

**New England Dressage Association  
Board of Directors  
Summary of Meeting  
February 15, 2012**

Participating in person: HStone, ADane, KWojtylak, SMcKeown, PCormier, DCarr-Kirk, KMcHugh, SStorbeck, CMacDonald, BJenkins, DHolston, JSheehan, KSwanfeldt

Participating at the invitation of the board: Tammy Papparella

Participating via conference call: AYama, JDillon, APrenosil, SDavenport, CShea

### **Secretary's Report**

It was **VOTED** to approve the minutes for the December and January meetings. The board asked Heather Stone to prepare a summary of the December and January meetings for posting on the website.

### **Treasurer**

Sue updated the board on the finance committee meeting. The finance committee approved a policy that Sue and Carol, in consultation with Helen Barrett (NEDA's investment adviser) should have the power to sell investments to generate cash for any budgetary shortfalls. After discussion, the board asked the finance committee to consider whether a change to NEDA's investment policy would be appropriate, perhaps to keep more liquid cash on hand to address any budgetary shortfalls. After further discussion, the board **VOTED** to approve the policy that the Treasurer and Carol Gordon, working with Helen Barrett, should have the power to sell investments to generate cash to address any budgetary shortfalls. Sue next updated the board on the finance committee's discussion of barter issues and how they relate to our financial statements. As part of that meeting, the finance committee felt that it would be appropriate to have a process to approve and coordinate all barter arrangements. The finance committee's recommendation was that the treasurer and the head of sponsorship (or her designee in the sponsorship function) should be provided with information on all barter arrangements.

Sue circulated the February investment performance and Carol circulated the January and February financials prior to the meeting.

### **President's Report**

Kathy circulated the following written report in advance of the meeting:

"I have two seemingly contradictory subjects for a President's Report. The first is to report on a very interesting conversation that took place this month on the GMO Prez listserv. Someone asked what GMO's were doing to help keep their members motivated and focused on goal setting and progress in their riding. What followed was a robust set of different programs run by various GMO's that had nothing at all to do with competitions. All riders can set goals and report progress towards achieving those goals, and the GMO sets out a program that allows the GMO to recognize progress towards and achievement of those goals. I found it quite interesting, as I know there are many riders who, for whatever reason, do not choose to compete, yet still must try to find ways to improve their riding and measure their progress. I was particularly struck then by the recent USDF announcement of the program whereby you can submit a video of a ride for a professional critique from a judge. I am

wondering if NEDA should consider setting up something short of competition awards to accompany our year end awards program that would build on these two elements.

My second topic is to sound an alarm bell. More and more of our board members are finding their NEDA work to be overwhelming in the face of family and job pressures, particularly as they are nearly all also trying to wedge horse ownership and riding into that schedule. I'm not sure what we can do about it, but we need to own it and find ways of discussing and dealing with it. It's not just having enough volunteers at events, which we have already identified and are doing something about. It's about who will be available and able to manage an increasingly complex organization as time goes on. I'm not sure the structure we have now is sustainable. Please give this some thought. I would like to put this on the agenda for discussion in March.

Of course, the incongruity between these two topics is obvious. If we were to launch a goal-setting program for members, someone would need to run it!"

*At the meeting, the board discussed the request from Austin Dressage for a gift to the Dressage Foundation to honor Lowell Boomer's 100th birthday. After discussion, the board **VOTED** to donate \$100 to the Dressage Foundation.*

### **Convention Attendance**

Kathy updated the board on the possible advance list of attendees to the convention.

### **NEDA Boutique**

Arthur Testa, owner of EmbroidMe, made a presentation to the board about the NEDA boutique. EmbroidMe is a large organization, with over 350 franchises. So, buying power and support. They do promotional products, embroidery, screen printing. They also have the capability to create an ecommerce website for any organization. He can also embroider special products that NEDA or a consumer provide. [www.embroidme-auburn.com](http://www.embroidme-auburn.com). The board decided to establish a committee to work on NEDA Boutique issues – Diane Holston, Karin Swanfeldt and Debbie Carr-Kirk. The committee will work with Arthur to come up with a few actual NEDA examples for the March meeting.

