

October 2025

COLLECTIVE REMARKS



HDS DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

Editor: Fran Kehr

Designer: Carrie Leach

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear HDS Members,

As we kick off the **GREAT AMERICAN INSURANCE/USDF Region 9 Championships, SWDC, and HDS Autumn Classic**, I want to extend my heartfelt best wishes to all our competitors. Your dedication, preparation, and passion for the sport are truly inspiring. We're proud to have such talented riders representing Region 9 and SWDC.

Special thanks goes to HDS's Angel Gunn, Region 9's Bess Bruton, and SWDC's Sarah Jane Martin. Your hard efforts are what makes this show tick!

A huge thank you to our incredible volunteers —your time, energy, and commitment are what makes Region 9 so special!

We'd love to see and share the memories you're making this weekend! Please **send us your favorite photos**—whether you're competing, volunteering, or cheering from the sidelines. You can email them to franwkf@gmail.com or tag us on social media.

Let's celebrate this amazing weekend together!

Warm regards,
Jody Lynn DeStefanis
President, Houston Dressage Society

Houston Dressage Society

Board Meeting

*Meeting Agenda
September 8, 2025*

- 7:00 PM Call to order and intro of guests
- 7:02 PM Review and Approval of minutes from last meeting
- 7:05 PM Discussions
- 7:05PM Election Ballot
- 7:15PM Laborious Day Show recap
- 7:25PM Championships
 - Show Management (Angel)
 - Awards (Carrie)
 - Volunteers (Jody)
 - Sponsorships (Jane)
 - Special Events (Ashley)
- 7:35PM Board Reports
- 7:35PM Treasurer's Report – Angel/Nat
- 7:45PM Advertising/Sponsorships – Jane
- 7:55PM Youth – Cate Schmidt
- 8:05PM Membership – Diane
- 8:15 PM Education – Sarah
 - Twinwood offer of “Meet the Trainer”
- 8:25PM Schooling Shows – Dawn
- 8:35PM Publications and Media – Fran/Carrie
- 8:45PM Historian – Noel
- 8:55PM Old/Unfinished Business
- 9:05 PM New Business
- 9:15 PM Adjourn

HDS Board Members



President

Jody Lynn DeStefanis
jody@wv-dressage.com



Recognized Shows

Angel Gunn
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Historian

Noel Anne Lewandos
navl55@live.com



Vice President

Simone van der Schalk
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Volunteers

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Treasurer

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Secretary

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Youth

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Sponsorship & Ads

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Awards

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Special Events

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Publications & Media

Fran Kehr
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HDS 2025 Recognized Shows

GAIG/USDF Region 9 Championships,
SWDC and HDS Autumn Classic (Level 4)

October 2-5, 2025

[Show Info/Results](#)

HDS Schooling Shows

Haras Cup Dressage/WDAA

Sat, Oct 11, 2025

[Haras Cup Info](#)

Snowdonia

Sun, Nov 9, 2025

[Snowdonia Show Info](#)

New Horizon Stables

Sun, Oct 26, 2025

[New Horizon Stables HDS Schooling
Show](#)

New Horizon Stables

Sun, Nov 23, 2025

[New Horizon Stables HDS Schooling
Show](#)

SAVE THE DATES
2026 Show Calendar
[Region 9 2026](#)

CHECK THE HDS WEBSITE FOR UPDATED CALENDAR

[Houston Dressage Society](#)

BE SURE YOU ARE AN HDS MEMBER

[Membership](#)

Harvest Classic September 6-7, 2025

Congratulations to all competitors!! Thank you to all volunteers!

[Harvest Classic Results](#)



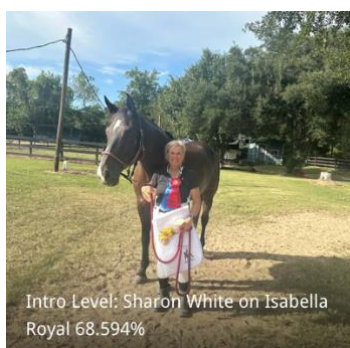
WKF Schooling Show Sept. 20, 2025

Good rides and good weather were the theme of the Windy Knoll Farm Fall Dressage Schooling Show. It was a full day with 57 rides.

