

**New England Dressage Association
Board of Directors
Summary of Meeting
December 21, 2011**

Participating in person: JDillon, HStone, KHickerson, CMacDonald, KSwandfeldt, BJenkins, SStorbeck, JSheehan, PCormier, APrenosil, SWalker, KMcHugh, KWojtylak, LJohnson, SEdelen, LMendenhall, CShea

Participating via conference call: SMcKeown, ADane

Participating via conference call at the invitation of the board: Carol Gordon

Secretary's Report

It was **VOTED** to approve the minutes for the November meeting. The board asked Heather Stone to prepare a summary of the November meeting for posting on the website.

Financial Report and Treasurer's Report

Sue McKeown circulated the December investment performance report and Carol Gordon circulated the December financials prior to the meeting.

Kathy reminded everyone about the new format for the budget meeting in January, as well as the new project "risk" basket that will be discussed and approved, to be used for new projects, or changes to existing programs that NEDA isn't sure will "work" or not.

After discussion, it was **VOTED** to accept the financial report and the treasurer's report.

President's Report

Kathy also updated the board on the proposal from Sue that NEDA donate \$2,500 to USDF so that second through fifth placing owners for 2012 USDF national awards could receive a plaque. After discussion, the board decided to make the donation based on a 9-6-1 vote.

NEDA Boutique

NEDA will be doing some preliminary work to see if a new vendor could be found to run the boutique. The board discussed what it would want to see in such a vendor. One board member emphasized that any vendor would need to commit to attend at least some NEDA events in person, or that NEDA would have to find someone who would commit to run the booth at NEDA events, including, if possible, the schooling shows. Several board members also mentioned the need to have a board member be a liaison to the vendor to handle quality control issues, feedback, etc. Another board member also suggested that may NEDA should offer a discount to professionals who order their own logo material from the NEDA vendor, and a discreet NEDA logo could be added to those items. Karin has a potential vendor that will come to the February meeting to make a presentation.

Financial Seminar Series

Carol Gordon discussed her financial seminar series with the board. It would be about a half a day seminar (with breaks and questions). It will be geared towards equestrian professionals (barn owners,

managers, trainers, etc.). It would have a financial component, an insurance component and a legal component. It will be offered at no cost to NEDA, but NEDA may want to offer a discount or free attendance to professional members, or flextime instructors. After discussion, the board confirmed that NEDA would be interested in working on this program with Carol et al. Kathy suggested that Carol do an ad in the TIP and write a column in the TIP as well, perhaps on something that comes out of the first seminar.

Educational Events at Shows

Kat led a discussion about educational events at shows. Devon does a similar thing, very casual. It provides another route to use professionals already at the show, and another thing for people to attend in between classes, or if they aren't showing at all. After further discussion, the board decided to let the education committee continue to work the idea and come back to the board with a proposal. Kat agreed to work with the education committee on a proposal. Kathy agreed to work on a sporthorse proposal. Bringing back Ride on the Side was also discussed as an option. Kat also suggested a lunch and learn program where sponsors pay for the lunch (food, tent, speaker) and people can come and learn at no charge.

USEF Affiliation

Kathy updated the board on the likely USDF decision, for 2013 and beyond, to prohibit non-member fees. Beth agreed to get more additional information about the proposal, for the board to discuss at a future meeting. Beth suggested that the sweepstakes could be held for NEDA members only, and perhaps Jr/YR and AA championships could be held for NEDA members only.

Marketing / Advertising Proposal

Kat led a discussion about a marketing/advertising proposal that she emailed to the board prior to the meeting. Kat already set the plan in motion. Any pictures, etc. should be sent to Kat to be used in this electronic publicity. After discussion, the board **APPROVED** Kat's proposal, including the \$250 Horse Publications amount.

USDF Convention DeBrief

Kathy told the board that USDF agreed to have a national championships. Two years on the east coast, then moving to the west coast.

Winter Volunteer Workshops

Kathy announced the workshops at the USDF convention, Region 8 meeting and it received a very positive response. Kat has a friend who will write press releases for NEDA until we find a permanent person to do it, at a fee of \$60 per release (normally a \$450 charge). After discussion, the board **APPROVED** the charge.

Year End Award Celebration Proposal

Karin led the board in a discussion of her proposal to change the year end awards. Many board members agreed that some change should be made, but some board members pointed out that yet another NEDA weekend being added to the annual schedule may not work. And that we would be making a change with no real information about why award winners don't come to the awards ceremony. After discussion, the board decided to do a survey of recent award winners asking why

they didn't come to the banquet to get their awards and then decide how to proceed based on the information from the survey. After further discussion, the board decided not to host an awards ceremony at the banquet in 2012, and to table discussion of what changes, if any should be made to the YEAs until a future meeting.

