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Dressage4Kids Calendar

<https://dressage4kids.org/news-events/event-calendar.html>

November

November 1-2 D4K TEAM Clinic at Roaring Run Equestrian Center in Apollo, Pennsylvania

November 7-9 CDI Mexico at Rancho St. Vincent in Lerma, Mexico

November 15-16 D4K TEAM Clinic at Maplewood Farms in Waymart, Pennsylvania

November 22-23 D4K TEAM Clinic at Serenity Rose Equestrian Center in Denton, Nebraska

November 22-23 D4K TEAM Clinic with Lilo Fore at Twinwood Equestrian Center in Fulshear, Texas

December

December 6-7 D4K TEAM Clinic at Kalie Beckers Dressage in Folsom, Louisiana

Are you interested in hosting a D4K TEAM Clinic? Contact Mary at d4k.org@gmail.com.

Meet D4K Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival Competitor and Overall Reserve Champion Bella Perkins

Bella Perkins was the FEI Junior and Above Division and Overall Reserve Champion at Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival 2025.

Q: How many years have you competed at Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival?

Bella: It has been more than a decade! This was my 11th year! So crazy to think about.

Q: What was your reaction when you found out you were Division Champion and Overall Reserve Champion?

Bella: I was very excited. I was prepared to not place very well this year since it's both of

our first year competing at Fourth Level. We still have some elements that aren't confirmed so I was very happy that my written test and equitation scores made up for our dressage test.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about your horse?

Bella: Rhapsody is a 17 year old Hanoverian that I got 4 years ago through D4K's Horse Donation Program. He had been out of work and pretty rusty when I got him so it's been a long process to correctly bring him up the levels. He's taught me so much and helped me achieve so many goals.

Q: What's your horse's "superpower" in the show ring?

Bella: Rhapsody's "superpower" is probably his ability to make even the bad moments look not so awful. He loves to show off!

Q: If your horse could talk, what's something they might say to you?

Bella: "Do we really have to do tempi changes?? They're really hard!"

Q: Is there anyone whom you would like to thank for helping you on your dressage/riding journey?

Bella: My mom for always supporting me and coming with me to shows all over the place. My trainer, Hollie McNeil, for helping me grow immeasurably as a rider and horsewoman for over a decade now. All of the girls and parents on our Riding Right Team that make YDF so much fun every year. Lendon, Mary, Fern, and everyone at D4K for not only this show but everything else they have done for me and countless other young riders. Thank you!!

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Bella: Thank you as well to all the volunteers that make YDF possible. I'm not sure where I would be without it!

For more information about D4K Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival, go to:

<https://dressage4kids.org/d4k-festival/>



Thank You to 2025 TEAM Clinic Hosts and Organizers

Thank you to all the hosts and organizers of the 2025 TEAM Clinics!

Cadence Ranch Hutto, TX	Hilltop Farm Colora, MD	Rancho Santa Fe Bloomingdale, MI

Euphoria Stables Starke, FL	Kalie Beckers Dressage Folsom, LA	Riding Right Farm Buskirk, NY
Faith Haven Stables North East, PA	Maplewood Farms Waymart, PA	Roaring Run Equestrian Center Apollo, PA
Faith Hill Farm East Greenwich, RI	Meadowbrook Equestrian Center Naples, ME	Serenity Rose Equestrian Center Denton, NE
Georgia Int'l Horse Park Conyers, GA	Noble Steed LLC Canton, GA	Twinwood Equestrian Center Fulshear, TX
Highclere Farms Burlington, NC	Painted Dreams Horse Farm Wrightstown, PA	Windy Knoll Farm Magnolia, TX

We are scheduling TEAM Clinics for 2026. If you are interested in hosting a D4K TEAM Clinic, please reach out to Mary at d4k.org@gmail.com.

Scholarship Report from Lilliana Green

Clinic with Jordan LaPlaca, October 21-22

I recently had the wonderful opportunity to ride in a clinic with Jordan LaPlaca, which is very timely considering I am headed to US Dressage Finals at the World Equestrian Center in one week. My horse, Devon, and I are working on solidifying our Second Level work before we leave for finals, and thanks to the generosity of D4K, I was able to work towards this goal with the help of Jordan. With only a week out from finals, my goal going into this clinic was not to fix every little thing, but rather to finesse our overall impression and improve the consistency and suppleness of our transitions.