### **Online Show Entry System**

Sue updated the board on the options available for online entry programs, given the new USDF move to online entries. For one system, online credit card payments would go directly into NEDA's checking account. For this system, NEDA would have to pay the credit card fee, plus a fee to the developer of the system. The other system charges the competitor for the credit card fee, and then sends NEDA a check. Both systems work well with Fox Village, with one system sending entries directly into Fox Village. One of the systems also saves the competitors' information for any subsequent shows and has a clinic capability. After discussion, the board **VOTED** to approve the purchase of "Kevin Bradbury's system".

### **Coordinator Reports**

#### **Education -**

The following written report was submitted by Angela Prenosil in advance of the meeting:

“Not much to report, just getting everything in order for Spring with lots of suggestions for topics with Michael and Carol.

For Fall Symposium at Pineland things are looking very good. Pineland is really excited and I know they are going to pull out all the stops to make it a great event with great attendance. We are already working on logistics, traffic flow, etc. Contracts have been sent, but not signed yet. Dates have been confirmed with clinicians, so we should be good with Stephen Clarke and Ashley Holzer for October 27-28th.

Lots of offers for facilities to run events, now we just need to get people to manage them and we're gold.

P.S> maybe for agenda? What do we do when vets, saddle fitters etc offer lectures etc...do we have a NEDA policy on that? I get these emails, so maybe if we had a “blanket” statement regarding these requests it would make our lives easier...?”

The following written report was submitted by Linda Mendenhall in advance of the meeting:

“Spring is going well...lots of interested emails and we did have auditors signed up before I left. We've have lots of suggestions from are email request and I'll be forwarding these to Michael and Carol with a tentative agenda as a starting point.

Kat put together a great press release for spring...thank you!

The para riders are likely going to make a presentation 1 of the days.

Things are looking good at this point and I'm well rested after what was a very hectic three months. :)”

### **Sponsorship -**

The following written report was submitted by Phyllis Leblanc in advance of the meeting:

“I'm pleased to share the new Sponsorship Guide with the board. It is attached to the email containing this report. Lee Cullen did the design, layout and execution of the guide. It was quite a bit of work and she did all of it on a volunteer basis. She was a delight to work with, very responsive and extremely thorough. I can highly recommend Lee if anyone is looking for graphic and/or design work.

Tammy thought she could have the new forms up on the website this weekend so I expect the website will be updated before the meeting Wednesday night.

The sponsorship committee put a lot of thought into designing the sponsorship packages to balance the cost to NEDA of benefits offered, and keep the discounts in a consistent range. In order to maintain the balance of the benefits we will not offer to “customize” or “modify” sponsor packages. The packages offer significant discounts. In most cases even if someone does not use a particular benefit they are still receiving a significant savings from buying benefits a la carte.

If the benefits within the package are not desirable to a sponsor we will work with the a la carte benefits. This will also help to avoid confusion in administering the benefits. The only benefit

not offered a la carte is the logo and link on the website. We feel that this should remain an exclusive benefit of sponsors who buy packages, with the exception of the Fall Festival page.

Renewal letters/emails have gone out to all of our previous premier sponsors. We already have two, Elite Equine Imports and Back on Track, who have notified me that they will continue their sponsorship.

Kat has offered to put together an email to send to past and potential sponsors for the various events. Sponsorship can work with Kat and the event managers to put this together and get it out in order to generate sponsorship.

The marketing activity through emails and Facebook for the events seems to be working. We are already receiving inquiries from potential sponsors, even for as far out as the Fall Show!”

