

AHCnews

Industry Leaders Meet at AHC Conference in Washington

The 45th annual meeting of the American Horse Council was held in Washington, DC in late June. It drew nearly 200 attendees, including industry leaders from 50 organizations, members of Congress and staff, and federal regulatory agency staff.

“We had our best attendance in quite a few years,” said AHC president Jay Hickey. “We think that is because of the importance of the issues facing all segments of the horse industry before Congress and the federal agencies. We also think the topic of this year’s National Issues Forum, ‘Where Have All the Horses Gone,’ attracted great interest.”

The first day of the AHC’s annual meeting is an opportunity for all of the AHC’s advisory committees to meet face-to-face and discuss federal issues affecting all segments of the horse industry. Those committees include the Animal Welfare Committee, Health and Regulatory Committee, Horse Show Committee, Racing Committee, and Recreation Committee. The AHC’s Coalition of State Horse Councils also meets, as does the Unwanted Horse Coalition.

Probably the most-discussed legislation was the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act (PAST Act), which was before the AHC’s Animal Welfare Committee and Horse Show Committee, but brought up at several others too. “The AHC, along with all major breed registries and horse show organizations, supports the bill, which now has 296 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 57 cosponsors in the Senate. That position of support was reaffirmed at the meetings,” noted Hickey, “So we will redouble our efforts to get it passed. But even with that number of Congressional cosponsors, we still need more help from the horse community at large to get it over the finish line.”

“Taxes are always an important topic,” Hickey noted. “and were again at this annual meeting.” Several favorable tax provisions applicable to horses and assets used in the horse business expired or dropped in value at the end of 2013. This includes the Section 179 expense deduction, which went from \$500,000 to \$25,000; bonus depreciation, which went from 50% to zero; the ability to depreciate all race horses over three years, rather than over seven; and the higher limits for contributions of real property for conservation purposes by farmers and ranchers. “Legislation to extend all these provisions is being considered by Congress and the AHC supports such extensions. We are hopeful any extensions will be retroactive to January 1, 2014,” said Hickey.

In addition to the reinstatement of three-year-depreciation for all race horses, the AHC Racing Committee also discussed efforts to have the Department of Treasury re-characterize the definition of a wager so that fewer wagers are subject to withholding. Current federal bills to legalize and regulate, or simply prohibit, Internet wagering were reviewed. The AHC was directed to ensure that if any legislation is considered in Congress it protects what the racing industry is now offering under the Interstate Horseracing Act.

In the equine health area, attendees received reports on the Equine Veterinary Mobility Act, which would allow veterinarians to transport medications deemed “controlled substances” to farms, tracks, shows, and events without fear of violating the Controlled Substances Act. “This critical



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legislation has passed the Congress and should be signed by the President shortly,” said Hickey. “Once signed into law it should eliminate veterinarians’ concerns about the Drug Enforcement Agency finding a violation should vets take medications out of their offices to administer to horses.”

In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed several changes to the import-export regulations. The Health and Regulatory Committee was updated by USDA staff on the latest rule change proposal that would eliminate Saudi Arabia from the list of countries with African Horse Sickness and make it easier for horses to be imported from that country. As with any changes to the import rules, the industry wants to facilitate the international movement of horses, “but not at the expense of protecting the U.S. horse population,” said Hickey. “This meeting allowed the AHC Health and Regulatory Committee to discuss this proposal and prepare to submit comments to USDA by mid-August on the proposed rule change.”

Finally, the AHC’s Recreation Committee discussed the recent introduction of the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (H.R. 4886), which would direct the Forest Service to address the current trail maintenance backlog that is adversely affecting trail users, including equestrians. “The AHC, along with the Back Country Horsemen of America and the Wilderness Society, was significantly involved in the drafting and introduction of this bill. We are all for it,” said Hickey.

The AHC annual meeting also was an opportunity for the AHC’s Coalition of State Horse Councils to meet and discuss state issues and activities thoroughly. The AHC’s Van Ness Award, presented to an outstanding person associated with state councils, was presented to Paul Briny of Illinois at the luncheon on Tuesday.

