



Q1 2025

NEWSLETTER

[HOME | NFDA \(NFLADMESSAGE.ORG\)](https://www.nfladmessage.org)

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****In This Newsletter****

2025 Board of Directors

Ida Norris NFDA/TDF Educational Opportunity

How Western Dressage Arrived at NFDA Chapter One

Lynn Shinkle

Highlighted Jr. Member Liza Rose Dickson shares her experiences with NFDA.

Scholarship recipient Patricia Estes lets the membership know what was/is being accomplished with the NFDA scholarship funds!

Thank you all for a great start to 2025! We have hosted our first schooling show, The Educational Clinic with Ida Norris, and our Dressage on the First Coast USDF/USEF Rated show with great success!

We have many new members and continue to strive for an even BIGGER GMO than last year! Do spread the word about all NFDA has to offer and encourage others at your barns to join and participate on any level. NFDA is rich with history, full of educational opportunities, offers great exposure, and is really FUN!!!

~Kate Johnson Secretary and Newsletter Chair

*****Please Renew Your Membership On The Website*****

[Membership | NFDA](#)

And Share The Link/Information !

Our club has so much to offer, and we love to see and welcome new faces with both 2 and 4 legs!!!

*****[KEEP UP WITH NFDA LIVE ON THE FB PAGE](#)*****

Meet the NFDA 2025 Board of Directors

Lynda Overbey President:

My name is Lynda Overbey and you elected me to be the NFDA president for this season. I am a wife, mom of two, horse, dog, cat and chicken mom and a riding instructor for children. To me, everything about dressage, western dressage and our club is fascinating!

I love NFDA and feel ready to put my mark on it.

As a horse-show mom for the last five seasons and a board member and show coordinator for our schooling shows for the last two years I learned that there are some things that can be improved to make our shows even more enjoyable

One of the best features of our club was its inclusiveness, the friendly atmosphere that made our shows a “happy place” for everyone. But I do feel like we are losing that a little bit so this year I want to focus on bringing that feeling back.

To maintain our high standards, I will ask that we all, riders, trainers, parents, friends need to comply to our show etiquette, set positive examples and be positive role models so everyone has the chance to “Sparkle and Shine” at our shows again.

My second focus will be to offer more educational opportunities to our members and friends like clinics, seminars, meet and greets etc.

Maybe you can all help me by letting me know what kind of clinics or seminars you would like to see and you are most likely to attend!

Thank you so much for your support

Adriana Smith Vice President :

Adriana is a USDF Bronze and Silver Medalist who owns Cavalo Rosa Dressage LLC in St. Augustine. She has been on the board of NFDA since 2018 and currently serves as Vice President and Show Secretary. She is committed to promoting correct classical basics in her training and to running a local show series that is both welcoming and professional.

Kate Johnson Secretary:

I have been a member of NFDA since 2007 and was on the board in some capacity from 2009-2018. I did take a couple of years off from being on the board more recently but continued to be active with NFDA in the show ring and now am back in both the arena, as Secretary, and Newsletter Chair. I have seen many changes in NFDA over my years here and have had the pleasure of working with amazing people, their wonderful equine partners, and sharing in a great deal of learning and growth. I do know that NFDA offers so much to so many. I want to cultivate an inclusive, positive, and welcoming environment as well as facilitating educational opportunities both in and out of the saddle. NFDA has an amazing history long before my arrival. I hope that members today will reach out and inquire about where we came from, how we got here and who made it possible. The inspiration runs deep. We didn't just land here with all this in place. We need to keep up the hard work to ensure we continue, grow, improve, adapt, and learn. I want to be a part of that legacy.

Susan Johnson Member At Large :

Vintage rider who is passionate about competing locally, Regionally and Nationally in both Classical and Western dressage. Arabians are my breed of choice for over 35 years.

