

ASHA BOARD MEETING

*American Saddlebred Museum Library
Lexington, Kentucky
Monday, July 12, 2004 11:00 a.m.*

Members Present: President Fred Sarver; Officers Tom Ferree, Edward R. Bennett, Sandra S. Lilly, David L. Howard; Directors Vicki Gillenwater, Kris Price Knight, Misdee Wrigley, Mary Anne O. Cronan, Lewis P. Eckard, Kay Richardson, Robert K. Ruxer, Nancy Boone, Carter Cox, Mary Ann Pardieck, Dr. Alan R. Raun.

Members Absent: Carolyn Groves

Others Present: Alan F. Balch (Executive Secretary), Jefferson Streepey (Counsel), Randy Harper (UPHA President)

I. President Sarver called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m., and asked Mr. Balch to call the roll. The presence of a quorum was established, and a brief discussion followed of the agenda and rules of order. Mr. Sarver asked for a report of the Nominating Committee on the matter of the seat left vacant when Director Matthew Heiman left for service in Iraq. Ms. Knight reported that Mr. Heiman was in the process of returning from his service, and since he was available to resume his previous position on the board, she moved that he be re-appointed to his previous position. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wrigley, and adopted unanimously.

II. The directors considered minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee and Board dated February 19, February 21, and March 13. Mr. Cox pointed out that he could not agree to the statement in the Executive Committee minutes of February 19, including the phrase "most of the group agreed that stripping horses served no purpose." Directors Ruxer, Raun, Pardieck, Cronan, Gillenwater, Howard, Richardson, Wrigley and Knight all joined in Mr. Cox's concern. Mr. Sarver pointed out that the minutes were of an Executive Committee meeting, and had not been approved. Mr. Cox and several other directors stated that they wished the record to reflect their disagreement with the statement, and that it should be deleted from the minutes.

Dr. Raun pointed out that in the minutes of the March 13 meeting, he had suggested that the directors receive financial information on the Grand National program, which has not yet been circulated, and that a point had also been raised about mailing duplicate magazines to member addresses. He asked that minutes be circulated earlier, and Mr. Balch added that this could be done, and that an action list could be prepared from discussion items at the meetings.

Ms. Pardieck moved and Ms. Boone seconded that the minutes be approved, and the motion was adopted unanimously.

III. Mr. Sarver, as President, presented his report to the board.

a. KEEP (Kentucky Equine Education Project) has been formed, largely with the leadership of former Governor Brereton Jones, to foster education of the Kentucky public and legislature as to the importance of all equine breeds and activities to the economy and future of the state. Gov. Jones had contacted Mr. Balch on several occasions to attend vari-

ous formation meetings, and Mr. Balch had consulted with Mr. Sarver and Mr. Bennett on this important initiative. Since Gov. Jones was adamant that it was critical to have the American Saddlebred represented on the board being formed, Mr. Sarver asked Ms. Wrigley to serve, and she agreed. Ms. Wrigley reported on activities thus far, and that she had asked for Mr. Bennett to assist, particularly in Shelby County. All 120 Kentucky counties are being organized to focus on jobs, economic impact, grass roots and to influence legislation in Frankfort. She pointed out that as ASHA is a national organization, we have to be sensitive to the fact that this is a Kentucky initiative, but there is still an important role for us to play, inasmuch as breeding is centered in this state and we are headquartered here. If legislation is enacted bringing funding forward for the equine industry, it is important that the Saddlebred breed receive its share. Mr. Sarver pointed out that in Virginia, a significant revenue stream has been developed for the Virginia Horse Center via legislation, and that we have to attend to those needs in Kentucky. Mr. Bennett advised that horses and the overall equine industry are critically important to the state, especially so in that they are labor-intensive pursuits. Ms. Pardieck expressed her appreciation to Ms. Wrigley for her commitment to this project, and other directors agreed.

b. Mr. Sarver reminded the directors that nominations for the Association's awards need to be considered, and asked Mr. Balch to circulate criteria for the awards and lists of past recipients.

c. As to the American Hackney Horse Society amnesty program for unregistered ponies, Mr. Sarver inquired as to whether the directors thought this was a worthwhile program to consider. Mr. Eckard was asked to ascertain what the experience of AHHS appeared to be.

d. Mr. Sarver then led a wide-ranging discussion of the American Horse Council's attention to the matter of a national equine identification system, and whether a position on this proposed and burdensome program was warranted by ASHA. Mr. Balch and Mr. Sarver agreed to consult further on the matter, and coordinate any possible response to the requests of the American Horse Council with UPHA. Mr. Sarver emphasized that ASHA is properly represented on all appropriate AHC committees.

