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2026 WDAA World Show Newsletter

Dear Friends,

It was good to see many of you at the WDAA World Championship Show in Guthrie, OK last week. Some things I'll remember from this year's show include: the USEF Medal Equitation Class, truly amazing freestyles, record-breaking temperatures, and the lovely new event center. The WDAA staff and volunteers did a great job making the show run smoothly and providing a wonderful show experience for everyone there in spite of the balmy weather. Exhibitors were prepared with fans and electrolytes for horses, keeping all equine athletes comfortable and hydrated throughout the show.

The youth exhibitors were very impressive this year. There were forty-eight different breeds of horses, showcasing harmony in concert with their riders during the show. It was a wonderful celebration of Western Dressage and friendship.

Now, a new competition year will begin in December with new tests, a new level, a new division and pairs freestyle. I believe the test writing committee has done a marvelous job. I look forward to seeing how you all like Advanced Walk-Jog. New rules pertaining to this and a few other things will be published in the USEF Rule Book on December 1. Be sure to look in the Western Dressage chapter for anything in red print to learn what's new.

After December 1, all shows should be using the new tests. I hope you all have a great time using them as you progress up the levels.

Enjoy the Journey,
Cindy Butler, Your President
Western Dressage Association of America

NEW Test Release October 1, 2026

The 2027 WDAA tests for Intro through 6th Level will become public on October 1, 2026 and will become effective for competition on December 1, 2026.

In this highly anticipated release, 3 new categories (Advanced Walk-Jog, Level 6, and Pairs Freestyle) will be introduced.

The Test Writing Task Force consisted of 6 primary people who were specialists in their assigned areas. They were tireless in their commitment to the project and spent countless hours finetuning the tests.

Special thanks to:

- Cynthia Collins – Choreographer. She provided her expertise to make sure the tests flowed well and encapsulated all the elements the level required.
- Eleanor Stine Masek, Heather Stalker, and Julie Haugen – R Judges. These qualified individuals fine-tuned the tests from a judge's perspective for time, judge-ability, brackets, and double coefficients. Julie provided excellent input into the ride-ability for gaited horses.
- Jackie Rosellin, Susan Lang – Technical Writers. These are two outstanding individuals who put the test sheets into their format, double-checked for test accuracy, and inserted the directives.

The 2027 tests could not have been completed without the additional help from our test riders and WDAA Board reviews.

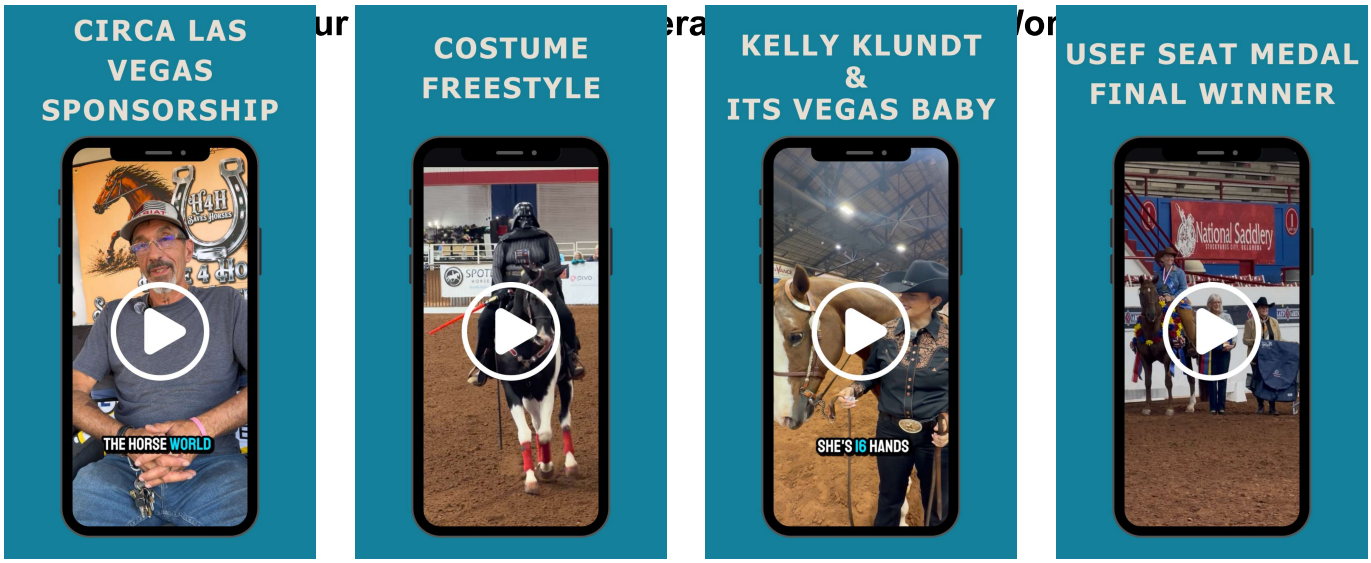
We hope you enjoy riding them as much as the team enjoyed creating them for you!
- Gail Matheus - WDAA Test Writing Task Force administrator