### **Advertising –**

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

“We have finalized some amazing contracts with both the Horseman’s Yankee Pedlar and the Equine Journal. They are super excited to be supporting us not only on their magazines, but online, in their email blasts and in their special issues. In both cases we were able to barter to have them support our events and in turn we have more exposure than we’ve ever had, it’s a total win, win! I’m also in constant contact with them, once a week to make sure they’re on top of things for us which also includes publishing our press releases in their editorial sections. One other big thing about them is the fact that they have free ad design services. This means a ton of \$\$ saved to hopefully help that bottom line of ours that needs tightening up anyways. I’ll of course be evaluating them and their work in the beginning to make sure they’re keeping with the level we expect of NEDA in terms of our branding. But so far, so good!

I’ve also been in contact with any and all New England publications submitting all of our NEDA Events to them which was never on their calendars, yikes! So hopefully everyone will start seeing NEDA even in those places as well.

I’ve submitted a number of press releases to the media and they’re slowly getting picked up. Thank you to everyone who has been working with me so far on their own events recognized in this manner. I’ll be bringing a binder with me which I’ll be updating monthly of all the places NEDA is being seen aside from our own website. It’s a great way to measure everyone’s hard work and see it firsthand.

I’ve been managing the main NEDA Facebook page and have just recently been added on as an Admin to the NEDA Education Committee’s Facebook page. As for the main page, it’s been gaining a lot of new “likes” and we’re getting a ton more interaction. It’s an exciting time to be talking up everything we’re doing and having enthusiastic people interacting along with us. There are a number of events I’ve created in conjunction with this, with great levels of response as well.

Lastly, attached to this email you’ll find a pretty in depth report. I was asked about finding a way to keep up with website updates and making sure everyone’s sections are being maintained properly. I decided that this was pretty well incorporated with this overall plan I had for marketing anyways. The Editorial Calendar attached is a way for us to month by month decide which events are upcoming and need promotion, and when those materials are due. The first tab on the spreadsheet is all NEDA events as a whole and the months they actually will be taking

place in. The next two tabs represent every publication we're dealing with including the TIP and when materials are due, and what materials will be represented. The second tab handles print promotion which includes the TIP. Most of this stuff is ads, which I'll be handling, but some of it is articles which Tracie needs for the TIP. Everything is listed on what events or promotions we're going after for that month and when it's due. I'm going to be working with those individuals when things are due well in advance so proper promotion can be granted. The last tab is all the online promotions we're going to be doing, and it's similar in a way to print promotion. It's a bit confusing and I'll be happy to spend more time refining it in an easier to read and understand format once you've all had a chance to look it over.

There are some super exciting things happening and I appreciate everyone who has thus far filled out my questionnaire to help me design these great marketing initiatives!"

### **Technology -**

The following written report was submitted by Alison Yama in advance of the meeting:

"Here's a summary for the tech committee:

- 1) Tammy will be attending the meeting tonight for the discussion about how info should flow from the committees to her for website management
- 2) We have made progress on the database and it looks like AVECtra can get going in about 6 weeks.
- 3) We have started recruiting folks for the website design and launch. We had one additional member step forward to help. Tammy and I have started looking at website "skins" to see what designs would work for our website. The skin is the overall design of the homepage. You can buy these off the shelf (\$30-\$50) these days instead of programming the whole the thing."

*At the meeting, the board discussed with Tammy the process for updating the website. Tammy prefers that board members contact her directly with website changes. If she becomes overwhelmed, or needs help with prioritizing items, Debbie Carr-Kirk will be her board contact. Also, Tammy asked for her admin access to be removed, but after working under that system for a while, she has decided that she really needs it.*

### **Sporhorse -**

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

"Stallion Auction:

We have 36 stallions donated this year. Auction ends this Saturday Feb 18 at 9pm. Most bids will come in towards the end, but already we have 12 stallions with bids. If we sell them all, we should do really well this year. We'll put out a reminder email on the closing and post around on the bulletin boards. Spread the word if you can.

All stallion owners were given the new NEDA Stallion Auction logo to put on their web pages. The team is doing a super job!

