

RMDS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 11, 2024

Zoom Meeting

Meeting @ 6:30 PM

Attendance: Sharon Soos, MaryJo Hoepner, Dorothy Kapaun, Sally O’Dwyer, Patricia Weed, Shannon Lemons, Eleanor Harrison, Katie Knight, Stan Adamson, Judi DeVore, Karen Harkin (Until after her report), Heather Petersen, Analiese Kovisto, Kristen Allen, Sloane Rosenthal, Gwen Ka’awaloa, Laura Speer, Sandy Vernon, Gabrielle Ward, Ruth Edie Nielsen, Renee McMillen, Beth Geier

Proxies: Ginka Kubelka to Heather Petersen; Karen Harkin to Judi DeVore after the Scholarship Report; Nadia Westra to Heather Petersen;

Call to Order-President

Sally O’Dwyer

Meeting called to order at 6:36 pm by Sally O’Dwyer

Brief Introductions of the new board meetings

Secretary - Approval of Minutes -

Heather Petersen

Meeting minutes from September and October were approved by email vote.

Treasurers Report

Sharon Soos

Operating Funds as of December 31, 2023

Wells Fargo RMDS Checking Account	\$ 84,947.79
Wells Fargo PayPal Account (as of 12/15/2023)	\$ 4,876.46
Subtotal	\$ 89,824.25

Restricted Funds as of December 31, 2023

Wells Fargo Scholarship Fund	
RMDS Scholarship	\$ 4,597.29
Barbara H McElnea Scholarship	\$ 8,000.00
Subtotal	\$ 12,597.29
Total	\$ 102,421.54

Operating Funds as of January 11, 2024

Wells Fargo RMDS Checking Account	\$ 95,026.78
Wells Fargo PayPal Account	\$ 578.74
Outstanding Checks	\$????
Pending Deposits	\$????
Subtotal	\$ 95,605.52

Judges “L” Program	-	\$ 13,189.00
Subtotal Operating Funds		\$ 82,416.52

Restricted Funds as of January 11, 2024

Wells Fargo Scholarship Account	
RMDS Scholarship	\$ 4,597.29
Barbara H McElnea Payable	\$ 8,000.00
Payable	- \$ 250.00
Subtotal	\$ 12,347.29
Total	\$ 108,202.81

Who is doing the RMDS taxes for 2023? Beth and Sharon are working to talk to someone. He specializes in non-profits – Maurice. He’ll do the chapter taxes and the organization. The original estimate is looking to be about \$4,000

President Report

Sally O’Dwyer

No Report.

Vice President Report

Sloane Rosenthal

If your committee needs any help, Sloane is here to help! Sloane asked if she should do opening remarks at the banquet. We absolutely

Central Office

Beth Geier

Membership

- Registration – 283 as of 1/1 members for 2024-21 new horses since October, 2022
121-Amateurs 15-Juniors
- See reports with chapter membership totals.
- Accepting dues for 2024: \$70.00 later in month, it is \$80

Shows:

- For 2024: 5 - RMDS recognized shows: 32 - USEF/USDF recognized including Championships & Regionals

Omnibus:

- See Nicole Bizzarro’ s report

Database/Website:

- Working well – found a couple more glitches that we need to work on.
- Asking people that have refunds if they want to donate – most say yes.
- Please ask your chapter members to see if there is a donor in the group or if they know of one.

Banquet:

- January 13, 2024- As of Jan 6 - 136 attendees

Volunteer:

- Interesting statistic: recorded with RMDS for 2023: 301 people 4138.25 hours

General:

- Chapters receive two free email blasts for educational purposes.
- RMDS Executive Board members get ½ price auditor if fee \$50 or more to RMDS events.

Next Executive Board Meetings (2nd Thursday odd months-exceptions noted) –

2024 RMDS EVENTS:

Banquet	January 13
TD	Feb 12
New Rules	Feb 20
Show Mgt.	March 4
Horse Expo	March 15-17
Team Competition	July 20
Summer Intensive	July 17-19
Sport Horse	Sept 18
Championships	Sept 19-22

Executive Board Meetings:

Reports: Jan 11, March 14, May 9, July 11, Sept 12, Oct 10 (budget)

