

To: USDF EXECUTIVE BOARD (EB)
From: USDF Staff
Date: April 4, 2024
Re: Activities Report

ADMINISTRATION

Governance

- The following governance documents have been posted on the USDF website since the 2023 convention.
 - 2022 Board of Governors (BOG) meeting minutes approved by the 2023 BOG
 - 2023 BOG meeting minutes (*draft*)
 - Policies and Procedures (*updated*)
 - Bylaws (*updated*)
 - Regional Director Guide (*updated*)
 - Council & Committee Handbook (*updated*)
 - EB meeting minutes: 2023 Fall and January 30, 2024
 - Proposed Policies and Procedures edits (2024 spring meeting)
 - Committee reports (2024 spring meeting)
- Incoming and continuing committee chairs and members received an e-mail communication from the USDF office which contained a web link to USDF's most current governance documents, as well as the respective 'thank you' or 'welcome' letter. Those outgoing received a 'thank you' letter and recognition certificate in the mail.
- In accordance with USDF's revised transparency policy (effective January 1, 2024), delegates were notified in advance of the Executive Board's January 30th and March 20th meetings, and were provided the meeting agendas and reference materials as approved by the president, then ratified by the EB. This will be done for each EB meeting moving forward.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

GMO Delegate/Proxy Appointments

There were fourteen GMOs eligible to appoint a delegate/proxy that did not have representation at the 2023 BOG meeting. These GMOs received a letter from USDF following the convention notifying them that they lacked representation on the BOG. The letter encouraged the GMO to appoint representation for future BOG meetings.

PM Delegate and Executive Board Nominations

PM delegate nominations are open. A communication soliciting nominees appeared in the January, February, and March eNews. An ad for nominations appeared in the January/February and March/April issues of *USDF Connection*. On the home page of the USDF website, a rotating banner for nominations is currently running and will continue to run through the nomination deadline. Additionally, in early February an article about the nomination, election, and role of PM delegates titled "Building a Delegation" was created and published on *YourDressage* and USDF's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. The links to this article were shared with members of the Nominating Committee and the regional directors. PM delegate nominations are due to the office April 15.

The positions of president, treasurer, and regional director in the even-numbered regions are up for election in 2024. To date, we have two nominees: Debby Savage for Region 2 Director and Noah Rattner for Region 6 Director. The deadline for nominations is June 1. Nominations are also accepted from the floor of the BOG meeting.

MEMBER SERVICES

- The Member Services Department has a new employee, Megan Pater (Member Services Coordinator). Megan will primarily be responsible for coordinating the Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention, under the guidance of the Senior Director and CFO and the Member Services Director. She will also provide support to all departmental staff.
- SmartPak participated in the 2024 membership drive by offering all USDF Participating and Business Members who renewed online by December 31, 2023 a \$25 electronic gift card.

USDF NON-MEMBER FEE TASK FORCE:

The task force recently sent a survey to gauge members' interest in multiple-licensed competitions. Survey results will be shared with relevant parties as soon as they are available.

COMPETITIONS

2024 GREAT AMERICAN/USDF REGIONAL DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIP PROGRAM:

- 2024 champions at each level and division will receive \$440 in prize money and reserve champions will receive \$293 in prize money.
- LeMieux has joined as a supporting sponsor of the regional championship program. They will be providing the championship outerwear.
- The Regional Championships Committee is currently updating the Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Finals and Adult Amateur Equitation Regional Finals guidelines to assist with the efficient conduct of these classes in conjunction with the Regional Championships.

2025 GREAT AMERICAN/USDF REGIONAL DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS:

- The following language has been added to the 2025 USEF/NAYC Dressage Qualifying Calendar Policies and Procedures:

Great American/USDF Regional Dressage Championship Competitions may be added to the USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions Calendar. These competitions will be required to hold USEF/NAYC Junior/Young Rider Qualifying Classes. Regional Championship competitions wishing to offer all national qualifying classes (in addition to the Junior/Young Rider classes) are subject to a twenty-five-dollar (\$25.00) application fee.

PROELITE/USDF BREEDERS CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES (USDFBCS):

- The Sport Horse Committee has approved 7 ProElite/USDFBCS Final applications for 2024.
- As of mid-March, 24 competitions have applied to hold ProElite/USDFBCS qualifying classes in 2024.

