

Donna Copeland

Donna Copeland has been a member of ODS on and off since the mid 1990s when she moved here from Florida. She first rode classical Intro tests on Bonnie Macom's "Sissy", a half-Arabian mare, because she was afraid to ride her own horse in competitions! Her horse, "Gunz N Roses", won the 2001 ODS Reserve Champion Training Level award with another rider.

Along with obtaining an Associate Degree in Veterinary Science awarded in 1976 in one of the first Vet Tech programs offered in the US, Donna has bred and exhibited several Pinto Half-Arabians from 2001-2015 in Arabian and Pinto shows. A major experience was showing the same pinto gelding in both the US Arabian Nationals in 2008/2009 and many times in the Pinto World Championships in Tulsa. Unfortunately training and showing primarily as a halter handler for over a decade took Donna away from riding. In 2015 she took her only remaining pinto to the Pinto World 50th year anniversary show winning her first ever Top Ten under saddle in what is still called "Ideal Pinto English Pleasure" where horses are both ridden and then stood up in halter at the end of the class. Later that year, Donna realized her dream was to become a real rider.

In the fall of 2015 Donna was introduced to Laurie Hedlund.. Laurie convinced Donna that Western Dressage was a legitimate form of dressage and could be ridden in exactly the same frame, using the same bit, the same independent seat, and the same understanding of classical aids taught classic riders. It was just what Donna needed to get back into the saddle after back surgery.

Donna was convinced by Laurie that they should compete at the 2018 WDAA World Show. They competed in their first ever **Basic "Test 1"**, the first of the Western Dressage lope tests earning them an 11th place with only 4/10th of one point off of a Top Ten in the test's Amateur Division. Donna is convinced that western dressage is a legitimate and credible form of dressage allowing many who might not feel comfortable riding or showing warmbloods in Classic dressage to continue to ride with pride, and enjoy the joy of improving one's communication with their beloved mounts, regardless of what breeding or background horse and rider come from.

Donna currently works for Express Employment as a Technical Writer and is looking forward to retirement in the near future.

