



## **KDEA E Newsletter – Late November 2023**

### **KDEA Mission Statement**

KDEA serves the South Central Kansas dressage and eventing community by providing educational, social, and competitive opportunities that promote a harmonious partnership between horse and rider



#### KDEA Officers and Board 2023:

President Cassandra “Cassie” Black

Vice President: Susan Lang

Treasurer: Hillary Matzen

Secretary: Rebecca Rolph

Board Kim Miller, Cyndi Harris, Sarah Pryor, Natalie Petz, Jennifer Thuener, Jackie Schwartz, Lisa Del Mundo, Kathy Adkins, Marty Foster. Sophia Tiekling (jr).

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**Mark Your Calendars! Next KDEA General Membership Meeting and 2024 Elections – Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>** at Capall Stables, 3400 S 143<sup>rd</sup> St at 6:30 pm. There will be a “Taco Bar” at the meeting, so if you have a Mexican-themed dip or side you would like to bring, please do so (but you don’t have to bring anything). We will have KDEA Elections at this meeting, with the following people nominated for 2024 officers and board:

- Nominations for 2024 Officers and Board At the August KDEA meeting, Nominating Committee member Haley Kottler presented the following slate of nominated Officers and Board for 2024, which will be voted upon at the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

President: Cassie Black

Vice President: Cyndi Harris

Secretary Jennifer Thuener

Treasurer: Hillary Matzen

Board: Susan Lang, Becky Rolph, Kim Miller, Sarah Pryor, Natalie Petz, Jackie Schwartz, Lisa Del Mundo, Marty Foster Dennett, Joanna Gunzelman, Eysley Hatfield-Jr Rep, Natalie Parnell-Jr Rep

Officers and Board need to make every effort to attend all membership/board meetings (held the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, every other month) and to participate in KDEA functions and committees.

**Renew for 2024!** It is not too early to join KDEA for 2024. The membership year starts 12/1/23 and runs through 11/30/24, and in order to maintain our “roster” with United States Dressage Federation, we need at least 20 of our 90+ members to turn in their membership applications by mid November for processing by December 1<sup>st</sup>. So – please go out to the KDEA website, download a form, print it, send it in to our new membership chair Charlotte Pinkall (or email to her) and pay your dues by check (send with form) or pay by PayPal and indicate on the form that you send in WHEN you sent your \$\$ via Paypal. You no longer have to sign up for awards (except for a few who show Recognized only), so the membership is the only \$\$ you will owe at this time.

**KDEA Awards Meeting – January 21, 2024!** January 21<sup>st</sup> at 2pm we will be awarding our year end awards at the Equestrian Estates clubhouse. Please plan to attend these parties and get to know your fellow members. We are a great group with so much to offer each other. Watch for further details, and contact Haley Kottler ([haleykottler@gmail.com](mailto:haleykottler@gmail.com))

**Volunteer Hours for 2024.** As a KDEA member, we hope that you are involved enough in our organization that you want to support us with your volunteer hours at our shows, clinics and other educational events. If you want to be eligible for (most all) year-end awards, you also must earn at least 5 “points,” which you earn by helping out at our KDEA functions. Each newsletter, we will have a section for Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities, so that you can see what is available. See the KDEA website for a list of activities that earn you “points” toward year end award eligibility. Note that coming to KDEA meetings can qualify for some of your “points” so consider coming to a meeting if you haven’t done so in the past. Many of them start with an Education Session.

**Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities.** Right now, we will need help with the Awards Meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup>. If you can assist with set up/tear down, planning, please contact both Marty Foster Dennett ([shobewalkin@gmail.com](mailto:shobewalkin@gmail.com)) and Haley Kottler, Awards committee member ([haleykottler@gmail.com](mailto:haleykottler@gmail.com)).

**Ride A Test and KDEA Show Dates – 2024.** Put these dates on your calendar and come join us as a competitor, volunteer, spectator or groom!