****New Equitation patterns and Therapeutic tests are coming soon! ****

2026 WDAA World Championship Show

The 2026 WDAA World Championship Show was truly one for the books! From inspiring rides and unforgettable freestyles to proud accomplishments and new memories made, this year's show celebrated everything we love about Western Dressage.

Congratulations to every rider, horse, trainer, and team who made it to the World Show and gave their best in the arena. Your dedication, passion, and sportsmanship continue to make the Western Dressage community so special.



Congratulations to our 2026 WDAA World Show Overall High Score winners!

A huge congratulations to our overall champions and reserve champions!

Junior Overall
Champion: PAETYN GILLIAM
Reserve Champion: PIERCE PARKS

Amateur Overall
Champion: CARMEN HANSON
Reserve Champion: SARAH PRYOR

Open Overall
Champion: KRISTIN WASEMILLER-KNUTSON
Reserve Champion: REBECCA DENNIS

Exceptional Overall
Champion: CANDACE CARLSON
Reserve Champion: TOMMY FORKNER

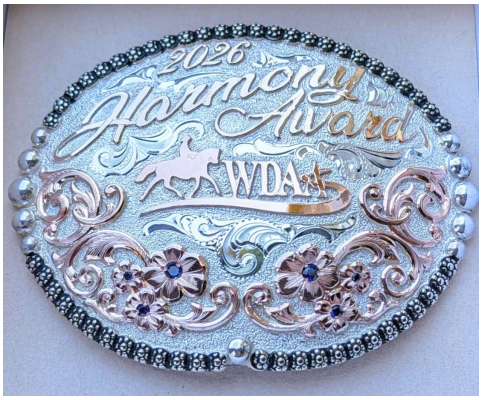
Gaited Horse Overall
Champion: REBECCA LOOMER
Reserve Champion: ROBIN GILBERT

WDAA Harmony Award sponsored by Skyline Vaquero

Congratulations to **Karoline Echterbecker of Commerce, Texas**, winner of the **Harmony Award** at the **2026 WDAA World Championship Show**!

Karoline became eligible for the Harmony Award drawing after scoring **at least an 8.0 in harmony** at the 2026 International Challenge. She then earned at least an 8.0 in harmony at the World Show, qualifying her for the randomized drawing.

The Harmony Award included a **custom-made 2026 Harmony Award Winner Silver Buckle**, generously donated by Skyline Vaquero Silversmiths, the official buckle sponsor of the Western Dressage Association of America.



“A good rider lifts others up — in and out of the arena.”

We are proud to introduce the **2026 McLaughlin Awards Sportsmanship Award winners**.

Adult - Becci Loomer

Junior - Jasmine Johnson

World Show Official Photographer and Videographer

Each year, [Vince LeMaster Photography] captures the unforgettable moments that make the **WDAA World Championship Show** so special – from the first salute to the last.