The AHC’s National Issues Forum, sponsored by Luitpold Animal Health, was held on the second day of the convention and heard three panels discuss “Where Have All the Horses Gone.” Tim Capps, Director, Equine Industry Program, University of Louisville, was the keynote speaker. Attendees heard representatives of racing, showing and other stakeholders explain in detail how the dramatic fall-off in registered horses affected them and what they were doing about it. “Clearly, this is a critical issues for the future of the horse industry,” said Hickey. “But just as clearly the leaders of the industry are acutely aware of it and taking steps to reverse it.”

One effort is the AHC’s “Time To Ride” program and convention attendees heard an update on the “100 Day Horse Challenge” intended to attract 100,000 new people to an equine experience this summer. Various stables, events, and facilities will be competing for \$100,000 in cash and other prizes. Patti Colbert of PCE Enterprises gave an update on the Challenge.

Dr. Nat White updated all on the current status of the National Equine Health Plan and the formation of the Equine Disease Communication Center, which will be operational later this year and provide accurate and up-to-date information on disease outbreaks.

The AHC annual meeting was also an opportunity for the Unwanted Horse Coalition, which operates under the AHC, to meet. Members present reaffirmed their commitment to the UHC and its various ongoing educational programs.

The AHC’s convention also included the AHC’s Congressional Reception, which allowed industry people to visit informally with Members of Congress to renew old friendships, make new ones, and discuss industry concerns.

The annual Congressional Ride-In took place all day Wednesday, June 25. The Ride-In brought horse people to Capitol Hill to meet with their elected representatives to discuss important issues affecting them.

“As always, the AHC’s annual meeting brings together the horse industry’s leaders, stakeholders, service providers and rank-and-file to discuss common federal issues of importance,” said Hickey.



AHC's Issues Forum Asks "Where Are All the Horses"?

On June 24, the American Horse Council held its National Issues Forum, sponsored by Luitpold Animal Health, in Washington, DC. The forum featured speakers from across the horse industry discussing "Where Have All the Horses Gone." Leaders from breed registries, racing, showing, the various disciplines, veterinarians and other stakeholders spoke about the decline in registered horses and the impact on their segment of the horse industry.

Several major points emerged from the forum. There has been a decline in the number of foals and registered horses over the last several years that is impacting all breeds and segments of the industry and the leaders of the industry are aware of this decline and are taking action. It was also noted that this is not the first such decline in the number of horses and in previous instances there was later a rebound in numbers.

"People have been talking about the decline in horse numbers for some time, however this is the first time the issue has been discussed in a comprehensive fashion," said AHC president Jay Hickey. "It was a very good program and attendees now have a better understanding of current conditions and what actions are being taken."

The forum began with a presentation by Tim Capps, Director of the Equine Industry Program at the University of Louisville. Mr. Capps presented evidence that the industry has experienced several drops in horse numbers and prices in modern history, most notably during the great depression and in the mid-1980s. He pointed out the horse industry often parallels the wider economy and the current situation closely mirrors the impact the Great Depression had on the industry. In the past following such declines, growth was often propelled by individuals outside the industry becoming interested and investing in the industry, noted Capps. He believes it will again be important to look beyond current horse industry participants to grow the industry now and in the future.

There was no one reason given by the various speakers for the drop in registered horses. The economy was cited as the single largest factor, but there are likely several other factors as well. Mr. Capps believes the horse industry was in a bubble that peaked around 2004, which was similar to an earlier bubble in the 1980s, that exacerbated the situation. The increasing cost of horse ownership and participation in shows; concerns about welfare; and increased competition for leisure and gambling dollars were all also cited as playing a roll. Speakers from racing, breed registries and horse shows expanded on the issue.

Jim Gagliano, Jockey Club President & COO, reported that the Thoroughbred foal crop has been declining and is responsible for a drop in the number of starts, number of horses in the field, the number of owners, and the number of racing days. Forum attendees also heard what actions are being taking by the racing industry. Mr. Gagliano said the Jockey Club is working to promote the best races, make better use of social media, attract a younger demographic, and develop new owners. Scott Wells, President & General Manager, Remington Park Racing Casino spoke about the need for better customer service in the racing industry. Josh Pons, Maryland Horse Breeders Association related how as an individual breeder he is engaging new owners and getting them started in the industry.