IV. Mr. Howard, as Treasurer, presented his report to the board. Directors reviewed the detailed financial statements provided, through May 31, as well as a "Revenue-Expense Summary," attached, prepared by Mr. Howard. In general, the financial performance of the Association is improved when compared with year-earlier results, and also favorable to budget for the current year. A brief discussion of possible adjustments to fees and penalties ensued, as well as the issue of staff benefit expenses. A consensus emerged that given the expense of benefits, a close analysis of comparable benefit packages be conducted each year, with an eye toward conserving such expenses.

Upon the motion of Ms. Wrigley, seconded by Ms. Cronan, the Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.

V. As Executive Secretary, Mr. Balch brought several matters to the attention of the directors

a. Mr. and Mrs. Joe Jackson requested that the directors consider "a resolution endorsing the police to continue their investigation into the horse poisonings ... as the case needs to be solved as a safeguard for the entire horse industry," referring to the loss of Saddlebred horses a year earlier in a highly publicized incident involving, among others, a former World's Grand Champion owned by the Jacksons. The directors reviewed and discussed recent news accounts of the Jacksons' litigation in a related matter, and expressed reluctance to become involved in any such dispute, especially such a public dispute. Moreover, it was pointed out that any resolution or statement by the board on any aspect of the matter might be cited by one party or another to the dispute that the Association was "taking sides," no matter how carefully such a resolution might be worded to preserve the Association's neutrality. **Upon motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Pardieck, the directors voted unanimously to take no action on this request.**

b. Mr. Balch drew the attention of the board to various issues regarding the Association's magazine. Following a general discussion of its editorial content, the directors considered a revised editorial policy to appear in each issue, noting that the appropriate committee had discussed this matter at length. **Upon motion by Ms. Cronan, seconded by Mr. Howard, the directors adopted the revised editorial policy unanimously.**

A lengthy discussion ensued on the magazine's advertising policy. Mr. Balch and Mr. Howard discussed the differences between this magazine, as the official magazine of the Association and the breed, and other magazines published by for-profit enterprises covering the breed. It was noted that the ratio of paid advertising pages to editorial pages was a critical criterion in the financial performance of any publication, and Mr. Balch stated that efforts were underway, somewhat haltingly at first, to significantly improve the magazine's performance in this area, issue by issue. Since the magazine is published five times a year, its suitability for news coverage, as such, is less than a more frequent publication. However, it can be a much better vehicle for distributing information and news about Association programs and policies. Ms. Wrigley stated that the directors of the Association themselves should carefully consider how they could support the magazine with advertising of their breeding and other activities, noting that several already do, but that more selling needed to be done to others, as well. **Upon motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Lilly, the revised advertising policy, as amended, was adopted unanimously.**

c. The directors then considered the magazine's policy as to publishing letters. It was noted that the magazine has subscribers that are not members, and that only letters from members or subscribers should be published, and the staff of the magazine should have the authority to edit letters as needed for length and clarity. **Upon motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Gillenwater, the revised policy for publication of letters, as amended, was adopted unanimously.**

Mr. Balch then commented on several sta-

tistical items. Through June 30, the business of the Association continues on the same trend noted in previous monthly reports. Foal registrations are up over 20%, and transfers are about 3% up through the same date. Membership also continues to be strong (up about 10%), in part at least because of the new mandatory membership requirement for "A" rated competitions. The directors also reviewed the details presented on Futurities, Sweepstakes, and the Grand National.

VI. The directors then turned their attention to committee reports and business, relying on agendas of committee meetings and other information provided, leading to extensive discussion.

a. Planning Committee: In the course of this discussion, the increasingly close relationship between the Association and the Museum was noted, and in particular with respect to the Museum's initiative to modernize and expand its building. Though the joint Building Committee is separate from this committee, and was scheduled for a meeting in the morning, in this discussion **Ms. Wrigley moved and Dr. Raun seconded a resolution that the Association work together with the Museum in its capital campaign, and authorized the Executive Committee of the Association to act for the board in this matter in the upcoming weeks and months. The resolution was adopted unanimously.**

Also in the course of this discussion, Mr. Balch sought authorization of the board to work toward developing an alliance of national breeds and disciplines to work in a coordinated fashion, especially with respect to governance matters in the United States Equestrian Federation, as recommended by the Planning Committee. **Ms. Cronan so moved, Ms. Richardson seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.**

b. Standards/Rules Committee: Ms. Pardieck and Mr. Balch reported on the business of this committee. With respect to a request for consideration of a rule change to eliminate the requirement that Pleasure Horses back in championships, Ms. Pardieck said that although the committee had discussed this matter at length, and understood the reasons for the request, on balance its members felt that the backing requirement should remain, and so moved, with Ms. Gillenwater seconding. Extensive discussion followed, comparing the request from some Pleasure Horse exhibitors with the feelings of this committee. **Upon voting, the motion to retain the requirement for backing in the rules passed, with two opposed.**