### **March 2-3**

- **KDEA Ride A Test** - 2 full days, but AM/PM sessions alternate Capall and Eagleview
- Instructors Susan Lang, Marie Maloney, Lisa Del Mundo

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### **April 13th**

- KDEA Dressage Schooling show and Combined Test - at Eagleview. Judge: Rebecca O'Bea, L Graduate

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### **May 18th**

- KDEA Dressage Schooling show at Three Wooden Crosses. Judge: Laurie Hedlund, L Graduate, USDF Certified Instructor

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**June 15<sup>th</sup>**

- KDEA USEF "Lite" Western Dressage Show - at Eagleview. Judge: Melissa Creswick, "R" WD

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**July 13<sup>th</sup>**

- KDEA Dressage Schooling Show and Combined Test - 20x40 ring only - at Twin Creek Trails. Judge: Cassie Black, L Candidate

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**August 17<sup>th</sup>**

- KDEA Dressage Schooling Show at Three Wooden Crosses. Judge: Holly Luke, L Graduate

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**September 14**

- KDEA Dressage Schooling Show and Combined Test - at Eagleview. Judge: Sherry Guess, L Graduate, USDF Certified Instructor

**2024 General Membership Meetings 2024** – Put these on your calendar as well! Remember that attending up to 2 meetings counts as a “Point” toward your volunteer points needed to qualify for awards.

Feb 6th

Aug 6th

April 2nd

October 1st

June 4th

December 3

**Learning Moment – Eventing Dressage.** There are some notable differences in how errors are scored for Eventing Dressage tests.

1. Fall of rider does not result in elimination, but the score in the movement where fall occurred is affected (as would be Rider score). EV 119.2(d) and EV 118.9. Traditional dressage = eliminated from class.
2. If the rider comes in wearing boots, they are not eliminated, but are stopped to remove the boots (may have assistance) and 2 points of (non cumulative) error is recorded. EV 119.2(a). Traditional dressage = eliminated from class.
3. If the rider has learned the wrong test, the judge can stop them, and with an error recorded. If the rider can then “change to the correct test” (from memory) and continue, they only incur the initial error. Subsequent errors are cumulative, and with 3 errors in the test they are recorded as a TE or Technical Elimination. EV 118.11.
4. French link snaffle, Dr Bristol, and “wavy” Happy Mouth bits are allowed in Eventing Dressage (but not in traditional dressage). See Eventing Annex A. These bits are all illegal for traditional dressage.
5. Leather neck straps are permitted (EV 10.2(k) – illegal for traditional dressage.

**Learning Moment – Dressage Tests – Purpose of the Levels (Part 1)** – From 2023 USEF/USDF tests:

Introductory Level: To introduce the ride and/or horse to the sport of dressage, confirming that they are beginning to develop an understanding of correct dressage basics. The horse should be ridden freely forward in a steady tempo and clear rhythm, accepting contact with the bit. An understanding of test accuracy and geometry should be demonstrated.

Training Level: To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics by showing suppleness both laterally and longitudinally, moving freely forward in a clear rhythm with a steady tempo, and readiness accepting contact with the bit. Correct geometry and lines of travel should be shown.

First Level: To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed the improved balance, lateral suppleness and throughness, as well as the thrust to perform lengthenings of stride. **The horse should be on the bit.**

**Member Accomplishments** – well, KDEA had many folks going to shows this fall, including Western Dressage Association World, Morgan Grand Nationals, AQHA World, and several On Line shows. Here is what has been reported to me (send me your results, folks, for inclusion in next newsletter...)

- **US National Dressage Classic – Region 5 On Line Show – a qualifier for the US National Dressage Classic (by Spotlight Shows)**
  - Two of our members competed in this on line show, with great results.
    - Anne Stephens on Merlot – Level and All Around Champion Western Dressage Introductory and Basic Levels.
    - Kelli Wolf on Jacoby-Overall Level 2 Champion, Reserve Champion Level 2, Freestyle Level 2, Reserve Champion.

**US National Dressage Classic (the finals) On Line Show by Spotlight Shows**

Anne Stephens on Merlot were All Around Champion at both Introductory and Basic , and 5<sup>th</sup> in Intro Level Championship and 4<sup>th</sup> in the Basic Level Championship  
Kelli Wolf and Jacoby were Overall Level 2 Champion, Reserve Champion Level 2 Reserve Champion Level 2 Freestyle

