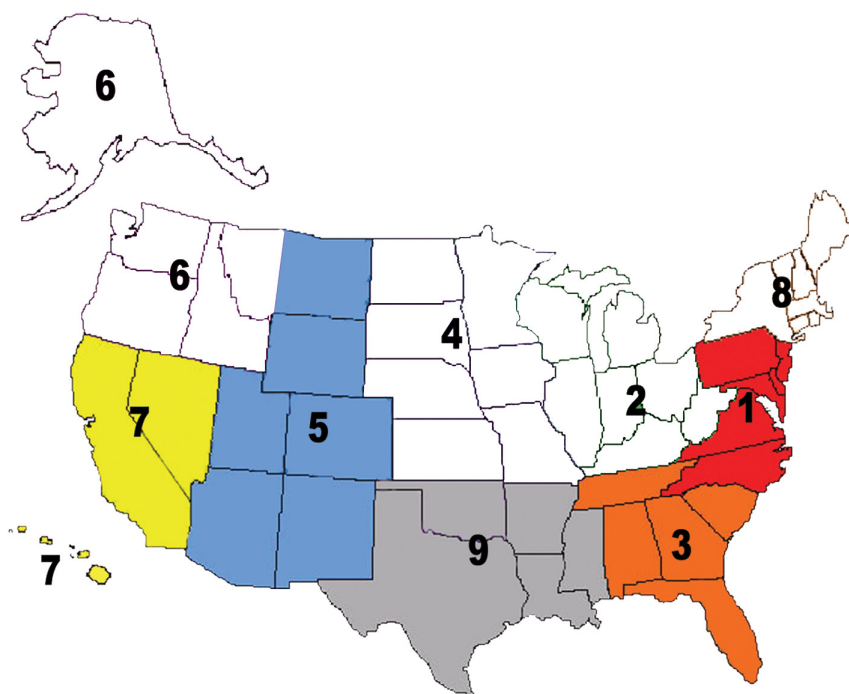


Meet the Candidates

Get to know who's nominated for USDF Executive Board office this year



The USDF thanks all of the current Executive Board members for their service to the organization.

To learn more about USDF's governance process, visit usdf.org/about/about-usdf/governance/.

Officers

For the 2025 election cycle, the USDF Nominating Committee asked the candidates for vice president and secretary to submit a brief biography and to answer the following questions:

1. *What special professional or technical skills would you bring to the Executive Board to help implement the strategic plan of the organization (i.e., financial, legal, business, management, technology, human resources)?*

2. *How has your involvement in local, regional, and national USDF activities promoted/enhanced dressage regionally and nationally?*

3. *What specific goals and objectives do you have for USDF?*

4. *How will you, as an officer, encourage greater member participation and help make USDF the "go to" organization for dressage in the United States?*

Here are the candidates' biographies and responses.

Candidate for vice president: Debra Reinhardt

I have been competing horses since 1981, starting in the hunter world, and by 1988 I had completely changed to dressage and bought my first dressage horse. I have continued to compete and have been successful by winning many year-end awards, including my USDF bronze and silver medals.

ON THE BALLOT: This year, the USDF Board of Governors will elect directors of USDF's odd-numbered regions, as well as a new USDF vice president and secretary

During the 2025 Adequan®/USDF Annual Convention, December 3-6, the USDF Board of Governors will elect two USDF officers—vice president and secretary—as well as directors of USDF's odd-numbered regions (1, 3, 5, 7, and 9), all of whom will serve as members of the USDF Executive Board.

Like all organizations, USDF needs committed leadership in order to enjoy continued growth and thoughtful direction. The USDF Executive Board functions as a cohesive team and strives to further the organization's mission and goals.

Current USDF secretary and former USDF Region 8 director Debra Reinhardt is running unopposed for the vice presidency.

When former USDF VP Kevin Reinig was elected president last year, he appointed former USDF president Lisa Gorretta as interim VP for a one-year term.

To fill the anticipated opening for USDF secretary, former USDF Region 7 director Carol Tice is running for that position.

Region 3 director Charlotte Trentelman will step down at the end of 2025, and USDF extends its thanks and gratitude for her service. Running to fill that seat are Stephany Fish Crossman and Lisa El-Ramey.

