filling before closing. Please check Facebook and the MDA website for the most up to date information.

Show Dates	Show Name	Location	Closing Date
September 29	Aberdeen Farm	South Lyon	September 19
October 12 & 13	Rattlewood Farm	Oxford	September 29

The Board is diligently working on updating the running scores for year end awards. A separate document is attached to the email version of the newsletter with scores through the July shows. You can also find the scores on our website and linked to Facebook. As we continue to update the scores, we

will send updated lists. If you see any discrepancies with your scores, please contact Holly Zecchin at [holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org).

## Encore Award

This is a friendly reminder that members have until October 15 to submit their applications for the Encore Award. Please submit all applications to Holly Zecchin at [holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org).

## Jean Brown Award

Did you know that you can win an award for volunteering? Members who volunteer at MDA clinics, events and MDA Participating Schooling Dressage shows can apply for the Jean Brown Award. It's based on hours of service, so get out & volunteer!

Submissions for this award can be sent to Holly Zecchin at [holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org).

## Volunteer Opportunities

We will be looking for volunteers to assist at our annual gathering in January. If you are interested in helping with the Silent Auction or set-up/tear down of the banquet, please reach out to Meghan Connolly or Alexandra Pollack. Remember, volunteer hours count towards the year end MDA volunteer award.

## MDA Board of Directors and Committees

As a Board, we look forward to serving you. We would love to hear from you! If you have questions or concerns about a specific event or area, please contact the following people:

- Marketing: Alexandra Pollack ([alexandra@midwestdressage.org](mailto:alexandra@midwestdressage.org)) or Mykal Roth ([mykal@midwestdressage.org](mailto:mykal@midwestdressage.org))
- Year End Awards/Schooling Shows: Holly Zecchin ([holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org)) or Alexandra Pollack ([alexandra@midwestdressage.org](mailto:alexandra@midwestdressage.org))
- Redbook: Holly Zecchin ([holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org))
- Membership: Katie Bratschi ([katie@midwestdressage.org](mailto:katie@midwestdressage.org)) or Cheryl Figures ([cfigs\\_mda@yahoo.com](mailto:cfigs_mda@yahoo.com))
- Education: Mykal Roth ([mykal@midwestdressage.org](mailto:mykal@midwestdressage.org))
- Professional Advisory: Alexandra Pollack ([alexandra@midwestdressage.org](mailto:alexandra@midwestdressage.org))
- Year End Banquet: Alexandra Pollack ([alexandra@midwestdressage.org](mailto:alexandra@midwestdressage.org)) or Meghan Connolly ([meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org))
- Historical: Beth Schaub ([beth@midwestdressage.org](mailto:beth@midwestdressage.org))
- Volunteers: Holly Zecchin ([holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org))
- Communications: Mykal Roth (social media) ([mykal@midwestdressage.org](mailto:mykal@midwestdressage.org)) or Meghan Connolly (newsletter) ([meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org))



President: Holly Zecchin ([holly@midwestdressage.org](mailto:holly@midwestdressage.org))  
Vice President: Mykal Roth ([mykal@midwestdressage.org](mailto:mykal@midwestdressage.org))  
Secretary: Katie Bratschi ([katie@midwestdressage.org](mailto:katie@midwestdressage.org))  
Treasurer: Cheryl Figures ([cfigs\\_mda@yahoo.com](mailto:cfigs_mda@yahoo.com))

## Thank You, Sponsors!

The MDA would like to thank the following sponsors for their ongoing support for 2024:

### Russ and Kelly Gilbert

The image shows two business cards stacked vertically. The top card is for Jeff Smith, a Professional Farrier, with contact information and a logo for 'Pathway To EQUINE EXCELLENCE'. The bottom card is for Don's Lil Johns, featuring a phone number and a logo of a wooden porta-john with trees and a moon.

**Jeff Smith**  
Professional Farrier  
810-543-0766

Serving Oakland,  
Macomb, St. Clair  
& Lapeer Counties

Pathway  
To  
**EQUINE EXCELLENCE**  
Custom Care For Your Horse's Individual Needs

**248-969-6900**

**DON'S LIL JOHNS**  
PORTA-JOHN'S & SEPTIC PUMPING





## Classifieds

If you are interested in listing anything for sale in the classifieds, please contact Meghan Connolly at [meghan@midwestdressage.org](mailto:meghan@midwestdressage.org).

### **17.5 MW Kieffer Orphee Ultra Exclusive**

Medium-high knee rolls on the saddle flap  
Panel cut back in the shoulder area  
Long girth straps  
Movable V-suspension  
Soft flaps  
Double soft leather  
In demo condition!  
\$2500 shipped

Contact Katie Bratschi at [chris650@msu.edu](mailto:chris650@msu.edu)



## Lemieux Vector Balance Safety Stirrups

Lemieux Vector Balance Safety Stirrup in all black. Used less than 5 times, just not for me. I believe they are 4.5". \$225 + shipping or meet in Holt/Mason/Lansing area. Contact Meghan at (989) 798-1291 or [meghan.connolly83@gmail.com](mailto:meghan.connolly83@gmail.com)