- **Western Dressage Association World Show**
- KDEA Members competing: Marie Maloney, Cyndi Harris, Haley Kottler, Cassie Black, Natalie Petz, Karen Pool's niece Jadyen, Hillary Matzen, Kelli Wolf, Gail Matheus, Lauren Schiller (did I forget anyone?)
  - Gail Matheus rode Kelli Wolf's Jacoby to a Level 2 Open Championship.
  - Kelli Wolf – rode her Jacoby to 4<sup>th</sup> overall Level 2 Amateur, Freestyle Level 1-5 Amateur- world Champion
  - Haley Kottler on My Three Crystals-Amateur Basic test 3-7<sup>th</sup> place
  - Cassie Black on My Three Crystals-Open Level 1 Division tenth place
- **Morgan Grand Nationals –Cassie Black with XL Braveheart owned by Janie DeWitt-Sport Horse in Hand-80.5 6<sup>th</sup> place**
- **AQHA World Show**
  - KDEA Members Competing: Haley Kottler, Cassie Black, Cyndi Harris, Natalie Petz, Karen Pool (well, sort of...see the article further down in newsletter).
  - Natalie Petz on Faded Hotrodder – Reserve Level 1 Champion – Amateur  
Level 1 Test 1 – 68.6, Level 1 Test 3 – 70.3 Level 1 Test 4 - 68.00
  - Haley Kottler on My Three Crystals – Bronze Champion Amateur Basic Level with an average score of 67.745
  - Cassie Black on My Three Crystals – Bronze Champion in Open Level 1 with an average score of 69.76
  - Cyndi Harris:
    - Docs Blonde Dollie, Basic average score 71.93 Res World Champion  
Level 1 average score 70.47 World Champion
    - Big N Bright Level 1 average score 69.94 Res World Champion  
Level 2 average score 65.90 Res World Champion

- **Dressage Medals** – Gail Matheus earned her USDF Silver Medal on Reatta, and is working on her Silver Freestyle Bar.

If you have accomplishments...scores from a show, a great clinic experience, or that you have achieved a personal goal, we would like to share these with our KDEA members. Please submit to Susan at [smlang2@cox.net](mailto:smlang2@cox.net). Info can be submitted any time, and it will get placed in the next newsletter edition.

**Judge Training:** Gail Matheus has been accepted into the USEF “r” dressage judge program and will start her training sometime next year. Marie Maloney is finishing up her instruction for her “R” dressage judge license and will test in March 2024. Marie Maloney also finished her “L” certification for Working Equitation and is aiming for her next level of judge certification with the Working Equitation group. Susan, Marie and Gail also recently attended the three-day-long USDF/USEF Judge’s Forum in Kentucky, taught by judges Michael Osinski and Janet Foy. Stay tuned for a write up and notes on this clinic. Marie and Susan also attended the USDF/USEF clinic in Kentucky on Judging Materiale and Para Equestrian, taught by Kristi Wysocki. Education is the name of the game!

### **The Year 2024 – A Year of Building Our Partnership – By Hillary Matzen**

2023 was a year hijacked in just the right way. We started the year with a detailed show plan and in May took a hard detour to the vet. Stella was lame. We turned our attention from competing to treatment and rehab. As stressful as that all was, in hindsight there were many positives that came from it. We spent a lot of time together doing nothing much, starting with stall rest and hand walking, then graduating to turnout and grazing. I spent a lot of time in a lawn chair reading while she grazed around me, it made our relationship even better. We have been released back to full training again since the beginning of September and she has felt great. I can’t thank Dr. Speer and his team enough for their help. I’m really enjoying riding regularly again, but also continue with the reading and hand walks. One of the biggest holdovers from rehab is water treadmill workouts. Back in the summer of 2022 KDEA had an educational session at Dr. Speer’s Swim Gym. It was very interesting, but to be honest I wasn’t sure Stella would tolerate such a thing. I was wrong, she really enjoys it. Part of Stella’s therapy was walking on that treadmill, and I can’t recommend it enough. Not just for rehab, but conditioning for any discipline, it can be tailored to cardiovascular or muscle building. We continue to go weekly as it is a great workout, stretches and strengthens the top line and the 45\* water reduces any inflammation throughout the body. Scheduling for the treadmill is done separately from the vet clinic, so evening and weekend hours are possible. If you’re curious, give it a try! When the injury happened, our goal became making it to the WDAA World Show in late September and we just made it. I entered the show before knowing if we would be able to go. Stella felt good, but we were not quite back to 100%. Stella earned her bronze medal for lifetime points with WDAA over the last year and we placed 9<sup>th</sup> in the Level 2 Amateur Division at the World Show. I have to say though, year after year the best part of showing is the KDEA family, we stable as a group, support each other getting ready and cheer for each other, couldn’t ask for more!

### **My Journey Thus Far – By Lori Lockhart**

After my third show, I began thinking about my journey and hoped I could offer some advice to others who may be new as well. First, it was a bit intimidating to lead my western tacked horse into the warm up area with so many well-appointed classical human and equine competitors. Then, I remembered that I had worked very hard and was prepared and excited to ride down the center line.. Insecurity has no place in making dreams and goals come true. Second, I was happy that I had found a trainer who supported and pushed me as a rider. If I had tried to enter this world on my own, I would have been ill prepared to properly ride my tests.