Incumbent Region 1 director Bettina Longaker, Region 5 director Heather Petersen, Region 7 director Regina Antonioli, and Region 9 director Bess Bruton all are running unopposed for reelection.



Besides being an adult-amateur competitor, I am also a licensed US Equestrian Federation 'R' technical delegate.

Managing shows has been a passion of mine for nearly 30 years. I have managed some of the biggest dressage shows, and I started the CDI3* Darien, which became CDI-W Saugerties. I ran the USDF/ABIG Region 8 Championships for five years at Ox Ridge Hunt Club, and I'm still very involved with running the Region 8 championships. In addition, I served as the US Dressage Finals event coordinator for four years and have been the show manager for the past eight years.

My experience with the USDF started in the early 1990s as Marketing Committee chair, where I championed the High School Lettering Program and created the Membership Committee. In addition, I have been a member of the Technical Delegates Council and Freestyle Committee, have been chair of the FEI Managers Committee and Competition Management Committee, and for nine years served as USDF Region 8 director. Presently I am a member of the Competition Management Committee and am the USDF secretary.

My wonderful husband, Steve, and my incredible son, Robert, make my life complete!

See you on the center line.

Responses to questions:

1. While most people may think of me as a show manager/ secretary—as I have run my business, Centerline Events, since 1996—I bring much more than competition management. I am an adult-amateur competitor and a licensed 'R' TD. In addition, my experience as associate publisher of *Dressage Today* allows me to bring my knowledge about publishing to the Executive Board.

2. I have been on the Executive Board for nine years as Region 8 director and three years as USDF secretary. I have participated in many committee conference calls and discussions so that I could be more informed in the board meetings and decisions. I was the event coordinator for the first four years and then show manager for the US Dressage Finals, where I learned more about how the office and USDF works in general. On a more local level, I have either managed or been secretary for the Region 8 Championships for over 20 years and created and organized the CT Level 1 Dressage Championships. I have run three 'S' judge-promotion programs along with several judges forums.

3. I would like to help the USDF be the only place to go to get knowledge, education, find instructors, competitions, and every aspect of dressage information and education.

4. We need to give members more opportunities to communicate with the Executive Board. With the use of Zoom, we can hold "town meetings" and encourage members

to communicate with the officers and their regional directors via e-mail to allow more communication and knowledge of the thoughts of USDF members.

Candidate for secretary: Carol Tice

I started in dressage in the early 1980s when it was suggested I work with a dressage instructor to help improve my Western horses.



I became hooked on the discipline, and that instructor happened to be the chair of the local California Dressage Society (CDS) chapter. In short order, I was volunteering at their shows and clinics. That led to being more involved with the chapter as chapter chair and show manager, and with the CDS Executive Board as a regional director, vice president, and president. From there I became the USDF Region 7 director until I moved from that region to Oklahoma.

Also in the early '80s, I married and started teaching beginner riders at my husband's ranch in southern California. Our riding school used basic dressage principles for all riders, both English and Western, and always offered dressage tests for all riders in our school shows. ⇨

My involvement in and with local chapters of the largest USDF GMO has allowed me to work at the CDS and Region 7 Championships in all capacities. I had the great pleasure of being involved with the Del Mar National Dressage Show for years as the volunteer coordinator.

I have been and am currently serving on the USDF GMO Committee and the USDF Outreach, Awareness, and Inclusion (OAI) Task Force. In 2024 I started volunteering at the US Dressage Finals. I continue to ride and teach dressage, now in northeastern Oklahoma and north-western Arkansas, always using basic dressage principles no matter what saddle the horse is wearing.

Responses to questions:

1. If I am elected to this position, I would be returning to the Executive Board with knowledge of the workings of USDF. My hope is that, with this knowledge, I will be able to meld seamlessly into discussions and decisions regarding the current topics and issues.

2. Besides promoting dressage at my business and bringing new members into the local CDS chapters and therefore USDF, I have worked at the southern California Equine Affairs and Horse Expos in the CDS/USDF booth promoting both organizations. Being new to my area, I am learning where and what the local clubs' involvement with USDF happens to be.

3. My understanding is that USDF realizes that there are many differences between the coasts and all areas in between, and their ability to be involved in dressage. With USDF working diligently to offer education for riders at all levels, I'd like to continue with the development of those programs.

