

Karen M Graddy

2020 MFTHBA Vice President Candidate

Born in Falls Church, Virginia, a child of the military, I have always been fascinated with horses, a trait inherited from my grandfather. After getting a Bachelor of Arts in Business from the University of Arkansas, I married and moved to the small farm town of Parkdale in Southeast Arkansas and helped my husband operate a 2500 acre cotton farm. We also began a farm chemical business and a computer billing service for local small businesses. After my husband died in 1984 I continued to oversee the farm operation for the next 15 years until I sold the farm in 1999.



In 1988 I remarried and moved to Conway, Arkansas, where I was office manager for my husband's woodworking business for 13 years. I also created Windwood Farms and began my entry into the horse world as an owner. It was here that I was first introduced to the magnificent Missouri Fox Trotter. It was love at first sight and after the first purchase there were quickly 2 more horses in the barn. My daughter, Eva Morschheimer Dedmon and son Henry Morschheimer had fallen under the fox trotter spell also and anything to do with these horses (shows, trail riding, teaching, training, breeding, watching) became a way of life.

We became members of the Arkansas Chapter of the MFTHBA where I served on the Board of Directors as Vice President and President and was instrumental in creating the 4 state show "The Southern Classic" and was chair person for 4 of these shows. I also helped Cindy and Lee Fonken with the newly created Arkansas Chapter trail awards program.

In the early 1990's I became a Life Time Member of the MFTHBA and gave volunteer time to the association. I was honored to receive the Jeff Caswell Memorial Sportsmanship Award. When the first Judges Committee was created in 2000 I was chosen to serve on the committee. I was asked to put on a private judges' seminar in my barn to help the European Affiliate obtain their first MFTHBA carded judge. This committee created the program to get the judges' seminars into other areas of the country, securing a seminar in Florida and one in Utah. I was selected to judge the versatility classes a number of times and have also managed the versatility arena a few times. I have worked the performance arena and judged there, also. My love has been going to our affiliate shows to judge and have open talks after the show about horses or affiliate issues.

My next committee was the Rules Committee where I served as secretary. For the next 3 years, under the direction of Suzanne Scott, this committee rewrote the official rule book, getting it into compliance with the state and federal laws.

I am now back on the Judges Committee as a co-chair, where we were able to expand our judges' base by educating and carding outside judges as well as current member judges. We have set criteria for selecting judges for the shows at Ava and are working on virtual seminars for those members who live away from Missouri.

I have judged 4 times in Germany. Two years ago I was asked by the EMFTHA to get the MFTHBA registered on the European Union's list of non-EU-Third Countries list. This I accomplished and the MFTHBA is the 3rd equine breed registry listed with the EU. This step allowed for the import of Missouri Fox Trotters and for breeding in Europe, saved import duties and enabled the buyers to register their horses in the European Stud Book. I have continued to help the European chapter when the EU has enacted new laws that have to be addressed. About 4 years ago the EMFTHA submitted my name to the Federation of Equine International (FEI) to become 1 of 2 judges in the United States sanctioned to judge Breed Shows and evaluate breeding stock to be placed in the European Stud book.

The Missouri Fox Trotter has allowed me to make many friends in Israel and soon I began shipping horses to Israel (not all fox trotters), many times flying with the horses and being able to spend time in Israel visiting and riding horses.

Being raised as a military child, I was taught many things that have stuck with me. My father served as the commandant of Aeronautical Chart and Information Center in St. Louis for 5 years and as children we were often put into situations with many of his associates and high ranking military officers. It was essential that good manners, respect and patience be displayed. My mother taught me that common sense, integrity, trust and character were very important. She also taught me that when I see a need, try to help, give of yourself and try to make a difference. This is the way I live my life and I bring these characteristics with me when I work with people. I am committed to this breed and want to see it grow again. We need new avenues, new venues, new ways to improve and expand. I am committed to working with others, listening and identifying peoples' needs and working for solutions. I have always been a stickler for rules, but when they aren't working we need to change them, not break them. Change should never be on a whim or for selfish reasons, but for the good of the breed and the membership at large. I would appreciate your support in this 2020 election.