According to Debbie Fuentes, Registrar/Sr. Director of Registry and Member Services of the Arabian Horse Association, between 2004 and 2014 all breeds experienced a decline in registrations, transfers and membership. While the economy is seen as a primary driver in this drop, shifting attitudes toward the value of registration may also play a role. For this reason many breed registries have initiated marketing campaigns promoting the benefits of registration. Breed registries are also taking other actions. Don Treadway, Executive Vice President, American Quarter Horse Association, updated the forum on their "Take Me Riding" youth initiative to introduce children to the world of horses.

The decline is also impacting horse shows and trainers. Julie Broadway, Executive Director of the American Morgan Horse Association (AMHA), discussed the impact on professional horse trainers and said if trends continue there will be more trainers than horses. Members of the Saddlebred, Hackney and Morgan Horse industry have formed the United Breeders Committee (UBC). The UBC is working with stallion owners, trainers, and veterinarians to help reduce the cost of producing a marketable horse and has initiated the "Stop the Drop" campaign that encourages reduced stud fees, reduced collection/



booking fees, making mares available for lease and reduced training fees. Lori Rawls, Executive Director, U.S. Equestrian Federation reported participation in breed shows has decreased, but participation in discipline shows has increased.

Service providers are also being impacted. Jeff Blea, DVM, President of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) talked about the impact on the veterinarian community and how fewer horses' means less work for horse vets. Dr. Blea additionally spoke about the AAEP "Touch: Tools to Connect to Your Clients and Their Horses" program to help veterinarians create a long-term, successful relationship with horse owners.

There was wide agreement among all segments that welfare programs are vital to attracting new participants as well as a need to focus on youth and removing barriers that discourage individuals from competing with their horse. All segments agreed on the need for better marketing.

Following up on the need for more and better marketing, Patti Colbert of PCE Enterprises updated the Forum on Time to Ride, an initiative of the American Horse Council's Marketing Alliance. Time to Ride has launched an ambitious national campaign and contest called the "100 Day Horse Challenge" with a goal of introducing 100,000 new people to a horse experience between May 31 and September 7, 2014. Ms. Colbert reported that the "100 Day Horse Challenge" had accomplished its goal to sign up 1,000 stables, instructors, and others in the horse community to host events. These hosts will now compete for \$100,000 in cash and prizes in three different categories based upon size, by introducing new people to a horse experience and several have already hosted their first event.

"The forum clearly identified the problem is not only a decline in the number of registered horses, but also a decline in horse owners and people participating in horse activities. But, there is also good news. Industry organizations are taking action both individually and collectively, like the 'Time to Ride' initiative," said Hickey. "The industry also has one great advantage, the enduring appeal of the horse, and with continued effort on the part of the entire horse community the industry will come out of the current economic climate even stronger."

The day ended with an update on the industry's National Equine Health Plan and the Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) by Dr. Nat White, past president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners. Dr. White reported the EDCC is very close to being active with work on the website now complete. The EDCC will coordinate and disseminate timely and accurate information about diseases in general and outbreaks when they occur and will play an important role in combating outbreaks and limiting economic damage such outbreak cause the industry.

Thank You to Our Convention Sponsors

The AHC would like to thank the following companies for their support of the American Horse Council's 2014 Annual Meeting and National Issues Forum: Luitpold Animal Health, Zoetis, Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, Merck Animal Health, Populous, GH2 Gralla Equine Architects, Bayer Animal Health, Loyd Hall Black, Jr., and Patterson Veterinary. The AHC appreciates their support in helping our Annual Meeting and National Issues Forum continue to be a success.



Trotter and Welton Elected to AHC Board

The American Horse Council has elected Johnny Trotter and Chris Welton to the Board of Trustees.

“The AHC is pleased to have Johnny Trotter and Chris Welton join its board,” said AHC president, Jay Hickey. “The experience they have in both the horse and business world is outstanding. We are pleased to have them working in yet another capacity to keep our industry strong and feel that they will be great assets to the Board and the organization.”

Mr. Trotter is the current President of the American Quarter Horse Association, and has served as an AQHA Director for 11 years. He has served on the racing, nominations and credentials, stud book and registration committees, as well as the foundation, ranching and racing councils. His involvement in the American Quarter Horse Industry focused on racing, roping, and horses used for ranch work and breeding. He is an avid team roper and has made the finals for the World Series of Roping the previous two years. Trotter is also the CEO of Livestock Investors LLT and owns Bar G Feedyard.