I'd also like to work on increasing membership numbers and member participation at USDF events.

4. Considering that without USDF there wouldn't be dressage as we know it in the US, I'd like to help continue the process of informing members about all this organization has to offer. I'd like to continue working with the board on creating member awareness of how to navigate through all of the information on the USDF website, that *Your Dressage* is a valuable tool, and that members know their regional director is their pipeline to the USDF board.

Regional Directors

For the 2025 election cycle, the USDF Nominating Committee asked the regional-director candidates each to submit a brief biography and to answer the following questions:

1. *What special professional or technical skills (i.e., financial, legal, business, management, technology, human resources) would you bring to the Executive Board to help implement the strategic plan of the organization?*

2. *How has your involvement in local, regional, and national USDF activities promoted and enhanced dressage, both regionally and nationally?*

3. *What specific goals and objectives do you have for USDF and your region if you should be elected regional director?*

4. *How will you, as a regional director, encourage greater participation by each member within your region?*

Region 1 incumbent:

Bettina Longaker

Three-term Region 1 director Bettina Longaker has well over four decades of experience in horse

ownership, riding, competition management, and GMO leadership, and she looks forward to continuing to serve the region for her final term. She has run USDF Youth and Adult Team competitions, NAJYRC, AHSA and USDF Regional Championships, and US Dressage Finals. She is a past president of two Virginia Dressage Association (VADA) chapters and of VADA itself.

Bettina grew up in Ithaca, New York, and began her formal training as a rider at Cornell University with Charles Lent. Chuck also hired her when she was 17, making her the youngest instructor in the Cornell Equitation Department. After moving to Virginia in 1976, Bettina earned a BS in information systems from Virginia Commonwealth University. She earned her USDF bronze medal in 1985 and became an L graduate with distinction in 1993. That same year, she volunteered to secretary one of the largest East Coast dressage shows at the time, paving the way for many more years of volunteering.

Bettina lives in Somerset, Virginia, where she operates her business, Scripts & Rides LLC, and takes care of her four pretty much do-nothing horses, two wonderful orange cats, and her mother's Koi. When asked why she wanted to continue as Region 1 director, she said: "I think I know what I am doing for our region, and I now need to find someone to mentor so they can take over after my last term is completed. Also, being on the USDF Executive Board opened the opportunity for me to serve on both the USDF and USEF Para-Equestrian Committees, making this my first USEF committee."

Responses to questions:

1. Through all my years in IT,

both professionally and within my dressage work, I have managed to keep my “people skills,” which gives me invaluable insight into the confusion that many feel with the never-ending evolving technology.

2. Over the last four-plus decades, I have run the gambit of shows, from schooling shows to my first Level 1 licensed dressage competition this year, to the US Dressage Finals. I feel it’s imperative to be involved from the ground up to understand the needs of the varying levels of dressage riders across our region and nation. As show management, we are service providers who have the responsibility to help our riders understand their obligations to themselves and the requirements they must fulfill to succeed in their dressage endeavors.

3. I still have two large concerns: 1) Who will take over for the aging generation?, and 2) Are we doing enough for the everyday competitor in today’s world? For question 1, as I age, I get more and more concerned as to where the next generation is going to come from. Question 2 is an ongoing process that I think the USDF makes a concentrated effort to achieve.

4. Communication is the primary tool we have to get participation. In this busy world of e-mails, texts, and numerous other online methods of reaching out, I have tried to communicate efficiently without bombarding my region’s members to distraction, while always being available for their inquiries.

Region 3 candidate:

Stephany Fish Crossman

Stephany Fish Crossman is a USDF bronze and silver medalist, and like many dressage riders, has half her scores toward her gold. She is a Trainer A graduate (highest level)



of the International Academy of Equestrian Studies in Warendorf, Germany.

Throughout the years, Stephany has worked for and with many notable trainers. She regularly works with Ride with Your Mind founder Mary Wanless and is one of only five Level Two accredited coaches in the US with the RWYM Rider Biomechanics system. Currently, Stephany is working with Kathy Connelly as the 2024 recipient of The Dressage Foundation’s Lindgren Grant. She is a student of natural horsemanship and follows Harry Whitney and Mark Langley. She teaches and trains both at home and in the regional area, and she travels around the country as a clinician as well as hosting international trainers, clinics, and retreats at her facility. She currently competes her nine-year-old Dante’s Rhythm RF at Fourth Level and has recently purchased her next competition horse, So Special, a three-year-old that she started this summer.

