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Friesian Horse Association of North America

Re: 2021 Elections

Dear FHANA Members,

It is a great honor and privilege to be nominated for a position on the FHANA Board of Directors. I look forward to sharing my thoughts and ideas regarding our beloved breed and organization as well as my Friesian story with you during this election process.

In 2006, I experienced a take your breath away moment while watching a medieval drill team perform at a local fair in New England. It was during the performance that I told myself I needed to find more out about this stunning breed. This moment changed the course of my life and career. Since that incredibly special day, I have been privileged to work with Friesians from all over the United States and the Netherlands.

In 2007, I became a member of my local chapter, North East Friesian Horse Club. Since then, I have had the opportunity to serve as a Board of Director, Vice President and President. In addition, I also acted as the Committee Chair for the chapter's two horse shows, Classic Horse Show and IFSHA Region 1 Championship wrapping up the chapter's show season by spearheading the Year End Awards for members.

A few of my Friesian career highlights include training and showing three stallions to earn their Ster Predicate, earning my USDF Bronze Medal, awarded USEF Regional Horse of the Year for Friesian Dressage and top 5 USEF National Horse of the Year Driven Dressage.

I know I can bring a new perspective to the FHANA

table. My experience and involvement with the Friesian community along with my passion for the breed we love, are why I am asking for your vote for the FHANA Board of Directors.

I look forward to serving the members of FHANA and the horses they love in the future.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Eccard

2021 Board of Directors Election Questions:

- *Please describe your credentials which would help you to be an effective FHANA board member. Explain how these credentials have aided your past participation in FHANA and its related organizations (committees and chapters) and events.*

I have served as the North East Friesian Horse Club President and as Board of a Director. For 4 years I was NEFHC's representative for the FHANA Members Council, while on the council I was able to assist on sub committees which was also a great opportunity for me to get to know other members of the organization better as well as broadened my understanding of issues that other chapters were facing that I could take back to my own chapter. In 2020, I was asked to represent NEFHC at the FHANA Strategic Planning meeting. This meeting gave me a greater appreciation for the work and commitment needed from both the Board of Directors and its members for FHANA's continued growth. I was also asked to join the AGM 2021 (2022) Committee, and act as the Chairperson of the FHANA Mare Show East Committee. My horse show planning experience was very helpful in the early stages of organizing this event that sadly had to be postponed.

- *Describe three initiatives you would like to see FHANA accomplish during your term? Describe how you would recommend they be accomplished?*

- 1) With so many people pushing unapproved stallions for purebred breeding, I believe FHANA needs to show Members and nonMembers the reasons why it is so important to breed our beautiful mares with Approved Stallions. What does the breed lose by doing this? We lose the ability to track the offspring of the mare lines as well as our traction with research in solving some of the medical issues the breed has, it is also going to flood the market with BBII horses and while I don't know what that will do to our stud book horses in the future I do believe that by flooding the market with BBII breedings we will forfeit the History of our breed.

How do we accomplish this? Through education. Social Media tends to be one of the public and widely used forums to provide information. This could be done via an overview of the “whys” as well as a Q&A session with the collaboration of the KFPS.

- 2) It is my hope to see FHANA collaborate with brokers in registering horses sold, so that their ownership history isn't lost or the horse is “lost” to FHANA by developing relationships and offering incentives to encourage future registrations. Social Media is a free tool that we could make a video showing how easy it is by showing examples as to why it is important to register your new horse with FHANA.
 - 3) I would like to pave the way for the Sport Predicate requirements to be the same test here in North America as is in the Netherlands which could be accomplished by an alliance with the USDF. In the event, that was not an option, a FHANA committee could spearhead education available to our members as well as new people to the breed or new to FHANA, about the difference in the predicate requirements between our 2 countries. Furthermore, we could educate our members and non-member Friesian dressage owners to what FHANA has to offer their Frieisans in North America with the intent of gaining the “dressage” only Friesians membership (example year end awards, etc).
- *What current membership benefits do you feel need to be improved, and what could be added to make FHANA more attractive to past members, existing members, or new members?*

When I ask this question to those in my region the most common answers are either I love the portal and or I own a gelding and didn't renew. I think we as an organization really need to look at the non-breeding members and ask them what they would like in exchange for their commitment to our organization for another year.

- *In your opinion, what are the most important issues facing FHANA going forward, and how would you address these issues as a Board member?*

My personal opinion is that we have two issues facing FHANA that going forward we need to address.

As I mentioned earlier, I think we have to seriously take a look at the number of BBII breedings offered and determine the best way to continue to educate the importance of Approved Stallions and the reasoning why the KFPS has such strict rules for approving its stallions as well as breeding.

Secondly, I think we really need to take a moment as an organization to focus on the inclusion of those who English is not their primary language and those who abstain from technology with educating those new to the breed. The facts are clear, the Friesian horse is popular in many different demographics. Therefore it is in our best interest to make sure that FHANA and its members are able to guide them to join FHANA and register their purchased horses by making the all of the website tools available translated into Spanish (currently only the BB II Section is available in Spanish) and have membership and marketing materials available to mail to those who might not have internet capabilities. This way we can track the sales and history of these horses moving forward. As an organization we could offer some incentives to get them and/or their liaisons to register their horses.

I thank you for your time and hope to serve you proudly as a FHANA Board of Director.