

Report on AHA Convention 2016

The theme of the 2016 AHA convention was “Create”, the third concept in the Connect, Collaborate, Create trilogy. The folks at the Tulsa Hyatt Regency again rose to the occasion and were able to accommodate the unexpected change of venue for this convention. The final delegate count reported was 259 credentialed out of 381 possible.

President Richardson’s State of the Association message summarized the progress made in the past year. The computer systems, web site etc. continue to be upgraded and improved. We were reminded that the system will be down Nov. 30 for a couple days while being worked on. All members are encouraged to double check that AHA has your correct email address and contact information as one of the big transitions is to electronic mail.

Youth Nationals were held in Oklahoma City this year. There were some cooling/ventilation systems that were not up to snuff and have been addressed for next year. In spite of the heat the show went well. The Canadian Nat’l also went well. Adult showmanship was very popular this year. US Nat’ls celebrated its 50th anniversary. Halter rules were stringently enforced which caused some people to start a movement to take halter out of US. AHA is firmly committed to keep halter as part of our Nat’l shows. Sweepstakes amateur classes were large and popular as were the paybacks. Upgrades to the facility continue. The Youth Judging Contest is reportedly ranked one of the best in the National level. This is the place where some youth are first introduced to Arabians. Trail was added to the contest this year. Distance Nat’l got very good comments about food, trail markings, venue, etc. Appaloosa National Distance was included this year and it seemed to work well.

The Central Park Show had great weather this year and presents another showcase for Arabians. Congratulations to those who showed in that somewhat difficult venue. The Country, Western, and English Pleasure classes were Pro/Am which helped show the world the amateur riders. Many people in other parts of the world don’t realize we ride our Arabian horses, much less have amateurs riding them.

The market for mid level horses seems to be expanding. We are encouraged to start a lesson program which introduces people to Arabians. Research seems to support the idea that people tend to stay with the particular breed they first encounter. The learn to ride programs tend to produce a steady income and give new/young trainers a leg up in the industry.

USEF seems to be stepping up and reaching out to members and “others” to introduce them to horses and the value of membership.

The “big deal” in the financial picture is that we have gone from being in the red to a break even situation. Good weather, minimal horse health issues and other factors have contributed to large national show numbers which in turn produce revenue for the Association. Careful planning and spending has contributed largely to accomplishing this positive financial goal. In addition, the HVAC, lighting, insulation and upgrades to the building have been done without going into debt. Kudos to the “First Dude” Cynthia Richardson’s husband, for all the work he has done on some of the computer issues without charge to the Association.

We were treated to a short video on the “Arabian Horses for Humanity” project. This is similar to the Painted Ponies concept. Life size fiberglass Arabian horse statues will be available for sponsorship opportunities for clubs, regions or whomever. See the AHA web site for more on this.

The Treasurer’s report indicated we are at a break even point since being about 2 million in the red in 2009. As mentioned earlier, hard work, careful spending, and investments are paying off.

Glenn Petty’s EVP report was mostly the same information as the President’s report with a few more details in some areas. Those areas being the National Shows and Rides, Futurities, Sweepstakes entries etc. He enumerated all the social media accounts, followers etc. and indicated that it is very popular.

The Horseman’s Distress Fund report again demonstrated the phenomenal generosity of our Arabian Horse family.

This year there were 15 resolutions to be considered. Of them, 12 were passed with the remaining 3 withdrawn. I attended several committee meetings. I would be happy to answer any questions regarding the resolutions, general sessions, committee meetings, etc., I attended. I think I have been to about 30 conventions and it seems to me that the resolution process is getting more and more refined. More study, thought, and careful vetting by the various committees and interested groups seems to have improved the process considerably. I would encourage all to explore the AHA web site as well as the Region 10 web site for further and future information. The most controversial resolution was probably #5 that addressed shoeing rule modification. The second amended form was passed. For the exact wording on this and all resolutions please refer to the AHA web site.

The AHA web site also has the results of the various elections and full convention details.

Respectfully submitted,
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