ADEQUAN®/USDF YEAR-END AWARDS:

- The 2024 Adequan®/USDF Year-End Awards preliminary standings went live on the USDF website on March 8.
- For the 2023 competition year, USDF awarded over 2600 awards to just over 1600 award recipients.

ADEQUAN®/USDF ALL-BREEDS AWARDS:

- There are 66 breed/performance participating organizations taking part in the 2024 USDF All-Breeds Awards. New registries for 2024 include the Norwegian Fjord Horse Alliance Inc.
- Many of the 2024 All-Breeds Participating Organizations decreased the number of All-Breeds Awards they selected to recognize.
- By invitation of The Gypsy Horse Registry of America, Cristen Brown attended their annual meeting in Scottsdale, AZ during the first weekend in February. During the meeting Cristen presented information about the many opportunities USDF offers for recognition, in addition to attending their awards banquet.

AWARDS COMMITTEE:

Cecilia Cox, Region 5 Awards Committee representative, created a presentation promoting the USDF Rider Awards Program and presented the information to a local GMO.

USDF MEDALS WITH DISTINCTION:

For the inaugural year (2023), a total of 671 bronze, silver, and gold medals with distinction were awarded.

EDUCATION

L PROGRAM COMMITTEE:

- Two new L Education Programs, Part 1, have been approved:
 - New England Dressage Association (Region 8) – starts October 10, 2024
 - Virginia Dressage Association (Region 1) – starts December 14, 2024
- The L Education roundtable webinar scheduled for April 24, from 6:00-7:30 pm has 137 registered to attend at the time of this report.

JUDGES COMMITTEE:

- Four new Continuing Education (CE) in Dressage Judging Programs have been approved in the last 30 days:
 - Know The Movements (remote) – three sessions, started 3/19/2024; Region 3; Jodi Lees
 - Know the Movements (classroom) – 3/24/2024 with Jodi Lees
 - Upgrade Your Judging Eye (classroom) – 4/27/2024; Region 5; with Dolly Hannon
 - Focus on the Collective Marks (remote) – 5/21/2024 with Jodi Lees
- Ten USEF dressage judges earned their USEF freestyle designation by attending one of the two CE in Judging Freestyle Programs in February and passing an online exam.
- The test writing working group has been formulated for the 2027 test cycle.

ADULT PROGRAMS COMMITTEE:

GMO Education Initiatives (GEI)

- The following is an overview of GEI events and grants for 2023-2024:
 - Nine GEI events approved and completed
 - \$6,327.76 in grant money has been dispersed
 - 275 total participants
- As of March 21st, the following applications have been received and are under review for events to be held between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025:
 - Six GEI event applications received
 - one has been rejected for ineligibility
 - two events have been approved
 - the remainder are still under review

USDF Virtual Education Series

The following webinars have been held or are scheduled as part of the virtual education series:

- The Purpose of the Movements – held October 24, 2023
 - Presented by Sarah Geikie and Bill McMullin
 - 765 registrants
 - 323 attendees
 - Average attendee time 50 minutes
- Bit Fitting and the Equine Athlete – held February 13, 2024
 - Presented by Kim Gentry
 - 490 registrants
 - 233 attendees
 - Average attendee time 47 minutes

- UPCOMING: Fitness Routines for Spring – to be held May 7, 2024
 - Presented by Jec Ballou
 - 238 registrants as of March 21, 2024

Following each event in the series, the webinar is placed on the website for on demand viewing, along with a quiz. Completion of the quiz will allow members to earn USDF education credits.

NATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE:

