

*Laura McKenzie's bio:*

Over the last 20 years, I have enjoyed every aspect of all of the English disciplines. My foundation in riding started in Virginia where I was a member of Loudon Hunt Pony Club. My family was relocated to East Lansing, Michigan where I continued to be involved with Pony Club. The next move was near Sacramento, California to Vacaville. Most of my time was spent participating in upper level Pony Club events and being trained under Edward Richardson (VA native and whom I trained with the Italian Olympic team). I was fortunate to experience the first upper level Sierra Pacific Pony Club camp at the Pebble Beach Equestrian Center. In addition to Pony Club, I worked at Buckeye Ranch and rode various levels of horses and competed at local hunter- jumper and dressage shows. When my family was relocated to Southlake, Texas I started to do Show Jumping in Pony Club and qualified for the 2001 National in Lexington, KY. However, after my return from national and competing quite well, I decided to switch discipline to the art of dressage to further establish a partnership between horse and rider. I practiced dressage under the tutelage of many trainers, including Irina Bourkinaya from the Russian Riding School.

When I was enrolled at the University of Arkansas my interest in riding was refocused as a result of Northwest Arkansas having a large population of interest in hunter- jumpers. I accomplished a B.S. with distinct honors in Animal Science, with a minor in equine science and history. This season I will be defending my M.S. in Meat Science (Food Safety and Quality).

Since 2004 I have closely worked with the UA Equine program and have aided in training both horses and riders in the Equine Behavior and Training course. In addition, I have written an edition of the laboratory manual currently used for the behavior and training course. I have also taught many lectures in *Intro to Animal Science*, *Intro to Equine Industry* and *Equine Behavior and Training*, from animal behavior to genetics.

This season, I look forward to being the president of NWAHJA and guiding our association to a fun, safe and progressively competitive season.