Our official photographer attends the show solely through the support of exhibitors who purchase photos. Without those purchases, future coverage of the World Show would not be possible.

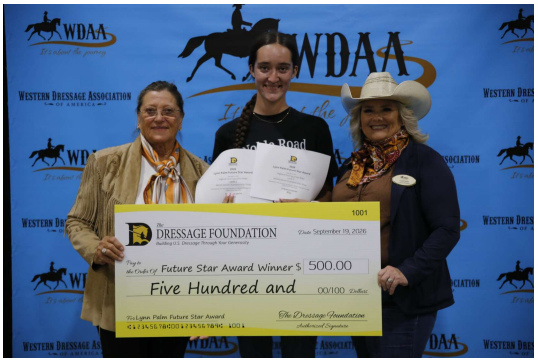
Support Vince by purchasing your World Show photos today!

Purchase Your Photos Here!

Total Horse Channel is your go-to source for WDAA World Championship Show video coverage. Catch replays of your favorite rides, relive special moments, or order professional videos from the show.

View or Order Your Videos!

Scholarships / Awards



The Dressage Foundation was pleased to present the Lynn Palm Future Star Awards at the Western Dressage Association of America (WDAA) World Championship Show. These $500 awards recognize the highest-scoring junior rider, with a score of 65 percent or higher, in the Introductory, Basic, Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 divisions.
The goal of the Lynn Palm Future Star Awards is to support promising youth riders as they continue their Western Dressage training and education.

The awards are presented through TDF's Western Dressage Fund, which was established by Lynn Palm in 2019 to give back to the sport she loves. The Western Dressage Fund also provides grants to amateur, youth, and professional riders who need financial support for training, as well as to groups hosting Western Dressage educational events.

2026 Lynn Palm Future Star Award Recipients:

- Introductory: Pierce Parks & TWF Candy Coated — 79.25%
- Basic: Pierce Parks & TWF Candy Coated — 76.538%
- Level 1: Sage Smith & RHRGV Crickets Song — 74.00%
- Level 2: Paetyn Gilliam & Harry Winston — 79.655%
- Level 3: Paetyn Gilliam & Harry Winston — 75.909%

Thank you to our World Show volunteers!

Thank you to our World Show volunteers! As always, we are so thankful to those who take time out of their busy show days to help keep the show running smoothly.

A few World Show Top Volunteer certificates were presented by Volunteer Coordinator Joann Sarni:

- **Sydney Stocker (WDAA junior member) -** a SUPERSTAR! She logged in at least 4 hours each day as a score runner. Even when she was asked her to take a break, she wanted to keep going.
- **Jasmine Johnson (WDAA junior member)** A world show first timer who score ran and worked the awards window with a smile and polite conversation.
- **Sopia Kessel (WDAA junior member)** She has volunteered to work our Awards Window with smile!
- **Donna Copeland -** Every year she is always available when we need her, which is often!
- **Anna Pappas -** Another constant volunteer we can count on to show up and fill in anywhere she is needed

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A HUGE Thank you to our 2026 WDAA World Show Sponsors!

Click here for a full list of Sponsors

USEF News

The first-ever USEF Western Dressage Seat Medal Final at the 2026 WDAA World Championship Show in Guthrie, OK, judged by Lynn Palm.

Congratulations to our inaugural Champion, Jessica Schultz aboard The Devils Reject, and Reserve Champion, Kristen McDonald aboard Dino! These two riders set the standard for this exciting new chapter in Western Dressage.

The Final tested riders' correct training, equitation, and ability to maintain a strong partnership with their horses — and it certainly put those skills to the test! Riders had to complete most of the class without their stirrups, making an already challenging Final even more demanding.

A special congratulations goes to Aubrey Welch, a junior rider, who placed 5th in a field of 10 amateur and open riders. What an impressive accomplishment and a great example of the talent and dedication of our junior competitors!

The Final was created to celebrate the correct training and equitation behind a successful horse-and-rider partnership. Riders qualified through a Western Dressage Seat On The Rail class, Western Dressage Horsemanship class, or Combined Equitation class. The Final followed the Combined Equitation format, with an On The Rail section and a Horsemanship pattern, each worth 50% of the final score.