No reports: Feb 8, April 11, June 13, Aug 8,

BOG Nov 16

2025

Banquet **January 11**

**RMDS MEMBERSHIP -
YEAR-TO-DATE**

1/9/2024

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Members:	283	654	664	714	636	700	725	752	756	779	675	827	797	868	751	945	1030	1008	1036	1019	1151	1177	1162
Horses:	21	131	130	161	109	159	161	91	93	59	63	59	135	123	132	166	246	262	234	207	337	274	
AV	23	43	47	40	39	39	36	39	25	29	26	27	25	27	24	15	26	12	-	-	-	-	-
BV	65	139	146	160	138	151	162	159	182	168	171	180	182	190	200	188	205	172	178	179	199	208	230
FH	18	68	66	65	51	56	70	57	73	79	76	64	65	71	72	75	76	77	74	73	109	103	115
GV	45	83	98	89	78	80	77	91	95	71	55	71	53	65	83	87	105	102	88	92	93	98	77
HP	54	160	144	146	117	162	164	169	149	156	151	176	190	208	226	256	265	260	259	251	267	283	278
NC	24	50	65	69	57	64	75	69	77	77	89	94	93	110	132	107	124	137	137	139	162	151	150
OB	11	24	24	30	40	37	38	49	43	42	33	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PP	42	86	73	56	62	87	77	89	63	70	63	62	44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No Chapter	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	5	11	12	13	15	14	25	14	16	22	21	34	36	24
CS							-	Dissolved	24	35	47	52	63	115	124	115	127	126	143	130	137	155	134
NM			dissolved	37	33																		
PN															Dissolved	inactive	12	13	13	14	15	14	13
PR									Dissolved	10	11	18	14	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TS															Dissolved	36	51	68	90	86	91	74	77
WA									Dissolved	19	21	26	28	24	24	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
WC			dissolved	21	20	23	25	29	22	18	19	23	27	31	22	21	25	25	32	34	44	55	64
TOTAL	283	654	664	693	616	677	700	723	756	761	675	827	797	868	751	945	1005	983	1004	985	1107	1122	1098
Juniors	15	51	53	64	54	66	73	80	86	88	95	120	117	120	134								
Amateurs	121	163	236	240	140	217	205	195	163	152	176	209	220	239	230								
Education	13	19	14	12	11	14	18	21	17	16													
Business	2	16	15	16	12	12	9/2																
Life	40	40/1	38/1	43	35/1	33/1	32/2																

Permanent Committee Reports Continued:

Scholarship

Karen Harkin

The RMDS Scholarship Committee met on December 18, 2023. The committee members were: Karen Harkin, Chairperson; Jewlee Beulah; Rebecca Ciotta; Joan Clay; Gabrielle Hibbard; Dorothy Kapaun; Edie Nielsen; and Barbara Prograss.

The Committee reviewed five complete and well-done application packages. There was a nice mix of applicants requesting scholarships for a variety of uses. All applications were well-written; several were from individuals with some personal health dilemmas who demonstrated great resolve to continue on their riding journeys. The budget allowed for four recipients, plus the Barbara McElnea Scholarship for members west of the Continental Divide. There were no professional applicants. The committee is recommending full funding for all the applicants. Three of the applicants requested funds in excess of the \$500 typically awarded. However, after being notified of the typical awards, they chose to continue and revised their budgets accordingly.

The Committee is recommending the following for scholarships:

For the Junior/Young Rider \$500 Scholarship, the Committee recommends Applicant A: This individual had 8.5 volunteer hours; two strong letters of recommendation from a co-worker at the horse rescue where she volunteers and a local veterinarian where she work; she had a solid budget with a combination of lessons, clinic fees and entries. She has two horses, a rescue Thoroughbred which has recovered from EPM and a warmblood. The costs and the efforts associated with caring for and showing two horses while in college and working, makes her a worthy recipient. She will be helping her chapter with social media in 2024.

For the Barbara McElnea Scholarship of \$1000, the Committee recommends Applicant B: This individual had 9 volunteer hours; she presented a solid budget; she had two recommendation letters from her current instructor and the clinician; she plans to train on her own horse with a front range trainer who is traveling to the western slope; the balance of the funds will be used towards a show in April where she is moving up to third level. As one of our two "upper level" riders, the committee felt strongly about supporting her.

For the Leg-up \$500 Scholarship (Training and First Level), the Committee recommends Applicant C: This individual has 12 volunteer hours; she presented a solid budget; she had several recommendation letters including from trainers and family. She has a strong hunter/jumper foundation gleaned with nationally recognized trainers. Due to a variety of medical issues and loss of a beloved horse, she is restarting her riding career in dressage. Her current horse also has had some medical issues, which has further delayed her riding journey. But now back on track and in a program, her request is for lessons and a clinic audit.

For the first of two Beverly Swanson Adult Amateur \$500 Scholarships, the Committee recommends Applicant D. This individual had an **amazing 61.75 hours of volunteer time!** She presented a solid budget supporting a clinic she wants to ride in; she also presented two strong letters of recommendation from her regular trainer and a

“barn mate” who is a testament to the wide variety of volunteer duties this individual will undertake. This Applicant is our second upper-level rider, planning to show fourth level this year. For the second Beverly Swanson Adult Amateur \$500 Scholarship, the Committee recommends Applicant E: This individual has **46.5 volunteer hours!** She is Treasurer of her chapter. Her training plan is for three clinics this year; she also presented strong letters of recommendation from her regular trainer, and a clinician. We will also direct her to The Dressage Foundation’s Military Grant Fund as she is a retired member of the military. The Committee was impressed by the realistic and heartfelt applications and hope the Board agrees with the recommendations. The Scholarship Chair will also encourage three of the five applicants to increase their volunteerism to RMDS and/or to their local chapter beyond the required eight mandatory hours.

There was quite a bit of discussions and some questions for Karen on various aspects.

MaryJo Hoepner made a motion to approve the recommendations of the scholarship committee. 2nd by Judi DeVore. Motion passed unanimously.