WKF hosts 3 schooling shows each year: a Winter Show in February, Spring Show in May, and a Fall Show in September. We award Champion saddle pads for the highest average in Intro level (includes amateur and junior riders combined) and a saddle pad for the highest percentage averaged in 2 classes for a junior rider, amateur rider and open rider competing in Training Level and above.

Ellen New from Designs by Ellen donates an embroidered monogrammed dressage saddle pad. Our Fall Show Winners are pictured below.

WKF would like to thank all the riders and our excellent show staff: Ellen and Bill New who do all the scoring and computer work, Judith Hackney and Patty Maxwell for scribing, Carrie Leach the ring steward and Holly Klay for working the gate.



HDS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Colleen Akin

At what age were you introduced to horses/riding?



I was 6 years old on a family vacation to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. We were hooked, so our longtime family friend Rich Newhart started giving my brother and I lessons. It quickly became a family affair with all 4 of us working at the barn every weekend, and the purchase of our first pony, Chunkee Monkee. Soon after purchasing her, we moved from CT to NY and had them in our backyard. My parents lovingly took on the role of horse family

with absolutely no background in it of their own. The tradition of them being involved carried on too many organizations and horse shows over the years. Laura and Joe Akin's endless support is why I still have horses in my life 28 years later!

What is your favorite memory with a horse?

I have a vivid memory from 2012 riding my horse Duet in a lesson with Vicki Hammers O'Neil on a very typical day, nothing special, until it was! It was the first line of one tempis I had ever ridden; Duet had ever done, too! It was so special to have experienced that on a horse that we raised from 2 years old in my backyard. A VERY close second was the first day I sat on Pumpkin Spice, my covid horse-baby. I am forever grateful to my cousin Danielle for finding this dream horse for me.



What is the most difficult thing about owning/riding horses?



I find injuries to be the most challenging part of our sport, but probably not for the reason most would assume. Sure, there is the heartbreak of the setback of missing a competition or having to retire them all together from sport (been there). But I think the hardest part of horses is the lack of communication to ask them where it hurts or what you can do to make them more comfortable. It is absolutely gut wrenching to see an animal in pain. Their well-being will always come first to me.

Luckily, Pumpkin my has no issue communicating her needs to me.

What's your profession?

I work full time in Sports Medicine (for humans) for Houston Methodist as an Athletic Trainer for Bellville school district. Horses are a lifestyle that will always be a big part of me, but I am also equally as passionate about sports medicine. When I was younger, I volunteered at therapeutic riding centers with physical therapists: at Lendon's farm, I began working with Physio Eckart Meyner; in clinics and his co-author Alison End with the Balimo stool. This was a kickstart to my future passion to help others! I continue to build on what they taught me, providing intentional, science-based techniques with a twist of reality

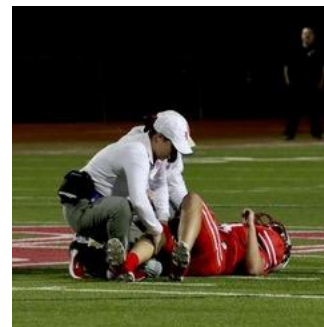
in my equitation clinics. I always knew from a young age that I would find a way to merge my two passions. As I build my career, I have been blessed to be able to combine these worlds through working professional Rodeo Sports Medicine at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and paying it forward through equestrian specific lectures on concussion; emergency action planning for Dressage4Kids.

What do you love about your job?

My favorite part of my job is that on a good day I get to be the kids' biggest fan as the Athletic Trainer. There are not many health care professions that you have the opportunity to cultivate relationships outside of their injuries.

What is the TOP 1-3 pieces of advice you would give riders/horse owners?

1. Treat every horse like it's your own. They deserve all the empathy in the world.
2. Find the opportunity. There is always another door to be opened in this sport. Showing and success will come in waves, so be humble to enjoy the other learning opportunities. Go audit, go volunteer, take a new class.
3. Don't purposely include "Spice" in your horse's name unless you really want them to live up to that name.



What is your horses favorite and least favorite exercises?

Her absolute favorite thing to do is canter, and her least favorite is cantering the way John and I want her to for training level. She certainly does not lack expression (thank you for that Grandpa-Totilas)!

If you could snap your fingers and change one thing about the horse industry, what would it be?

How expensive it is. I didn't choose the horse girl life, it chose me!



If you could spend the day with ANY one person, who would it be? Why?

