



DAZZLING: The iconic Salt Lake Temple in all its Christmas glory, and the entire holiday-light-filled Temple Square, are huge Salt Lake City tourist draws

Changing of the Guard

Special events at the 2018 convention honor USDF's departing president, George Williams

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENNIFER O. BRYANT

One of the most respected and beloved USDF presidents in modern history received standing ovations and other special recognition during the 2018 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention.

At the podium for his final USDF Board of Governors (BOG) assembly, in Salt Lake City, Utah, George Williams accepted applause and a commemorative photo from the BOG delegates during the November 28-December 1 convention, marking the end of his final term as USDF president.

Williams, of Wellington, Florida, is the USDF's seventh president. His nine-year run is second only to that of his immediate predecessor, Sam Barish, in length; Barish served for 10 years.

Before Williams became president in 2010, he served 10 years as USDF's vice president—making him the longest-

serving officer in USDF's history. (Barish has Williams beat by one year in total number of years served on the USDF Executive Board, but seven of those years were spent as the USDF Region 1 director, which is not an officer position.)

Williams, whose final "Inside USDF" column appears on page 4, brought a unique blend of elite-rider celebrity and "populist dressage" activism to the USDF presidency. An FEI-level competitor who had trained and exhibited the Tempel Lipizzan stallions before he joined the USDF Executive Board in 2000, Williams saw his dressage fortunes rise around that same time when he got the ride on the superstar mare Rocher. The pair soon became winning fixtures in the Grand Prix ring in the US and abroad. (Sadly, Rocher died in December, just days after the 2018 USDF convention wrapped. Read her obituary on page 16.)



PARTING GIFT: *USDF vice president Lisa Gorretta presents outgoing president George Williams with a framed photograph of himself and wife Roberta presenting their daughter, Noel Williams, with her USDF gold medal in 2014*

The USDF president also represents the organization to the United States Equestrian Federation, and as such Williams serves on the US Equestrian Dressage Sport Committee (formerly Dressage Committee) and various other US Equestrian groups. He has been the US Equestrian national dressage youth coach since 2014, and in 2016 he was appointed to the *Fédération Equestre Internationale* (FEI) Dressage Committee. All the while, he has continued to ride, teach, and train alongside wife Roberta and daughter Noel in their Williams Dressage business.

“George has had a profound impact on the sport of dressage and on national recognition of the role of the USDF



HAPPY TRAILS: *Current and former USDF Executive Board members presented outgoing USDF president George Williams (center) with a briefcase during the Salute Gala & Annual Awards Banquet. From left: Melissa Creswick, Terry Wilson, Bettina Longaker, Janine Malone, Sue Bender, Margaret Freeman, Carolyn Bunch, Lisa Gorretta, Ken Levy, Sue McKeown, Steve Schubert, Heather Petersen.*

through his steady and compassionate leadership,” said incoming USDF president Lisa Gorretta. “He is both a cheerleader for where we are now and a staunch advocate for change that is essential to ensure USDF’s growth and success. Above all, he has the welfare of our horses as a top priority in everything that we do. He is irreplaceable; therefore I have no intention of letting his influence disappear as he takes on some new professional challenges and I take the proverbial reins as president.”

No stranger to USDF office herself, Gorretta, of Chargin Falls, Ohio, served as USDF vice president from 2014 through 2018 and was the USDF Region 2 director from 1995 through 2000. In addition to her Executive Board involvement, she has served on numerous USDF committees, including as a past chair of the Regional Championships Committee. A longtime adult-amateur rider and horse owner, she is a USDF bronze and silver medalist, an FEI dressage steward, and a US Equestrian “R” dressage technical delegate. Gorretta’s professional background is in small business: She founded the Ohio-based equestrian retailer The Paddock Saddlery in 1986, and now does consulting for equine-industry-related businesses after selling her company in 2013. She was elected the USDF’s next president



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE: *USDF president George Williams presents (from left) retiring USDF treasurer Steve Schubert, Region 2 director Ken Levy, and Region 6 director Carolyn Bunch with commemorative plaques*



THE 2019 USDF EXECUTIVE BOARD: Sherry Guess, Sue Bender, Debra Reinhardt, Kevin Bradbury, Sue Mandas, Debby Savage, Sue McKeown, Lisa Gorretta, Lorraine Musselman, Heather Petersen, Margaret Freeman, Carol Tice, Peter Rothschild. Not pictured: Bettina Longaker, Anne Sushko.

during the 2018 BOG assembly after running unopposed.

The honors for Williams culminated at the Salute Gala & Annual Awards Banquet, held the final evening of the convention. First, Gorretta and other past and present USDF Executive Board members presented the outgoing president with a leather briefcase. Then, in a surprise announcement, USDF Region 5 director Heather Petersen revealed that Williams' friends and supporters had already raised seed money of over \$31,000 to establish a new fund in his name at The Dressage Foundation (TDF), Lincoln, Nebraska. Williams will work with TDF to determine the focus of the George Williams Grant Fund and how grants will be awarded.