Applicant A: Grace Davis – Jr/YR
Applicant B: Kristen Nobilo - Barbara
Applicant C: Allison Suddard – Leg Up
Applicant D: Sonny Zinn – Leg Up
Applicant E: Tiffany Brown – Beverly Swanson AA

Adult Amateur

Katie Knight

Jodi Lees is the proposed clinician for the 2024 RMDS Adult Amateur Clinic. The theme will be Achieving Impulsion: What is It and How Do We Get It? The suggested date is November 16 and 17 but this is the RMDS BOG so we’ll look at the following weekend – November 23-24, with ten riders each day. The initial budget is as follows:

Clinician fee \$1500 per day (\$150 per ride/10 riders)

Transportation 500

Hotel/food 600

Venue 500

Cost total: \$4600

Revenue \$4000 (20 rides at \$200)

USDF grant \$1000

Auditors (\$25 a day) unknown

Total: 5000

(Any profit repays the grant)

Jodi Lees is an accomplished Dressage professional. She currently continues to compete, to train horses, to train riders, to teach clinics across the nation, and to judge shows as an “S” judge across the country and as a guest in other countries as well.

Jodi has been exposed to excellent education and training. She continues her education at symposiums and forums each year through a number of organizations such as USEF, USDF, IDTC, IDRC and Judge’s forums.

Heather Petersen made a motion to approve the budget with the dates of November 23-24, 2024, 2nd by Sharon Soos. Motion passed unanimously.

Awards

Shannon Lemons

2023 Year End Awards

- New trophy vendor – initial invoice was over \$9000, but they ended up giving us some good discounts and with tax exemption got it down a bit over \$5000.
- Still in process of going through everything before the banquet, always have a few corrections/remakes with this many items 😊

- May be short on glasses (thought I had one more box), so depending on how many pick up, I may have to send them out later. I'm looking at changing to stemless glass in that case so that they could be more easily mailed. Thoughts on that change long term? Folks seem to be in favor of stemless.
- Have enough volunteer gifts, will order something else next year.
- Got this year's replacements covered between statues that I had to donate and other folks providing them.

Communications

Analiese Kovisto

Stats:

- **ECentaur** (Dec):
 - 67.4% open rate
 - Login link highest open
- **Facebook**
 - 28 Day Reach:
 - 2,892 people
 - 918 Post Engagements
 - 8 new page likes
 - 11 new page followers

Q1 Plans:

- Overhauling ECentaur
 - Have smaller blurbs that lead to links on site/blog to allow information to be easier to find/skim
 - Adding upcoming events section
 - including volunteer opportunities
- Growing Instagram following:
 - Slightly different, less link dependent content
 - Adding linktree/linkinbio section when links are required
 - Following local and dressage related organizations

Needs:

- Access to Instagram logins to be able to interact on app as RMDS
- All chapters, please add analiesekovisto@gmail.com to your email lists!
- If you don't hear back from me, please text (818) 624-7651. Had some issues with a few emails being filtered.
- MaryJo has an article she's written

Database – 2 items have been requested by Heather and Beth for service.

- We are having them add volunteer hours and the member chapter to the membership card.
- We are also having them work on removing members who don't have birthdays from the junior standings in the chapter awards reports and move them into the open divisions.

Omnibus – We are waiting on advertisements and content. Nicole is working hard on it now.

Education

MaryJo Hoepner

Confirmed activities:

1. February 12 2-6 TD Training
2. February 20 6:30 New Rules
3. March 4 2-6 Show Management

Proposed Free Style Clinic (CE approved) with Dolly Hannon March 24. Budget to be approved so applications can be made. Location to be determined.

Freestyle Budget

Income

20 students x \$100 2000

Cost

Instructor x \$800	800
Venue	500
Food	400
Insurance	100
Printing	100
Income/Loss	0

TDF funding will be applied for

Judi DeVore moved to approve the Freestyle clinic, 2nd by Katie Knight. Motion approved unanimously.

Proposed Pressure Proof Clinic budget to be approved

Here are some considerations for planning the clinic.

CONCEPT: Riders need to practice being under pressure and successfully dealing with the pressure to gain confidence. These clinics provide an opportunity for riders to experience pressure while playing a game horseback with the other riders. These challenging and empowering riding clinics are designed to help riders increase their confidence, courage and concentration by decreasing fears, failures and frustrations; doubt, distractions and dwelling on mistakes.

OUR VENUE ARENA: Dressage clinics are best taught in large-court arenas with all 12 letters. We need 6 - 10 poles (jump standards are an added bonus), a mounting block and seating for auditors.

INCLEMENT WX/ RAIN: It's important to have an indoor arena as a backup in case of rain. If it rains and we don't have an indoor arena we'll still complete our clinic, I'll just teach your riders a five-hour symposium of a variety of rider fitness and mental coaching workshops.

OUR SEMINAR & WORKSHOP Multi-day clinics always include two upbeat equestrian sport psychology seminars. Riders will learn how to improve their confidence and courage while also building their strength and stamina!

OUR AUDITORS I'm proud to donate all auditing fees to your group. You may set, collect, and keep all auditing fees from our clinic. Most groups charge \$25-\$50 per day (the more auditors, the more you'll earn). Many groups use auditing as a way of creating a fundraiser.

OUR SCRIBES I'll need two scribes for our riding sessions. They don't need to have experience but should be familiar with riding. It's important they be free for the entire three hours of our riding sessions (i.e. a parent who has to help her daughter shouldn't be our scribe).

OUR RIDERS Riders of all ages and levels can ride in Pressure Proof clinics because we divide everyone by groups based on the level of horse and rider. As you can imagine this isn't always easy (like putting 12 square pegs in 12 round holes!) but please do your best. Thank you for considering the horse when grouping your riders (for example if an upper level rider is on a green horse she should still ride in the lower level group to avoid over-challenge her horse). I'll push all riders according to their own ability, meaning that if a rider proves to be more advanced than the group, I'll push her harder than the others. We can even raise or lower the height of the fences between rides so everyone is challenged equally.