In addition to his involvement in the horse industry, Trotter is actively involved in his local community. He has served on the West Texas A&M University Foundation as well as the Make-A-Wish Foundation, the Deaf Smith County Chamber of Commerce and the Kings Manor Methodist Retirement Home boards. Trotter is also a former member of the Texas Cattle Feeders board of directors and was the 2006 recipient of the Tri-State Fair Western Heritage Award. Trotter lives in Hereford, Texas with his wife, Jana.

“I would like to thank my predecessor Jim Barton for his many years of dedication to the Board of the AHC, and I am honored to be selected to serve and follow in his footprints and the many AQHA leaders before him,” said Trotter. “The role the American Horse Council plays in virtually every aspect of the equine industry is more important today than ever. The AQHA and the AHC have worked together for many years, and there is great value in the AHC’s work on behalf of all segments of the equine industry. I look forward to helping in all these efforts.”

Chris Welton is the CEO of the United States Equestrian Federation, replacing John Long who announced his retirement last year.

Welton possesses a broad background in sport development and management including experience with the Olympic movement. In 1991 Welton was named Vice-President for Corporate Partnerships and Sponsorship for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games where he managed the domestic sponsorship program for the Atlanta Games. Following those Games, Welton founded Meridian Management, and the new company became the exclusive marketing representative of the International Olympic Committee, responsible for managing all sponsorship and marketing activities for the IOC.

In 2005, after eight years as Meridian’s CEO, Welton joined the international sport marketing consultancy Helios Partners, where he served as Helios Partners’ CEO until early 2013.

In addition to his experience at the Olympic level, Welton has a passion for horses and equestrian sport. He and his family own a horse farm, and he is a western pleasure rider, while his wife rides hunters and jumpers.

Welton said “The American Horse Council is one of USEF’s key partners, helping to ensure that all parts of the equine community have a strong and trusted voice in Washington. I look forward to working with my fellow board members and AHC staff in continuing to perform this important function.”



AHC Presents 2014 Van Ness Award to Illinois' Paul Briney

Each year, the American Horse Council presents the Van Ness Award, sponsored by the New Jersey Horse Council, to a person who has shown leadership and service to the horse community in his or her state. It is awarded in memory of Mrs. Marjorie Van Ness, one of the founders of the New Jersey Horse Council and the AHC's Coalition of State Horse Councils. This year's award was presented to Paul Briney of Chatham, IL for his great service to the horse community in Illinois.

"As a founding member of the Horseman's Council of Illinois, Mr. Briney has made his state council effective and critical to the industry's health at the state and national level," said AHC president Jay Hickey in presenting the award at the recent AHC annual meeting. "For over 50 years, he has been the embodiment of education and outreach. In fact, he was such a fixture in the Illinois state capitol that many of the legislators knew him as 'the horse man.' His 27 years of service to the Horsemen's Council of Illinois has been exemplified with a smile and a kind word. He has been an inspiration to many, and a tireless advocate for the horse industry, for education, and for promoting all that is good about the horse."

During his time in the industry, he has had tremendous influence on the development of state policies as they apply to horses. He was instrumental in passing the Illinois Equine Infectious Anemia regulation that resulted in near eradication of the disease in Illinois. He helped to pass the Illinois Equine Activity Liability Act, one of the first such laws, leading other states to follow their lead. He was also a driving force behind the renovation of the Illinois State Fair Grounds, ensuring that horses and horse facilities were an integral part of the plans and still a fixture at the fair.

Mr. Briney has been a member of the Illinois Farm Bureau horse committee, Illinois Livestock Advisory Board, and was the Founder and Past-Chair of the Illinois Equine Foundation. He is a lifetime member of both the American Saddlebred Horse Museum and the Illinois American Saddlebred Pleasure Horse Association, and was instrumental in initiating Saddlebred judges clinics. In 2013, his family received the Gillenwater Family award for Lifetime Service to the Saddlebred horse breed and association.