Stephany is a past president of STRIDE, one of the largest GMOs in Region 3. She has a background in hotel management, is a frequent contributor to *Dressage Today*, and is the co-host of the *Dressage Today* podcast. She resides in Okeechobee

County, Florida, on a cattle ranch with her husband, three horses, three dogs, two cats, five pet cows, and numerous unnamed cattle.

Responses to questions:

1. Over my lifetime I have held several types of jobs, ranging from being a server in restaurants to working my way up the corporate ladder in hotel management, as well as managing barns and veterinary offices and being a vet tech. These positions have given me good business skills, good people skills, and the ability to lead or follow, as each situation needs. I am good at bringing people together to work toward the greater good of the group, and recognize that working together will always get more accomplished than working alone.

2. As part of a GMO as well as a USDF participating member, I always encourage others to utilize the opportunities that USDF provides through membership, whether it is access to information or learning opportunities and programs that they offer for forwarding yourself as a rider. As a podcast host, I like to highlight different aspects of our horse world, to show how all parts tie together.

3. I belong to a large, active, and vastly diverse region. I would like to see more conversations among GMOs of all sizes, and I would like to forward the knowledge of USDF and its programs to non-GMO members, as well as encouraging volunteering at all levels.

4. During my tenure, one of my goals would be to speak to a member of each GMO and understand their individual needs as a club. I would also encourage non-GMO members to become more active in their USDF membership, whether

through joining a GMO or getting involved directly with USDF through volunteering and education. I believe that being a part of an organization means being active in it.

Region 3 candidate: Lisa El-Ramey

Lisa El-Ramey brings a unique combination of experience, knowledge, education and determination to everything she does. An accomplished equestrian with multiple national championship titles, she has achieved similar



results for her clients. Lisa holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of Florida. In her professional life, she has started multiple businesses, ranging from her own Oak Hammock Farm, equine appraisals, a tour operator, and mortgage-loan originator. Most recently, she served as mayor and council member of her small south Florida town, Loxahatchee Groves.

Lisa is a member of the USDF Outreach, Awareness, and Inclusion (OAI) Task Force and the USDF Region 3 Championship Site Selection Committee. She has served multiple years as a PM delegate. She sits on the boards of two nonprofit organizations, and in those roles she has established or restored

their websites, provides weekly e-newsletters to their members and subscribers, and manages their social-media accounts.

Lisa is a USEF 'S' dressage judge and an active clinician who travels throughout the US and South America. She has earned her USDF gold, silver, and bronze medals as well as her silver and bronze freestyle bars.

Responses to questions:

1. My experience as a municipal elected official serves in understanding and implementing governmental structure, policies, and processes necessary to facilitate effective decision- and policy-making. This board knowledge is important to enable managing staff, budgeting, and long-term planning. My mortgage-industry background helps me understand economic trends and create strategies necessary to minimize downturns and maximize opportunities. The current strategic plan is a great blueprint and aligns well with Region 3's goals.

2. My service on the Region 3 Championship Site Selection Committee has helped to locate the championships to best address our geographic challenges. On the OAI Task Force, we implemented a member survey, created and launched several GMO supporting options, and goodwill-promoting competition offerings.

3. In preparation to run for Region 3 director, I researched the responsibilities of the position and challenges facing Region 3. My first goal is to reestablish the Region 3 website and create reliable communications with Region 3 members and GMOs. Once realized, this network will provide support disseminating education,

competition, and involvement opportunities. Implementation of outreach to assist in succession planning for future Region 3 growth and sustainability ultimately serves USDF with its national targets.

4. As a region, it is our responsibility to identify our strengths and weaknesses. By maximizing technology for more effective communication and outreach, we can overcome our large geographic area and connect with our broad range of interests and equestrian levels. GMO and local growth is critical to creating long-term participation in the sport and organization.