In our first ride, Jordan addressed a few different aspects of our Second Level work while keeping our goal of improved suppleness and consistency in mind. We primarily focused on keeping the suppleness in the preparation for our simple changes, as well as keeping the balance and geometry throughout our counter-canter loops. I can be quite inconsistent with my preparation for simple changes, and oftentimes our canter-walk transitions can either be too abrupt or there will be trot steps. Jordan explained the trot steps that we sometimes get should not be addressed by applying a stronger aid, but rather by taking a deep breath in, half halting, sitting tall, and then exhaling to ask Devon to smoothly transition into the walk. This helped me take the time to prepare for the transition without rushing it or asking abruptly, which I am sure Devon is very grateful for! For our Second Level counter-canter loop, we practiced riding the loops in a slight shoulder-in positioning in the direction of the lead we were on. This helped with keeping the balance and suppleness, as well as preventing Devon from falling on his inside shoulder, which would be the outside shoulder in true lead.

In our second ride, we worked on finessing my half halts, specifically in our collections back from mediums. Jordan emphasized how important it is to soften after a half halt, especially after a medium gait. We also focused on improving the activity of the gaits, making sure to maintain energy and freedom even while collecting. This was definitely a highlight of our ride, though that might have been helped by the chilly fall air and Devon feeling especially forward! At the end of our ride, we discussed the importance of riding the movements of a dressage test as a sequence, almost like a dance, rather than getting stuck only thinking about the pattern. We also touched on how important it is to go for hacks and add diversity into our training before a big event.

Thank you so much again to D4K for this opportunity, I feel much more confident and prepared heading into US Dressage Finals!



D4K Business Assist (BA) Program

Dressage4Kids' newest program, Business Assist (BA), is an innovative initiative designed to help D4K participants who are now equestrian professionals build financially sustainable and personally fulfilling businesses.

This program is part of D4K's broader commitment to support equestrians at every stage of their careers - from young riders just starting out to trainers, judges, and business owners. Thanks to the generous support of **Iron Horse Dressage, LLC** and anonymous donors, D4K is able to offer the D4K BA Program to participants free of charge.

Led by Debra Thompson, a Certified Scaling Up Coach with over two decades of experience helping entrepreneurs thrive, each session includes expert instruction, group discussion, and guided homework focused on actionable outcomes - plus the invaluable opportunity to connect with peers.

The second BA cohort is now under way. Future sessions will be offered twice a year pending future funding, as we remain committed to offering this extraordinary opportunity to our Dressage4Kids community free of charge.

To learn more or to apply for a future BA group, go to:

<https://dressage4kids.org/programs/d4k-business-assist-ba-program.html>

Huge thanks to Debra, Iron Horse Dressage, LLC, and the anonymous donors for making this incredible program possible!

D4K Participants at the CDI Mexico

FEI Children's and Junior dressage riders were invited to take part in the CDI -W, November 7-9, at Rancho St. Vincent, just outside Mexico City. The riders are starting to travel today and will draw for horses tomorrow that they will be borrowing. The US riders will be joined by riders from Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago.

Follow their updates on Dressage4Kids' Facebook or Instagram pages.

U.S. FEI Juniors competing:

Lark Heckman - FL
Bennett McWhorter* - LA
Camila Tossas - FL
Claire Tucker* - NE

U.S. FEI Children selected:

Austin Hermann* - GA

*D4K participant

The Dressage Foundation Grants

The Dressage Foundations offers a wide range of grants and programs to meet the needs of dressage enthusiasts across the board, including adult amateurs, breeders, instructors, judges, technical delegates, FEI/High Performance, para-equestrian, show management, Western Dressage, and youth and young adult riders.

To access their grant calendar, go to: <https://www.dressagefoundation.org/grants-and-programs/>

About Dressage4Kids

Dressage4Kids, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization incorporated for the express purpose of providing educational and competitive opportunities for youth riders and the adults who support them.

<https://dressage4kids.org>

Check out our videos on YouTube

Dressage4Kids | d4k.org@gmail.com | dressage4kids.org

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