Please remember that our clinics require the completion of multiple dressage movements without stopping. Riders who can't "steer" around such courses should audit our clinic. Multi-day clinics are for 12 mounted riders per day. The same 12 riders can ride both days, 12 different riders can ride each day, or a mixture of riders can ride (i.e. 10 riding both days + 4 riding one day). Please note that the groups on the first day can be odd numbers (like a group of five, four and three) but groups on the 2nd day must be even numbers (like two groups of six riders and one group of four).

OUR HORSES PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND MAKE NO EXCEPTIONS

Because of the challenging nature of our clinic it's very important that all horses be willing, well-behaved, and able to complete a full dressage test - without stopping. Horses who have a tendency to rush, run-out, refuse fences, be barn-sour, or are otherwise unable to complete a course without stopping (or make their riders feel fearful) are not appropriate for this clinic. Our clinic is designed to teach riders to be positive and focused under schooling or showing pressure (i.e. recovering after mistakes, never quitting, and avoiding distractions). It is NOT designed to teach riders how to solve things like rushing or refusing horses, or how to overcome the fear of a horse who makes them nervous or

fearful. Riders who attempt to ride with horses like this usually end up feeling very disappointed in the clinic and frustrated. It also delays the entire clinic for all other riders.

PRICING: I charge a flat rate fee of \$3840 (which ends up being \$160 per rider per day). A \$1200 deposit is due a month in advance to confirm the clinic booking. Auditors are encouraged and all auditing fees go to your barn/trainer.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns!

Melissa McClain

There was a lot of discussion of the concept, the price and various other topics. Once a budget is approved, then we can further explore the concept.

Pressure Proof Budget

Income

12 x \$160 x 2 \$3840

Auditors x \$40 x 20 800

Cost

Instructor \$3840

Rental \$ 500

Food \$200

Will apply for TDF funding

Judi DeVore moved to approve the budget and concept, 2nd by Sloane Rosenthal. Motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Part 2 L Program Budget to be approved so applications can be made Three Sessions D1, D2, D3. D1 is now a classroom session. We are looking for shows with sufficient 2nd level entries. Houston and/or Bay Area are possibilities for D2 and D3. D1 would be held near DIA.

Session D1 & D2
a

One instructor for two days, (these L Instructors cannot be used to also officiate at the competition on the same day as the L Program Session).

<i>ESTIMATED INCOME</i>		
Participants Fee (\$425.00 x 10)		4,250.00
		\$4,250.00
<i>ESTIMATED EXPENSES</i>		
Instructor Fee (\$800/day x 2)		1,600.00
Airfare (may be higher or lower depending on distance and time of year)		600.00
Lodging		400.00
Instructor Meals		200.00
Printing/copying		200.00
Postage		25.00
Tent rental		500.00
Refreshments/Lunch (include volunteers)		450.00
Certificate of Insurance (adding USDF as additional insured)		100.00
		\$4,075
<i>ESTIMATED LOSS/PROFIT</i>		\$175

Additional costs to consider: Traveling expenses for organizer and volunteers including lodging and meals.

Final Examination

Exam must take place at a competition. Two examiners are required for two days. These examiners cannot be used to officiate at the competition on the days of the exam.

<i>ESTIMATED INCOME</i>		
Participants Fee (\$700 x 10)		\$7,000.00
<i>ESTIMATED EXPENSES (2 Examiners)</i>		
Examiners Fee (\$750/day per examiner x 2)		3,000.00
Airfare (may be higher or lower depending on distance and time of year)		1,200.00
Lodging		800.00
Meals		400.00
Printing/Copying		100.00
Postage		50.00
Tent rental		500.00
Refreshments/Lunch		450.00
Certificate of Insurance (adding USDF as additional insured)		100.00
Total expenses		
<i>ESTIMATED LOSS/PROFIT</i>		400.00

Additional costs to consider lodging and meals for organizer and volunteers, possible Sunday night stay for examiners, gifts for volunteers.

Stan Adamson moved to approve the L program Part 2, 2nd by Katie Knight. Motion passed unanimously.

Junior/Young Riders

Gabrielle Ward / Jewlee Bellah

Camp is set for July, Gabrielle has worked on the flyer and such to go in the RMDS Magazine. Need to get with Nadia and Jewlee on more camp information and the team competition. For camp, she has lined up Taryn Anderson and is working on other activities. Looking at setting up camp as an overnight camp.

Marketing

Kristen Allen / Jessica Reigel

Much discussion regarding the sponsorship spreadsheet for the entirety of RMDS and the exposure of non-RMDS owned shows that are RMDS recognized and how that affects the organization. Kristen will take the feedback and she will meet again with a smaller group.

Professionals

Sue Martin / Holly Bergay

Sue has been looking at getting a lawyer to talk about the legal aspects of being a professional. She will have more information hopefully for the next meeting.

Shows – Championships

Nadia Westra/Heather Petersen

Nothing much to report at this point in time on the main championships for 2024. Contracts have been signed with CHP and a deposit has been mailed.

2025/2026 Bids – 1 bid received. Shannon Lemons moved to approve the bid received from 2 White Feet, Inc., 2nd by Sharon Soos and MaryJo Hoepner. Motion approved with Heather Petersen abstaining.