Region 5 incumbent: Heather Petersen

Heather Petersen was born and raised in Dubuque, Iowa. She attended Iowa State University, earning degrees in music (oboe



performance) and animal science. Heather met and married her husband, Michael, during college and moved to Colorado soon after. They have two children, Elizabeth and Sarah, and a menagerie of animals on their farm. Before working in the horse-show industry, Heather worked in restaurant management.

Heather is an active amateur dressage competitor; mother of two active professional and Jr/YR dressage competitors; a USEF 'R' technical delegate; an FEI Level 1 steward; a current or past member of several USDF and USEF committees; and manager of multiple USDF Regional Championships, Rocky Mountain Dressage Society Championships, and CDIs. She is the secretary/manager for many other successful national competitions, schooling shows, and local shows; and a past president, education chair, and current secretary of the Rocky Mountain Dressage Society. Heather has organized USDF L programs, USEF 'r' dressage-judge programs, and several educational symposiums. She has also served several years as a USDF Region 5 Young Riders/Junior team *chef* and enjoys organizing the USDF Region 5 FEI Jr/YR clinics. Volunteering is one of the best ways we can give back to the sport of dressage.

In her spare time, Heather loves to ride her horses, read lots of books, and hang out with her family and animals. She has enjoyed getting to show in other parts of the region and Florida in recent years and connecting with the Region 5 membership.

Responses to questions:

1. While on the board of the Rocky Mountain Dressage Society and in my previous terms serving on the USDF Executive Board and several other large nonprofit organizations, I've worked through budgeting, restructuring, long-term planning, and membership retention.

Managing restaurants and my own horse-show-management business has given me experience in management, cost analysis, and

budgeting, as well as an awareness of the importance of teamwork.

2. Having served and currently serving on quite a few USDF and USEF committees, I have helped to provide valuable resources for dressage competitions and competitors, and I try to spread more information about the programs offered by USDF in particular. I enjoy working with our overall membership to increase their dressage knowledge, and I've relished working with our juniors and young riders, helping grow the sport and create potential open and adult-amateur competitors and hopefully create more longevity for dressage.

3. I would like to see USDF maintain and develop more diverse educational programs to meet the changing needs of our membership. Helping educate our instructors will strengthen our sport from bottom to top, including our amateurs and youth.

For our region, I will focus on keeping up good communication, finding more potential venues for our Regional Championships, and helping our diverse membership meet their goals.

4. By promoting the various educational programs our GMOs are offering, as well as competitive opportunities for those who would like them, we can increase participation. Getting more information out to our membership, especially from our parent USDF organization, can really help spread ideas and information, and encourage our members to be present.

Region 7 incumbent:

Regina Antonioli

After launching a successful business in public relations and marketing, as well as enjoying



success showing as an amateur, Regina Antonioli combined her business expertise and her love of equestrian sports and created Equestrian Concepts, a marketing and consulting firm dedicated to the equestrian market. Regina's many accomplishments include serving as press officer at past Olympic dressage trials and US Dressage League Finals, and as managing editor of *Showcase Magazine* and the USEF Zone 10 newsletter. In addition, she has worked on such prestigious events as the World Cup Finals, North American Youth Championships, and the USDF Region 7/California Dressage Society (CDS) Championships. She continues to provide marketing, press, and social-media services to events, companies, and individuals.

Regina began managing shows over 30 years ago. She has done numerous regional events, Southern Junior Championships, and CDS Regional Adult Amateur Competitions. She is most well known for her CDI competitions, including the boutique Epona International, the prestigious Del Mar National, and the DASC Benefit CDI in Temecula.

She has been on multiple USDF committees and is currently serving on the Competition Management

and GMO Committees, as well as on the Dressage Equitation Task Force. In her first full year on the USDF Executive Board as the Region 7 director, Regina feels she has much more work to do. She also works on numerous committees for CDS and is the executive director for the reformatted Dressage Association of Southern California. She is committed to promoting equestrian sport, providing outstanding event experiences, and educating the public about the unique partnerships between horses and riders.

Responses to questions:

1. The combination of my management experience and my marketing background gives me a unique perspective, identifying how to take ideas and help navigate logistics to turn those ideas into reality.

