



NORTHEAST FLORIDA DRESSAGE ASSOCIATION

2010 Membership Application ◆ 12/1/09 - 11/30/10

NFDA is a Group Member Organization and our members are automatically USDF Group Members

NAME: _____ **USDF#:** _____

ADDRESS: _____
Street City State Zip

PHONE: HOME : _____ **WORK:** _____ **CELL:** _____

EMAIL: _____ (Please be sure to PRINT your email address clearly!)

Member Preferences:

If you do **NOT** want your name & contact information included in the yearly membership directory please check here: _____

The newsletter is sent out via both email and postal service. Email delivery is faster and greatly reduces costs.
 If you would be willing to receive the electronic version of the newsletter but opt out of hardcopy (postal) delivery, please check here: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY:

- _____ **Individual / Supporting Membership - \$ 50**
 Vintage (50 years of age or older)

- _____ **Junior Membership - \$ 50**
 Juniors must be 18 yrs or younger as of 1/1/09.
 Birthday: _____

- _____ **Family Membership - \$50 for primary member plus \$20 for each additional member.**
 Primary: _____
 Additional: _____
 Additional: _____
 Additional: _____

(Note: USDF will recognize one primary member for each family membership. USDF will designate additional family members as GMO supporting members.)

Your membership entitles you to:

- Group membership in USDF
- USDF Connections monthly magazine
- Eligibility for Spring & Fall Series and Year End Awards
- Monthly newsletter and email updates on events
- Opportunity to participate in club sponsored activities (social/educational/clinics)
- Discounted entry at all NFDA sponsored horse shows
- Yearly membership directory
- Eligibility to hold office
- Eligibility to vote in yearly local elections
- Eligibility for scholarship application

VOLUNTEER FOR NFDA (check all that apply):

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day / Assistant Show Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-show set-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Host a Clinic/Event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post-show take-down | <input type="checkbox"/> Ring Steward | <input type="checkbox"/> Elected Official | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing / Advertising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scorer | <input type="checkbox"/> Scribe | <input type="checkbox"/> Runner | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with Club duties / Anything |

WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

- Schooling Shows Recognized Shows Clinics/Seminars Networking/Social Events

TALENT / OCCUPATION: We know we have a wealth of talent within our own membership – please share! Please list any talent or occupational experience that may be helpful to NFDA from an administrating/management, horse show & special event perspective (Examples: graphic artist, PR or marketing consultant, artist, calligrapher, CPA/bookkeeper, attorney, photographer, woodworker, florist, IT specialist, veterinarian, equine retailer, seamstress, writer, printer/desktop publishing, etc.):

<p style="text-align: center;">MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NFDA</p> <p style="text-align: center;">c/o Lynette Wadsworth 200 Dark Horse Lane Hastings, FL 32145 904-669-1525 cell</p>	<p>For office use only:</p> <p>Date received: _____ Amt: _____ CK #: _____ Cash: _____</p>
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WILLED BODY PROGRAM

Article by: Mary Teter

What???? No doubt that was your first reaction to the headline of this article. It was mine several years ago when I picked up a magazine in the waiting room at UF's Large Animal Clinic in Gainesville.

San Star was battling his second bout with Laminitis, and I was nervously scanning thru any and all reading materials awaiting the prognosis from the Vet. The news was encouraging, and I never thought about that headline again.

Forward to January of 2010. My 30 year old horse Marquette (Mark) was failing. A member of my family for near 28 years, his heart, spirit and will were as strong as when he was 2. Racked with osteoarthritis, his body could no longer sustain it. Although this is a very difficult topic to discuss, it is a situation we all have faced or will face as horse owners. First, when is it the "right time"? Just as important "what happens to the body".

I have always boarded my horses. The facilities in NY and FLA could not bury them in a final resting place. The question was how I honor this horse that brought so much happiness into my life for a very, very long time. That headline – Willed Body Program - popped back into my head.

Offered by UF/Gainesville a horse donated to the Willed Body Program provides 3rd year veterinary students (who must maintain a specified level of academic excellence) the opportunity to work on an actual body. This is a rare opportunity for the students. A fact that I found fascinating after speaking with Dr. Rick Johnson, professor of this advanced anatomy and physiology class.

I had assumed, considering the population of unwanted pets, the university would have an unlimited source of cadavers. NOT TRUE. Any horse they accept must be willingly donated by the owner.