Breed Shows

None of our qualifying shows had put in their forms for the USDF qualification application so weren't listed. USDF asked me to talk to them, so it seems like they have all submitted or in the process of it. A bit of confusion on what needs to be submitted to the USEF vs USDF for some of the new shows. I asked if maybe they had a checklist and timeline for new show managers.

#### Sporthorse promotion

Been working with Kat on ideas for better promotion. She is incorporating that into her plan. She is incredibly helpful.

#### USDF Sporthorse

Linda Mendenhall has been added to the USDF Sporthorse committee.

We will be seeing a test of the new program for 3 year olds at Devon next year. It will be a combined score for 3 year olds showing in material and in hand. Scot Hassler will be conducting some training sessions for starting the horses. New England is one of the locations for that. This is an exciting new program the Kristi Wysocki and Scot Hassler have come up with to bridge the USDF Breed Shows to the USEF FEI Young horse.”

#### **Fall Show -**

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

“Fall Show is lumbering into shape... I have 12 judges lined up, 3 announcers, FEI Steward, one TD. Still to go.... probably a 13th judge and another TD. I am working on the prize list. The website needs updating... Sponsor forms need finalizing. Yikes!

The issue to be decided pronto... are we going to offer on line entries at the Spring Show and, if so, which of two new on line entry systems we will use:

1. Kevin Bradbury's system which is still pretty new, used at Devon last year as a beta test site. There were some glitches... but he fixed them. And he did not charge them, as it was a live test venue. It meshes with Fox Village. The advantage is that the money is processed via our own merchant account and dropped directly into our checking account. It costs us to use the system, but not much.

2. Pete Jorgensen's system which is also new, and has proven seamless interaction with Fox Village. The glitch here is that the competitor pays the fees, on top of the entry monies, and monies are processed thru PayPal who then sends us the money and reports.

I think that Sue McK and I are leaning to Kevin's system.... due to the financial handling. And an innate belief in his reliability and competency.

No other Fall Show issues.... I sure hope we have found a more viable Breed Show schedule.... that will entice some new competitors.”

#### **L Program -**

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

"L" Part Two on schedule. Will be asking Board for 2013-14 date approval full "L" program approval. Also discuss possible "r" program for 2013 or 2015 as I think both in 2013 may be too much for me. I should be retired in 2015, not working full time."

### **Spring Show -**

Paul updated the board on the Spring Show. Everything is progressing on schedule.

### **Membership –**

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

“Blue Hill Press will be sending out the second membership mailing for 2012 this Friday, Feb 17. First mailing went out on Dec 15. Since then we have added 198 new members for a current total of 1,427 members.

The Volunteer Workshop Series is coming together nicely. I am receiving sign ups via email and through the USPS. Jen Dillon is going to walk me through the Constant Contact system in the next day or two so I can find out who has signed up on line. Can't wait!

Tracie forwarded an email to me from Charles River Dressage Association. CRDA sent out a message to their membership about the Workshops.

The committee has most of the materials pulled together for the workshops. At this point we are just fine tuning everything. Besides a wonderful committee, I've had help from Paul, Beth and Sue M to review the materials. Lee Cullen volunteered to create and send out the CC message about the Workshop. Now I just have to make sure that all the workshop hosts know how to access the videos that we will be using. This has been quite a learning experience for me. It has been wonderful to see the response from the GMOs and individuals.

Karin and I are communicating with each other regarding the 2012 volunteer gift. I have a couple samples that I'll bring to tonight's meeting.

I forgot to cover this topic in my membership report. I'd like to sell OPLs at the workshops for \$10 each. I realize that this is a discounted price but my reasoning is 1) we will not have to spend money on the postage, 2) potential volunteers need to know when shows are happening, and 3) I think they will be more inclined to give back and volunteer if they feel they got a great deal on the book. At \$10 a copy, it is all profit for NEDA.”

*At the meeting, the board determined that the OPL should be provided to members, and one copy to each show manager and advertiser. Other copies will be available for purchase.*