A lengthy discussion was held on the issue of Roadster classes being included with the Saddlebred rules of the National Federation, since Roadsters as such (in their own division) are now required to be registered Standardbreds. A suggestion was made that a Saddlebred Roadster might be required to be at least half Saddlebred. **Dr. Raun moved and Ms. Wrigley seconded a resolution directing the committee to develop such a rule within the Saddlebred Division, and the motion passed unanimously. [It was thereafter determined that a Roadster section already exists within the Saddlebred Division.]**

Ms. Pardieck and Mr. Balch reported on the committee's recommendation that controversial rule change proposals within the process

of the National Federation might well be withheld from consideration at the Federation's annual meeting in January, as is the case with at least one other breed, so that they could be heard at the ASHA annual meeting in February, and then finally considered thereafter by the Federation. Mr. Balch stated that following conversations with the USEF Saddlebred Committee co-chairs, Ms. Crumpler and Mr. Lockard, he felt there was strong support from this idea at the Federation, and from its staff. Mr. Bennett questioned how this could be so, since he had discussed the matter with Ms. Crumpler and he reported she had stated she did not favor it, and he felt the suggestion might be perceived as an attempt by the ASHA "to override" the Federation's committee. Mr. Balch stated that he felt there must be some misunderstanding, because he and Ms. Judy Werner had discussed the situation together with Ms. Crumpler and Mr. Lockard, understood there was strong agreement with the suggestion, and that they had emphasized the ASHA's understanding that the Federation was the final authority on rules in accordance with federal law. Mr. Bennett stated that Ms. Crumpler asked him to call her after this board meeting, to see whether the issue had been raised. Thereupon **Ms. Cronan moved and Ms. Lilly seconded a resolution that the recommendation of the committee in this regard be adopted, and that Mr. Balch be certain that the timing issue had been adequately addressed with the Federation Saddlebred Committee and its leadership.**

c. Registry Committee: Mr. Sarver announced that Mr. Tom Pettry had resigned (owing to personal circumstances) from the chairmanship of this committee, and that he had appointed Judith Werner as interim chair until 2005, given her previous extensive experience with the Association and the Registry. The directors reviewed the statistical and other informational material distributed, and a discussion followed of concluded and pending cases before the committee. Mr. Balch stated that the committee had agreed that the staff of the Registry should understand their role as to assist members and owners in getting their horses registered, rather than to view the rules as technical reasons to impede registration, and he felt the staff understood this perspective properly.

d. Regional Championships Committee: Chair Kay Richardson led a discussion of the background of this committee, relying on an excellent overview of its purpose and other information developed by former president Tom Pettry. Several directors commented on the importance of pursuing a national structure such as this, and **Ms. Wrigley moved, with Mr. Howard seconding, that the board conceptually support the work of the committee as described by Ms. Richardson.**

The motion passed with Mr. Cox abstaining.

VII. The board considered several matters pertaining to the Kentucky State Fair World's Championship Horse Show.

a. As to titles advertised by winners, Ms. Cronan distributed a detailed paper describing how media would be encouraged to title championships, and said this paper would be provided to various outlets. However, she stated that she wanted this board to have an opportunity to review it beforehand. Discussion ensued as

to the reason for the various titles listed, and appreciation was expressed to her for this effort.

b. Mr. Balch and Ms. Cronan described the cooperative effort that had been underway for several weeks to improve technology in use between the Association and the State Fair so that the most accurate information possible be employed in the program, by the announcers, and in the results, as well as to be certain that all registration rules were adhered to strictly.

c. Ms. Cronan reported on efforts to enlarge the make-up ring at the show. She noted that everyone was familiar with the constricted space in that area, but described a plan that would improve matters by widening the entrance to the schooling area. The directors expressed their appreciation that she and the State Fair were continuing to work so hard to improve an already exceptional event.

VIII. Old Business

Dr. Raun called the board's attention to several items in previous minutes that had not yet been attended to, and asked whether Mr. Balch might review previous minutes to prepare an action list for the board, as well as circulate minutes earlier so that they were not just received immediately prior to the following board meeting. Mr. Balch stated he would do so, and that preparing the minutes earlier should not be a problem.

IX. New Business

Ms. Knight asked whether any response had been prepared to the negative publicity that had appeared in "The Gaited Horse" magazine. Mr. Balch and Mr. Sarver responded that they had understood that a member of the Planning Committee had planned to respond, but that they had not yet seen any. A short discussion followed about the advisability of responding formally to such articles. This led to a discussion of annual awards made by the Association at its February meeting, and Mr. Ruxer pointed out that not all awards have to be made each year, and that if suitable individuals are not nominated, no award should be made in those cases.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m., on the motion of Ms. Lilly, seconded by Ms. Gillenwater.