Ingrid Klimke! Her genuine love for horses is contagious. I was already a fan girl from her books before being selected for her masterclass. After experiencing her training in person, I know there is much to be learned from her, and she is so willing to share the knowledge!

What are your goals for you and your horse in 2026?

We have big plans! We will continue to trailer to John for coaching as much as my schedule allows. Pumpkin gets VERY excited to learn, starts to whinny as soon as we are on TexOver's road. I'm personally enjoying having consistent coaching for the first time since I was a Young Rider. I am hopeful to have the opportunity to show first level & maybe a freestyle for regionals... but if you ask Pumpkin Spice, she has even bigger goals than me!

TRAVELLING TRAINER: GINA COLLIER

Equestrian Training in Motion began in 1990 in Parker, CO near Denver when professional dressage trainer, Gina Collier, found there was a need for her to travel to the client. There is no reason to load your horse every time you want to take a riding lesson or get some training in. You and your horse get to learn at home, where you are both comfortable with the environment. No need to find a babysitter for your children or rearrange your whole day, since you are already at home or where your horse is. Everything is easier and it still only takes 45 minutes out of your day.



Over the last 26 years, Gina Collier has trained many breeds of horses from ponies to warmbloods. Always with the same theories and techniques in mind, dressage is quite successful for any horse. They can benefit regardless of the discipline that they are ridden in. An example is Western, hunt seat, jumping, endurance, etc. Gina also works with all types of riders, from children to adults. Beginners through advanced, all levels are welcome! You and your horse can learn together. Each training session or lesson package is personalized to fit your needs. She is currently in Pinehurst TX but will travel up to 45 min (or so) to teach and train you and your horse.



Gina Lynn Collier is a USDF Silver & Bronze Medalist with 35 years professional experience. She has a Riding Master III from the world-renowned Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre in West Virginia. In addition, a Bachelor of Science in Equestrian Studies from Mount Senario College, in Wisconsin. She also has earned numerous highpoint and awards through the years showing up the levels through FEI.

To keep up with her education, she consistently rides in various lessons and clinics. Her many students enjoy showing at schooling and recognized shows and are quite successful!

Gina Collier
Equestrian Training in Motion
www.ETMofTexas.com



A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO LESSON WITH A WORLD CLASS TRAINER



Sabine Rijssenbeek will be at Windy Knoll Farm October 24 -25 for a two-day clinic with limited rider timeslots.

Sabine works well with all levels of riders, offering a positive and insightful approach to finding and bringing out the best that the horse has to offer and the tools the rider needs to make the most of the horse's abilities.

Sabine grew up in the Netherlands and holds an International Trainer's Passport (Level 3). She was shortlisted to represent the Netherlands in the Moscow Olympics and has personally trained under two different Dutch Olympians prior to coming to the United States.

Sabine is currently based out of Northern California and has successfully trained her clients to qualify for USDF Dressage Nationals every year for the 15 years she has been in the USA. She has also been the Dressage clinician for the Western States Horse Expo for four years running.

CLINIC LOCATION:

Windy Knoll Farm, 32118 Old Hempstead Rd, Magnolia, TX 77355

DATES:

Saturday, October 25 – Sunday, October 26, 2025

COST:

\$150 per 45-minute lesson / semi \$80
Ride one day or both / Day Stall \$10

CONTACT:

Holly Klay (812) 325-6037 hklay@m3cable.com



USDF is pleased to announce the upcoming educational opportunities for you to share with the members of your GMO:

USDF Book Club Meeting Tuesday, September 23 at 8:00pm EST
33 Strength and Fitness Workouts for Horses by Jec Ballou

Join USDF staff and the hosts of the Dressage Radio Show podcast as they sit down with author Jec Ballou to discuss her most recent publication. The meeting will include live question-and-answer-based discussion with viewers as the group shares what they learned from the exercises in *33 Strength and Fitness Workouts for Horses*.

Members are encouraged to email questions for the author to bookclub@usdf.org.

Registration for the Book Club meeting is available [HERE](#).

USDF Virtual Education Series – Wednesday, October 22 at 8:00pm EST
Inflammation and Fatigue in Performance Horses, presented by Dr. Sarah White-Springer

Dr. Sarah White-Springer joins USDF once again to share the findings of her recently concluded research on how inflammation and fatigue affect the overall performance of equine athletes. Sarah will discuss how nutrition, sleep, exercise, and even light exposure are related to recovery and injury prevention in performance horses.