2025 Aspirations for NFDA include :

*Affordable education programs to each of Jrs, Adult, Vintage Open club members

* Club growth opportunities for members participation - interest survey to all new members

- * Girls. Weekend - field trips to high profile events is Wellington- CDI Qualifiers or WEC
- * Sponsorship Program Development
- * Scholarship development- update requirements w/ new fresh ideas - update webpage



Aurea Thompson Member At Large:

My name is Aurea Thompson, and I have been showing with the NFDA since 2021. I feel blessed that horses have been a part of my life since I was little and thankful for the various opportunities I have had to ride over the years. I am so excited to be a part of this year's board. I hope to bring more sponsorships to NFDA to support our growing community of classical and western dressage riders, and through that, will help promote our organization as a positive presence in the Jacksonville community and surrounding areas. I am looking forward to a great year!

Kathee Cook Treasurer

Kirstin Prince Member At Large

Beth Gould Member At Large

Barbara Cadwell Member At Large

As ALWAYS All Newsletter Submissions are WELCOME and APPRECIATED!!!!!!

kjinusvi@hotmail.com



~The Ida Norris Experience with NFDA and Sponsored In Part By TDF~

The Northeast Florida Dressage Association (NFDA) recently received a grant from TDF's Violet Hopkins Fund for GMO Events. The grant helped cover the costs of a symposium with Ida Norris titled "Dual Perspectives: Exploring Dressage for Classical Dressage and Western Dressage Riders."

The clinic organizers shared with TDF, "The grant funds assisted NFDA in bringing in a nationally recognized instructor who is equally skilled in classical and western dressage. There is an interest and desire in our area to learn about the basics of dressage. Ms. Norris brought a fresh perspective and judge's eye to what is expected at each level."

Participants rated the clinic "five out of five" and NFDA mentioned that nine participants signed up as members of their GMO!

Photo Credits SD Photography Jax



"Dreams became a reality for our small club!" 🧡💜

The Origins of Western Dressage and The Arrival To NFDA:

Lynn Shinkle

Chapter 1

I remember reading an article in mid-2000 in one of my many equine magazines I used to get about an interesting new sport called Cowboy Dressage. This used the basic principles of traditional dressage, but in a western saddle. Some differences were the arena was called a “court” and used a different arrangement of letters, and there was “The Court Challenge”, which included ground polls.

As a western rider I found this very interesting. At that time, I lived in Texas. I found a dressage instructor a year or so earlier and took lessons for about 9 months. I had a very basic knowledge of dressage. I rode my 5-year-old pinto Saddlebred mare Soleil. I’ll never forget when the trainer made the comment of what a great walk she had (what?), or the time she asked to ride her and I remember the saying “the better the rider, the better the horse” I was like wow! I want to learn more about dressage.

Then more articles appeared in the magazines about this new discipline. It was Western Dressage. A mirror to traditional dressage but ridden in a western saddle!

This is what the WDAA web site says about the beginnings:

THE BEGINNINGS

The idea of Western Dressage had been brewing for some time. When a few prominent trainers met in 2007 and began to discuss the many horses they had trained, the successes and the failures of different techniques, as well as the conversations they had had with both trainers and horse owners, they realized that there were some core concerns shared by everyone involved in today’s horse industry. In late 2010 a meeting was held in Dallas, Texas to discuss these issues. The WDAA founding directors met with several gentlemen of the Western Horseman Magazine. The discussion was inspiring and gave impetus to the importance of moving forward with a plan. An organization and rallying point was needed, one that would provide information which would benefit all western horses and riders. That organization would honor the horse in its rightful place as the living symbol of the American West, value the partnership between the horse and rider, and also celebrate the American West as the beautiful and legendary place where it all began and continues today. This would require the building of a Western Dressage Community dedicated to all these concerns.

And then came another player. North American Western Dressage developed a similar western discipline. The two organizations were vying to be the primary WD sport. Now we had two different association’s offering WD and each had developed their own different tests.

On April 29, 2008, Soleil gave birth to Saqwalis Nyte Of Fame, better known as Bella, a beautiful bay national show horse. Six months later, our family and farm relocated to Callahan, Florida.