Other Election Results

Besides the position of USDF president, five other Executive Board seats were up for election: treasurer and the directors of Regions 2, 4, 6, and 8 ("Meet the Candidates," October 2018).

Two incumbents ran unopposed and were reelected by acclamation: Region 4 director Anne Sushko and Region 8's Debra Reinhardt. Lorraine Musselman ran unopposed to fill the seat of retiring treasurer Steven Schubert and was elected by acclamation, as was new Region 2 director Debby Savage, who replaces the retiring Kenneth Levy. The only election-day surprise came when Peter Rothschild was nominated from the floor of the BOG as a challenger to incumbent Region 6 director Carolynn Bunch, and subsequently defeated Bunch.

Lisa Gorretta's election to USDF president leaves the vice president's seat temporarily open. Per USDF's bylaws, Gorretta will appoint an eligible person to serve as vice president for the remainder of the open term.

Freestyle Rule Goes Back to the Drawing Board—Maybe

Typically, there is one hot topic at the USDF convention—often a proposed change of sorts to a USDF program or dues structure, which plays out in lively discussions at the two days of USDF regional meetings and culminates in

more discussions and one or more votes at the BOG assembly. The Salt Lake City convention was no exception—but the topic was a definite departure from the usual. That's because, for the first time in this reporter's memory, the controversy concerned a US Equestrian dressage rule change that had already been enacted.

The "freestyle rule," as it's become known (formally US Equestrian DR 129.9) was approved by US Equestrian last summer as an extraordinary rule change (meaning at a time of year other than at the annual US Equestrian convention in January). DR 129.9, which went into effect December 1, 2018, raised the prerequisite score to ride a freestyle from 60 percent to 63 percent at the highest test of the level. A USDF statement on the new rule outlined how the rule came into being, traced the history of the freestyle minimum-score requirement (it was instituted in 2005 and in 2009 was raised from 58 percent to 60 percent), and presented statistics showing the numbers of freestyle rides and their score breakdowns in 2018. The core rationale for the change, according to the statement, was that the USDF Freestyle Committee was concerned about "the technical proficiency that seemed to be missing in some freestyles" and believed that "the 60 percent prerequisite score no longer shows proficiency at the declared level."

With the support of the USDF Judges Committee, the Freestyle Committee submitted to the USDF Executive Board a proposal to raise the prerequisite score to 63 percent. The Executive Board approved the measure and forwarded it as a proposed rule change to the US Equestrian Dressage Sport Committee, which approved it.

The problem, as some USDF members saw it, was that although the proposed rule change was posted on the USDF and US Equestrian websites prior to its passage, the "extraordinary" timing meant that many dressage competitors were unaware of it, and they felt the organizations did not do enough to publicize the proposal and solicit feedback before the rule received final approval. Most of those who spoke out against the change at the USDF convention said that they support measures designed to protect equine



RED ON RIGHT: Color-coordinated Region 8 delegates occupy the front rows at the Board of Governors assembly

welfare (in this case, through correct riding and training) in principle, but that the timing puts an undue burden on those competitors who earned what they thought were the necessary prerequisite scores in 2018 but who must now “requalify” to ride a freestyle if they hadn’t hit the 63-percent mark. (For one USDF member’s thoughts on the subject, see “The Tail End” on page 232.)

Opposition to the freestyle rule change ran high enough that a motion was presented at the 2018 BOG assembly to direct the USDF Executive Board to submit an extraordinary-rule-change request to US Equestrian to rescind the new rule “because the adopted extraordinary rule will disadvantage the membership” of the USDF. During the BOG assembly and at other meetings in Salt Lake City, arguments for and against

Convention News and Notes

News shorts and educational tidbits from the 2018 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention

- US Equestrian has abolished the dressage rider tests.
- Sixty percent of riding-related fatalities are caused by head injuries. Replace a lower-end equestrian helmet every two to three years; a higher-end model, every four to five years. If the helmet sustains an impact, replace even if there is no evident damage. —Dr. Chris Winter, “Handling Emergency Rider Situations”
- The USDF Board of Governors approved a \$4/person group-member dues increase—the first in 10 years.
- Sand is the most important factor in arena footing—“the flour in your cake.” Sand varies by particle size, gradation, shape, and mineral content. Different types of sand work well with different types of footing additives. Read the USDF’s footing guide, *Underfoot*; and download *Equestrian Surfaces—a Guide* at inside.fei.org/system/files/Equestrian_Surfaces-A_Guide.pdf. —Heidi Zorn, “Footing Facts and Figures”
- A five-year-old horse should show correct development of straightness, equal bend and suppleness on both sides, and a willingness to take weight onto the hindquarters (i.e., to collect). Keep in mind that “you cannot bend what is not straight first.” —Lilo Fore, “Preparing Your Young Horse for Competition”
- “I look for the same feelings [when I ride] a young horse as I do in a Grand Prix horse; it’s just more cultivated [in the advanced horse].” —Christine Taurig, “Preparing Your Young Horse for Competition”
- “It is not true that all the Young Horse classes are looking for is big, expressive gaits. They are also looking for the ability and willingness to collect—that the horse can go from big to small. That is what makes a young horse exceptional.” —Christine Taurig, “Preparing Your Young Horse for Competition”
- “If you’re breeding, breed the walk and the canter. We can develop the trot.” —Lisa Wilcox, “Preparing Your Young Horse for Competition”
- “If the rider’s body is moving up and down, the horse’s back will not come up to meet the rider. That’s why we need to learn to sit. A quiet seat will enable the horse to easily balance himself.” —Gary Rockwell, “Utilizing the Pyramid of Training”
- “Straightness is the ultimate submissive quality in a horse—that it trusts the rider enough to be straight. A flighty horse leads with one shoulder. It’s not natural for a horse’s brain to want to be straight.” —Lois Yukins, “Utilizing the Pyramid of Training”



STAR POWER: Trainer and international judge Lilo Fore, US Equestrian national dressage young-horse coach Christine Taurig, and Olympian Lisa Wilcox headlined a panel on “Preparing Your Young Horse for Competition”



WELCOME TO SALT LAKE CITY: Convention attendees mingle over hors d'oeuvres at the welcome reception

rescission were presented, many on the topic of whether it is unrealistic to expect an “average” horse and rider to be able to earn a score of 63 percent at a US Equestrian-licensed/USDF-recognized dressage competition.

“This rule may affect only 10 percent of the people,” Cayuga Dressage and Combined Training Club delegate Jane-Marie Law said to the BOG, “but that 10 percent disproportionately affects poor, rural clubs like mine,” she said of her Ithaca, New York-based GMO.

GMO Basket Winners

Acherished tradition at the annual USDF Board of Governors assembly is the awarding of gift baskets from USDF’s GMOs as door prizes. Beautifully decorated baskets usually contain dressage-related goodies and items reflective of the GMO and its geographic region.

The USDF thanks all of the GMOs that donated baskets in 2018. Here’s the list of the lucky winners.

GMO	Winner
Alamo Dressage Association	Joan Leuck Waak
Alaska Dressage Association	Iris Berdrow
All Dressage Association	Elizabeth Clifton
Aloha State Dressage Society.....	Amy Parsons
Arizona Dressage Association	Barbara Cadwell
Cayuga Dressage and Combined Training Association	Bari Richter
Central New York Dressage and Combined Training Association	Jane-Marie Law
Connecticut Dressage Association	Cynthia Ganem
Eastern Iowa Dressage and Eventing Association.....	Bonna McCuiston
Eastern New York Dressage and Combined Training Association	Wendy Vernon
Eastern States Dressage and Combined Training Association	Carol Bulmer
First Coast Classical Dressage Society	Angela Rice
Fort Worth Dressage Club.....	Beth Jenkins
Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association Inc.	Tiffany Rutledge

Some delegates viewed the motion primarily as an opportunity to rebuke the manner in which the rule was enacted.

“I think it’s important for us to send a message that this is inappropriate,” said Region 3 participating-member delegate and First Coast Classical Dressage Society representative Barbara Cadwell, of Florida. “I don’t object if it’s done right. I want to publicly smack their hand.”

Some high-profile USDF members have gone on record in support of the raised score threshold, including George Williams (“Inside USDF,” page 4). Another, FEI 5* dressage judge and USDF Judges Committee chair Gary Rockwell, said at the USEF/USDF Open Forum at the USDF convention: “As a trainer, I wouldn’t allow a student to do a free-style if they were getting [only] 60 percent, [and] I’d be embarrassed to fight the efforts to improve my students. Even with a very ordinary horse that might get a 6 on gaits, if the basics are good and the horse is on the bit, [the collective mark for] submission can get a 7. We had a mule at the [2018 US Dressage] Finals; that’s half of a horse!” he said,

Gold Coast Dressage Association.....	Laura Ashley Killian
Houston Dressage Society.....	Deb DeVries
Idaho Dressage and Eventing Association.....	Anna Cluxton
Indiana Dressage Society.....	Fie Studnitz Andersen
Kansas City Dressage Society	Amy Swerdlin
Lehigh Valley Dressage Association	Anne Kuhns
Midwest Dressage Association	N. Brent Hicks
Nebraska Dressage Association	Sarah Jane Martin
NEW Dressage Association	Katherine Smith
New England Dressage Association....	Mimi Mack
North Carolina Dressage and Combined Training Association	Daniela Valentgas
Northern Ohio Dressage Association ...	Reese Koffler Stanfield
Northwoods Dressage Association	Leslie Burket
Oregon Dressage Society	Arielle Brodkey
Potomac Valley Dressage Association .	Mari St. Amand
Rocky Mountain Dressage Society	Diane Holston
St. Louis Area Dressage Society	Terry Wilson
Southern Eventing and Dressage Association	Jaimie Ringger
STRIDE.....	Sally Davenport
Utah Dressage Society	Leslie Rohrer
Virginia Dressage Association	Ruth McCormick
Western New York Dressage Association	Jane Fucinaro
Wisconsin Dressage and Combined Training Association	Shelley Fugitt

concluding that “we should be showing freestyles a level below what we are schooling.”

