

**New England Dressage Association
Board of Directors
Summary of Meeting
May 16, 2012**

Participating in person: HMStone, DCarr-Kirk, PLeBlanc, BJenkins, CMacDonald, LMendenhall, KO'Connor, ADane, JSheehan, KMcHugh, SMcKeown, PCormier, TRichardson, KWojtylak, SStorbeck, SWalker

Participating via conference call: SDavenport, KHickerson, JDillon, APrenosil

Secretary

It was **VOTED** to approve the minutes for the April meeting, with the changes discussed at the meeting. The board asked Heather Stone to prepare a summary of the April meeting for posting on the website.

Treasurer

Sue circulated the April investment performance and Carol circulated the May financials prior to the meeting.

Sue reported on the finance committee meeting with Helen Barrett and Sue Edelen. Helen put together a plan that has been circulated to the finance committee for its consideration. Helen is working on a plan for the Endicott Fund.

The audit is almost done, and should be done in the next couple of weeks. No issues to report. Sue and the finance committee will consider whether next year should be a year when NEDA should be putting its audit services up to bid.

After discussion, it was **VOTED** to approve the finance committee report.

President's Report

Kathy introduced Shawn to the board, and vice versa. Lainey will be giving Kathy McHugh job descriptions for the board positions that will be circulated to the full board, so that the board can respond to member inquiries, etc.

Adult Amateur Participation in Shows

Jane Sheehan led a discussion of the national press revolving around the decline in adult amateur participation in recognized horse shows. Next year, USDF is coming out with rider tests, where only the rider will be judged. These tests have been designed for those with horses that may be less than perfect, or riders that are newer to dressage. Jane suggested that NEDA may want to consider a show at some point in the future that is centered around adult amateur riders. Separate classes from open riders, etc. Angela added that she had been considering a two day show only for adult amateurs. The first day would be a schooling show and the second day would be a recognized show. Perhaps in 2013? After discussion, the board determined to watch this issue – show managers will keep track of adult amateur participation and report back to the board. Right now, adult amateur participation in NEDA shows and regional schooling shows is high. One thing that NEDA may consider is adding

more walk / trot classes and pony classes. Sally suggested writing a TIP article about the opportunity classes at the NEDA schooling shows.

Banquet and Awards

Jen led a discussion of various options for the banquet / awards ceremony. The online survey results were sent to Jen but will be forwarded to the full board tomorrow. Most people said that they were more likely to come to an awards banquet if it is at the fall symposium. Most people who attend the fall symposium attend the banquet. Whether someone is an award winner doesn't seem to affect who comes to the banquet. Most people who didn't come said that it was because of other commitments or the location. Unless NEDA picks a place each year based on where the award winners are located, it seems unlikely that any banquet will attract high winner attendance. Maybe circulate a new survey about other ways to publicize award winners other than a banquet? Why continue to give awards out in person if no one wants to come to see it? Some board members pointed out that if some people don't care about an in person awards banquet, then just send the awards to them. If others want an in person event, then why not have something at the banquet for those people? One board member suggested that we ask award winners whether they would prefer to be recognized at the Spring Show as an alternative. After discussion and subject to further review at a future board meeting, the board **VOTED** not to have an awards ceremony at the banquet this year. Several board members abstained or voted no. Future discussion will elicit what should be done with the awards. The awards committee (consisting of Linda and Karen) will make a proposal as to what will be done with awards at a future meeting.

Member Benefits

Shawn Walker led a discussion of various member benefits that could be offered to NEDA members. Members would receive discounts, and NEDA would receive a donation, typically in the same amount as the discount. Discounts can be in any amount, but typically 15%. 5% comes to NEDA, 5% goes to the card program organizer, etc. The loyalty card program is based in Minnesota, or Pennsylvania. They capture the data, handle the record keeping, etc. The problem is that none of these companies have anyone in NEDA's area with the bandwidth to take on this program. Another option is that members get a discount, but NEDA gets nothing. How many of NEDA's sponsors would be interested in such a program? How would we administer it in the absence of a local presence by the loyalty card companies? Many board members thought that a straight member discount would be a lot easier to administer, at least at the beginning, and perhaps we should start there and see how it goes. Phyllis and Alexandra will work on how to get back to Trafalgar. Draper already offers a discount, as an example, through a coupon code. Some members felt that putting this benefit on the website would be unfair to other sponsors. Other members felt that it would not be a competing benefit. Facebook, for instance. Or other publicity opportunities that would be different from "sponsorship" benefits. After discussion, the board suggested that Shawn, Alexandra and Phyllis form a committee to create a proposal revolving around member benefits. While that committee works, Alexandra will get back to Trafalgar Square and explain that NEDA is not in a position to administratively handle their exact proposal, but that they can certainly offer a discount to NEDA members, and for now advertise that on the bulletin board, and if they want to give money to NEDA based on the discount then NEDA would certainly accept it. A committee is looking in to how NEDA can administer NEDA member benefits at this time, and after that committee has a chance to meet, we will get back to Trafalgar Square with any additional options.