I did all of Bella's training and, at 4 yrs of age, started her under saddle. We had already done in-hand shows, liberty classes, in-hand obstacle challenges, and plenty of groundwork, but I wanted something other than western pleasure to show in. I needed a goal, something to work towards. Western dressage was it- new and unknown but that is what seemed to fit both myself and the horse best.

I began to work with a local dressage trainer who had heard about western dressage but never had trained any students. I was her first.

After looking at both associations tests, it was decided to go with the WDAA test. It was a very good choice as shortly after this WDAA was recognized as an affiliate of USEF. (I am highlighting this on purpose because this is BIG ~ Kate added this part).

As I found out more about any local offerings it just so happened that NFDA had recently added WD to their schooling shows.

At this time WD was so new, only two tests were offered: Basic test A & Basic test B. (Yes, the first year it was Basic, then in 2013 the name changed to Intro....). With help, I filled out our entry for the 2012 schooling show fall series, September 15, 2012, and then snail-mailed it to Steve Amburgey. Then I waited to see my ride times. How awesome it was that I had an actual ride time and did not have to wait for who knows how long for my class to be called into the ring!!!

I received my ride times, Basic A at 1:49pm & Basic B at 3:34pm. I was also asked to please bring the test sheets with me, for they did not have them. I just figured everybody brought their own test sheets, all new to me!

The Journey begins

Show day. Clay County Fair Grounds was the venue for the show. I'd been there several times already with Bella when we showed with the North Florida Arabian Club, so no big deal with nerves. If we got a few odd looks sporting a western saddle I honestly don't remember, but I felt most welcome. In the warm-up arena. I was now starting to feel a bit nervous, I was really going to do this! On deck, just about to enter as **the first ever WD rider**, I figured I had no place to go but up!

Down center line we go as Bruce calls my test. Ten movements (that I cannot recall but I still have the tests) that seemed to last forever. Finally, the turn down centerline. Halt. Salute. Breathe. Like really-breathe!

Heather Stalker (I) was our judge and Bella and I received a 65% from her. Our next test Basic B, judged by Christine Slayer (I) and we received a 67.39%. Honestly, I had no idea if this was hi/low, good/bad scores. As I shared my score sheet with the one other WD rider (Barbara Aponte) and others, I was assured that for a first-time rider on a 4yo started 8 months ago, yes - good scores.

We entered the October and November shows, both of us still learning and growing together. Scores were consistent, mid-60's so the desire to show kept us working to improve. We had found our new adventure!

Stay tuned for the rest of the journey.....

We will be highlighting the arrival of WD and the progression of WD presence with NFDA in upcoming Newsletters.



NFDA 2025 Line up

January Year End Banquet - 01/26/25
At Maggiano's St. John 12-3

February 02/01/2025 Charlotte Trentelman "S" & WD R
Ida Norris "S" & WD "R"
02/02/2025 Ida Norris Sunday Clinic

March 03/08/25 and 03/09/2025
Dressage on the First Coast
Recognized English only

April 04/12/2025
Brian MacMahon "S" WD "R"
Silja Knoll WD "r"

May 05/17/2025
Bill Woods USDF R
Lynn Marie Newton WD "R"

August 08/23/2025
Heather Stalker "S" & WD "R"
Megan McGee WD "r"

October 2025
10/11/2025 Double Qualifier Show!
Matt McLaughlin USDF "R"
Michelle Velasco L Grad with Distinction, WD "r"

Nov 2025
Championship 11/15/2025 and Schooling Show
Judy Downer "S" & WD R
Natalie Lamping "S" & WD R
3rd Judge TBD

More educational opportunities to be added soon!

LET'S GET THIS
 **PARTY**
STARTED!

Show entries are processed and results reported online: [Sign up:](#)
[Schooling Show | NFDA \(nfladressage.org\)](https://nfladressage.org)

We appreciate all volunteers in ALL capacities! NFDA doesn't happen without volunteers: [Volunteer | NFDA \(nfladressesage.org\)](https://www.nfladressesage.org)



~PARTICIPATE IN A BOARD MEETING~

Please join us in our monthly board meetings via zoom every 3rd Monday at 7pm.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE MEETINGS, PLEASE EMAIL NFDAPRESIDENT@GMAIL.COM TO GET THE ZOOM LINK!

