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New USEF Vaccination Rule

In January, the USEF Board of Directors approved an addition to the rule book, which outlines equine vaccination requirements for licensed competitions. Beginning Dec. 1, 2015, all horses entering the grounds of a Federation-licensed competition must be accompanied by documentation of Equine Influenza Virus and Equine Herpes Virus (Rhinopneumonitis) vaccinations within six months prior to entering the stables.

[Read more](#)

NEW APPAREL!

Did you miss the chance to pick up some new RMDS clothing at Championships? Lots of cool items, including the new sleeveless polo, sport-tek shirt, jacket (you may order in several color choices), and commemorative and volunteer T-shirts. Click [here](#) for pics-and order from the Central Office.

Chapters

RMDS has 11 chapters in the Rocky Mountain Region. Check for changed days/times/places of meetings! If you would like to change your chapter affiliation you must personally notify the central office in [writing](#).

[Click for Chapters](#)

USDF Region 5

Click [HERE](#) for latest report from Heather Petersen, USDF Region 5 Director.

For the latest updates and current Region 5 news. [Click for Region 5](#)

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a fantastic year...

2015 was a very busy year filled with exciting educational opportunities and shows.

RMDS hosted a Professionals Symposium series that was very successful, a USDF "L" program and a Freestyle presentation and then clinic. The "L" Continuing Education and TD Show Management clinics at the beginning of the year were well attended and the new Test Clinic as well. Open clinic days with Christoph Hess were successful. I could go on and on, but then we all know there were so many activities offered by RMDS, not to mention the variety of chapter-sponsored and private clinics. There was something for everyone available in 2015.

Estes Park was the venue for our Championships and proved to be beautiful and fun in spite of some windy moments. The judges enjoyed the beauty of Colorado and the hardiness of the riders here. We will be back in Estes in 2016 for RMDS and Region 5 Championships.

Educational events for 2016 are in the works for Professionals, Adult Amateurs and of course our Junior/Young Rider program. Suggestions for programs are always welcomed. RMDS hopes to host the 2016 USDF Adult Symposium. At this time we are waiting for date options from USDF. This program is for all adults and the speakers are Betsy Steiner and Kathy Connelly. More to come on this...

As I look forward to attending the USDF Convention I am hoping to get some new ideas on growing our membership. The convention is always inspiring as we have the time to meet and discuss the future of dressage with people from around the country. We are not alone in the challenges we face and the discussions always lead to some new ideas. The RMDS basket is always popular and I look forward to putting it together each year. I have received several items and the basket is growing.

Our Board of Governors was very successful and the delegates and membership discussed many items that we need to consider in 2016 and beyond. I look forward to working with everyone and I had such a great time meeting new people and just getting to know others. The RMDS membership has proven to be very active and willing to work. 2016 will be an active and fun year.

Aloha, Gwen Ka'awaloa

GET YOUR AWARDS BANQUET FORM IN!

The RMDS Championships Awards Banquet is Jan. 16 at the Renaissance Hotel by Stapleton. Click [HERE](#) for info and to get your banquet form and be sure to mail ASAP - Deadline is Jan. 8, 2016.

Ready for 2016 Events?

Board Combines New and Returning Officers

From Linda Gaber, 2016 RMDS Communications Chair

RMDS Board members, chapter presidents, voting delegates and guests made plans for 2016 at the annual Board of Governors meeting in November in Denver.

After the slate of officers was read three times, with no new nominations, members elected President **Gwen Ka'awaloa** to a new two-year term. Also elected were:

- Joan Clay**, vice president, one year
- Sharon Soos**, treasurer for another two-years
- Heather Petersen**, secretary, two years
- Shannon Lemons**, Awards Committee Chair, another two-years
- Linda Gaber**, Communications Chair, one year
- Carie Sciss**, Education Chair, two years
- Una Schade**, Marketing Chair, two years
- Sarah Dodge**, Professional Chair, two years

In the all-day meeting, the members approved a nearly \$200,000 budget and accepted the request from Wasatch Mountains (Utah) President Sally Shaffer to dissolve the chapter due to lack of participation. On a positive note, congratulations also went out to new RMDS 'L' graduates qualified to judge at RMDS-only recognized shows: Michelle Anderson, Megan Gretey, Wendy Fryke, Julie McDermott and Sharron Sarchet.