The motion passed—although, as former USDF secretary and former USEF Dressage Committee member Janine Malone pointed out during the BOG assembly, its rescindment is not guaranteed, as it is only a request and the actual decision must be made by US Equestrian. Even if US Equestrian is amenable to a rollback, “I don’t know how long it would take and what the process would be to rescind this at this time,” she said. “It wouldn’t be immediate.”

For the moment at least, then, DR 129.9 is in effect—so if you wish to ride a freestyle this year, the prerequisite 63-percent score at the highest test of the level is required, as of this writing.

From SafeSport to Schooling Shows

As amateur sports organizations, the USDF and US Equestrian are required to comply with Safe Sport regulations. That’s because US Equestrian is the US Olympic Committee’s (USOC) national governing body for equestrian sport, and the USDF is the US Equestrian dressage affiliate organization.

Following legislation signed by President Trump in February 2017, amateur sports organizations and their members must report sex-abuse allegations involving minors to local or federal law enforcement or to a designated child-welfare agency. The USOC established an independent organization, the US Center for SafeSport (safesport.org), which offers online SafeSport training, is the reporting agency for claims of sexual misconduct, and maintains a database of disciplinary records, among others.

As part of the SafeSport compliance requirements, USOC affiliates and their members must complete SafeSport training. US Equestrian adult members with Competing memberships were required to complete SafeSport training by January 1, 2019, in order to remain eligible to participate in US Equestrian activities (which include US Equestrian-licensed/USDF-recognized dressage competitions). US Equestrian general counsel Sonja Keating and CEO Bill Moroney were on hand at the USEF/USDF Open Forum at the USDF convention to give an overview of Safe Sport policies and to take questions. Here is an abbreviated Q&A from their presentation. For more information about Safe Sport, visit usdf.org and choose the “Safe Sport” Quick Link at the bottom of the home page.

Q: How will dressage-show organizers track SafeSport training compliance?

A: US Equestrian (usef.org) maintains a Safe Sport directory that lists the names of members who have completed the training. US Equestrian is creating an “ineligibility list” for shows to use.



CARROTS: Drawings for the coveted GMO gift baskets (like this one from the Georgia DCTA) fill lulls in the action at the Board of Governors assembly—and sometimes serve as a welcome break during tense discussions

Convention Sponsors

The USDF thanks the following sponsors of the 2018 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention:

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Youth Meet and Greet sponsors:

US Equestrian

Dressage4Kids

Q: What is the time frame for training compliance for those who join US Equestrian after January 1?

A: New members will have 30 days to complete SafeSport training, after which time they would be ineligible to compete until they complete the training.

Q: Some classes at US Equestrian-licensed shows, such as dressage opportunity classes, do not require USEF membership. Must entrants in such cases complete SafeSport training, as well?

A: Even if you have entered an opportunity class or other class that does not require US Equestrian membership, if you yourself hold any category of US Equestrian membership, you must complete SafeSport training in order to be eligible to participate.

When a minor child enters a US Equestrian-licensed competition, a parent or guardian must sign the entry form. If that parent or guardian is not a USEF member, then SafeSport training is not required.

Q: What about officials, both American and foreign?

A: US Equestrian licensed officials (judges, technical delegates, and others), staff, and board members must undergo background checks and maintain current SafeSport training status, including yearly refreshers. Currently there is no requirement that a foreign official must complete SafeSport training in order to judge at a US Equestrian-licensed show.

Schooling-show awards program proposed. Another buzzy 2018 convention topic was the proposal for a new USDF awards program. Presented at the Competition Open

Forum, the USDF Regional Schooling Show Awards Program would enable riders in unrecognized dressage shows to earn year-end awards in four divisions (open, junior/young rider, adult amateur, and non-professional) at seven levels, from Introductory through FEI. Riders, who would be required to hold USDF group memberships, would pay an annual fee to participate, and competitions would pay a fee per show in order for scores to count toward awards, according to Lisa Gorretta, who chaired the task force that developed the proposal.

The proposed awards program was developed in response to USDF members' requests for recognition of their achievements in dressage outside the sphere of "recognized" competition, Gorretta said. Aware that many competitors choose schooling shows as an adjunct or alternative to recognized shows because of cost, travel distance, and other factors, the USDF is aiming to offer schooling-show competitors an avenue for earning national recognition. By making group membership a participation requirement, the USDF also hopes to encourage schooling-show competitors to join their local GMOs, she said.