In addition, the board discussed the fact that in the OPL, the awards form should be removed from the OPL and instead a notation should be inserted that people should refer the website. Kathy agreed to talk to Deb about this change to the traditional OPL presentation of awards information.

Coordinator Reports

Advertising –

Kat Wojtylak reported the following. This is my first report, but it really serves as a proposal in a lot of ways. I'm coming to NEDA having very little experience with the organization as a whole. What this gives me is a unique perspective on things. I stepped into my position to handle advertising, but to me I didn't want to simply "step into" a position. I wanted to solidify my place, but also bring forward my personality and experience. The proposal below is more of a marketing plan that I have been working on. What I have done is basically taken all the information I've been able to obtain about NEDA, what it is most people are wanting to see for the organization, and my ideas on how to get there. It's a platform to start discussions, to help maximize everything we're doing.

Summary

- To gain a strengthened membership and participation amongst NEDA members adding additional value for members and the equestrian community.

Goals

- To gain additional numbers amongst the membership itself
- To draw in additional talents to existing and future programs
- To gain exposure and recognition in the media for what is being done

Challenges

- Limited "man power"
- Limited budgets
- Limited interest amongst the media
- Limited demographics

What NEDA has to Offer

- Enthusiasm amongst its existing board members
- The strongest GMO base in the country
- Strong existing programs and activities
- Immense amounts of information and education

Strategy

- Provide more emphasis on membership, less on the competitive side
- Bring in more of a widespread youth, it being the future of the organization

- Find people who are enthusiastic and bring them to our cause, even if they aren't in our region or organization
- Go out and be seen!
- Get us noticed

Implementation

Media

- Join the American Horse Publications which is an annual fee of \$250 which will give us access to the media, allowing our news to go out to every major publication in the country
- Find someone to write press releases to follow up immediately after all major events, but also to plan ahead a few months to get coverage and the word out on events. Can pay a nominal fee in the interim through one of my friends at \$60 per release which is normally a \$450 job.
- Be in contact with the media and create relationships with them, this will be ongoing.

Increased Volunteering

- Start with Workshops which Debbie is working on
- Get involved on social media, it's free! Use testimonials from existing members who have worked their butts off. Pictures also speak a thousand words.
- Think about starting a column in the TIP from volunteers to talk about things they've learned

Event Attendance

- Focus on the lesser attended events
- Use marketing to enhance and push attendance
- Work with the younger demographics and offer a discounted fee to participate
- Work with other GMO's, 4-H Clubs and offer the same discounted fees to participate

Additional Membership

- Focus on the benefits that mean the most to members
- Talk about the educational opportunities provided
- Work on gathering testimonials from existing NEDA members
- Work on targeting other industries such as the eventing, combined driving and jumping industries focusing on using dressage aka flatwork for their training
- Go out and be seen at local equine events and open houses
- Work more with free outlets such as social media to bring in a younger demographic, possibly think about discounted membership fees for junior and young riders, with less benefits
- Gear current advertising to cover not only print, but also digital formats

Action Goals

- Committee Chairs need to be in constant contact for the events and activities in which they are in charge. Event information must be provided to the PR Committee at least one month prior to the start of the event, if not sooner. This includes the who, what, where, when, why and who of the event.
- Kat to start setting up a finalized budget for the Advertising which will focus on print and digital outlets

Measuring Success

- Additional membership
- Enhanced Attendance at events
- Greater participation in committees and volunteering
- More presence in the media

Additional Considerations

- Time and money are the most limiting factors, but partnering with certain publications should mean they are investing more time and enthusiasm. Look at Dressage Today with their advertising for sponsorship. Consider more avenues in which we offer them exposure in our outlets for trade in advertising opportunities.”

Year End Award Banquet –

Karin Swanfeldt reported the following. I thought I would send this out before tomorrow nights meeting. I have been doing ALOT of thinking and talking to other board members since the YE Banquet. I also attended the National Convention this year with NEDA. So with all this talking and all the learning and networking that I did in San Diego I have a PROPOSAL for a change with the YE Banquet.

The number one topics with most GMO's at the Convention and USDF was building membership!!! Volunteer burn out!!!! With these two burning topics I have come up with an idea to help with these issues and also change the banquet. I would like to see the Awards Banquet separated from the Fall Weekend. Fall Weekend is huge and needs to be its own event just like Spring!!!! I do know change is difficult for some but I feel flexibility is more important for NEDA's growth. I was asked to run with this event as its chairperson so as its chairperson this is what I am proposing.

