

**New England Dressage Association  
Board of Directors  
Summary of Meeting  
April 18, 2012**

Participating in person: HMStone, LJohnson, KWojtylak, SStorbeck, CMacDonald, SEdelen, KHickerson, ADane, LMendenhall, SMcKeown, CShea, PLeBlanc, BJenkins, APrenosil, KMcHugh, PCormier, JSheehan, DHolston, KSwanfeldt

Participating via conference call: None

**Secretary**

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

**Standing Rules**

The board reviewed the draft standing rules circulated by Heather Stone prior to the meeting. Board members will continue to review for the next week, and then an updated version will be posted on the website.

**Treasurer**

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

**President's Report**

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

“In honor of NEDA's 40th birthday, I have organized a President's reception for Sunday lunch during the Spring Symposium, at which all but one of NEDA's former presidents will be present. It will include some kind of a panel discussion moderated by me and a fantastic slide show of old pictures that Carole MacDonald is researching. We plan to repeat this during the fall symposium, hopefully with all former presidents available. Carole is working so hard on this slide show, I'd love to find a way to use it more often this year and to post it on the Web somehow as well. Should be fun. Betsy Hestnes will not be there.

Is anyone interested in having an equestrian tag sale in connection with any of our events. I have sold all my horses and consolidated all my equestrian gear from four different locations into my barn in Vermont, and I find I have quite a lot of excess - actually I think I have more than one of everything that has ever been sold for horses. If you think there is interest, I will organize and market to members.

We are in the process of setting up an Endicott Fund with our investment advisor to receive Priscilla Endicott's gift. We need to discuss what to do with it and get back to her. I had a wonderful meeting with her during the past month - what a gem of a person.

I completed the agreement with USDF concerning our gift, and the check has been sent off. Kat did a press release about the gift. Yea, Kat!

I attended the volunteer workshop at GMHSA this past weekend. It was excellent - very informative, well organized and substantive. Sue McKeown was a great presenter. There were almost 40 people there. Thank you Deb! Not only are we building our volunteer ranks, but we are making many new friends in the region by doing something as useful as this, and they think we did it for them!”

*At the meeting, Kathy mentioned that she had been contacted by a young rider that was looking for people to write articles on various topics. Kat had some ideas and agreed to follow up with Kathy separately.*

### **Endicott Fund**

Priscilla Endicott has made a large donation to NEDA, preferably to be used for education which is what she cares about the most. Several board members suggested using the money as the seed for a capital fund that would continue on into the future. Several other members suggested using the money to subsidize auditors for the Spring and (possibly) Fall symposiums, as well as to bring clinicians in from other parts of the country on a subsidized basis. A third idea, not related to education, is to use the funds to subsidize a paid position to help run all of NEDA’s programs and events. After extensive discussion, the board decided to think about various options and discuss it at a future meeting before providing a proposal to Priscilla. Kathy agreed to give Priscilla an update. The education committee agreed to brainstorm ideas as well as part of their outreach program. Lainey and Sue Edelen agreed to be part of that effort as well.

### **TIP**

Tracie expressed a need for some help with the TIP. Kat has some thoughts on how to organize getting material together for the TIP so that it isn’t such a burden on Tracie. Kat and Kathy agreed to speak directly to Tracie about Kat’s ideas.

### **Tack Sale**

Next year, Kathy agreed to organize a tack sale at the Spring Show next year.

### **Banquet**

Karin led a discussion of various options for the banquet / awards ceremony. Many board members suggested a survey to see if we can find out why award winners don’t come to the banquet. Maybe an award winners-only email list for the last year or so? Maybe something in the winter, not tied to any other NEDA but perhaps with a short speaker program or roundtable? Jen’s view is that we should have a social event on the Saturday night of the Fall Weekend, but not to hook it to an awards ceremony. Sue suggested that we have an awards banquet this year, doing a better job of only bringing awards for those who are attending, and think about doing something next year. Some board members felt that it is inevitable given NEDA’s size and geographical breadth that many awards will have to be mailed to winners. After extensive discussion, the board decided that there should be an awards banquet at the Fall Weekend. Angela, Karin, Linda and some others agreed to form a subcommittee, including Jen, to work on an awards component at the Fall Weekend and come back to the board at the next meeting with a plan, including how other board members can help with the awards (before and after the banquet).