At the conclusion of her overview, Gorretta asked the convention audience to indicate support for the program by a show of hands. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

Special Honors

Arguably the most memorable part of the annual USDF Salute Gala & Annual Awards Banquet is the recognition of the year's top international dressage achievements and the pre-

In Their Finest

Part of the fun of attending a USDF Salute Gala & Annual Awards Banquet is the chance to wear something other than barn clothes. As these photos show, horse people clean up well!



Freestyle designer and 2014 USDF Volunteer of the Year Terry Ciotti Gallo, Region 1 delegate and past USDF Historical Recognition Committee chair Anne Moss, and USDF L Program and Judges Committee member and 2013 USDF Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient Marilyn Heath



US Air Force service member Stacey Chepren of New Jersey (right, with supporters and fellow award winners) attended in uniform to receive the All-Breeds First Level Open, Adult Amateur, and Four-Year-Old and Older Maiden/Yeld Mares championship awards from the Percheron Horse Association of America for her mare, Klein's Olinda



Youth members enjoy one another's company at the banquet reception

sensation of the USDF's highest honors: USDF Volunteer and Youth Volunteer of the Year awards, Roemer Foundation/USDF Hall of Fame induction, USDF Lifetime Achievement Awards, and USDF Member of Distinction awards.

In Salt Lake City, gala attendees applauded the dressage and para-equestrian dressage medals won at the FEI World Equestrian Games Tryon 2018. Dressage team and Grand Prix Special silver medalist Laura Graves, who wasn't there in person to accept the Adequan®/USDF Grand Prix Dressage Horse of the Year award for her Verdades, sent a short homemade video featuring "Diddy" snacking on carrots while Graves expressed her thanks.

USDF Volunteer of the Year. Dressage judge, USDF Judges and L Program Committee member, US Equestrian committee member, and steadfast cheerleader for both horses and aspiring judges Lois Yukins, of Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts, was honored—fittingly, on her birthday—for her tireless efforts on behalf of the USDF.

"She has put in countless hours on these committees," said George Williams, "and is being recognized for her outstanding work and contributions to USDF and the sport of dressage."

USDF Youth Volunteer of the Year. Illinois Dressage and Combined Training Association member Emma Kane, of Algonquin, Illinois, is active in planning activities for her GMO. The recent Marquette University graduate is also involved with Dressage4Kids and with a local nonprofit organization, Veterans R&R Operation Wild Horse, which pairs military veterans and families with mustangs.

"Volunteers are essential to the success of USDF," said USDF Youth Programs Committee chair Roz Kinstler. "It's always so rewarding to see a youth rider 'paying it forward' already. Emma Kane clearly shows her commitment to promoting dressage and her love for the sport."

USDF Members of Distinction. As approved by the USDF Executive Board, the USDF Historical Recognition Committee chose four noteworthy members to receive this honor in 2018. A Member of Distinction is someone who has made outstanding contributions on a local or regional level toward the fulfillment of USDF's mission of education, recognition of achievement, and promotion of dressage.

Priscilla Endicott founded the New England Dressage Association in 1972 and served as NEDA's first president. The USDF charter GMO has since grown into the USDF's largest single-chapter GMO, with many illustrious members. At her farm, The Ark, in Harvard, Massachusetts, Endicott hosted clinics with European dressage masters. She was also instrumental in NEDA's establishing dressage shows—the NEDA Fall Festival remains New England's largest and most prestigious—and organizing judge-training seminars.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: Lois Yukins (center) with USDF president George Williams and USDF vice president Lisa Gorretta



YOUTH VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: Emma Kane (second from left) with USDF Youth Programs Committee chair Roz Kinstler, 2017 Youth Volunteer of the Year Meghan Slaughter, USDF FEI Junior/Young Rider Committee chair Roberta Williams, and USDF Youth Programs Advisory Subcommittee chair Mickayla Frederick



MEMBER OF DISTINCTION PRISCILLA ENDICOTT: Endicott's NEDA colleague Beth Jenkins (second from left) accepts from USDF president George Williams, USDF Historical Recognition Committee chair Charlotte Trentelman, and USDF vice president Lisa Gorretta

Sue Hughes, of Plymouth, Michigan, has been a proponent of dressage in the Midwest since the late 1960s. A longtime Midwest Dressage Association board member, she studied dressage under the late Roemer Foundation/USDF Hall of Famer Violet Hopkins and the late Maj. Anders Lindgren, and for many years she helped to organize the USDF/Hopkins Instructors Seminars. She is a past USDF Region 2 director and a former member of the USDF



MEMBER OF DISTINCTION SUE HUGHES: *Hughes (second from left)*



MEMBER OF DISTINCTION MARTHA MCDANIEL: *Lisa Webster (second from left) accepts on McDaniel's behalf*



MEMBER OF DISTINCTION MARY ANNE MCPHAIL: *McPhail (second from left)*

Bylaws and Nominating Committees. Devoted to learning, she went on to obtain her US Equestrian “r” judge’s license and to become a Level III Centered Riding instructor.