Having someone with experience and an eye for the expectations for each maneuver is crucial to learning to develop and polish riding skills. Third, develop a relationship and partnership with your horse. That connection will enable fluid and forward riding that will sparkle in the arena. In closing, proper preparation and belief in yourself and your horse will open the door, or guide you to enter at A and ride down the center line, to a whole new world of welcoming people and exciting competition!

Lori Lockhart

### **Good-bye to the Barn – By Elaine Cornell**

Who would think that saying goodbye to an old barn would be so sad? I'm surprised that, as the commotion dies down, I find myself grieving the loss of a structure. One where so much joy, sorrow, learning, fun, and memory making took place for 35 years. The center part of the barn is actually 100 years old and had been moved onto the property, and then added onto. It was a place where old horses taught young children to love and trust them, and about the work that comes with caring for a horse. A place where young girls learned the hard work of putting hay in the loft and old girls celebrated knowing they could still do the work. A hay loft that housed sleepovers, graduation pictures, and cats who forgot how to get down and had to be rescued. A home for gatherings of friends of all ages and for dressing up horses like bunnies and fairies and dragons and witches.

The old barn was the location of numerous shenanigans that got a young boy in trouble, only for him to bring his daughters back many years later to teach them the very same shenanigans. A barn where a boy learned to saddle his own pony and his little daughters would learn using that same saddle. In the rafters of that old barn, dozens of baby barn swallows were hatched every year, and many, many baby horses were born in the stalls. The soft light and old wood captured the heart of a prize winning photographer. She loved taking pictures in the barn, and one of her many images captured there was featured in a National Geographic children's book.

It was a sturdy old barn that was found still standing under the rubble when a tornado took down the big, relatively new barn next to it.

Four generations of girls who we unofficially adopted as daughters grew up and became mature and responsible adults in this barn, and they are still part of our lives. The barn was their second home and many lifelong friendships were forged here.

Every morning when I went out, the first thing I looked at was the weathervane on the top of the barn. It told me which doors to open and which to close, and where to stand when emptying a manure bucket so shavings didn't blow back in my face. It told me when the weather was about to change.

My compass has been lost. Instead of looking forward to a new barn, I find myself mourning the loss of an old friend.

### **Wear a Helmet – It Could Save Your Life (and it did save mine!) - by Karen Pool**

Susan asked if I would be willing to share my story regarding the importance of wearing a helmet as you never know when you will need it. Here's my story on why I believe in wearing a helmet and my modified AQHA World Show experience due to my accident.

As a western rider, I love the look of the cowboy hat! Not sure when but several years ago, I switched to wearing a helmet faithfully. Once I tried the helmet, I decided I liked the safety that they provided plus decided they were comfortable after all and a positive is you don't have to worry about the Kansas wind catching them and blowing them off. I'm thankful that I wear one every time I ride as you never know when something might arise and you will be glad you had it one. That situation happened a little over a month ago.

As with every accident, there are the "Should Have, Could Have" scenarios but that doesn't change the situation that happened, maybe just prevents future accidents. My memory of that Saturday is that it started off nicely, but then the rest of that day can be summed up with what the heck, oh no

this is going to be bad! I somewhat was aware of being put into an ambulance and then when I finally become aware of what was going on, I was being wheeled into a room in the Wesley Trauma unit but still didn't know why. It wasn't until my husband got there and I asked why I was there, he said Thor caught his hind foot in his rein and we both went down together. I have no recollection of going down with him and hopefully I never regain that memory! Even with the helmet, I had a concussion but thankfully no brain bleed or skull fracture.

The next several weeks were rough with the first week being very rough! The rooms kept spinning, my balance was wobbly and I could not lay on my right side or look to the right when laying down without feeling like my body was being slammed down and back up again or fast spinning of the room. The sad part was we were entered in the AQHA World Show in Western Dressage and that was my final goal for 2023. The medical professionals told me that I should not ride for 6-8 weeks at least and that show was out of the picture. Many tears were shed when I learned this.

Therefore, Plan B for the show since no refunds for fees already paid. It came down to one final option – a family member could ride. I asked my niece if she would be interested in riding my horse for me at the World Show. She said she was game for it which is what I thought her response would be. Her friend that used to ride dressage told her that it was fun and to go for the opportunity! So, Jayden, my niece, who had never heard of western dressage agreed to do it. In less than a week, Jayden had two rides on Thor with Cyndi's guidance, reviewed the tests and watched some videos. At the show, we laid out the court with water bottles, etc. in the stall barn aisle and she personally walked the court to memorize the tests.