### **Boutique**

Karin led a discussion of the NEDA logo, embroidery work, etc. The board viewed some samples on swatches, as well as some examples of jackets, etc. (without logos). The boutique should be up and running for the Spring Show. As a business matter, the profits from the sales will be used to buy additional product for future events. The digitized logo has been done and is owned by NEDA, not Artie. After extensive discussion, the board determined to go forward with Artie providing the services for the boutique, with the Swanfeldts running the actual boutique at events. A contract outlining the arrangements will be worked out by a committee consisting of Kathy, Sue, Heather and Phyllis. A second step will be to figure out whether and to what extent horse products (as opposed to just people products) will be offered (either by the boutique or for items that buyers bring in themselves).

### **Marketing Consistency**

After discussion, the board **VOTED** to make Kat the Public Relations Coordinator to serve for the remainder of Tracie Richardson's term.

Kat led a discussion of barter arrangements, and whether we should have a limit on any such arrangements. Sidelines and the Chronicle want to partner with NEDA on a barter basis. After discussion, the board determined to leave such decisions up to the Public Relations Committee and the Sponsorship Committee based on what makes sense for each level of sponsorship and what other equal level sponsors are doing.

Kat led a discussion about NEDA's "brand" in its printed materials, and the various ways in which it is presented across NEDA's marketing materials, advertising and publications. Kat suggested having an expert, on a low cost basis, come up with some "marketing rules" regarding fonts and colors that would be acceptable for NEDA materials and would be incorporated into new materials in the future so that we would build greater consistency over time. Kat suggested that NEDA should also pick one logo. Karen agreed to send the logo to the board so that everyone would have it. Education and Sporthorse or Fall Festival could be reflected in a banner under the logo. After discussion, the board determined to have a logo for embroidery, and the regular JPEG logo in two forms (fall festival and the NEDA logo).

### **TIP**

A committee of Tracie, Kat and Phyllis will work on beefing up the content of the TIP, and add additional contributors.

### **Sponsor Discounts for Members**

The following information was compiled by Shawn Walker in advance of the meeting.

"I have done some research on how we could get sponsors to offer our members a discount on products & services from our sponsors and simultaneously donate back to NEDA.

While I thought I had a good idea, I clearly am not the first person who thought of this avenue, because there are companies out there that provide the service to do this already!

I think I have found at least one good, viable option. <http://www.plsrewards.com/fundraising.php>

The key to this program is that you distribute these loyalty cards pre-loaded with a reward of some kind. Could be for \$5 cash, which can be redeemed at any of our participating vendors, or it could be

for one free dressage pad when you spend \$50 at someplace. Sky is the limit. The key is, it gets distributed with something on there that drives the member to the sponsors. The card would (in theory) have the NEDA logo prominently displayed, but would also feature participating vendor logos—but only the handful that offset the “initial loading” of the card via free products/store dollars/whatever would be on the front.

See examples: [http://www.plsrewards.com/sample\\_card\\_gallery.php](http://www.plsrewards.com/sample_card_gallery.php)

The card gets activated by the member online—either through the NEDA website, or through our Facebook page. All the activation info gets automatically uploaded into a current, accurate membership database—which we could share with our sponsors who “pay in” to the program. While you can accrue points without activating the card, you can’t spend your rewards dollars until activation occurs.