“Sue has been such an important part of so many programs that it is very hard to think of all of them without missing some,” said judge and fellow Michigander Maryal Barnett. “Her passion for improving horsemanship and dressage in particular is inspirational to all around her.”

Martha McDaniel has brought the spirit of aloha to dressage for decades. A legend in Hawaiian dressage circles, she received the Aloha State Dressage Society’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016 and is a member emerita of the ASDS’s board of directors.

A longtime dressage rider and competitor, McDaniel is noted for her outreach to youth and her efforts in organizing clinics for both youth and adults in Hawaii, in addition to numerous other educational events for her GMO.

US dressage Olympic bronze medalist Allison Brock, who hails from Hawaii, remembered a kind gesture of McDaniel’s: In 1991, Brock, aged 11, had competed in First Level freestyle and was at the annual ASDS awards banquet. As she had many times before, McDaniel was called to the stage to accept the ASDS’s Hans Moeller Musical Freestyle Award. “When she went to pick it up, she gave it to me instead. She probably doesn’t know how much that meant to me.”

Mary Anne McPhail grew up in the Detroit area and now divides her time between Michigan and Loxahatchee, Florida. A longtime adult-amateur dressage competitor and a retired US Equestrian “S” judge, she has made indelible contributions to the sport.

In 1997, she and husband Walter McPhail established the Mary Anne McPhail Dressage Chair in Equine Sports Medicine at Michigan State University, East Lansing. There the McPhails also funded the construction of the McPhail Equine Performance Center for the purpose of conducting ongoing research in the fields of dressage horses’ health and performance. The inaugural McPhail Dressage Chairholder, Dr. Hilary Clayton, has conducted research whose findings have affected everything from the way dressage definitions and rules are written to the design and maintenance of arena footing.

McPhail has supported the USDF for years by hosting the East Coast editions of the USDF FEI-Level Trainers Conference at her Florida facility, High Meadow Farm. She revived a struggling Palm Beach Dressage Derby into a prestigious CDI, and she has owned or co-owned high-performance horses including Robert Dover’s 1992 Olympic mount, Lectron, and current international competitor Lonoir, ridden and co-owned by Olivia LaGoy-Weltz.

“Serving as the McPhail chair was the opportunity of a lifetime and one for which I will be forever grateful,” said Clayton. “Much has been accomplished as a result of Mary Anne’s vision and foresight. It has become something of a tradition to annually share this research with USDF members at the convention.”

Mark Your Calendars

The 2019 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention will be held in Savannah, Georgia, December 4-7. See you there! ▲

Jennifer Bryant is the editor of USDF Connection.

The Salute Gallery

Memorable moments from the 2018 USDF Salute Gala & Annual Awards Banquet

Adequan®/USDF Grand Prix Dressage Horse of the Year



On behalf of owner Laura Graves, trainer Debbie McDonald (third from left) accepts the Col. Thackeray Perpetual Trophy from Adequan® representative Deven Vespi, Dressage Extensions representative Deborah Tomlinson, and USDF president George Williams

Celebrating WEG Success



Riders and supporters of the medal-winning 2018 US World Equestrian Games dressage and para-dressage teams were fêted. From left: US Equestrian dressage managing director Hallye Griffin, newly appointed US Equestrian national dressage technical advisor Debbie McDonald, para-dressage competitor Kate Shoemaker, sponsor Mary Anne McPhail with WEG dressage test rider Olivia LaGoy-Weltz, dressage competitors Kasey Perry-Glass and Steffen Peters, sponsors Akiko Yamazaki and Betsy Juliano, and dressage competitor Adrienne Lyle.

Hilltop Farm Trophy



Adequan®/USDF Dressage Breeder of the Year Anne Sparks, of Horses Unlimited, Albuquerque, New Mexico (right), accepts the award from USDF president George Williams, Adequan® representative Deven Vespi, Dressage Extensions representative Deborah Tomlinson, and Hilltop Farm representative Jessica Fay



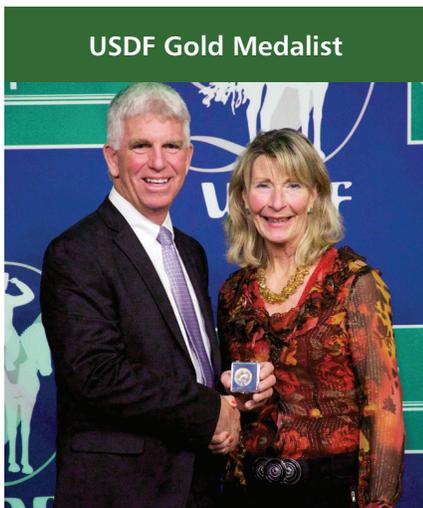
StallionExpo Trophy

Adequan®/USDF Dressage Sport Horse Breeding Breeder of the Year Maurine “Mo” Swanson, of Rolling Stone Farm, Slatington, Pennsylvania (right), accepts the award from USDF president George Williams, Adequan® representative Deven Vespi, and Dressage Extensions representative Deborah Tomlinson. Swanson also received her USDF bronze medal.