Sloane Rosenthal moved to submit a bid to USDF for the 2025 USDF Region 5 Championships, 2nd by MaryJo Hoepner. Motion was approved with Heather Petersen abstaining.

Volunteer

Judi DeVore/Eleanor DeVore

The volunteer committee activities for January:

—**Identifying what educational programs we need to help with volunteer recruitment:** Exploring holding a basic scribe training covering rules and giving experience to those new to scribing. Then possible electronic scribe training with Heather Petersen afterward that would be open to people who have scribe experience or have taken the Basic Scribing training.

—**Working on revisions to the current RMDS volunteer form for documenting hours:** Trying to make this form match the USDF form more closely so hours could be sent to USDF for inclusion in their volunteer awards program. Also the form needs to be mostly for non-show volunteer activity since shows have the hours submitted by horse show managers or volunteer coordinators and don't need to be duplicated by the volunteer. We also want to make it a fillable PDF to expedite being able to send it to the authorizing individuals verifying the hours.



Rocky Mountain Dressage Society

Volunteer Program Log

All hours earned must be earned with a RMDS or RMDS Chapter activity. Hours logged must include the signature of the appropriate chapter/RMDS official for the activity where hours are earned to verify hours.

RMDS and chapter officials are allowed to earn volunteer credit as long as the volunteer hours earned are not in the context of the elected position they hold.

- Volunteer Name:
- Address:
- Phone:
- Email:
- Member RMDS Number
- Member USDF Number

If volunteering for an RMDS member other than yourself, indicate member name::

Hours earned at shows should not be submitted! This form is for non-show hours and activities that do not have an official who is doing submission of hours for the volunteers. Examples:

- Organizing or assisting with a clinic (unless clinic organizer states they will be submitting hours)
- Committee meetings for actively working on specific topics such as shows or other events are considered volunteer hours, provided this is not in the context of the position you hold. (Example: The chairman of the education committee does not get hours for preparing for or running the education committee meeting.)
- Writing articles for publication in RMDS Centaur
- Recruiting sponsorships for RMDS or GMO activities and RMDS Championships
- Participating in RMDS fundraising efforts (ex: instructors who donate lessons for RMDS fundraisers)

Complete fillable form and forward to appropriate GMO official for verification of hours

Date	RMDS or RMDS GMO Activity/Event	Hours Earned

Signature of RMDS/Chapter Official:
Position Held within RMDS/Chapter:

Completed form emailed to RMDS Central Office: rmds@rmds.org

Appointed Committee Reports:

1. Western Dressage

There were 6 WDAA shows in Southern Colorado and it was great.

Simone Windeler

2. Nominating Committee – Chapter Presidents

Some discussion as to what this committee does and such. Sally is going to reach out to each of the chapter presidents though quite a few responded without availability during the call.

???

3. BOG - November 16, 2024

Working on looking at alternative venues.

Heather Petersen

4. Banquet –

138 reservations as of 1/6/2024

Beth Geier

Parking is comped.

HUGE Thank you:

Nadia Westra – amazing auction chairman - \$9K in value items.

Shannon Lemons – awards chairman extraordinaire

Heather Petersen-creative video set-up

Region 5 Report

Heather Petersen

The Holiday season has passed and we're starting another fantastic new year! I'm going to provide a bit of a Convention wrap-up and highlight a few things to note.

Congratulations to our GMO award winner at the Convention:

- Region 5 GMO Volunteer of the Year – Tania Radda – Scottsdale, Arizona – Arizona Dressage Association

A few key things from the Convention this year:

- Due increases were passed by the Board of Governors for the membership year 2025 that starts December 1, 2024. Participating membership will increase to \$100, Youth participating membership will increase to \$80, GMOs will pay \$25 per individual member (a \$1 increase) and an additional \$2 increase was passed to make it \$12 per family member.
- The Executive Board passed quite a few fee increases that will also be effective for the 2025 competition year. Some highlights include Horse Lifetime Registrations increasing from \$115 to \$140, HIDs increasing from \$35 to \$45, Non-member fees increasing from \$35 to \$55 and qualifying ride fees increasing from \$15 to \$20. If you have any questions on these, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or USDF and ask.
- The 2024/2025 USDF Budget was approved at the Board of Governors, as were several housekeeping By-Laws. GMO delegates will now be due October 31st instead of August 31st. This will give GMOs more time to determine who their representatives will be for the USDF Convention each year.
- USDF is working with the US Para Equestrian Association to merge them under the umbrella of USDF. This will be a working project for 2024 and more will be brought before the 2024 Board of Governors meeting.
- Convention numbers were up for 2023 but the Gala dinner was down slightly.
- The 2024 USDF Convention will be December 4-7, 2024 in Houston, Texas.

The USDF FEI Trainers Conference will be held again in 2024 – January 15-16 in Loxahatchee, Florida at High Meadows Farm with Sabine Shute-Kerry and Sven Rothenberger. I look forward to seeing some of you there!

The 2024 FEI North American Youth Championships will be returning to Flintfields Horse Park in Traverse City, Michigan one week earlier and the USEF Festival of Champions will be returning to Lamplight Equestrian Center in Illinois as well shortly after NAYC.