Once the member goes to a sponsor and spends money, they get \$\$ loaded back on their card—say, 10% of their total purchase—which they can use for a future purchase. 10% also goes back into NEDA’s coffers—we receive daily electronic notifications of participation in the program—so there is transparency/auditability—and the sponsors pay us what they owe us on a monthly/quarterly basis.

There are many ways vendors can access the “program”—through a conventional credit card swipe, or even through a regular web browser: [http://www.plsrewards.com/certified\\_terminals.php](http://www.plsrewards.com/certified_terminals.php) . This would address the accessibility for all sponsors, big and small.

The member gets an e-mail the next day—automatically generated by the system, thanking them for their purchase and showing how much went back to NEDA and \*\*\* our chosen charity, should we get around to picking one\*\*\*, which we both agree we should!

Here is the whole “fundraising” presentation-complete w/what database looks like, thank you e-mails, reporting mechanisms, etc. These guys also do e-mail and text marketing campaigns, but they seem to be elective. All their reports seem to be very helpful in terms of tracking activity and making sure there are no abuses to the system. [http://www.plsrewards.com/downloads/pls\\_fundraising.pdf](http://www.plsrewards.com/downloads/pls_fundraising.pdf)

I have NO IDEA how much they would charge for this, but it may just be the initial \$5/card that gets issued. BUT IT CAN BE DONE! Whether or not we try to do it internally or outsource it remains to be determined, but it can be done.

I have attached a brief description of why we are looking at this as a membership and sponsor benefit. It would obviously turn some of our existing sponsorship packages on their heads—people may not want to pay \$\$ for print ads anymore, as they cannot measure ROI effectively. But maybe it is time to offer our sponsors something new, which basically costs them nothing unless and until the member walks in and spends money with them. That’s pretty low-risk!!”

## **Coordinator Reports**

### **Scholarship**

The following written report was submitted by Sue Edelen in advance of the meeting:

“Scholarship Committee met last week to look at our 8 April applications (a good number, 2YR, 2AA and 4Pro), and awarded 5 Scholarships:

Dianne Cantara (AA) – scholarship to ride with Pam Goodrich

Rita Brown (Pro) – scholarship to ride with Morten Tomsen  
Katherine Ayn Dow (Pro) - scholarship to ride with Pam Goodrich  
Lisa Pierson (Pro) –scholarship for Part II of USDF L Program  
Cindi Wylie (Pro) - scholarship for USDF “r” Judges Program and to ride with Christoph Hess”

### **Education -**

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

“Spring Symposium next weekend with Carol L and Mike P. – honestly think as far as content and personalities go, this will be one of our best for sure! Can’t wait to go, hope some of you will make it and get your barn buddies to go. Not sure how the numbers look, but Spring continues to be low attended....I think after this year, we need to look how it turned out and consider doing “something” different to increase attendance- change program, location, pricing, etc. I guess we’ll wait and see! Linda will report the details.

Flextime : As of 4/17/12, 49 students have been assigned Flextime Lessons with 43 instructors. Plus one discount certificate for a lesson awarded to a volunteer.

Nancy Marsh Terry  
NEDA Flextime Program

Fall Symposium – Jen is getting in gear now that she is settling into her new life in Maine. We are starting to get our ads going and you’ll start to see the publicity growing. Ashley and Stephen are on board and excited, so is Pineland Farms J Jen will follow up with details.

Outreach Program – Have to count, but at least 7 or more events just for April and May! People are really getting it and its making the pressure on our dept ease up a bit. Next, we need to finalize details on the financial help (Tier 2) and partnership level (Tier 3). I’m thinking that maybe if someone has a great clinic planned for next spring(like the Erica Posely “Got Seat” clinic), we may consider jumping on board and partnering to try that for a spring event..? Endless possibilities.”

### **Sponsorship -**

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

“Everyone on the Sponsorship Committee and our volunteer for marketing, Kathleen Gilroy, have been very busy since the last report on March 21st.

We have received a combination of cash and in-kind donations that have put us over our projected annual budget figure.

