

2014 AHA Annual Convention

Mary Smith, delegate

First of all, I want to thank NMAHA members and Board for selecting Roz and me to represent our club at the regional and national level. And for helping to subsidize the cost of attending both the three Region 10 meetings during the year and the AHA Annual Convention. It is an honor and privilege we do not take lightly – there are numerous clubs across our country and Canada who do not have representation at the national level. Kathy Monico attended as a guest and thus also represented our club. Of the 428 total number of delegates eligible to represent their clubs, 268 were credentialed and participating in the Convention.

At the first General Session each year, a list of clubs having their AHA affiliation revoked due to being under 10 adult members is read. This year 12 clubs were listed. Revocation voting was postponed until Saturday by which time eight of the 12 had been able to obtain the one or two more members they needed to stay active. At the end, only four clubs had their club charters revoked. It is a testimony to the community of AHA – helping each other.

As Roz stated in her report, the Convention will be in Denver for the years 2014-2016. The theme of Connect (2014) Collaborate (2015) and Create (2016) will tie the three years together in focus. The Convention has always been a place to connect/network with others and this year was no exception.

A total of 30 resolutions were discussed with six withdrawn, one disapproved, ten approved as originally submitted, and 13 approved with modifications. The entire action report, along with the actual rule changes approved, will be on the AHA website soon but here are the highlights of what was approved:

- Approved By-law 'cleanups': 2-14, 5-14, 6-14, 7-14, 8-14
- Disapproved: 9-14, which dealt with altered photographs. The virtual impossibility of enforcing this is ultimately what led to disapproval.
- Approved: resolutions 10-14 through 25-14, 29-14, and EE-14
 - All the working western rules were approved, none of which were controversial
 - The Dressage Freestyle and Dressage seat equitation changes were approved
 - In-hand Trail rules were approved, effective for 2016 competition year
 - Ranch Horse Pleasure rules were approved, effective for 2016 competition year
 - A third ring procedure was approved for in-hand classes. This was an extraordinary rule change (added after the deadline for resolutions). The third ring procedure will be called the Combination Ring Procedure and will incorporate parts of the Exit the Ring Procedure and the In the Ring Procedure. The vast majority of shows utilizes the In the Ring Procedure and will likely continue to do so. Larger shows with adequate holding areas outside the in gate now have another option.
- Withdrawn: 1-14, 3-14, 4-14, 26-14, 27-14, 28-14

Meetings I attended Wednesday included a portion of the Board of Directors meeting after we arrived in mid-afternoon, the Sport Horse Committee, the Plenary Session to review resolutions, the Working Western Committee and then the USEF Arabian Division Rules Committee. I will have to say that it is encouraging to hear about the growth in sport horse entries nationwide, although we are sorely pressed in MN to have many people enter these classes.

Thursday we had a two-hour General Session (see Roz's report) followed by the Judges and Stewards Commissioner Forum. The Professional Horseman's Committee merged with this forum as so many

people wanted to attend both and they were in adjacent rooms at the same time. Stan Morey utilized a Power Point presentation to give an overview of what his office does and about the Judges/Exhibitors School, relationship with USEF and EC as to licensing of judges. He also addressed the high average number of classes each horse was entered in at the Youth Nationals and how this is one of multiple factors in the health and welfare of the horses. He also touched on the electronic score pad difficulties at the US Nationals. I also attended the second Working Western Committee meeting and the Resolution 5-90 Task Force meeting. The latter is always a closed meeting which I attend at the request of the J&S Commissioner. Our Region 10 caucus was held Thursday evening. It is at this caucus that the delegates have an opportunity to share what we have learned at various meetings and discuss some of the candidates for elections.

Friday's meetings that I attended included the USEF Arabian Division Rules Committee, followed by the Education/Evaluation Commission meeting. We had General Session part 2 all of Friday afternoon.

Saturday was the General Session part 3 all day. The current AHA officers were re-elected, other election results were announced, and the list of national judges/stewards for 2015 was distributed. We also saw a preview of the new AHA website being developed – I think you will like it!

I would like to encourage each of you to watch the AHA website for videos of at least some of the General Session speakers. I highly recommend that you list to the presentations by Glenn Petty, Cynthia Richardson, Glenn Petty, Scott Trees, Stan Morey, and Julian McPeak (Marketing). Hopefully all will be on the website – look under Membership – Convention – Convention Archives. That is where the previous speeches are available.

Again, I thank you for allowing me to represent NMAHA at the regional and national level. Roz and I (and Kathy) often attend different meetings so we are able to listen to and share with many different groups. Our club is not unique in its difficulties, and in its successes. How to impart the enthusiasm that is generated by like minds working together is not easy. We can do more to connect with other Arabian owners and with others who have not had an Arabian. As one of the speakers said, this connection does not start at the top, it starts with each one of us connecting to one other person, face to face.