As part of the course curriculum, students are required to write thank you letters to the owner. Mark will be honored by having his show name added to the large plaque that hangs at UF's clinic attesting to his contribution to the education of the school's veterinarians and future medical breakthroughs.

April 16th my husband and I drove Mark to Gainesville. All who may read this article can imagine the emotions during that time. Dr. Johnson and staff were ever so patient assisting us in unloading Mark; gave us the time we needed for that final goodbye and respected my wishes that Mark be given a sedative prior to leaving me. (He never liked the Vet!) My family and my horse were treated with the utmost respect.

The entire staff came to tell us that Mark was at peace and presented me with a French braided section of his tail, tied with a red ribbon. (I will be honest reader – that's when I lost it.) . We were again thanked for the opportunity to have this elderly horse who had "a lot of mileage on him" to quote one staff member, transition from being a teacher in life to being a teacher in death. I could not think of a more fitting future for our beloved Mark.

Although willing your horse's body may not be for all, it is a viable alternative. And, the students learning today may just be the Vet who years from now save the life of your next horse. Information is available to you by going to the UF website and in the search link write – Willed Body Program. Or, call the school and ask to speak with Dr. Rick Johnson directly.

- Tipping up in the Rear: Saddles that ride up in the back may have a twist angle, gullet width or panels that do not fit the horse.
- Impaired movement of the Horse: Changes in the way a horse moves under various saddles may be subtle, but resistance in movement usually indicates restriction of the shoulder muscles.
- Behavioral Problems: Horses dislike pain as much as we do. Once a horse associates saddling with suffering, you can expect resistance to any part of the riding experience. It can express itself in a number of ways, including:
 - Resistance to being saddled and/or girthed.
 - Fidgeting when being mounted
 - Cranky demeanor when being ridden
 - Opposition to being shod
 - Hypersensitivity to being brushed
 - Excessive fussiness (cold-backed) immediately after saddling
 - Head tossing, ear pinning, teeth grinding and tail swishing when saddled.

These and other subtleties are ways your horse is telling you he is uncomfortable. Learn to watch for the signs that something is wrong.

SO.....What do you do if you find a problem. You may try to resolve it yourself, which can take far more time and effort that you ever expected. You can also contact a qualified saddle fitter and ask for help. There are as many options in saddles as there are in horses' backs, and their experience and knowledge can shorten the struggle and get you back in the saddle faster.

Lea Ann Rogers is a certified saddle fitter through MSA and an equine neuromuscular therapist who works in the North Florida area. Contact rogers5@bellsouth.net or 904-591-0540.



- **Length of the Back:** A less-than-ideal back is too short to fit the average saddle, whose panels would dig painfully into the horse's lumbar and extend beyond the 18th rib. If your horse has an extremely short back, a shorter-than-average saddle is needed.
- **Shape of the Back:** Here a departure from the ideal would include backs that are too narrow, too flat, or higher in the croup than in the withers. The average saddle would be painfully ill fitting for a horse with any of these traits, so you would need to find one that better matches the shape of your horse's back.
- **Size of the Shoulder:** On an especially narrow-shouldered horse, the average saddle can slip painfully forward onto the scapula. On a large shouldered horse, the tree points of the average saddle can restrict free movement and push the tree base painfully against the shoulders. In either case, as well as for a "normal" horse, the saddle needs to compensate correctly for the shoulder size.

Fitting the Rider

Few things can ruin an outing for you and your horse faster than riding in an ill-fitting saddle. It is well worth your time to inspect and test as many saddles as possible until you find one that fits. Again, an option is to work with a qualified saddle fitter whose experience with saddle brands and horses' backs might help you shorten your search time and put you back on your way quickly. Although comfort is an important issue during the selection process, it should not be your only consideration. In addition to providing a secure seat, a properly-fitting saddle must place you in a correct and well-balanced position. This is important for every rider, but it is especially for novices who may not realize that they are being forced into the wrong postures and may develop bad habits that are difficult to break later. You should take prospective saddles for a test ride to ensure they don't throw you off balance as your horse moves.