This committee has also been working very hard to make the transition from Phyllis to me a workable and mistake-free one, and I am continually grateful for their help and patience.”

### **Advertising –**

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

“Marketing Committee-

It was brought up in past meetings, but it doesn't seem to be official, but I'd like to propose being made head of the Marketing Committee. Right now there doesn't seem to be any one person overlooking things from advertising, press releases, social media, printed materials and the like which all reflect the image of NEDA being marketed. It would also allow me to be the filter for as much as possible to find new ways to promote NEDA.

#### Social Media-

We now have a Twitter (<https://twitter.com/#!/NEDADressage>), Pinterest (<http://pinterest.com/nedadressage/>) and YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/nedadressage>) accounts. For right now I am managing all of them and slowly getting content added.

#### Bartering ad space for sponsorship benefits-

How does the Board feel on this? Should we have limits on this per year? For example, I have both the Chronicle and Sidelines wanting to offer us ad space as they want to partner with NEDA so they actually want to take advantage of NEDA's own benefits. Chronicle's one contact I've been speaking with is from our region and wants to give back and Sideline's new editor is a good friend of mine who is also writing the NEDA press releases- she had no idea what NEDA was doing and now wants to get involved. We are already doing bartering for ad space with Horsemen's Yankee Pedlar and Equine Journal.

#### Branding for all printed materials/marketing-

I'll be bringing with me to the Board Meeting a copy of a demo board which includes printed and marketing materials over the past year. What I'm wanting to highlight is the lack of consistency in everything. This is no one's fault by any means, but merely a suggestion I'd like to put to the board. I'm wanting to offer parameters so things stay consistent no matter who is designing them. The problem is that we contract out the design of our materials to multiple people and consistency is lost. Things may say NEDA, but it doesn't look like NEDA. My concern which is looking towards the future is namely with our website. Right now you can all look at [neda.org](http://neda.org) and [nedasporhorse.org](http://nedasporhorse.org) (which [nedasporhorse.org](http://nedasporhorse.org) is actually embedded into our existing website) for an online example. Or you may have seen the eight versions of our logo that are floating out there. While initiative is being taken all around us, there is disconnect between what we're all doing in the looks itself. My proposal is to have someone come in very inexpensively who does this (I have someone already in mind) to set up parameters of fonts, colors and overall look to be associated with all NEDA designs. This will be a slow transition but will help things look clean and consistent, and scream NEDA when you look at them.

#### TIP proposal-

I have designed a proposal for the TIP and the way it's handled regarding content because to me it seemed like things were/are problematic for Tracie and those who are submitting content. Above this may mean more work, and yes, we're short on manpower-not something I overlooked. However, this is not something I would see as a transition happening overnight, but something we can slowly work into our existing design should anything change (see below). It would be a good time to possibly advertise for writers amongst our own membership and local colleges. I see these types of positions on the committee as being a lower level of involvement when it comes to volunteering in case someone wasn't sure where else they'd fit. Almost a good trial place for people to become involved with NEDA, and if they work out they can get moved elsewhere.

Overall question is, do we want this monthly newsletter to be something that focuses mainly on NEDA (basically stay the same), or do we want to enhance it to include the sport of dressage as a whole, educational content from professionals, highlights on showing of our members from outside our region, etc.?

Concerns that were brought up were that we're not putting enough emphasis on the USDF, that content is not saved month to month to stockpile for low volume news months, submissions focus too much on self-promotion and how do we limit that? Specifics- California did a five page article on the USDF convention so all of its members knew what was going on with the USDF and nationally to a larger scale. Many people feel there is no need for a USDF, but without support from GMO's, it would be scary to think, so the giving back has to start somewhere. As our content currently stands, we're too specific in terms of our region and the articles are lacking to open us up to a non-competitor, eventer, western dressage rider, para-dressage rider, etc.