Congratulations to all of the competitors who made history by participating in the inaugural USEF Western Dressage Seat Medal Final!

WDAA Nominee for the 2026 USEF Youth Sportsmans Award

Congratulations to **Gracie Bishop** the WDAA Nominee for the **2026 USEF Youth Sportsmans Award**, we wish her the best of luck in the final round competing with other USEF affiliate nominees.

Gracie will receive a free 2027 WDAA membership for applying.

New World Screwworm Confirmed in New Mexico Horse

The USDA has confirmed a case of New World Screwworm (NWS) in a leg wound on a working ranch horse in Grant County, New Mexico. This is the second confirmed horse case in the United States as part of the current incursion.

US Equestrian continues to monitor the progression of NWS in the United States and reminds you that fly migration and NWS protocols could change in the coming weeks and months.

US Equestrian has protocols in place for licensed competition organizers and participants to reduce the opportunities for the fly to spread – both for those conducting events in infested states and those with horses shipping in from infested states or zones. Required steps may include checking horses for wounds when they arrive and continuing to monitor horses during the competition. Finding and reporting suspect cases early helps protect horses and competition grounds from screwworm threats, including infestation and resulting quarantines.

USEF Press Release: https://www.usef.org/media/press-releases/new-world-screwworm-confirmed-in-new-mexico-horse

Step by step instructions for horses coming from a NWS-infested zone to a USEF show: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1221202520074352 50&set=a.122103614721435250

WDAA Test Revisions to Date

And for a horse coming from an infested state: https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1221199573714352 50&set=a.122103614721435250

UPDATE

- ~~Level 1 Freestyle: 4/5/2022 Total points correction on cover page only.~~
- Level 2 Test 2: 3/30/2022 Movement 15 clarification that the collect jog begins at V. Changed sidepass from 4 steps to 4 strides.
- Level 2 Test 2: 5/23/2022 Changed sidepass from # of strides to go to the first quarter line.
- Level 2 Test 4: 2/15/2022 Changed sidepass from 4 steps to 4 strides.

- Level 2 Test 4: 5/23/2022 Changed sidepass from # of strides to go to the first quarter line.
- Level 2 Freestyle: 1/7/2022 Movement 10 has had the verbiage "through the jog" removed. And now states only "Simple change of lead".
- Level 3 Freestyle: 4/26/2022 Total points correction on cover page only.
- Level 4 Freestyle: 4/26/2022 Added L|R to movements 9 & 10. Removed L|R from box 11. Corrected total points on cover page.
- Level 5 Test 1: 12/10/2021 Added "Left Lead" to movement #1 to clarify the lead to take from the halt.
- Level 5 Test 3: 12/10/2021 Added "Left Lead" to movement #1 to clarify the lead to take from the halt.
- 2022 Western Dressage Equitation Tests: 11/30/2022 Tests Retired.
- 2023 Western Dressage Equitation Tests: 12/1/2022 Added using the new Walk-Jog, Intermediate, and Advanced categories.
- 2023 Western Dressage Equitation Patterns: 02/22/2023 Changed the word “test” to “pattern”.
- 2024 Western Dressage Equitation patterns: 01/18/2024 Movement #4 Lope to Halt movement changed to “Halt through the Jog.”

Join WDAA or renew your membership today so you don't miss out on exclusive member benefits!

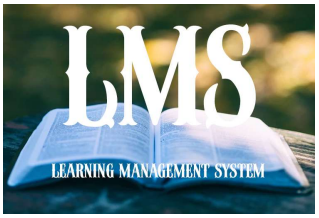
Join WDAA

WDAA has some very exciting events, be sure to check the calendar regularly so you don't miss out!

Visit the Calendar

Take advantage of this free member beneft! Professional directory to connect potential clients with professionals.

Visit the Directory



The LMS is a great way to learn more about Western Dressage. Only available to members.

Visit the LMS

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