Here's What's Planned

Mark these dates for 2016 events discussed at BOG:
Jan. 16 Awards Banquet at Renaissance Denver Hotel, Quebec Street, Denver, CO;
Jan. 30 RMDS Judges Continuing Education with USEF Judge Janet "Dolly" Hannon;
Feb. 6 RMDS Show Management and TD Clinic with Laurie Mactavish and Heather Petersen, Douglas County Fairgrounds, Castle Rock, CO;
June 11, RMDS/USDF Team Competition at Tomora Training Facility, Greeley, CO;
July 26-31 NAJYR Championships at Colorado Horse Park, Parker, CO;
Sept. 15-19 RMDS Championships and Region 5 Championships, Estes Park, CO;
Nov. 30 Deadline for RMDS scholarship applications, with completion of eight volunteer hours at a society or chapter event.

All RMDS members are invited to the Society's executive board meetings, the 2nd Thursday of odd months, including Jan. 14, March 10, May 12, July 12 (Tuesday), Sept. 8, Oct. 13 (budget), Nov. 5 BOG. Go to [rmds.org](#) for details.

THANKS to Our Outgoing 2015 Officers

RMDS salutes its outgoing 2015 officers and committee chairs:

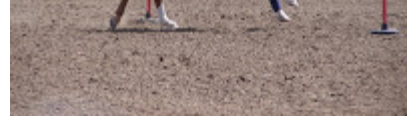
- **Aline Brandau, VP**
- **Jon Haugen, Education Committee**
- **Simone Windeler, Professional Committee**
- **Kerry-Louise Boucher, Communications Committee**
- **Nina Felsenthal, Secretary**

These are all volunteer positions, and RMDS thanks each one of you for all you have contributed as an officer on the Board.

My Road to Bronze with a Rescue Horse

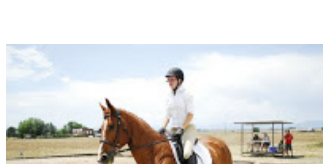
From Una Schade, 2016 RMDS Marketing Chair

I have had my horse, Fritz, for nearly 6 years now. I got him from a local rescue and paid \$700 for him in early 2010; he was 6 at the time. He is American Warmblood by registration but Hanoverian by breeding. We had a really rocky start to our relationship but have finally hit our stride together.



When I first got Fritz, he bucked nearly every ride and I just wasn't enjoying him like I should. After somewhere around 8 months or so I sent him to a cowboy for a month to try to help work out some of the kinks. And it helped. He still would throw fits sometimes for no apparent reason. And his go-to move if he spooked (or fake spooked to get out of work) was bucking and bolting at the same time. But it was much less frequently and not quite as severe as it used to be. I saw so much potential in him though, and I knew there was something really special about him. I decided it was worth working through and figuring out.

Fast forward about 2 years worth of just fun riding together and that's where we started our dressage journey. We started with Intro walk trot tests at schooling shows alongside Training Level in 2012. I decided I liked it and wanted to pursue it further. I had only ever trained and shown Hunter/Jumper prior to that so dressage was new to me.



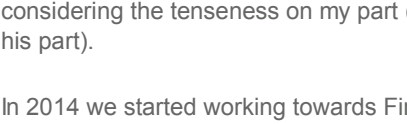
I started working more seriously on Training Level and showing at recognized events in 2013. Towards the beginning of show season we (he) had such a large meltdown at home that Fritz threw me off for the first time in quite a while and unfortunately fractured my T3 and T4 vertebrae, as well as separated my shoulder slightly. Not to mention all the bumps and bruises I had from the fall. My trainer helped me keep him in work a couple times a week while I was down and out for a few months. I showed Training Level a

handful of times after getting the OK by my doctor and did pretty well considering the tenseness on my part (which definitely caused tenseness on his part).