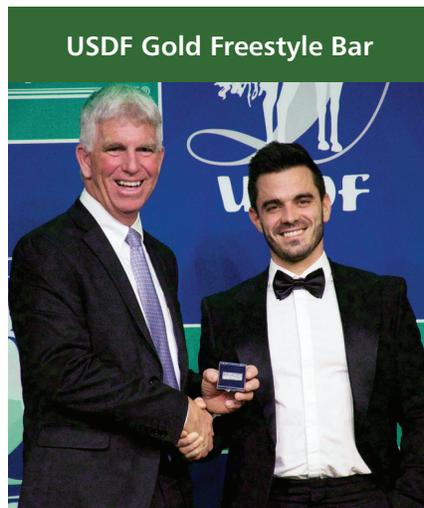
Traveling Trot Trophy

For her yearling Oldenburg gelding, Fabulously (Fürstenball – Bonsai, Belissimo M), the Adequan®/USDF DSHB highest-scoring champion, breeder/owner Merrie Velden (right) accepts the award from USDF president George Williams, Adequan® representative Deven Vespi, and Dressage Extensions representative Deborah Tomlinson



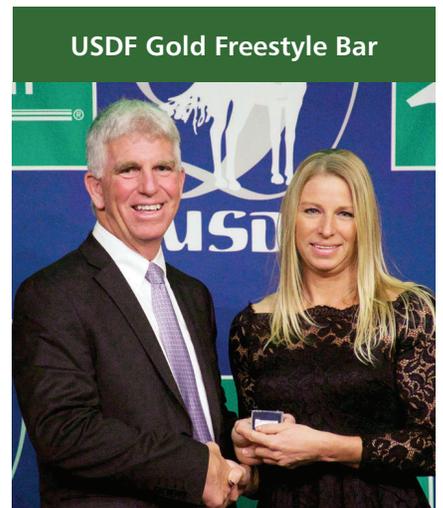
USDF Gold Medalist

Janis Beale (Pennsylvania), who also received Master’s Challenge awards at every level from Training through FEI



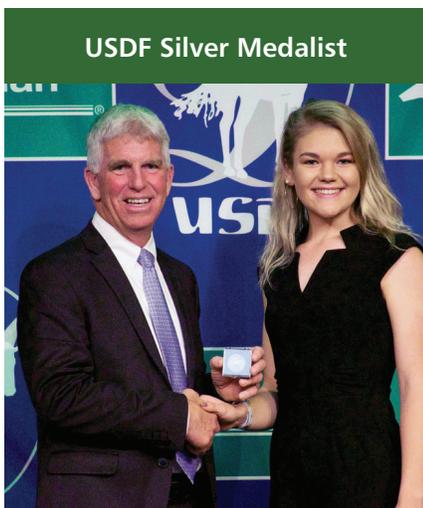
USDF Gold Freestyle Bar

Vincent Flores (Massachusetts)



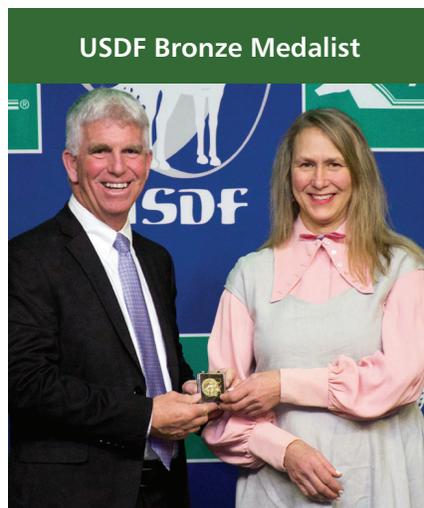
USDF Gold Freestyle Bar

Megan Zureck (New York)