Finding Your Comfort and Safety Zones

Here are some of the main factors that influence rider fit:

- **Seat:** Seat size is the distance from the nail at the side to the middle of the cantle. These are expressed in half-inch increments. Saddle maker's seat sizes vary slightly as well. Other saddle dimensions, such as depth of the seat, gullet width, position of the flaps, and stirrup bar, as well as the rider's height, weight, hip width, and thigh length will additionally affect fit. You must sit in a saddle to ensure that you are comfortable when centered in the deepest part, without being pushed against either the cantle or pommel.
- **Stirrups and Stirrup Leathers:** When in the stirrups, your feet should fall beneath your center of gravity, and you should not have to pull your leg beneath you or experience discomfort in that position.
- **Flaps:** Flaps keep the rider's knees from rubbing against the horse, and their various shapes and sizes reflect the riding postures used in different disciplines. Ensure that the flaps provide support when you assume the correct position. Your knees should clear the flaps and remain near the knee blocks for support. If your knees fall too far behind the flaps, there is a possibility that the seat size is too large to provide the correct support, and as your center of gravity falls behind, your legs will slide forward; again the result being that you are off balance.

Signs of Poor Saddle Fit

Your horse cannot articulate feelings as you do, but there are a number of visual and behavioral indicators of poor saddle fit. If you fail to address these warning signs, your horse will almost certainly resist being saddled and may suffer permanent physical injury as well. Protect your horse's health and comfort by keeping an eye out for the following symptoms of an ill-fitting saddle.

- **Friction Rubs and White Hairs:** When these appear in the saddle area, they are classic telltale signs of uneven weight distribution. Instead of spreading the weight equally over the entire bearing surface, a badly fitted saddle will concentrate too much weight in areas, producing white hairs or friction rubs.
- **Dry Spot:** The parts of the saddle that make contact with the horse's back should do so evenly, so that the wetness evident after you remove the saddle and pad is uniform over the back. If there are dry spots disrupting the overall pattern, the lack of moisture may indicate pressure points, or conversely, uneven pressure (bridging).
- **Marks on the Hide:** There is a very serious problem if you see sores, scars, galls, calluses or any questionable physical marks coming into contact with the saddle. Depending upon the location, the marks may arise from an ill-fitting saddle, an improperly adjusted saddle, or excessively tight girthing.
- **Rock n' Roll:** Great in dancing, but a saddle that rocks from side to side, or shifts signals poor fit, or an unevenly balanced rider.

The Basics of Saddle Fit

It's not a question of fitting you or your horse—it's a question of fitting you AND your horse. Every ride reflects a working partnership between you and your horse, and the wrong saddle can be a real deal-breaker. Although it's certainly natural to want your saddle to fit you well, your first consideration must be your horses' comfort and safety. A poorly fitting saddle can do permanent physical damage to a horse, and even the gentlest of creatures can turn downright nasty at the prospect of facing yet another ordeal with a saddle. One horse that you never want to ride is a horse that doesn't want to be ridden.

Honoring Both Sides of the Partnership

Proper saddle fit relies on a compromise that favors the horse a bit more than the rider. Even so, it still should to honor your needs. A saddle that fits your horse like a glove but causes you pain is not a good compromise. Your goal is to find a saddle that you both use without the risk of pain or misadventure.

The Myth of the Magical Saddle

Achieving the correct saddle fit may not be the simplest of tasks, but it's not nearly as complicated as some riders believe. Thanks to the recent surge in proper saddle fit, some have embarked on a well-intentioned but misguided pilgrimage for the one perfect saddle that fits both horse and rider to a "T" in every respect.

That would have to be a magical saddle indeed, one that automatically adjusted to every change in its owner or wearer. Factors such as diet, exercise and aging continually affect a horse's fat and muscle content, and our eyes, mirrors and scales tell us that our human dimensions are subject to a similar process. In a broader context, even two horses of the same breed are not identical, so anyone who rides more than one horse cannot expect a single saddle to be perfect for every occasion.

The Real Deal

These are the major areas of importance in fitting a horse:

- Withers clearance
- Unrestricted shoulder movement
- Good overall match between shape/size of the saddle and the shape/size of the horse's back
- Proper balance for even weight distribution

A properly fitted saddle will satisfy these basic requirements for horses of the physical type that you ride. If you regularly ride one horse or different horses of roughly the same conformation and size, one saddle, (and several saddle pads) will serve you well. If you normally ride horses of markedly different conformation or size, you will need to use more than one saddle. Otherwise, one or more of the horses will suffer.

Fitting the Horse

The first step in the saddle-fitting process is to accept the humbling fact that your horses' comfort and safety come first. Fitting the horse always comes before fitting the rider. Man has learned this lesson the hard way through centuries of experience in the saddle, but riders today can benefit from the wisdom gained along the way. You may want to tackle this by yourself or you may want to engage the assistance of a qualified saddle fitter.