***** Please, encourage others to join our fabulous GMO*****

[Membership | NFDA \(nfladressesage.org\)](https://www.nfladressesage.org)

*****NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS OF ARTICLES AND PHOTOS**

WELCOMED!!! kjinusvi@hotmail.com***



~ HIGHLIGHTED JR MEMBER ~



Liza Rose Dickson

I competed in my first NFDA show in October of 2022 and fully became a member in 2023. One of my favorite memories at NFDA was scoring a 54% on Intro A at my green OTTB's first show. She spooked and cantered off the rail for a majority of the test, and that was the first time I ever came out of the ring laughing after making mistakes.

I love the community surrounding NFDA and all the people who help run the show. Everyone is kind, considerate, caring, and willing to help with anything that anyone needs. Especially Mrs. Lynda and Adriana who work so hard to keep the show running, and deal with my walkie talkie not working for the 50th time.

My advice to new junior members is to breathe. Do not be too upset if one thing goes wrong in your test. Mistakes are normal and even if one thing goes wrong, there are other movements and areas where you can regain those points.

I am so excited for the 2025 show season because I will be, with the help of my mom, taking a green pony through the levels. I love helping to produce green and young horses and Ollie has been a dream to work with the past month that I have been leasing him! My amazing trainers, Alivia and

Taylor, have given me so many opportunities and I am truly grateful for their support.

I am most proud of how willing to learn and improve the incredible horses I have been able to ride have been. Zak, Ollie, Trevor, Jazz, and of course Pandora, have taught me so much about riding, patience, and helped me find the joy and love riding horses gives.

My biggest challenge is that I am a perfectionist. I feel in my heart that everything has to be done perfectly all the time, but sometimes when your partner is a very large animal with strong opinions, being perfect is hard and may not be on your partner's agenda for the day.

I would like to thank NFDA for being a safe and supportive community after we lost Pandora. 2024 was a challenging year, having lost my heart horse, I am so thankful that NFDA provided the opportunity to volunteer and be involved in the show even if I was not showing. If we had not been able to come to the show and volunteer right after Pandora passed, I am not sure my mom or I would have been able to come back to riding. I will always be thankful to everyone who was kind to me that day. Thank you also to my barn family at Y Knot. Everyone works hard with their horses to improve, and it is a very inspiring barn in that way.

I keep making connections and meeting new people through being a ring steward and I am so excited for this upcoming year!

Thank you!

Liza Rose

THANK YOU, JR MEMBERS, PAST AND PRESENT YOU ARE THE FUTURE OF NFDA!!!



*****VOLUNTEER SHADOW OPPORTUNITIES*****

If you are interested in learning how to Scribe, Score, be a Day Show Manager, or any other positions necessary to execute a successful show but don't have experience, PLEASE seek out a seasoned member, board member, or volunteer and take the opportunity to "shadow" that position. Scribing is NOT scary at all and always proves to be a great learning opportunity! Scoring DOES get you into a "zone" and the numbers make sense! We have a large membership and a very talented group who can help teach those skills which might seem daunting at first but become fun and second nature once you get your feet wet!!

*****NFDA SCHOLARSHIP HIGHLIGHTS*****

~PATRICIA ESTES~

DRESSAGE TO MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP

I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH AT THE END OF LAST YEAR TO HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE 4TH QUARTER SCHOLARSHIP BY NFDA . MY HOPE WAS TO USE THE SCHOLARSHIP TO PUT TOGETHER A DRESSAGE TO MUSIC ROUTINE FOR MY HORSE DANTE. UNFORTUNATELY CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED AND I NOW HAVE A NEW HORSE WHICH I AM WORKING ON DOING THE SAME. FOR MY FREESTYLE I ASKED YVONNE BARTEAU TO HELP WITH THIS TASK. YVONNE HAS CREATED MANY AWARD-WINNING FREESTYLES AND EQUINE THEATER PRODUCTIONS. I HAD PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED A FREESTYLE WORKSHOP IN 2023 AND GAINED AN INSIGHT INTO THE PROCESS INVOLVED. BELOW ARE SOME OF THE TAKEAWAYS FROM MY EXPERIENCE.

