



Western Dressage Judge's Seminar (Feb 2020)

ODS Scholarship Recipient's Event Reflections



For me, twenty-one cannot get here fast enough...and not for the reason you think! So much happens on the other side of 18; one of those things is making application to become a judge. That was just one of many things I learned while at the Western Dressage Judge's Educational Seminar that was held in February of this year. I was fortunate to be able to travel to Denver, Colorado with my 4H Leader, and fellow Dressage enthusiast, Corinne Bridgeman.



As you may have guessed, it was cold in Denver in February. The amount of snow that fell while we were at the seminar was mind-boggling to the kid from Oklahoma (and Texas). Each morning Corinne and I went out and dug the rental car out of the snow. We stayed in a hotel that was only a block from the seminar location but there was no walking in that much snow! While at the seminar, I gained a whole new appreciation for what those who live in the areas of the world that get lots of snow endure.

I also gained an appreciation for what those who judge us at the shows we participate in go through. The amount of information out there is overwhelming and meeting the requirements to become a judge is not for the faint of heart. Did you know that with USEF you can get 154 different licenses? It was amazing to actually meet some of the people who have worked to get one or more of these licenses and to hear what they went through and what they do with their license now.

At the seminar, I was able to spend a little time with my favorite TD, Marilyn Kulifay, who took time to encourage me and let me know she thought I would make a great judge some day! I really enjoyed the presentation by Mr. and Mrs. Swanson as their talk about tack was fascinating and to be able to actually see and feel what they talked about made it so real. Mrs. Swanson talked at length about the possibilities that are in place and in the works for disabled adults and kids to ride in WDAA shows which is something that is meaningful to me as I have enjoyed volunteering in three adaptive riding environments.

I am thankful that I was able to attend the seminar and appreciate Corinne taking me in and letting me tag along and learn. I owe a huge thanks to my Mom and Dad, Rebekah and Jeff Page, for everything they do to support my dreams. My parents assure me that 21 will come soon enough. I know that when it does come though, I will already be ahead because of experiences like this one!

- Zoe Page