

All For One, One For All

THE WESTERN-ENGLISH TRADE ASSOCIATION (WETA) turned three years old in May. Many of us involved with the organization gathered in Anchorage, Alaska, for the annual All Industry Conference and spent a great deal of time talking about the future.

The conference is always a highlight of my year since it brings me together with the people who help shape our industry. It's also a lot of fun, and in Alaska, the natural beauty was beyond description.



WETA's primary work these days is a marketing initiative aimed at attracting more users of Western clothing, saddles, tack and many other products. The initiative has morphed several times, but the goal has remained the same (see related story on page 4).

One of the realizations that hit those of us gathered in Alaska rather squarely was the need to widen our horizons as far as membership is concerned.

The organization really hasn't grown that much since it was formed. It's tough to say you represent the entire industry when your membership is only a tiny portion

of those who make their living in the equine trade business.

To attract more retailers, the dues structure was jiggered to allow smaller operators to become members at a very reasonable rate. It's a good start, but it's probably not the entire answer to the puzzle.

In the interest of finding more of those answers, I'd like to pose questions to our readers and solicit your answers. If you would like to E-mail your answers, that would be great. You can also write a letter or pick up the phone and call. I'd like to hear from more than 1,000 readers on these topics:

- Do you feel you know enough about WETA to understand why you should become a member? If you don't, how would you like the information disseminated to you?
- What is the primary reason you are not a member of WETA (if, indeed, you're not)? Be honest. Maybe you're not a joiner. Maybe you don't know about the benefits. Whatever the reason, feel free to share. It's very important to the future of the organization.

• If there's something WETA isn't doing at this point to warrant your membership, what would you specifically suggest the organization get involved in doing?

Meanwhile, please take a moment this month to visit www.wetaonline.org, the official Web site of the organization. The committee I chair for the organization has been spearheading updating and changing the look and approach of the site, and we're quite proud of it.

You'll also find a spot on the site where you can click and share your ideas about WETA and how it can best serve in the equine industry.

Also, if you were one of those who nearly lost your dentures when you heard that the All Industry Conference was going to be in Alaska this year, here's good news: We'll be deep in the heart of Texas (Austin) for next year's conference. Make plans today to join WETA and attend the conference. ☑

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