- The following Youth Outreach Clinics have recently been held:
 - The Region 3 Youth Outreach Clinic with Rachel Chowanec-Kaney was held March 9-10 at Noble Steeds in Canton, GA. There were eight participants and two paid auditors.
 - The Region 4 Youth Outreach Clinic with Anne Cizadlo was held March 9-10 at Stillwater Equestrian Academy in Hickman, NE. There were seven participants.
- The following Youth Outreach Clinics are scheduled for 2024:
 - The Region 9 clinic with Nancy Hinz will be held June 29-30 at Rolling Ridge Stable, in Manor, TX.
 - The Region 5 clinic with Brandi Roenick will be held October 5-6 at Central Arizona Riding Academy (CARA), in San Tan Valley, AZ.
 - Pending: Region 2 & 6
- USDF/IDA National Quiz Challenge
 - Thirteen schools have signed up to participate in the USDF/IDA National Quiz Challenge. Round 1 is open from March 13-27. Round 2 is scheduled for April 24 at Tryon International Equestrian Center. The schools participating this year include:
 - Averett University
 - Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
 - Centenary University
 - Florida State University
 - Johnson & Wales University
 - Lake Erie College
 - Miami of Ohio University
 - Rutgers University
 - Stanford University
 - University of Florida
 - University of Michigan
 - Virginia Tech
 - Wesleyan College

FEI YOUTH COMMITTEE:

- The following is the schedule for the FEI Youth Clinics for 2024:
 - **Region 1:** November 23-24 at Hilltop Farm, Inc with George Williams
 - **Region 2:** October 19-20 at Duncan Run Farm with Lilo Fore
 - **Region 3:** TBD
 - **Region 4:** July 6-7 at Providence Farm with Sabine Schut-Kery
 - **Region 5:** October 19-20 at Nighthawk Equestrian Center with George Williams.
 - **Region 6:** November 2-3 at DevonWood Equestrian Centre with Sabine-Schut-Kery
 - **Region 7:** TBD
 - **Region 8:** June 29-30 at Weatogue Stables with Lilo Fore
 - **Region 9:** Fall TBD
- NAYC – As of March 21st, we have received 58 NAYC applications:
 - **Region 1:** five Juniors and five Young Riders
 - **Region 2:** five Juniors and four Young Riders
 - **Region 3:** eight Juniors and no Young Riders
 - **Region 4:** two Juniors and two Young Riders
 - **Region 5:** two Juniors and two Young Riders
 - **Region 6:** six Juniors and one Young Rider

- **Region 7:** one Junior and two Young Riders
- **Region 8:** two Juniors and four Young Riders
- **Region 9:** four Juniors and three Young Riders

INSTRUCTOR/TRAINER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE:

- Marketing
 - A press release was recently issued announcing the schedule for the Dressage Development Seminars for 2024. We have six scheduled; three in the Northeast and three in the Midwest.
 - Northeast:
 - April 21-22, 2024: Lungeing Seminar with Ann Guptil and Vicki Hammers-O'Neil at Fox Ledge Farm (East Haddam, CT)
 - July 14-15, 2024: Riding Seminar with Bill McMullin and Vicki Hammers-O'Neil at Weatogue Stables, (Salisbury, CT)
 - August 10-11, 2024: Teaching Seminar with Sarah Geikie and Bill McMullin at Sperry View Farm (Bethany, CT)
 - Midwest (*all held at Coda Cavallo Dressage, Omaha, NE*):
 - June 29-30, 2024: Riding Seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie
 - October 19-20, 2024: Lungeing Seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie
 - November 2-3, 2024: Teaching Seminar with Heidi Chote and Sarah Geikie
 - A banner has been placed on the website home page that will direct visitors to the program information.
 - An article and listicles have been developed for *YourDressage* and will be posted the last week of March.
 - Sarah Geikie, Kate Fleming-Kuhn, and Kathie Robertson joined D4K to do a webinar to discuss the program. This was well received, and staff has received many inquiries about program as a result.
 - There will be an article in an upcoming issue of *USDF Connection* about the program.
- Professional Development Pathway
 - As of 3/21/2024, we have approximately eighteen applicants for this new pathway.
 - The committee co-chairs have reached out to potential mentors for the program. Once we have responses indicating who would like to participate, we will schedule a meeting to discuss this new aspect of the program. When this has been completed, applicants will be connected with potential mentors.
 - A new resource is being developed for the applicants in the program. The Professional Development Education Series will be scheduled monthly via Zoom and will be open to any applicant in the professional development pathway.
- Online Education Resources and Curriculum
 - Staff are working with faculty members to develop new online education resources and learning modules.
 - Current modules are under review, being updated and broken down into smaller modules to make them more accessible.
 - The manuals continue to be under review. The Lungeing Manual will complete its final review in the coming weeks. As the manuals are being reviewed, the illustrations may need to be refreshed.

