

## 2013 AHA Convention

The 2013 AHA convention was hosted by Region 14. It was held at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Lexington Kentucky on November 20-23. There were 301 registered delegates out of a possible 435. There were also several alternate and guests that attended.

Region 14 offered a tour before the meetings started on November 20. The tour included a trip to Darby Dan farm (where part of the movie Seabiscuit was filmed), a tour of a bourbon distillery, and lunch at a historical home and ending up at StalMare Arabians – owned by Aurora members Bryan and Joanne Grossman. I chose to fly to Lexington a day early to I could go on the tour. It was well worth it! Darby Dan farms is a stud farm that stands 9 thoroughbred stallions. The breeding manger is Canadian and is from Delburne Alberta. He attended Olds College to get his education. The Jockey Club doesn't allow AI, so all mares are bred naturally. They get close to 900 mares each year to breed. The mares are kept at a separate farm and are hauled in the day they are bred. Once they are bred, they are shipped back to the broodmare farms to wait to see if they are in foal. Most of the stallions breed 3 or 4 times a day. Occasionally some are bred 5 times a day. There is a specific nutrition and care plan for each stallion but all of them are ridden regularly.

The next stop was at Buffalo Trace Distillery. Kentucky produces close to 90% of all the bourbon in the United States. Needless to say, there was a LOT of buildings filled with barrels of bourbon in various stages of aging. There was some bourbon sampling at the end of the tour. After people sampled the bourbon on an empty stomach, they took us for lunch to a local historic house. Lunch included what else – Kentucky fried chicken!

Last stop on the tour was at StalMare Arabians. Bryan and Joanne gave us a tour of the farm before we went in the arena. Jim Stachowski presented Black Daniels and he had the crowd cheering as he displayed his National Champion park motion. They presented several of Black Daniels offspring from weanlings to two year olds. The tour was over and back to the Hyatt we went to start our meetings.

### **Amateur Committee**

There was a lot of discussion resolution 2-13. This was two unrelated amateurs co-owing a horse. There was a lot of confusion over the wording and who would be allowed to show the horse. It seemed that the room was equally split either for or against this resolution. There were pros and cons for both sides. It wasn't as simple a most people thought it would be. Some thought that it would help people share costs in showing by co-owning a horse. In reality, that can be done now. One person owns the horse and they can split the costs with a friend and

one can show in the owner classes and the other can show in the amateur to classes. There was also some concern if one of the amateurs has a trainer in the family and wants to co-own a horse with another amateur. The way the rules are written, then neither of them can show in the amateur owner classes. In the end, this resolution was referred back to the committee to do further work on it. It will be brought back to convention in 2014 to be discussed and voted on again.

They also discussed resolution 6-13 – Leveling the Playing Field. Again, some liked it and others didn't. The committee voted for it. It will take effect for the 2015 show year. Select riders will be considered Select as of 2002. It changes the rules of Select back to what the original intention was of Select when it was first introduced. Your points will be tracked per division, so you can be Select in Western, but you might not be Select in Hunter of Country. There will be different point requirements for Nationals and Regionals. The classes will all be AATR and JTR and will not affect the AAOTR or JOTR classes. The AAOTR and JOTR classes will still be divided by age. The AATR and JTR classes will be divided by ability/accomplishments. The classes will be Select, Choice, Elite and Prime Time (over 60 years). There was also a section for Open classes to be split as well. The proponent felt it was easier to have it included in the resolution with the other classes, than try to have it added later. The qualifications for these classes will be listed on the AHA web site. The points tracking is already done by achievement points, whether you are entered in that program or not. It is important to know, that these classes are an OPTION for shows to offer them. If the shows are smaller, then they most like won't offer the splits as some classes could have one or two horses in it and other could be huge. The larger class A shows and Regionals will probably be the first to offer them.

### **National & Regional Classes Committee**

There was talk of adding new classes to the National shows. Some mentioned were to bring back Informal Combination, adding Adult Showmanship and Limited Reined Cow Horse to US, and In hand Trail for class A shows. AHA has instituted new rules for adding classes at the national shows. There are too many 1-3 horses classes already and they want to ensure that any added classes will have the numbers there to support holding the class and to cover the cost of the awards for the class.

### **Market & Development Committee**

The website needs to be updated and AHA hired KGB Texas Marketing to help with this project. The cost of the upgrade is \$305,000.00. It is still a work in progress. When it is finished it will have an outreach section that will include farm listings, Discovery farms, places offering lessons and training. The website will track the user's interests so AHA will know what their members do and want to do. Most importantly, it will be much more user friendly.

They encouraged clubs to offer Community shows for new show people to make their show ring starts. The shows cost less to put on and are not as competitive as the class A shows. They aren't as intimidating for the first time exhibitors.

The Committee also suggested that if anyone has old Arabian horse magazines or directories, to drop them off at the local medical facilities. (Doctor, dentist offices, medi centers) as well as hair salons, spas and gyms. Local club contact information can be put on the magazines. This gets the magazines more into the public and promotes the Arabian horse in places other than a horse show or trade fair.

## **SWEEPSTAKES**

The Sweepstakes Committee has been working on a request that came from the 2012 Convention. More people wanted to see more classes pay Sweepstakes money. The problem is that less people are breeding and less people are nominating their foals. That means less money is coming into the Sweepstakes fund. People also forget that it is the BREEDERS Sweepstakes, not the AMATEUR Sweepstakes. The Points program is still in effect and will pay \$7.00 per point for 2013. The Sweepstakes Committee came up with a proposal that they thought might make people happy. They suggested to make ALL Amateur classes at the Canadian, Sport Horse and US Nationals shows as Jackpot classes. There would be a \$100.00 Jackpot fee added on over and above the class entry fee. This was a mandatory fee – everyone would pay it. 92% of the Jackpot fee would go back to that class as prize money. The horses don't have to be in the Sweepstakes program. If a horse was Sweepstakes nominated, then it would win a little extra money from the Sweepstakes program. There was a lot of discussion about this. Some amateurs felt that they couldn't afford to pay the extra \$100.00 per class. Some amateurs go in several classes, so it could add up to \$500.00 on to their entry fees. They felt that it wouldn't work if it wasn't mandatory. In the end, they decided to not implement it at this time as there wasn't enough support for it at this time.

## **Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee presented two horses with the Ambassador Award and one for the Open Competition Award. The Ambassador Awards went to Legendary DC and Just in Kayce. These two horses were involved in the Black Stallion Literacy Project, parades, kid's camps, horse fairs, and equestrian patrols. The Open Competition Award went to Oz Poop of Purchase. "Poof" competes on the open circuit in 3 day eventing.

## **Youth of the Year**

Congratulations go to Region17 Youth Director Katie Johnson for being awarded the AHA Youth of the Year. Katie is the first Canadian to earn this honor. She received a \$1000.00 scholarship and a very large trophy.

The Arabian Horse Foundation awarded the Regional Youth Directors \$500.00 each as well.

## **Resolutions**

The resolution results are on the AHA web site. If anyone has a question about any of them, contact any of the delegates and they will explain them to you.

The 2014 Convention will be held in Denver Colorado.

Karen Caughell