Fall Show –

Beth Jenkins reported the following. Fall Show is relatively quiet right now. I am busy finishing the prize list for the 2012 show. Some changes: We drop from 5 1/2 days to 4 days. Instead of starting the Breed Show Tuesday noon, we will run the Breed Show Thursday and Friday, along with the Dressage Show. That will reduce expenses considerably, in that we won't have to bring in Officials and volunteers on Monday evening. That will save a bunch of hotel rooms, and some officials fees. To say nothing of wear and tear on the Show Committee and volunteers.

Breed Show will drop from two rings to one ring, the ring that previously was the Breed Championships and then became NEDA Blue warm up. We will hold the Age Classes on Thursday, starting them as early as 8:00 AM..... but maybe later. Timed to finish at 4:00 for the competitor party during which we will have the Futurity Winners exhibition. We cannot hold an

actual Futurity class as it is open to only offspring of stallion auction horses. So the Futurity will be decided on the highest percentage scores during the age classes.

The USDF Breeders New England Championships will be held Thursday morning, ending at noon. The special classes will be held in the afternoon. One result of this change is that we will not be using that ring for NEDA Blue Warm Up. Instead we will use NEDA Red for Regionals competitors. And NEDA Yellow as Open Warm Up. NEDA Yellow is huge and so that should be OK. And it means one less ring for us to schedule stewards. And it means that people won't be warming up in NEDA Blue and then riding down the long roadway past the vendors to get to the competition ring.

Two pieces of good news for the Breed Show competitors. Tom will give us 25 stalls in the front barns for duration of the show. I will sell them to the first 25 Breed entries. After that stabling will be in the back barns with the rest of the competitors. These stalls will be \$200..... same as all other stalls. I will use them only for horses. No tack stalls. That eliminates the hectic confusion of having people switch stalls on Thursday noontime. That eliminates having three kinds of stabling. All stalls will be Duration Stalls at \$200. Period. The second good news is that it is looking like we can use the ring closest to the front barns for drive in rigs for the Breed Show Thursday and Friday. Tom uses that ring for car parking on the weekend. That was a major factor in putting the Breed Show on Thursday / Friday instead of Friday / Saturday. People with jobs were interested in Friday / Saturday. But the Breed Show has a lot of drive ins.... and close drive in parking is only available on Thursday and Friday.

The Dressage Show will revert to its 2010 shape. The FEI rescinded its ruling last year that CDI competitors could not ride in the Open Show the day of the CDI Jog. That is a relief. That means that, once again, CDI riders can ride in the CDI PSG or Grand Prix on Thursday and then enter the CDI at the jog Thursday late afternoon. They can ride the CDI on Friday and Saturday and then ride in the Open Show on Sunday. The only class list change I make for 2012 is to move the Regionals GP Freestyle from Saturday to Sunday, so that people who sometimes rides both Regionals and CDI can ride in both events if she wishes.

Sport Horse –

Kathy Hickerson reported the following. Breed Show Judges. The only breed show that does not have Breed Show judges now is Windswept. We've been getting recommendations from Kristi Wysocki on new judges just licensed and also one that is about to be approved. Rachel is working on getting the judges for the Windswept show. I've been working with the shows to help make sure we have enough variety for competitors to get enough scores for year end awards. Stallion Auction. Stallion contracts are coming in. We are up to 8 stallions formally under contract now. Silene is working hard at getting the donations. Not easy as it takes a lot of phone calls, emails and letters to get them. She has to keep contacting them. Often they will say they will donate, but getting them to fill out the contract is hard. Rachel and I are helping her to contact them as it helps to have someone they know sometimes. It is her 2nd year in the position and she is really getting a better feel for the job and also getting to know all the owners involved. Kristin Grosso is working on the stallion auction LOGO that we can give to the stallion owners so they can advertise that their offspring are eligible for the Fall Show futurity and help to get more entries to the Fall Show too. Tammy is working on getting the pages up on our auction site. www.nedastallionauction.org I renewed the domain for the year. Nothing up yet, but now that we have some contracts in hand, she will be getting it updated. Sporthorse Flyer. I've been mailing out the sporthorse flyer to committee members and breed shows to distribute to schools, tack shops and anyone that is not going to get one in their

NEDA membership packet. I'm already getting low on them. I'll plan another printing after we have all the final judges. The new printing turned out really nice. Paper seems heavier, so will go with them again for a 2nd printing. Sporthorse Survey. Kristin Grosso will be working on after the Holidays to get this going. Most of the issues from the Fall Show have been addressed and she was thinking we don't need this. She will get back to work on this again. USDF Sporthorse Scott Hassler will be stepping down as co-lead of the USDF Sporthorse Committee, so that Kristi Wysocki will be the only lead now. He will still be on the committee. Scott announced that his FEI young horse training sessions will be open to the public in 2012. We should look at getting him into this area. The committee also announced that they will be putting together some training sessions to focus on breaking and training the 3 year olds for material. They are looking to bridge the gap between breed shows and the FEI Young horse. Should be a fantastic program that we should get here when it is ready. January Tip. The January Tip is our stallion auction issue. While I thought I was on top of getting everything to Tracie/Beth, I didn't think about a cover article. So, I wrote that. I put in the announcement of the Eliusum Farm Breeders Grand there and would like to get a series of sporthorse email going soon too.