Registration for this virtual session is available [HERE](#).

How Infectious Diseases Spread Between Horses



Controlling infectious diseases relies on understanding how they spread. Infectious organisms are transmitted to horses through the following routes:

Aerosols

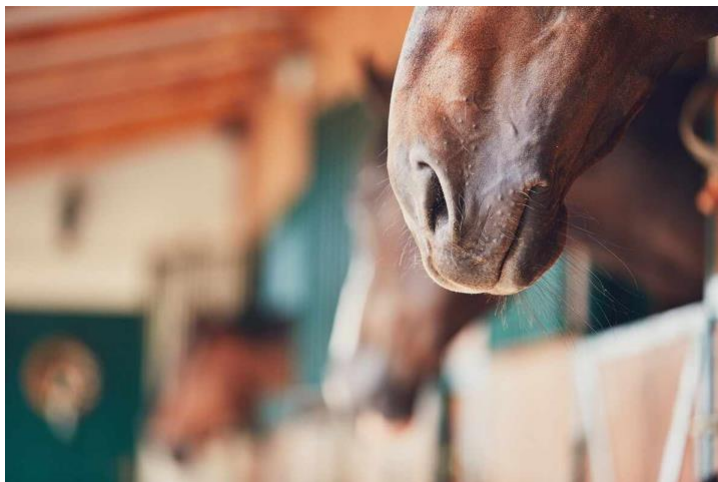
Respiratory droplets from sick horses become airborne through coughing, snorting, or sneezing. Residue from evaporated droplets and infected dust particles can also become suspended in the air. Infectious organisms are transferred when they contact the eyes, nose, or mouth. Pathogens vary in their ability to survive and



transmissibility in the air, which are impacted by environmental factors including wind, humidity, and temperature. Diseases capable of transmission by aerosols include equine influenza and equine herpesvirus. Airborne diseases are challenging to contain and can spread quickly. To reduce the rate of transmission, keep distance between horses, keep dust down, and ensure proper ventilation in enclosed spaces.

Direct Contact

Some diseases spread through close physical contact with infected animals, their body fluids or tissues, and direct touching of wounds, skin, or mucous membranes around the nose, eyes, and mouth. Affected animals can infect other animals through nose-to-nose contact or biting. Equine influenza is an example of a disease spread by nose-to-nose contact. Limit contact with horses between stalls, in aisle ways, and at crossties or wash racks; do not tie horses near each other; and clean and disinfect water troughs regularly to reduce direct contact.



Indirect Contact

Objects contaminated with infectious organisms are called fomites. These can include tack, buckets, grooming supplies, hoses, clothing, and vehicles. Diseases



spread by indirect contact include strangles and equine herpesvirus-1. Avoid sharing equipment between horses. If equipment must be shared, clean and disinfect it between uses. Dedicate separate supplies and equipment for sick horses. Keep vehicles and trailers in designated areas. Limit traffic, people, and other animals in horse areas to minimize spread through indirect contact.

Oral

Horses can consume pathogens in feed or water contaminated by feces or urine from infected animals. Licking or chewing contaminated objects in the environment can also lead to ingestion of pathogens. Diseases spread through oral transmission include salmonellosis and equine coronavirus. Control feed sources, ensure feed quality, and handle and store feed properly. Clean stalls regularly, manage fecal piles in fields and turnouts, and ensure proper waste management. Avoid natural water sources such as streams that might be contaminated with feces or urine from wildlife and livestock.

Vectors

Insects, such as mosquitoes and flies, or ticks can transmit infectious organisms between animals. Vector-borne diseases include West Nile virus and Eastern and Western equine encephalitis. Proper vector control is an essential part of any biosecurity plan. Use insecticide applications as appropriate. Fence off areas with high insect and tick populations and keep horses inside when these vectors are active (dusk to dawn). Eliminate insect breeding areas, including standing water and decaying organic matter.

**Wildlife**

Rodents, skunks, opossums, bats, birds, and other wildlife can also act as disease vectors. Diseases spread by wildlife include rabies and equine protozoal myeloencephalitis (EPM). Prevent wildlife from accessing barn areas, sweep regularly, keep barns and tack rooms tidy, and clean up and store feed in containers with securable lids. Patch holes and gaps in buildings to prevent wildlife access. Do not leave pet food or water out overnight and keep compost piles away from barns.



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