The dates of the 2024 USDF Region 5 Championships are September 19-22 and we will be at the Colorado Horse Park in Parker, Colorado. Qualifying will continue through August 26, 2024. Bid documents are now available for hosting the 2025 Great American USDF Region 5 Championships and are due to USDF by February 5th. I'd love to hear from any interested parties as soon as possible so we can help you with the bid process and anything you're going to need for those bids. All Regional Championships will continue to be held by early October since the Champions and Reserve Champions of the Jr/YR (Training-Fourth Level), Adult Amateur and Open divisions will feed into the Nationals Championships through the nomination process. There are also wild card spots for those who obtain high enough scores in the Championship classes.

If you are getting ready to show for the upcoming season, here are a few reminders:

- Make sure the name on your horse's coggins matches their registered name that they show under. This is a USEF general rule and quite a few folks sadly don't pay attention to the need for all documents to have the horse's name match.
- All horses are now required to have a USEF number – with an HID, an annual or a Lifetime registration. This is a change that is effective December 1st, 2023. The USEF HID is free and you can apply for one for your horse using your USEF Member Dashboard.

I'd like to once again highlight the USDF Group Member Organizations Volunteer Incentive Program - It is a fabulous opportunity for recognition of our members that isn't very well known. The Group Member Organization (GMO) Volunteer Incentive Program is a way for current USDF Group Members to earn recognition by volunteering with their GMO(s). Track your volunteer hours using the GMO Volunteer Incentive Program Hour Log below and have a current

GMO officer or official of record with USDF (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, newsletter editor, webmaster, roster contact) validate your hours with their signature. Once a milestone has been achieved, submit the form to USDF. Hours can be carried over to the following year(s), allowing you to earn recognition as time allows you to volunteer.

Finally for this month, I'd like to congratulate Ruth Edith Neilsen on receiving the Carol Lavell Gifted Memorial Fund Award for Region 5 from the Dressage Foundation. Edie is a member of the Rocky Mountain Dressage Society. Ruth plans to have an intensive training week with Jess Roberts and additional lessons with Simone Windeler. Her goal for training is to prepare for competitions to obtain her USDF bronze medal. The Gifted Memorial Fund for Adult Amateurs was seeded with donations in remembrance of Carol Lavell's great dressage horse, Gifted. The Fund's purpose is for adult amateurs to set aside quality, concentrated time away from daily pressures to train and bond with their horses. The best applications include a training program of five to seven consecutive days with one trainer. Volunteerism is also an important requirement for this grant. Applications are due each year by September 15.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Discussion of office manager pay structure. We will add this to the discussion for February.
- D&O Insurance reading of chapter officers into the record:

Chapter	Title	Name
Arkansas Valley	President	Sandy Vernon
	VP	Renee McMillen
	Treasurer	Sarah Murphy
	Secretary	Debbie Hood
Boulder Valley	President	Stan Adamson
	VP	Shannon Moyes Clark
	Treasurer	Marcia Zuger
	Secretary	Janeen Cochi
Foothills	President	Nadia Westra
	VP	Jewlee Bellah
	Treasurer	Erika Senna
	Secretary	Jennifer Stewart
Grand Valley	President	Karen Harkin
	VP	Leane Oliver
	Treasurer	Susan Gregg
	Secretary	Arlene Rhodes
High Plains	President	Andrea Osmond
	VP	Cecilia Madison
	Treasurer	Tiffany Brown
	Secretary	Jennifer Slade
Northern Colo	President	Laura Speer
	VP	Denise Morrison
	Treasurer	Lynn Ahern
	Secretary	Andrea Chirich
On the Bit Dressage	President	Ginka Kubelka
	VP	Kelly Wolfe
	Treasurer	Tom Wolfe
	Secretary	Anna Chalfoun

Pikes Peak Dressage	President	Patricia Weed
	VP	Mary Jo Hoepner
	Treasurer	Elaine Thomas
	Secretary	Heather Petersen

Katie Knight moved to approve the roster of chapter officers, 2nd by Eleanor Harrison. Motion passes unanimously.

Sloane Rosenthal moved to approved the chapter reports as they were sent out, 2nd by Katie Knight.

Chapter Presidents:

1. Arkansas Valley

Sandy Vernon

The Round Table meeting was very helpful in sharing information and giving our club new ideas for the upcoming year. We appreciate that numerous GMO's reached out to us after the meeting.

Thank you to Andrea Osmond, Patricia Weed, Ginka Kubelka, and Judi De Vore for taking time to connect with us.

Our Awards Party was a great success. We met at Pop's Winery for a warm gathering, honoring our successful and hardworking members. The wonderful food, wine, and gift exchange made for a nice way to wrap up the year.

AVDA Executive Board worked in December to update our By-Laws, reviewed our Awards Policy, Financial Policy, and created a Social Media Policy. We also created our budget for 2024. These were all approved unanimously at our General Meeting on January 6th. Now that the homework is done, we can start having fun in the arena!

During the meeting, Events Chair, Christina Coffin, reported on show committee news. The virtual show plans are coming together and we are excited to try something new. This event is scheduled for April 13th at Marion Peterson's Ranch.

Debi Stevens is our Education Chair and has clinics planned through April. Sue Martin is coming back in January, Holly Bergay will be here in February and April, and Laura Gillman is coming in March.