Solutions- Work with our existing membership to find additional writers who can help with content. Find a way that works to stockpile articles and content for slow news months. Set up guidelines ahead of time for article submissions from professionals that are unbiased and not self-promoting, then ask for articles. Work with press releases going out from the media to highlight current news in the TIP."

### **Boutique -**

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

"Well it is finally finished and was worth the wait! I will be presenting our new NEDA logo with sample items on Wednesday night! I hope you all love it as much as we do breath taking we say!! I also have a business plan in place which my team approved, I will present this also! Does anyone know who has our NEDA tent???? We do need to have this, I am working on tables and set equipment (small scale). We already own tall NEDA chair I use at EQ. We are moving along nicely! As I have stated in last months report all my other NEDA duties are on point or completed"

### **Sporthorse -**

The second committee meeting was last week and went well They have them every other week The last chance stallion auction is going well - it will close at the end of the month. The clinic in CT is shaping up well.

### **Fall Show -**

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

"As for Fall Show.... not good financial news.  
The FEI is putting CDIs out of business!  
I can see, perhaps, \$5,000 in unexpected expenses.

First FEI is now requiring....  
24/7 FEI Licensed Stewards in the FEI Stabling.  
We have a respite this year, can have one of our regular stewards on duty at any given time.  
But... I am sure we have to pay someone to take second and third shifts.  
Bummer."

*At the meeting, the board discussed various withholding issues associated with payments to non-US persons such as judges and clinicians.*

### **Continuing Education -**

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

"I have had to re-fill half of the candidate spots for the "L" because of late cancellations but got it done prior to leaving for Spain. Think we have a good group but not as high profile as last year.

We have 10 girls in the High School Equestrian Club, several of whom will be showing this Spring. One rode in the junior Championships in VA."

### **Spring Show -**

Paul reported that the show will have a waiting list this year. They need a stable manager but most of the other positions have been filled.

### **Membership -**

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

"Current NEDA member number is 1,611 members. We've added 82 members in the past month. 27 new members in the past 2 weeks.

I'm really not sure why the membership income is more than I anticipated, but I'm not complaining. We have brought in 1,611 members. I guess we've brought in more Medal Members than anticipated plus we must have received a bit of extra income from the OPL. I will try to do some investigation into this over the next couple weeks.

I'll put together a Summer Membership Promotion in the next couple weeks. That's it for now.

Tammy's Report on Avectra Training...

I have had one training class so far going over the Accounting set up but I need to get with Carol Gordon on account numbers and so forth to use (it would be the same ones she uses on her side so we can eventually just download the data to her rather than doing everything manual). The basic accounting needs to be set up before we do the fee structure for the membership. I didn't want to bug her with it last week while she was finishing up tax stuff but I will touch base with her this week. I have some concerns with family membership information and how it's all going to work, and so far I have not been too happy with the answers to the questions I have. In the initial stages of the data import I was being told the person who I would be doing the training with would be able to answer my questions better, but that wasn't the case! So, I am going back and forth a little bit with them to make sure the data was mapped over correctly and that we will be able to do Family memberships the way we need to. I know this is something that probably should have been ironed out a while ago but it was really hard to figure it out without actually seeing our data mapped over and seeing how it was going to look. I am confident it will get worked out soon. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks!  
Tammy

Volunteer Workshop Series...

Six down, one to go. Everything is almost already for the final workshop at UMASS this Sunday afternoon. Kate has all the course materials on her computer. Thanks, Kate! She will cover scribing, Diane Holston will cover stewarding, Susan Rainville, whom I've never met, is covering the general overview and Debra Reinhardt is covering scoring. Suzanne Mente will be the UMASS representative. Over the past week, we've had four more people sign up so there will be 23 people at the UMASS workshop...for a grand total of 195 participants in the series. I'm very happy with the result. I've already recruited 3 people from the Johnson & Wales workshop for the NEDA Spring Show. I am looking forward to recruiting more new people in the coming months. ;-)."