Spring Symposium Wrap-Up

Went very well. Linda will get out final numbers in the next week or so. The auditors found it very educational, and the riders were very flexible.

Spring Show Wrap-Up

Adding the 5th ring worked out well, particularly as they allowed more riders in the on deck area since the warm up was more crowded after the addition of the new ring. Feedback from the riders was very positive. The EMT was very bored. The “scary ring” was much better under the new configuration. Great weather. Less than 10% scratches. Fall show is usually 20%. After all the rain, the rings were in great shape. Financially, probably a pretty large profit. There were some volunteer issues, but it was pretty seamless to the riders.

Technology

Lainey has reached out to Alison, and Debbie has reached out to Tammy, to get an update on Avectora and the website. So far, no information has been forthcoming. Lainey and Debbie will continue to follow up.

Coordinator Reports

Sponsorship -

The following written report was submitted by Alexandra Dane in advance of the meeting:

“Sponsorship has received a check from the DeMoulas Foundation, thanks to the patient work of Sue Storbeck. The contract agreement is forthcoming, for benefits appropriate to a Platinum Premier Sponsorship.

Kat, as Marketing Coordinator, has brought in the Chronicle of the Horse for an in-kind trade of advertising. Kathleen Gilroy is working to finalize the agreement. The details will be available upon completion of the agreement.

On this month's agenda is the recommendation from Shawn Walker to address the proposal from Trafalgar Books for a discount for NEDA members which will generate income for NEDA from the sale of their books.

A continued, well-deserved thank you to all the Sponsorship Committee members, and to Phyllis, for their hard and productive work.”

Advertising –

The following written report was submitted by Kat Wojtylak in advance of the meeting:

“There’s been a lot going on in the background, so this month will be a relatively short report in comparison to past months as things aren’t ready to yet be finalized and reported to the group at this time.

Facebook Page- We have now surpassed over 1,000 likes, with a lot of activity in the past month, so this is continuing to be a growing medium to reach out to our members and the dressage community. The NEDA Education FB page will be deleted in the next week. The decision was made amongst the Education Committee and myself that there wasn’t a need for the two pages.

We thought that by combining the two pages into one, it allows membership to go to one place for all their information, instead of two places. It also allows for content to be continually updated, whereas it was proving to be a challenge with the Education page as everyone has been growing busier by the day so it's hard to keep it steadily moving along. At that time, we also setup rules for the admins to all be on the same page as to be using this medium effectively.

Demographics Survey- A group of us have gathered together and decided that it's about time we update our demographics for all of our membership and the region. Meaning what is the median income level, how about age of our membership, key interests, etc. This will ideally help sponsorship in finding new sponsors and help boost advertising in the future, along with making great selling points for NEDA. I have found someone to help me with this project and ultimately be on the marketing committee I'm forming. If anyone can offer any input to how this was put together initially or has any data for us to work with, please email me separately so I can spearhead this and get it underway.

Branding- We have solidified using one logo, and now we're working with Lee and the Education Committee to get them what we consider a badge for Education Outreach partners to place on their website or printed materials. I hope to have colors and fonts to present at the next board meeting for everyone to approve for use amongst all of NEDA.

Marketing- I'll be bringing my blue binder with me to the meeting on Wednesday, you'll all get a chance to see the level of exposure we're getting which is huge. NEDA is now getting their press releases and events picked up worldwide, it's a lovely things to be able to see NEDA all over the place!"

Boutique and Awards Banquet -

The following written report was submitted by Karin Swanfeldt in advance of the meeting:

"Just getting back from a fantastic three days working the NEDA Spring Show!!!!!! Beautiful weather, horses and AWESOME volunteers!!!!!!