"For the last 40 years I have admired the great people and friends that have received this award, and I am honored to have been chosen as this year's recipient," said Briney.

PAST Act Co-Sponsored by a Majority of Congress

Recently, the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act or PAST Act (S.1406/H.R.1518) surpassed 300 co-sponsors in the House and has 57 co-sponsors in the Senate. It is supported by almost all major national horse show organizations and many state and local horse organizations. It has also been approved by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and is one of the most widely supported and bi-partisan bills in Congress.

The PAST Act would strengthen the Horse Protection Act (HPA) and end the soring of Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses, and Racking Horses. Despite the existence of a federal ban on soring for over forty years, this cruel practice continues in the "performance" or "big lick" segments of the Walking Horse industry.

"Very few bills in Congress ever achieve this level of support and this is an important milestone," said AHC president Jay Hickey. "The magnitude of support for this bill is clear, but to advance it still needs to be brought to a vote. Ending soring is important for the welfare of Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses, and Racking Horses. But, it is also important for the economic health of the horse industry because, while soring happens only in a small segment of the Tennessee Walking Horse, Spotted Saddle Horse, and Racking Horse industry, such abuse damages the image of the entire horse industry."



Most major national horse show organizations support the PAST Act, including the American Horse Council, the American Quarter Horse Association, the U.S. Equestrian Federation, the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the American Paint Horse Association, the American Morgan Horse Association, the Pinto Horse Association of America, the Arabian Horse Association, the American Saddlebred Horse Association, the United Professional Horsemen’s Association, the Appaloosa Horse Club, as well as many state and local horse organizations.

“We believe now is the time for Congress to take action on the PAST Act. The AHC urges all members of the horse community to contact their Senators and Representative and tell them the PAST Act should be given a vote as soon as possible and they should vote for it, when that happens,” continued Hickey.

The AHC says individuals who wish to support the PAST Act can visit www.horsecouncil.org to find out more information or support AHC efforts by joining the AHC.

Vet Mobility Act Passed by Congress

Congress has passed the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act by voice vote. The bill is sponsored by Representatives Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Ted Yoho of Florida (R-FL), both of whom are veterinarians and Senator Angus King (I-ME) and Jerry Moran (R-KS). The AHC has strongly supported this bill.

“Equine Veterinarians are indispensable to the horse industry. This legislation will protect veterinarians who make calls away from their licensed place of practice and ensure they can continue to treat horses at farms, stables and tracks,” said Jay Hickey, President of the AHC. “We eagerly await for the President’s signature.”

The Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act amends the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to clarify that veterinarians are allowed to transport, administer and dispense controlled substances and medications outside of their registered offices and hospitals. It would ensure equine veterinarians have the ability to provide mobile or ambulatory services in the field to the horse community as they traditionally have.

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) changed its interpretation of provisions of the CSA regarding what veterinarians may carry with them and has stated it now believes it is illegal for veterinarians to transport controlled substances and medications for use outside of their registered locations, such as an animal hospital.

But equine veterinarians often provide mobile services and treat horses at farms, training facilities, horse shows, or racetracks. In many cases it is not possible for owners to bring their horses to a clinic or hospital. For this reason, veterinarians have for years carried any medications they may need with them secured in their vehicle. Their ability to do this and provide care to horses in the field is in jeopardy without this legislation.

The bill will now go to the President and he is expected to sign it into law in the near future.



National Forest Trail Stewardship Bill Introduced

On June 19, Congresswomen Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Tim Walz (D-MN) introduced the National Forest Service Trail Stewardship Act of 2014 (H.R. 4886). The bill would direct the Forest Service to take several actions to help address the current trail maintenance backlog that is adversely impacting all trail users on many national forests, including equestrians. The AHC, Backcountry Horsemen of America, and the Wilderness Society were significantly involved in the creation of this bill.

A June 2013, study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the Forest Service trail maintenance backlog exceeds a half-billion dollars, and only one-quarter of the agency's 158,000 miles of trails meets agency standards for maintenance. This maintenance backlog is causing access and safety issues for equestrians and all trail users on national forests.

“The recreational horse industry contributes \$20 billion a year to the economy and supports nearly 307,000 jobs nationwide,” said American Horse Council Vice President of Government Relations Ben Pendergrass. “However, it is dependent on access to public lands and well maintained trails. The Forest Service trail maintenance backlog is a serious threat to its continued growth and health.”