SPORT HORSE COMMITTEE:

The following are the education activities planned for 2024:

- USDF Sport Horse Seminar: July 27-28, 2024 in Wichita, KS
- USDF Youth Handler/Breeding Seminar: September 23-24, 2024 in Devon, PA
- USDF Handler Clinic: TBD

EDUCATION INITIATIVES:

- USDF hosted or supported 125 education activities/events in 2023.
- The raw video footage from the 2024 Adequan@/USDF FEI Level Trainers Conference is being reviewed and edited for content on *YourDressage* and in the education library.

Education Survey Interactions

- Between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024
 - 22 surveys distributed relating to Education Events.
 - 520 total survey responses

Education Spotlight Articles

- Between March 9, 2023 and March 15, 2024
 - 44 Featured articles
 - 1645 total “clicks”
 - Recently began sharing each week’s Education Spotlight articles on Youth Facebook page and we have seen an increase in views.

Online Education Modules

- Members have access to 80 online learning modules
 - Online courses: 24
 - Short courses by topic: 24
 - Virtual events: 13
 - USDF Virtual Education Series: 5
 - Technical Delegate learning modules: 12
- A total of 5,473.50 USDF University credits have been earned between October 1, 2023 and March 21, 2024

LICENSED OFFICIALS EDUCATION INITIATIVES:

- The following education activities have recently been held:
 - A USEF/USDF Young Horse Clinic with Janet Foy and Bill Warren was held January 24, 2024 in West Palm Beach, FL. There were twelve judges that attended, with eight judges gaining the young horse designation.
 - A USEF/USDF Judges Clinic with Janet Foy and Bill Warren was held March 7-8, 2024 in West Palm Beach, FL. This clinic used the technologies of BlackHorseOne throughout the two-day clinic. There were 49 judges and judge candidates in attendance.
- As part of the new initiative, work has begun to develop practice exams for judge candidates using the technologies of BlackHorseOne.

MARKETING

As 2024 has gotten underway, the marketing staff has been establishing our yearly timelines, providing sponsors with their 2023 annual exposure packets and 2024 deadlines, and planning out our editorial and social media calendars for the year.

IT/WEB:

IT staff is working on programming related to the USEF HID exchange, as well as preparing for 2024 year-end award calculations. The USDF website menus and navigation are currently being evaluated as we look to improve functionality and accessibility to the end users.

MERCHANDISE:

- Total store sales are up significantly over the previous six-month period, with gross sales of \$74,000. There were 240 more sales in this six-month period than over the last six-month period – due in part to the US Dressage Finals. The US Dressage Finals and convention made up 42% of sales, while online store sales maintained a similar number of sales as the last period. Top selling items are, once again, lapel pins and test booklets, and US Dressage Finals long-sleeve t-shirts and sunshirts.
- In February, a custom embroidery opportunity was offered to L graduates and certified instructors. There was a two-week ordering window, where confirmed L graduates and certified instructors had the opportunity to purchase USDF logowear and add their designation to any in-stock items from the USDF Online Store. One certified instructor took advantage of the opportunity (purchasing a pre-decorated

- baseball cap), and eight L graduates/L graduates with distinction took advantage of this offering.
- There were 40 overall Vimeo sales, 32 of them being On The Levels.
- The merchandise team is currently working with Katie Lewis to develop designs for the new spring/summer product line.

LICENSING:

Several new test licensees have come on board, including Zambia Equestrian Federation, Namibian Equestrian Federation, Cayman Islands Equestrian Federation, and the Horse Society of Botswana.

PUBLICATIONS:

- *YourDressage*
 - The *YourDressage* Breed of the Month series has continued to be popular, with USDF’s social media followers very involved in submitting photos for galleries and stories highlighting the specific breeds. Breeds featured since the last report include Gypsy Horses, Norwegian Fjords, Andalusians, and Haflingers. We also implemented a senior rider appreciation month, recognizing equestrians aged 50+.
 - Analytics:
 - Total New User Count (Since inception: April 2019) = ~355,000
 - New Users for 2024 (as of March 10) = 16,000
 - Top Three Stories for 2024 Q1:
 1. [Age is Just a Number](#)
 2. [Deadlines Approaching – Dates You Need to Know for 2024](#)
 3. [O Romeo, Romeo](#)
- *2024 American Horse Publications (AHP) Equine Media Awards*
Staff has submitted the USDF nominations for the 2024 American Horse Publications Equine Media Awards. Entries were submitted from both *USDF Connection* and *YourDressage*. Winners will be announced at the AHP Awards Banquet on Saturday, May 18, in Lexington, KY. This year’s entries included:

From *USDF Connection* magazine:

- Class 4, Assn/Org. Publication Equine Media Horse Care Single Article
 - “Tummy Troubles” by Natalie DeFee Mendik, November/December 2023 issue
- Class 6, Assn/Org. Publication Equine Media Service to the Consumer Single Article
 - “Online Shopping” by Patti Schofler, July/August issue
 - “Does Size Really Matter?” by Jennifer Mellace, July/August issue
 - “Boot Up!” by Sushil Dulai Wenholz, November/December issue
- Class 9, Assn/Org. Publication Equine Media Personality Profile Single Article
 - “Above and Beyond” by Kim F. Miller, September/October issue
- Class 17, Editorial Series
 - “Prepare for the Worst” by Judy Nauseef, July/August; and “Prepare for the Worst at the Show” by Judy Nauseef, September/October issue
- Class 32, Editorial Illustration
 - “Show Prep Seminars” by Jody Lynne Werner, March/April issue
- Class 34, Assn./Org. Publication Equine Media Cover Page Design
 - May/June cover – Mary Cornelius, photographer; Emily Koenig, designer
- Class 36, Assn/Org. Publication Equine Media Editorial Design
 - “A Season of Thanksgiving,” November/December issue – Emily Koenig, designer
- Class 43, General Excellence Print Publication circulation over 20,000
 - January/February 2023 issue
 - May/June 2023 issue

From *YourDressage.org*

- Class 1 Breaking News or Investigative Reporting Single Article (print or online)
 - [Unforgettable Moments from the FEI World Cup Finals Omaha 2023](#) by Chelsey Burris
- Class 2 News Reporting Related Feature Single Article (print or online)
 - [Heather Mason's RTF Lincoln Retires At The Top with Freestyle Victory at 2023 US Dressage Finals Presented by Adequan®](#) by Alice Collins/Jump Media
- Class 4 Association/Organization Publication Equine Media Horse Care Single Article (print or online)
 - [Bieber's Battle](#) by Rebecca Sims
- Class 12 Association/Organization Publication Equine Media Feature Single Article (print or online)
 - [The Branches, The Roots, and The Banner](#) by Natasha Rombeck
- Class 16 Editorial Event Coverage Single Article (print or online)
 - [Absolute Dream Lives Up to His Name for Jennifer Truett on Opening Day of 2023 US Dressage Finals Presented by Adequan®](#) by Alice Collins/Jump Media
- Class 18 Human-Animal Bond Article (print or online)
 - <https://yourdressage.org/2023/10/30/bringing-back-their-smile/> by Jason Webb
- Class 25 Equine-related Website
 - [YourDressage.org](#) by USDF
- Class 27 Editorial Action Photograph (print or online)
 - [Altitude](#) by Jason Hekkert Photography
- Class 28 Editorial Human-Animal Bond Photograph (print or online)
 - Grooming Photo [The Road to 2023 US Dressage Finals, as told by Notre Dame Z](#) by Lexi Christopher
- Class 29 Editorial Photograph (print or online)
 - [Golden](#) by Sara Shier

SOCIAL MEDIA: SEPTEMBER 15, 2023 – FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Facebook followers increased by 1.53% (from 66,236 to 67,252), with posts to the USDF Facebook page having a total reach of 342,000 during this time period. Our Instagram page follower count increased by 1.92% (from 26,100 to 26,600). Twitter (now called X) followers increased from 12,100 to 12,200. Some of the most popular posts during this time period were onsite coverage from the US Dressage Finals presented by Adequan® and the Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention, photo galleries, and Breed of the Month stories from *YourDressage*.

2023 US DRESSAGE FINALS TRADE FAIR:

The 2023 trade fair welcomed 43 total vendors, with many of our previous vendors returning again. A few new vendors which were popular on-site included Human Touch massage chairs and Erreplus Saddles, which was also a Finals Hospitality Sponsor.

END OF REPORT