Membership –

Deb Carr-Kirk reported that, according to Tammy, membership renewals have slowed WAY down since Nov 30. Tammy did remind me that in order for people to receive the 2011 USDF Yearbook, they need to be included on a roster to USDF by Dec 31. Jen Dillon is sending out a Constant Contact message to all the 2011 non-renewed NEDA members this week. Thank you, Jen! Sue McKeown is contacting USDF to figure out whether we should send a check or do a credit card transaction on Fri, Dec 30, to make sure everyone on our Dec 30 roster will be counted towards receiving their USDF yearbook. Thank you, Sue! The initial 2012 member mailing went in the mail last Thurs, Dec 15, to 1,231 members. OPL is in the final editing process. I have been busy working on the Volunteer Workshops. I have had an absolutely fantastic response from many people. I have a wonderful committee of people from around Reg 8. They are Paula Foote from ME, Kris Conquest of NH, Heidi Humphrey from VT, Ann Barber and Erin Keehan from NY, Kat Wojtylak and Judith Noone from MA, Anne Johnson from RI and Kari Bradshaw and Elizabeth Preston from CT. So far, we have Johnson & Wales, UNH, GMHA and ENYDCTA on board. Pineland Farms (ME) and St. Luke's School (CT) are tentatively on board. Only state I'm stuck on at the moment is MA. Kat has offered Draper's office and I'm just making contact with Andrea Waxler who may be interested in hosting a MA workshop. One of the things we'll need to talk about on Weds is the budget for the workshops. If all goes according to plan, I think all the facilities will be free of charge. Yahoo! I hope that the Trainers in each state will be free. The expenses will be for the 3 ring binders that will be distributed to all the paying attendees and for the cost of food, which will be very simple. My hope is to let kids attend for nothing, if they are accompanied to the workshop by a paying adult. I'd like to charge adults \$10 each, just enough to cover some of the costs. I don't think this should, in any way, be considered a money making undertaking. I'll look forward to a lively discussion on Weds night. I'd like everyone to keep in mind that I'd like to keep the process as simple as possible. My aim is to do one workshop in each reg 8 state in 2012. If the idea is successful, it would be my hope that some of the 2012 attendees would get on board to host similar workshops in 2013.

Education –

Angela Prenosil reported the following. Fall Weekend 2012 – Kate and I went and visited the new site for this coming years program – Three County Fairgrounds in Northampton, MA. We were delighted with the facility and Bruce Shallcross' demeanor, very accommodating and

knowledgeable. Basically for less than UMAss (all together) we can rent the facility, heated with vendors all inside under the same roof with electric, indoor bathrooms, room for clinicians and riders to meet, full size arena, warm area (possibly separate indoor), food vendor on site, no buses!, and excellent cheap stabling for as many horses as we would ever want! Also, closer to Clarion Hotel and Interstate 91. So the only weekend that will probably work that is not booked is Oct 12-14, 2012 which we have saved for us. Spring 2012 –Basically, we are just waiting for signatures on contracts from Michael Poulin and Carol Lavell and details for the actual program at Apple Knoll Farm on April 27-29, 2012. L Program – (from Sally) We are set to begin L Part 2 in May. Have a wait list. Need to put in an app for the 2013. Need dates for 2013 Fall Weekend. Nothing to report on flextime right now.

Sponsorship –

Phyllis Leblanc reported. The sponsorship committee met in November to review the sponsorship programs for the coming year. We would like to have the flyers redone in a simpler cleaner format. I plan to ask Lee Cullen for a proposal to do the work. We will begin to pursue renewals of sponsorship immediately following the first of the year. Several of the current sponsors have already expressed an interest in renewing for 2012.

Technology –

Alison Yama reported the following. 1) I've started the process of moving over our website to a new host. It should be a seamless process for all members or those who want to go to our site. We will start the process in January. Looks like it takes a few weeks from the time we tell the new host to start and then tell our old host goodbye. The move to Avectra continues to chug along. Still working on data. Facebook continues to be a popular portal for us. Please send anything you would like posted on our page to me (to my aeyama@yahoo.com address please).