As part of our education presentation at the meeting, Brenda Haley brought a handout for two arena exercises. She gave an over view explanation of how to ride the exercises. Members were asked to share their experiences with the exercises when we meet next month. Sarah Murphy is heading up a new scholarship committee and working on requirements for both an AA and a JR/YR award through AVDA. We also discussed the importance of volunteerism and how to keep volunteer hours more effectively. We are hoping to do a better job of reporting our club hours to RMDS in the future.

Members are doing their best to keep riding through these winter months, in preparation for spring shows and clinics. We have limited indoor facilities here, but often we are graced with decent riding weather.

2. Boulder Valley

Stan Adamson

Boulder Valley Dressage met virtually on December 11, 2023.

CLINICS: On December 16, 2023, we hosted a "Seat Clinic" with Sue Martin at Lakeview Equestrian Center in Boulder. This clinic sold out, and we had many auditors, and the club subsidized the cost to make it more widely available. We hope to offer more such events in 2024. We reviewed our Volunteer Clinic with Annie Morris at Lookout Ridge Equestrian Center, November 11-12, 2023, which was much appreciated by participants.

WEB SITE: Shannon Moyes Clark and Janeen Cochi continue to manage and make very helpful improvements to our website.

AWARDS BANQUET: We will hold our 2023 season Awards Banquet at the Boulder Country Club on January 27, 2024. The banquet will feature several fun activities, including our silent auction and 2022 awards presentations. Members should email photos of their 2023 activities to Julie Barringer-Richers for her slide show. Members are encouraged to donate items to the Silent Auction. VP Shannon Clark's banquet committee seeks volunteers to assist with set-up.

OFFICERS FOR 2024: At our October 9 meeting, held virtually, officers for 2024 were elected.

- President: Stan Adamson
- Vice President: Shannon Moyes Clark
- Secretary: Janeen Cochi
- Treasurer: Dorothy Kapaun

At our December meeting, we elected Marcia Zuger to replace Dorothy Kapaun, who is retiring.

USDF Convention: we heard comments from members who attended the December USDF Convention. We also heard very positive remarks from many of our delegation to the RMDS Board of Governors.

Bylaws and Standing Rules: We appointed a task force consisting of Stan Adamson, Beth Geier and Julie Barringer-Richers to develop recommended amendments to our Bylaws and Standing Rules which have not been updated for several years.

NEW EDUCATION COMMITTEE: To further our aims as an educational association, we have formed a new Education Committee as of October 9, consisting of Sally O'Dwyer, Beth Geier, and other interested members to plan several educational events for 2024. Shannon Clark is already working on a bit-fitting clinic, we are planning a saddle-fitting workshop, and a Ride-a-Test for spring of 2024. We will study what other chapters are doing, and consider some joint activities held in person or virtually.

We look forward to 2024. We have the dates June 29-30, 2024, reserved at the Boulder County Fairgrounds for our big shows. We are optimistic about where 2024 will take us.

3. Foothills

Nadia Westra

No Report

4. Grand Valley

Karen Harkin

Grand Valley Dressage Society (GVDS) closed 2023 on a high note with an excellent awards dinner/holiday celebration on December 8. Nearly 70 attendees enjoyed a delicious catered dinner, a look-back on the 2023 highlights, violin holiday carols performed by Megan Bretey, and of course, presentation of awards. This year's awards included boot bags, bridle bags, helmet bags (or all Introductory riders), garment bags, multi-hook bridle bags and sheets. We were excited to celebrate Inka Spatafora as our Volunteer of the Year, Ellie Fagan, Jessica Schuering and Karen Harkin as the Overcoming Adversity winners, and Leane Oliver as the Horseman of the Year. The Dressage Team Challenge was a repeat win for "Eddie and The Shrimps" (Krista Nobilo and Sir Edward WS, Carrie Washburn and Suntan Lotion and Megan Bretey and Sandro Malta). They will be the ones to beat in 2024! GVDS officers had a slight change for 2024 with Leane Oliver stepping into the Vice President role. Judi DeVore will continue on as show coordinator and education coordinator.

Plans are underway for some educational activities for GVDS and for RMDS members.

- 2024 Goal Setting Support Group hosted by the Shadbelly Girls, January 17, 6:30pm via Zoom. Although it sounds like it is for women only, we welcome all riders who are interested in setting personal goals and having the camaraderie of supporters who share in your highest times, your lowest times and everything in between. This is the third year for this group and look forward to others join us. <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86029902407>
- Equine Winter Fitness presented by Jec Ballou, February 26, 6:30pm via Zoom. Jec was an engaging presenter at the USDF Convention, so we are bringing her wisdom to Colorado. There will be a modest charge for this event. Judi DeVore, jdevore2000@yahoo.com is the contact person.

There are a few other ideas floating around, but nothing is firm yet.

We have a full compliment of horse shows this year – both recognized and schooling shows. Our recognized shows will be recognized by Utah Dressage Society to encourage more engagement between western Colorado and Utah.