Jayden's first ride for a western dressage test was in the AQHA World Show competition and she did very well. There were only 3 points separating 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Even though they ended up 4<sup>th</sup>, I was proud of Jayden and Thor. I think Western Dressage will gain a new rider as Jayden had fun and saw the value in Dressage. Jayden was impressed with how nice and supportive everyone was in the Western Dressage group. Jayden's horse background is rodeo/ranch riding – she's competed in big events as a breakaway roper. Her friend Piper decided she missed the dressage discipline and we might see her back in western dressage. Jayden and Piper even discussed Western Dressage for Cowboys as their husband/future husbands could use some of the skills. They both live in the Stillwater, OK area and were excited to hear about the shows in their area.

Even though AQHA World Show was a totally different experience for me than what I was looking forward to, I was pleased with the experience. It was valuable for me to watch as Cyndi coached Jayden on her body position and the corresponding response from Thor. I would see the changes in him when she would coach me but it's also valuable to witness from the ground by watching his response to another rider. There are things I was able to observe watching Thor that hopefully will help me to improve in the new year. It was also fun watching my nephew, Cowboy Cody, soak it all in and hopefully learn some new horsemanship skills.

I am looking forward to hopefully being fully recovered soon and back in the saddle. We have new goals for 2024! Thank you to all the group from Kansas for the assistance and support given to us in OKC!

### **Our Team Experience – by Kelli Wolf**

On July 9, 2023 the Award ceremony for the Western Dressage International Online Challenge announced the winners of the coveted Team competition- The Drifters , Reserve Champions of the largest group of teams, of this years show!! The Drifters consisted of Anne Stephens, Sarah Pryor and Kelli Wolf.

So how did the Drifters get their name? Go back to June 17, 2023 at the KDEA Lite show, where I showed Level 2 test 4, the test my coach Gail Matheus calls “the shoulder-in sandwich.” The judge's comment was “drifted on all lateral movements” ! I was so mad at myself – a low point of the show experience.

A summer high point came when Ann Stephens and Sara Pryor sent me a text, asking me to join their team for the Western Dressage On Line International Challenge team competition. I was so honored to be asked by such accomplished horse women!! What a day!! The lows and highs!

Ann took over gathering all pertinent information of both 2 and 4 legged team members. With the deadline to enter within the next 24 hours! She became our captain! Sarah was in charge of putting together the Facebook post complete with formatting and pictures! I was still pouting about my earlier performance and sent out, jokingly, “let’s be The Drifters”! They both came back with YES! So now you know the rest of the story!!

After we did so well at this year’s International On Line Challenge, I told the girls, since we all ride bays next year we can call our team “BAYWATCH.” They liked the suggestion, but we decided We are The Drifters! That’s how we ride!! 😊

### **Newly Minted Horse Mom – at age 83? - By Kelli Wolf**

“No, I got it! Just stay, out of the stall. No, that’s a halter! He’s fine, don’t worry. Keep back!!”

Okay, this isn’t going to work out. Mom’s 83 and blind in her right eye, and never been around horses. I don’t want to upset her, because she wants so badly to help. She wants to be part of (my horse) Jacoby’s Team. Is it me being way too scared she will get hurt? YES!! This was how it was at the WDAA World Show in 2022 when she came along to help.

It started with Mom coming for a visit in 2022, then she officially became a full fledged Jayhawk in January 2023. Boy, was I really not ready for what has happened!! She rolled in with a full moving van, and all her things soon got stuffed into her living/bath/bedroom suite. I believe she must have been reading up on how to become an important member of a horse team. From that first lesson at the WDAA show in 2022, she’s come a long way, as she has figured out how to move all the tack/horse and me to Gail Matheus’ Stonegate without slowing us down! That one good eye is attached to one very sharp little powerhouse!!

Plus, Mom has also become an administrative assistant to Gai; , when needed. If you have received ribbons or plaques from Spotlight Horse shows, she more than likely had a hand in it!! Literally!! I couldn’t have made it without her excellent help at this year’s World Show, she’s become not only a member of the Jacoby team, she’s becoming a true horsewoman!! I’ve been do a lot of thinking about what truly makes one a “Horsewoman.” In my case, it’s LOVE!