Typcasting Your Horse

The following physical characteristics are ones to consider when selecting a saddle. Taken collectively, they represent a general physical type of horse and will determine the kind of saddle that is most suitable. If you routinely ride two or more horses of very different size or conformation, simply switching saddle pads will not work. Distinctive variations in these areas require different saddles to accommodate them.

- Shape of the Withers: If horses were runway fashion models, the ideal on parade would be withers that are level with or slightly above the highest point of the croup. As is true with humans, not every horse conforms to the ideal that designers have in mind, so you need to eyeball your horse's withers. If they are higher or lower than the above standard, you must find a saddle that specifically addresses that deviation in the width of its gullet, angle of its points, and fullness of its panels.

NEWS AND CLUB UPDATES

GET TO KNOW PHYLLIS ALLYN

Name: Phyllis Allyn

Personal: Married to Terry. Two sons and two grand children with another on the way; two poodle-mix dogs, Paige & Bailey.

Years in NFDA: 4 years.

Hometown: Galveston, Texas but have also lived in Lubbock.

Early horse memory: My aunt had a farm where I would spend time. When I was 7 or 8, I went with her to the pasture to bring in her horse, Cricket. My aunt sat me up on Cricket, bareback, and was leading her back to the barn when we came to the electric fence. Cricket spooked and ran away, with me hanging on to her and my aunt and mother yelling and chasing after us. I stayed on and we eventually came to a stop. My aunt also had a black and white pony named Peanut. We would sit on him backwards, bareback, and steer with his tail.

Current mount: I own Jake who I like to call my ADD horse. He's 14 years old and I've owned him for 3 years. He's a former pony horse at the track. My pony, Snap, died last summer at age 18.

Dressage influence: I didn't own my first horse, a saddlebred, until I was 20. I showed saddleseat, moved on to hunt seat and then took a 25-year hiatus from horses. I started riding again 5 or 6 years ago and became interested in dressage through Jane Steen, a local trainer and NFDA member.

Other non-equestrian pursuits: I am retired and horses are my life now.

DEMONSTRATION RIDERS NEEDED

Demonstration riders are needed for the B and C session of the L program in Live Oak on June 19/20 and Aug 21/22. In June, all of the Training and First level rides are Saturday afternoon with all of the Second level rides on Sunday afternoon. In August, all of the demo rides will be on Sunday. Demo riders get free attendance at the educational session they ride in (\$50 value), lunch and a stall for their horse. Interested people should contact Judy Downer at 352-817-2347 or starrynightfarm55@yahoo.com.

WANTED: articles for the newsletter.

Have a favorite new fly spray? Love your new pair of boots or breeches? Got any tips of tricks? Have you been somewhere that other NFDA members would enjoy? Then tell us about it! Please submit your articles to our newsletter editor, Michelle Martin, at hot77shot@aol.com.

NORTHEAST FLORIDA DRESSAGE ASSOCIATION



May 2010

USDF Region 3

NFDA is a Group Member Organization and our members are automatically USDF Group Members

From the President

May 2010 Extended Remarks

I've had a very busy May, as evidenced by how long it has taken me to write my column for the newsletter. This weekend, my four sisters and I will be staying at a beachfront spa and, as I sit at my computer this evening awaiting their arrival, I've been contemplating how I came by my love of horses. The early evidence is there: sitting in the saddle with my grandfather on his quarter horse mare, Betsy, when I was about age 2 or Christmas day, asleep on my new rocking horse in the front yard, wearing my new red Stetson cowgirl hat. Still, I was the only one out of six children (one boy and five girls) to be bitten by the horse bug.

What made you fall in love with equines? Write in and let me know (planboss@comcast.net). I've had to learn that, when someone asks me "how are the horses" they really don't want a litany of details about my ride yesterday or the state of the pastures or any one of a number of things. This is what makes being a member of NFDA so wonderful: you can talk with fellow horse enthusiasts and no one's eyes will glaze over at the mention of "beet pulp."

To continue to foster this camaraderie, the NFDA board of directors is currently planning a member event this summer. We hope to announce the date soon but we anticipate a day long clinic for members (junior and adult) with lessons, a BBQ lunch, tack swap and fellowship. Plan to bring your memories and make new ones.

Check it out!!!

Check out the South Eastern Distance Riders Association (SEDRA) newsletter at www.DistanceRiding.org

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NFDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2010

Sept 18th

NFDA schooling show