In 2014 we started working towards First Level. We were solid in all the movements and I was excited to start showing. We showed First Level a couple times that year. There were a couple decent tests and a not-so-decent test. We got the two scores needed at First Level for the Bronze Medal. I also got a new saddle from Karen Borne at [Borne Saddlery](#), which made a huge difference in Fritz's movement and in my seat. It's amazing what a great saddle can do for you. At this point I moved into a new barn and went into more serious training.



We started schooling Second Level that winter and started showing Second Level the following show year, 2015. Fritz also got his SFs injected by CSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital's Erin Contino to make his lumbar back more comfortable. Something Fritz and I have always struggled with is that he can get pretty tense, and that reflected in some of our scores during show season. He even got spooked so badly by an oversized umbrella with a lady attached to it that sort of jumped out from behind the judge's box, that we exited the arena by jumping over one of the letter boxes. The judge gave me some compliments on sticking it out and asked if Fritz was an FEI schoolmaster; that was nice to hear after such a rough ride. But we did manage to get our scores at Second Level for our Bronze Medal. So I was traveling for a week for work, and my trainer decided to try to put flying changes on Fritz while I was gone. He took to them like he has been doing them his whole life. So we entered a show at Third Level just to see what would happen. I only did two Third Level classes and it was the happiest Fritz has ever been at a show. We scored 61% (and some change) on both tests after only having flying changes for a week and a half (and I had only gotten to ride them **once!** before the show classes). I couldn't believe it. I earned my Bronze Medal in that show. I was over the moon!!!



Not only did I do something I never thought I would do as a rider; I did it on a horse that I paid \$700 for, from a horse rescue. And not the easiest horse to ride, either. I am so proud of myself and my horse, Fritz. Even though we have had some major "downs" he is my heart horse and I know we will go far together. And those downs only make the ups that much sweeter and the hard work so worth it.

So get out there and ride. Work hard towards your goals as an equestrian, you **will** get there with perseverance. Downs happen, but don't let them make you give up hope. And Happy Riding!



Other News from the BOG Meeting

- New RMDS-branded apparel is available for online purchase in time for the holidays at [rmds.org](#).
- Show managers are encouraged to send photos and articles about their chapter shows and their riders for publication in the Centaur. Also welcome are articles about clinics, dressage finals, Junior/Young Rider events and fund-raisers.
- Omnibus is in final preparation and should be mailed to members in January.
- Each chapter is being asked to seek a local business sponsor for 2016 Championships, or an ad in Centaur or Omnibus.
- Annual RMDS, USEF and USDF memberships are ready to be renewed now for 2016.
- Paid RMDS positions will be open to bids, due in February. These include Centaur production, Omnibus production, Web manager and RMDS Office Manager.
- 2 White Feet show management staff are training to use new digital scribing software.

RMDS will be hosting Regional Championships in Colorado in 2016. Several RMDS riders were successful at the 2015 Great American/Regional Championships. Region 5 also was represented at the US Dressage Finals this month. Click on [www.usdf.org](#) for results. Members also voted to amend Year-End Awards tabulations by agreeing to "round up" if a score total ends as 0.5. In an effort to provide quality judges, they also voted to require 'L' graduates to have 24 hours of continuing education every two years, including scribing with an 'R' or higher judge, and eight hours at a competition with an 'L' faculty member or approved apprentice judge.

Championship show rules also were changed to read: *Horse and rider combinations who were champions from previous years cannot compete again in championship classes at the level they were champions more than three times.*

Several replacement trophies are needed in 2016 for these categories: You've Come A Long Way Baby (largest point spread), High Score Mare Third Level and Above, Grade Horse, AA PSG, Pony Training Level, Pony Second Level, Open First Level, Open 12, Futurity. To sponsor a new trophy, contact Shannon Lemons, Awards Chair by email: [lemons_shannon@yahoo.com](#).