As you all know there has been great discussion about the Awards Banquet/Celebration since last years event. It seems to be an on going issue of which I am the event coordinator!!! So as the event coordinator I have a new suggestion.

As I was working the show office this past weekend I realized that 95% of our award winners were at the Spring Show. Whether they were riding, coaching, watching or judging they were all there. I had a discussion with another board member and she suggested having the Awards Celebration with the Spring Show.....my FIRST thought was NO to far away from when the date closes, BUT I SLEPT ON IT!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The next morning I began to really think WOW what a super FUN idea for many reasons.....First all the winners are there, second everyone is looking for a place to eat on Saturday night together and third what a super way to introduce new members to what they have to look forward too. A WIN WIN for everyone. So you all know me....I began to get to work with this idea, I first ran it by other people. At that point I gathered paper work to share with you all that contain the costs of putting this event together. What better way to grow a show and add something fun.

I know folks are saying,"but it is so long to wait for our awards." Yes it is, but it can be posted before Christmas on our web site and I can work with Mountain horse on a jacket that can be worn year round.

I will DO ALL of the work for this, Sue and Paul will need to worry about nothing!!! Just come for cocktails/dinner. "-) This is what I do for the VIP/Competitors Party in NY, I can do it in Marshfield. Please think about this, it makes great sense!!!! As far as details do not bog down on those.....we need to MAKE a decision about this Celebration and I am looking for your blessing on this one. I will not let you down!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Also NEDA Wear:

Very successful at the Spring Show. Not enough time selling however :-(! Lots of inquiries about online orders. At this time we are working to put the online to our NEDA website together. This will give everyone the opportunity to pick colors and many different items. Arty is taking pictures of what we have at this point and posting to the site. This is going to take some time on his end and I will chat with him after Memorial Day. So we have a couple of weeks on this project.

Well there you have it my monthly report!!! If I do not see you Take Care and have a super Memorial Day Holiday!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Fall Show -

The following written report was submitted by Beth Jenkins in advance of the meeting:

“Things are quiet with Fall Show.

People are using the fillable entry form on the NEDA website and submitting it... which comes automatically to me. I am getting entries to Beland, ESDCTA and other shows. I am trying to figure out how to make a fillable form that people can fill out with Adobe Reader, save it on their computer and email to the appropriate secretary. I can do this and have posed revised entry form on Competitions and Fall Show pages on the NEDA website. The problem now is that people cannot save the filled entry. They can print it but not save it. An Adobe confusion.... working on this one.

Wonderful Spring Show. George and I gabbed and hung out for a relaxing day last Saturday.”

Continuing Education -

The following written report was submitted by Sally Davenport in advance of the meeting:

"The L program D-1 session at the NEDA Spring show was very successful thanks not only to Deb Riehl-Rodriguez's fine instruction but to the efforts of many volunteers. I appreciate the help from Paul C. For arranging for the tent, Sue M for dynamite scheduling, As well as Heather Dostal, Cheryl Reeve, Mary Schrader, Lisa Sugrue, Michaela Rattenbury and friend Ericka who helped with scribing and scoring. Several other NEDA members served as scribes for Candidates.

I would like to host the Part II again next year as several candidates are looking forward to this opportunity. If we hold off on another Part I A, B and C session until 2014, I can see holding one weekend of "r" or "R" in 2013 and the second session of that level in 2014.”

Sporthorse -

The following written report was submitted by Kathy Hickerson in advance of the meeting:

“The good news is we raised more money in the last chance stallion auction. We exceeded budget!

It was a little controversial with some people to expand to more unknown stallions but in the end it made us more money. We will review this in our Fall Sporthorse meeting to see how best to proceed in 2013.”

Membership –

The following written report was submitted by Debbie Carr-Kirk in advance of the meeting:

“Membership is relatively quiet at the moment. I am planning to run the NEDA Summer Membership Special from July 1 thru August 15 to encourage people to join NEDA by August 15 to be eligible for the 2012 NEDA YEA and to take advantage of member discounts for NEDA events and shows.

We've added 25 new members since my last report.

Dianne Cantara (who recently won a NEDA scholarship) has volunteered to take over as OPL Editor for the 2013 edition. Yahoo! I met Dianne for the first time at the show on Sunday. We reviewed the pages (NEDA, USDF and USEF) that I have been in charge of updating and I assured Dianne that I would be available to help her and Doreen Qunitiliani (the real force behind the OPL), as needed.”