1. WHEN SELECTING YOUR MUSIC IT IS BEST TO USE THE SAME ARTIST, GENRE OF MUSIC, MUSICAL OR THEME.
2. THE MUSIC YOU CHOOSE CAN HELP ENHANCE THE HORSE'S NATURAL GAITS. FOR EXAMPLE YOU CAN SLOW A RUSHING HORSE BY SELECTING A SLIGHTLY SLOWER TEMPO MUSIC. THIS WILL HELP THE RIDER MAINTAIN A SLOWER RHYTHM. THE SAME

GOES FOR A HORSE WHICH IS BEHIND THE LEG. A FASTER TEMPO CAN HELP INCREASE FORWARD ENERGY.

3. RIDE TO THE HORSE'S STRENGTHS. PREFERABLY SHOWING THESE STRENGTHS OFF GOING TOWARDS THE JUDGE FOR THE BIGGEST IMPACT.
4. WHEN PERFORMING THE FREESTYLE, RIDE THE MUSIC NOT THE ARENA. IF YOU GET BEHIND THE MUSIC CUT A CORNER. IF YOU GET TOO FAR IN ADVANCE YOU CAN ALWAYS ADD A CIRCLE.
5. LOWER LEVELS CAN CANTER IN, BUT NO CANTER TO HALT.
6. TO FIND THE START POSITION OUTSIDE OF THE ARENA. START AT THE PLACE YOU WANT TO HALT. PLAY THE MUSIC AND RIDE THE ENTRANCE BACKWARDS. WHEN THE MUSIC ENDS YOU WILL ARRIVE AT THE STARTING POSITION OUTSIDE.
7. INCREASE THE DIFFICULTY OF THE FREESTYLE TO EARN EXTRA POINTS BUT MAKE SURE IT CAN BE DONE WELL.

YOU RISK A BADLY PERFORMED MOVEMENT AFFECTING THE OVERALL IMPRESSION OF THE TEST.

ALTHOUGH I AM STILL WORKING ON MY FREESTYLE WITH MY NEW HORSE I HOPE TO DEBUT MY FREESTYLE AT THE COMING NFDA SHOWS. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE NFDA COMMITTEE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP AND YVONNE BARTEAU FOR HER HELP AND EXPERTISE.

PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE TO APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

[SCHOLARSHIP | NFDA \(NFLADRESSAGE.ORG\)](https://www.NFLADressage.org)

North Florida Dressage Association Scholarship Program



For additional information or questions on how to apply,

please contact Susan Johnson, NFDA Scholarship Chair

SusanGJohnson3@gmail.com

Please visit our website for details

<https://www.NFLADressage.org/scholarship>

This program was created to help open doors for riders to pursue and achieve their dreams.

DID YOU KNOW...

Monies awarded can be used toward

- Competitions outside local shows
- Clinics- either as an auditor or ride, with nationally known clinician
- Educational programs

SPRED THE WORD! APPLY NOW!
Guidelines attached.

*****NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS OF ARTICLES AND PHOTOS**

WELCOMED!!! kjinusvi@hotmail.com***

A Region 3 GMO (General Membership Organization) of USDF

The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) is the governing body of Dressage in the United States and boasts a national membership of 45,000. Approximately 35% of that membership reside in Region 3, which includes Florida, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Our Mission

The mission of the Northeast Florida Dressage Association is to promote the sport of dressage in our region by organizing clinics, schooling shows, recognized National Dressage Federation Shows, and promote social networking among our members and community at large.

The program of the association is educational and is designed primarily to offer a framework in which individuals can progress with the schooling of themselves and their horses throughout the training spectrum from Introductory to Grand Prix.