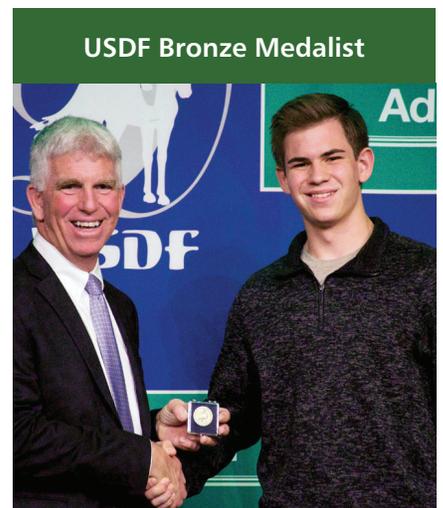
USDF Silver Medalist

Raegan McCool (Indiana), who also received her bronze medal



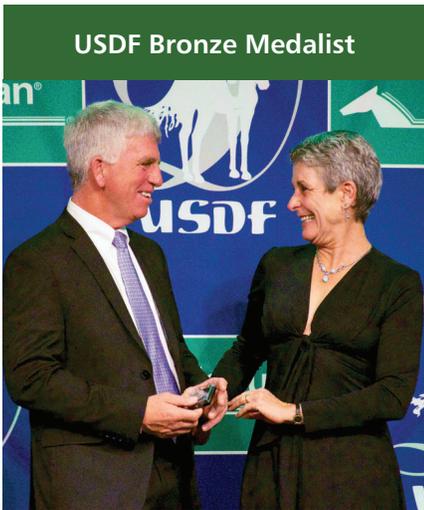
USDF Bronze Medalist

Brigid Pajunen (Minnesota)



USDF Bronze Medalist

Kade Schuenemann (Texas)



Roberta Williams (Florida) (with husband George Williams, USDF president)



Krystina Wright (Kentucky)—who's also the USDF's Competitions Department manager—with USDF president George Williams and USDF executive director Stephan Hienzsch



Utahans Linda Thompson and Ashley Adams



Kim Yacubucci (right), owner/rider of Ichiban



Shannon Stevens (right), owner/rider of Pik L's Donabella



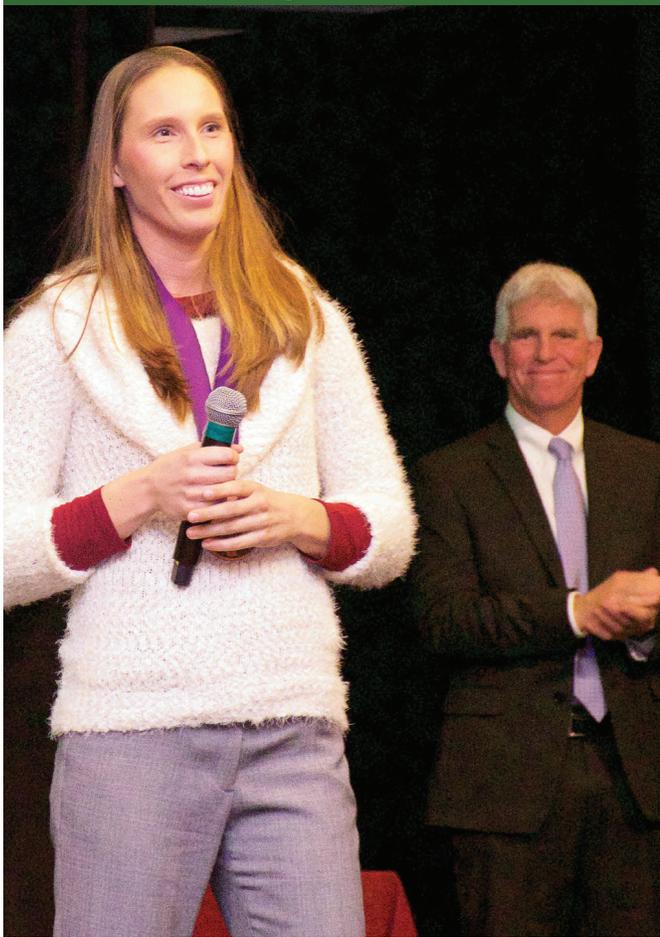
Second Level champion Sophia Kohlmann (California) riding Florian



First Level champion Andria Allen (Colorado) riding Armani AMA

TOP ROW MIDDLE: KRISTIN POSNER

Adequan®/USDF
Para-Dressage Rider of the Year



Grade IV champion and 2018 WEG medalist Kate Shoemaker addresses the banquet audience while USDF president George Williams looks on

Adequan®/USDF
All-Breeds Award



American Hanoverian Society winners group photo with USDF executive director Stephan Hienzsch (left)

Adequan®/USDF
All-Breeds Award



American Mustang & Burro Association Inc. winners group photo with USDF executive director Stephan Hienzsch (left) and AMBA CEO Jackie Braun (center)

Adequan®/USDF
All-Breeds Award



Rheinland Pfalz-Saar International Second Level Adult Amateur, First Level AA Musical Freestyle, and Second Level Vintage Cup-AA champion Caryn Bloom (Texas) (right) riding Achilles, with USDF executive director Stephan Hienzsch (left) and RPS representative Mareike Bobbett

Adequan®/USDF
All-Breeds Award



International Andalusian & Lusitano Horse Association winners group photo with USDF executive director Stephan Hienzsch (left)