- **April 20, 2024** – *Schooling Show I*: Judge: Dolly Hannon (CO), "S" & "R": WDAA/WDACO/AQHA-Western
- **April 21, 2024**- *Welcome to Spring*: Judge: Dolly Hannon, "S" & "R": USDF/USEF/RMDS/UDS
- **May 31, 2024** – *Summertime Warmup*: Judge: Renee Johnson (CA) "S" & "R": RMDS/WDAA/WDACO/AQHA-Western
- **June 1, 2024** – *Summertime I*: Judging Panel: Renee Johnson "S" & "R" & Heidi Gaian (CA) "S": USDF/USEF/RMDS/UDS
- **June 2, 2024** – *Summertime II*: Judge: Heidi Gaian "S": USDF/USEF/RMDS/UDS
- **August 24-25, 2024** – *Schooling Show II*: Judge: Michelle Combs (AZ) "r" & "R": WDAA/WDACO/AQHA-Western
- **October 5-6, 2024** - *Schooling Show III*: Kathy Simard (CO) "L With Distinction"

5. High Plains

Andrea Osmond

Board Members: President - Andrea Osmond Vice-President - Cecilia Madison - Newly Appointed in December
Treasurer - Tiffany Brown Secretary - Jennifer Slade

Officers: Newly appointed in November and December 2023 Chair of Marketing - Candice Christopher Co-Chair of Marketing - Tracey Christopher Chair of Shows - Cindy LaFevre Chair of Education - Andrea Kucharczyk Chair of Awards and Scholarships - Open Chair of Volunteers - Open

Members as of January 2nd: 55 Active

Upcoming Events: March 2nd or 3rd - Member meeting (restaurant TBD) April 6 & 7th - Amelia Newcomb Clinic - 34 rider applicants (Elizabeth) May 15th - Janet Foy Lecture - "What To Do When You Mess Up Your Test" (Location TBD) August 3rd and 4th - Dancing on the Plains I & II - Colorado Horse Park September 7th & 8th - Anna Buffini Clinic - 10 rider applicants - (Elizabeth)

Past Events: December 16th - GI Clinic with Dr. Allison Hartman (Attendance 10 people at Douglas County Fairgrounds)

Other Events & Projects: • A New Logo is being designed • Chapter Year-End Awards - Level Medals, Trainer Awards, Volunteer Awards, Breed • Rewrote our bylaws and will vote on the changes at the March Member Meeting • Redesigned the website • Brochure for the Colorado Horse Expo • Media Kit for sponsorship for our chapter and Dancing on the Plains I & II • Monthly newsletter sent out since November 2023 on the 15th of every month • Social Media Marketing Calendar • Utilizing the emails through RMDS to market our events • RMDS Bequest Basket Donation • Shirts and Jackets for Board Members and Officers for events

The chapter has experienced some positive changes with the addition of new board members. Our previous Vice-President resigned and was replaced by Cecilia Madison in mid-December. We have also added several new officers to ensure an active chapter and prevent burnout. This year will be busy with three clinics and one level 2 show.

We have scheduled a member meeting for March, hoping to see good attendance. The meeting will be held at a restaurant that we like and that can accommodate all attendees. We conducted a poll to determine whether virtual or in-person meetings would have better attendance, but the results were inconclusive. Our goal is to increase social interaction among members. As per the RMDS Bylaws, this is the time when members will have an opportunity to vote on the updates we have made to the chapter bylaws.

The show is progressing well. We are working on licensing for the competition and have already secured the venue and insurance. We will order ribbons and bridle tags once we have our new logo design. We have created a checklist and are working on it with the help of Heather Peterson.

We are happy to report that there has been a lot of interest in our clinics. We conducted polls and discovered that our members are keen to have access to higher-level national trainers. Therefore, we are striving to invite clinicians that our members have expressed interest in, and who can cover topics that our members are interested in. Additionally, we received poll results from our local trainers on the topics they would like to encourage their clients to attend the clinic offered.

To show our appreciation for the hard work of our officers, we are planning extra days with clinicians exclusively for our officers and auditors.

The chapter is off to a great start this New Year, and we are excited about the new energy in the chapter. We are working hard to provide great opportunities for our members.

6. Northern Colorado

Laura Speer

No Report

7. On The Bit

Ginka Kubelka

After canceling our show last summer, we explored all options to find a suitable facility in Laramie for our fully recognized show in 2024, but, unfortunately, were not successful. The facilities available either do not hold up to the standards regarding footing or are not big enough to fit a full-size dressage ring. Therefore, we decided to pause our recognized show until a facility that meets our standards becomes available.

Instead of pouring all our resources into one big event, we will try to offer small opportunities for local dressage and horse enthusiasts with the additional purpose of hopefully recruiting new members from the local horse community. More details will be available after our January meeting, which we postponed until January 18, so please check our website for more information toward the end of the month!

Starting February, we will go back to our regular meeting time at 7 pm every first Thursday of the month at Altitude Chophouse in Laramie, WY.

8. Pikes Peak

Patricia Weed

PPDS members had a blast at the Winter Celebration on December 10 hosted by Shannon Lemons in Black Forest!

Between end of year awards, great food and drinks, making brow bands and zipper pulls, and a white elephant gift exchange, we held our annual elections and added a new social media chair.

Few highlights going forward:

- Embroidered Pom Pom Cuff Beanies for sale
- Our RMDS Auction Basket is "PPDS Getting Its Barbie On"
- Clinic with Dolly Hannon on May 12 at Parfait Ranch in Elbert o 10 rides, discounted rate to PPDS members
- Possible reschedule of Vendor End of Year Sale
- Education possibilities: bits/bridle fitting, book review Brain Training for Riders, new member presentation
- Review end of year awards program

Next Meeting is February 8th.

8:49 pm Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted, Heather Petersen