

AHA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2015

It will be a challenge to condense the information that was presented at the past AHA convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Thank you to the Aurora Arabian Horse Association for allowing me to represent them as one of three delegates.

Craig Christensen emceed General Session on Thursday, November 19 at 8:00 am. The Convention had been well underway for many board members and committee people. After his welcoming speech we continued with the matters at hand.

AHA President Cynthia Richardson opened Convention on a positive note. She delivered a passionate speech once again to all in attendance, encouraging them to continue to “Connect, Collaborate and Create.”

President Richardson has earned my respect time and time again. She continues to lead the Arabian Horse Association with a staff of 47 people. Promoting the Arabian as a family horse and as an important part of lifestyle.

The association is operating on a tight budget in tough times and adjusting to the age diversity within its membership. Efforts to communicate with the youth, baby boomers, and seniors are ongoing. As a leader of AHA, she is excited with the progress of the association. AHA staff continues to work on the antiquated computer system. They are pleased to launch the beginning of website changes for guests. Watch for the new look at www.aha.com on January 11, 2016. The balance of the upgrade work will continue over the next three years.

This year saw completion of the repair to the AHA’s staff building in Denver. Maintenance of the Associations real estate investment is important and employees are pleased to see the work completed.

The AHA President coined the Central Park Show in New York as the highlight of her year. This prestigious event was a first for everyone. Special thanks to the Rolex Central Park Horse Show for allowing the Arabian horse to participate in this spectacular event. Their goal was to showcase a culmination of equine talent, athleticism and beauty to a new audience. The Arabian horse has been invited back to the event on Wednesday, September 21, 2016. Arabianhorseglobal.com will be live streaming this exhibition once again.

The morning’s general session included the following information:

There were 268 eligible delegates and 260 were credentialed for the 2015 convention. Currently there are 398 members. In 2015 there were 18 Regional shows, 4 Nationals, and 63 distance rides, 134 horse races. This year there were 6 clubs who had their status revoked.

Upon completion of the first general session, convention attendees continued with scheduled meetings. An individual who leads the committee in discussing the resolutions chairs each meeting. Lively

discussions took place with those proponents defending their requests and helping people understand their intent. Some resolutions met with strong resistance and others were well received.

Show Commissioner Stan Morey chaired the Judge and Stewards meeting. He discussed the importance of the integrity and importance of judges to “do the right thing” when judging. To be strong and to judge what is before them. He had indicated the average age of the show stewards was 62 and they are working hard to train new people for this position. AHA Judges and Exhibitors Seminar is Dec 3-5, 2015 and Judges Seminar December 6-8, 2015 in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Here are a few other interesting statistics:

AHA has 115 “r” accredited judges, 154 Regional/National judges and 139 Stewards. National events in North America this year alone require 57 judges, excluding alternates.

Youth (15), Canadian (11), Sport (14) and US (17) Nationals.

The pool of judges from year to year is not that large.

After attending numerous meetings delegates return to vote in the second general session.

The following are a list of the resolutions addressed. If you participate in any of these disciplines the rules are a great read. The underlined notations are my personal interpretations or clarifications. Complete rulings are available on the AHA website, USEF rulebook, Equine Canada rulebook or the AHA handbook. All are available to read on-line.

Resolutions approved each year must be approved by USEF and EC before being implemented. Therefore some rules will not be implemented until 2017.

Resolution 1 By Law amendment - Approved

Resolution 2 Bylaw restructure - Approved

Resolution 3 Change in Delegate Count - Approved

Starting in 2017 the club count will be decreased from 50 to 35 members for 1 delegate

Resolution 4 defining family AAO classes - Approved

Resolution 5 leased horses in AAO classes - Disapproved

Resolution 6 Joint Ownership - Disapproved

Resolution 7 Joint ownership with Charity - Disapproved

Resolution 8 Working hunter rules - Approved

Resolution 9 Leveling up modification - Approved

Amateur Riders may enter their appropriate level or a higher level

Resolution 10 Performance Halter requirements - Approved

Resolution 11 Working hunter rules - Withdrawn

Resolution 12 Course designers for working hunter - Referred to Hunter Committee

Resolution 13 Cross rails - Approved

Resolution 14 Hunter Hack Fences - Approved

Resolution 15 Sport Horse Showmanship - Approved

New Class

Resolution 16 Limited Reined Cow Horse - Approved

Resolution 17 Rescind resolution 12-13 - Withdrawn

Resolution 18 Hunt Seat Equitation - Approved

Resolution 19 Fence heights for Hunt Seat Equitation - Withdrawn

Resolution 20 Western Seat Equitation - Approved

Resolution 21 Western Horsemanship scoresheet - Disapproved

Resolution 22 Western Horsemanship extended gaits - Approved

Judges may call for extended jog and lope.

Resolution 23 Western Horsemanship eliminations - Approved

Resolution 24 Western Horsemanship position - Approved

Resolution 25 Adult Amateur Hunt Seat class - Withdrawn

Resolution 26 Showmanship score sheet - Withdrawn

Resolution 27 Showmanship class procedure - Approved

Resolution 28 Showmanship judging guidelines - Approved

A great read for those participating in the class. See the AHA website

Resolution 29 Removal of Showmanship tests - Approved

Resolution 30 Showmanship causes for Elimination - Approved

Resolution 31 Sport Horse Walk Trot - Approved

Resolution 32 Funding for Judges and Stewarts education - Approved

Starting in 2016 all AHA approved shows will be required to pay 9-90 fees

Resolution 33 Ranking Top 10 – Approved

Placings not to be announced

Resolution 34 Qualification timetable - withdrawn

Resolution 35 Regional National judges evaluation - Approved

Resolution 36 Lifetime qualifications for Stallions & Mares - Withdrawn

Canada was represented well at the AHA convention. Region 17 members have a strong voice and are active in the process of contributing to the work in progress.

Region 17, Aurora member Sydney Young was named Youth of the Year which is a huge accomplishment. Congratulations to her and all of her mentors, peers and family.

The Aurora Club made their presence known by winning three of the five awards presented by AHA. Thank you to Lorie Fisher, Communications, Marketing and Webmaster for submitting the applications on behalf of the club. Aurora won the 2015 AHA Club Excellence Awards in Communications and Club Projects and to finish the Presidents Banquet off received the CLUB OF THE YEAR!! What a great way to celebrate a 50th Year Anniversary.

Many special people have worked hard over the years to bring these awards home. They are here around us in many forms, as volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, donator's family and friends. Please say thank you and pat yourself on the back for being involved in a great organization!!!!

Although there is a lot of serious business conducted, there are many friends and fellow horsemen that attend the convention.

If an opportunity arises and you can attend the AHA convention I highly recommend you make the time. There is a world of Arabian horse people out there that wants to share their enthusiasm with you.

Carla Jackson MacGregor