The National Forest Service Trail Stewardship Act would direct the Forest Service to develop a strategy to more effectively utilize volunteers and partners to assist in maintaining national forest trails. It will also provide outfitters and guides the ability to perform trail maintenance activities in lieu of permit fees. Additionally, the bill would address a liability issue that has discouraged some national forests from utilizing volunteers and partner organizations to help perform trail maintenance and would direct the Forest Service to identify and prioritize specific areas with the greatest need for trail maintenance in the national forest system.

“In the current fiscal environment it is unlikely Congress will appropriate additional funds to directly address the trail maintenance backlog. This bill will help improve trail maintenance without the need for additional funding and ensure equestrians and all trail users continue to have access to, and are able to enjoy, trails on our national forests,” continued Pendergrass.

The bill is supported by the AHC and many other recreation organizations.

Congressional Horse Caucus Holds First Meeting of 2014

On March 5, 2014, Congressmen Andy Barr (R-KY) and Paul Tonko (D-NY), co-chairs of the Congressional Horse Caucus, hosted the first Caucus meeting of 2014.

The Congressional Horse Caucus is a bipartisan group of Members of the House of Representatives formed to educate Congress and their staffs about the importance of the horse industry in the economic, agricultural, sporting, gaming and recreational life of the nation.

“I was honored to host the first meeting of the Congressional Horse Caucus of the 113th Congress with my Co-Chair, Congressman Paul Tonko of New York,” said Congressman Barr. “It was a great opportunity to raise awareness about the enormous impact the American equine industry has on our economy and provide more information about the industry directly to Members of Congress and their staff. I look forward to future Horse Caucus activities promoting the American horse industry and the hundreds of thousands of jobs directly associated with it, as well as the \$102 billion it contributes to the U.S. economy.”

“Congressman Barr and I laid the foundation for an active year for the Congressional Horse Caucus,” said Congressman Tonko. “The equine industry is an important component of robust economic growth in the Capital Region of New York and across the nation, and I look forward to partnering with those looking to advance this sector of our economy. In places like Saratoga Springs, the equine industry supports countless small businesses and provides an economic ripple effect that is felt across the entire region.”



Stuart Janney III, vice chairman the Jockey Club and the owner of last year's Kentucky Derby Winner, Orb, was the special guest of the Horse Caucus. Mr. Janney shared his experiences from a lifetime involved in horseracing and answered Members' questions about how Congress could best address some of the challenges facing the industry.

During the meeting, several issues important to the industry were discussed, including immigration reform and the Race Horse Cost Recovery Act, which would renew a provision that expired at the end of 2013 and place all racehorses on a three-year depreciation schedule as well as other issues.

Barr continued, "I am confident this meeting has created positive momentum for the equine industry on Capitol Hill and greatly appreciate all of the support and leadership provided by the American Horse Council in advancing equine-friendly policies on Capitol Hill."

"We thought this was a productive Horse Caucus meeting and we appreciate Congressmen Barr's and Tonko's leadership of the Caucus," said American Horse Council President Jay Hickey. "There was a very good turn out and we thank all the Members and staff who took time out of their busy schedules to attend the meeting."

The AHC hopes all members of the horse community will contact their Representatives and urge them to join the Congressional Horse Caucus.

2015 Horse Industry Directory

The American Horse Council's annual Horse Industry Directory is a yearly effort to publish a definitive source that puts the entire equine industry at your fingertips. It is the most comprehensive national directory of breed and sport organizations, equine publications, state resources and racing and gaming organizations available.

The 2015 Horse Industry Directory is in the process of being prepared, and will have a staggering 1,000 + listings including equine publications, state agriculture resources, federal contacts, breed registries and associations, show and sport organizations, equine service providers and more.

Listing and ad space is still available. Include your equine business or organization in the most complete equine related registry and reach the horse industry's most diverse audience.

Please contact Ashley Furst via email at afurst@horsecouncil.org if you have any questions about the Directory, or are interested in purchasing a listing or ad space.