2. Grateful is the word that comes to mind here. I am grateful for all the opportunities afforded me to have an impact in the dressage community. I am grateful to all the people and organizations that have facilitated those opportunities. I've enjoyed over 25 years organizing local, regional, and international dressage shows. I've worked on numerous committees to uphold protocols that support the well-being of our equine partners and our human athletes, while always being driven to educate others about and promote the amazing discipline of dressage through public relations and social media.

3. One of the most important objectives for me is to foster appreciation. I think sometimes members don't feel they are appreciated enough by the association, and as a result sometimes do not appreciate all the association is

trying to do on their behalf. I hope this can be achieved with increased dialogue, where members, GMOs, and the USDF can share individual needs and expectations. I want to encourage speaking up without reluctance and listening without judgment.

4. The key words here are communication, acceptance, and inclusion. I hope that every member feels they have great value. This includes beginning riders, elite riders, and fans of dressage who may not currently ride. Our community needs the participation of everyone and anyone who loves dressage.

Region 9 incumbent: Bess Bruton

From the time I could walk, I was fascinated with horses. One of my first books was about the Spanish Riding School and the Lipizzan stallions.

I attended a Houston Dressage



Society meeting sometime in the late 1970s. Soon after, I started taking lessons, going to clinics and seminars, and devouring as much knowledge as possible about the fascinating and mysterious art and sport of dressage.

Showing followed, with my first "10" for a halt at my first recognized show, at Windy Knoll Farm in Texas. Fast-forward 30 years to earning my USDF bronze and silver medals.

I've been involved in horses pretty much my whole life, from behind the scenes at shows and clinics to serving on national, regional, and GMO committees and boards, including as past and current USDF Region 9 director.

I owned and operated a horse farm for 30 years, have worked as a trainer/instructor, am an L graduate with distinction, and have written equine-related articles. Outside the equine industry, I've been a certified yoga teacher/trainer, a home-economics teacher and a dog trainer; and worked in retail sales and in the oil and gas business. In my spare time I enjoy painting, working with glass-fusing and stained glass, fishing, hiking, and travel.

My love for the horse and its place on this earth and in our lives is important. I hope dressage and horses will be here at least another 500 years so that others can be fascinated, intrigued, and fall in love.

Responses to questions:

1. I'm told I am very organized, am a good listener, have a level head on my shoulders, and can analyze problems while being able to see where the options will lead. Administration is not for everyone, but I enjoy it.

I've owned and been involved with several types of businesses—retail fishing lures, equestrian clothing, yoga, training dogs, horse farm/training/teaching, L graduate judging, oil and gas, teaching home economics, construction. All have given me valuable life experience

with varied knowledge, which helps in good decision-making.

2. I've been involved with dressage at the GMO level since the 1970s, from videographer, volunteer, show secretary/manager, USDF L graduate, and braiding manes to competing through FEI. I have organized and hosted clinics, and trained and taught horses and riders. I'm a past GMO president and have worked on numerous committees.

I have been involved at the regional and national levels since the 1990s. I served several years as a PM or GMO delegate, on national committees, and as the USDF Region 9 director.

3. To listen and hear members' needs, and then to think of those needs as decisions are made. All goals and objectives should be about what is best for our members. They are the reason for our existence, along with the love of our sport and the horse.

4. Promote events and activities of stables, the GMOs, the region, and nationally through the Region 9 e-news, website, Facebook page, etc. A networking session held during each Region 9 summer meeting helps members and GMOs connect and exchange ideas and information.

Participation is rooted in passion. When someone wants to learn, they will jump at the chance to be involved. Promote dressage by sharing knowledge and the beauty and connection one can have with an awesome animal, and with it will come greater awareness and participation.



US Dressage Finals

presented by Adequan®

BECOME A PATRON

Support the US Dressage Finals by making a tax deductible gift.

Patron gifts will be recognized in the event program*, the yearbook issue of *USDF Connection*, and receive a commemorative gift of appreciation.

Patron levels of giving are:

- **Platinum** \$2,500+
- **Gold** \$1,000 - \$2,499
- **Silver** \$500 - \$999
- **Bronze** \$250 - \$499
- **Friends** \$100 - 249

Gifts received after September 26, 2025 will not be recognized in the event program.

To make your contribution please visit USDF's secure online giving site at

www.usdressagefinals.com

For more information please contact us at

donate@usdf.org

or **(859) 971-2277**