Caramello Named Director of UHC

Dagmar Caramello has joined the American Horse Council as the Director of the Unwanted Horse Coalition. As the face of the UHC, her responsibilities will include overseeing communication efforts between the UHC and the greater equine community, working closely with UHC members to enhance current and future efforts of the organization, and establishing and cultivating relationships with new UHC members and donors.

"We are very pleased to welcome Dagmar to our team," said UHC Chairman Dr. Doug Corey. "She has both participated and worked in the horse industry, and brings experience and enthusiasm to her new position with the Unwanted Horse Coalition."

Ms. Caramello grew up in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. She developed a passion for horses at the early age of five which has continued into her adult life. In 2011, she graduated from Penn State having majored in English and minored in Equine Science. Shortly thereafter in 2013, she received her Master's Degree in English from the University of Maryland.



Already an active competitor on the Mid-Atlantic eventing circuit, Ms. Caramello, in recent years, has become intimately involved with the Maryland Thoroughbred racing industry as an exercise rider—a position she took on full-time while pursuing her graduate degree.

“Having worked on the racetrack for three years, I’ve gotten to see first-hand the number of horses out there who are not only capable, but are hugely deserving of second careers. There is a lot of untapped potential at the racetrack. Just because a horse isn’t a very talented runner, or has lost interest in racing with age, doesn’t mean it can’t have a bright future in a new job. I am excited to join the Unwanted Horse Coalition as an advocate for unwanted horses of all breeds and backgrounds.”

UHC Meets During AHC’s Annual Meeting

The Unwanted Horse Coalition (UHC) held its annual meeting on Monday, June 23, during the American Horse Council’s National Convention and Issues Forum. At the meeting, attendees heard presentations by member organizations including The Jockey Club, The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, The Equine Network, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the United States Trotting Association, and the Master of Foxhounds Association. In addition, Janine Jacques, founder of the Equine Rescue Network, explained how her program uses a combination of microchips and social media to track down and locate abandoned, neglected, lost, stolen, or otherwise “unwanted” horses.

Following the presentations, the group discussed ideas for new UHC initiatives, including continuing its Operation Gelding program with the funds available; creating an educational campaign and providing materials promoting the benefits of castration/spaying non-breeding quality horses, similar to the programs dealing with dogs and cats; updating and reprinting UHC educational materials; and creating a webinars sub-committee. The UHC also decided to sell Ellen Harvey’s new book, Standardbred Old Friends, through the UHC website. For every book sold through the UHC, it will keep \$10 of the \$30 sales price, plus shipping and handling. Funds shall be used for Operation Gelding.

Overall, the meeting was a great success and the UHC looks forward to both enhancing its current programs and taking on new ones.

Operation Gelding Update

The UHC’s Operation Gelding program continues to help castrate stallions across the country. Now in its fourth year, the program has assisted in castrating 939 stallions at 79 clinics in 32 states. In the past year, Operation Gelding has been responsible for castrating 181 horses in 16 clinics across the country. These included clinics at veterinary schools and clinics such as, the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia; the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine in College Station, Texas; and the Springhill Equine Veterinary Clinic in Newberry, Florida. Multiple clinics were also held at equine rescues around the country, including Hope in the Valley Equine Rescue in Wichita, Kansas and Dreamchaser PMU Rescue and Rehabilitation Inc. in Waddell, Arizona.

Operation Gelding is able to continue thanks to the support and seed money provided by the American Association of Equine Practitioners Foundation, Zoetis, and the UHC. Proceeds from the sale of Dr. Jennifer Williams’ book, How to Start and Run a Rescue, also help fund the Operation Gelding program. Sales from Ellen Harvey’s book, Standardbred Old Friends, will now also benefit Operation Gelding. Books can be purchased on the UHC website: www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org

Operation Gelding offers funding assistance to organizations and associations that wish to conduct a public gelding clinic under the name and guidelines of Operation Gelding. An organization that has completed an Operation Gelding clinic will receive funding of \$50 per horse, \$1,000 maximum, to aid in the costs associated with the clinic.

Operation Gelding currently has limited funding available for organizations that would like to host their own Operation Gelding clinic. For more information on how to host a clinic, contact Dagmar Caramello, UHC Director, at dcaramello@horsecouncil.org or 202-296-4031. Information and applications can be found on the UHC website.