

Shannon O'Dell – 2019 Annual APHA Convention Report
Fort Worth, TX March 1-3 – Washington Director

First, let me extend my appreciation to the NWCC Executive Board for allowing me a grace period to file this report with all of you. For those who don't know, less than a week from returning from Convention my grandfather was suddenly hospitalized and then passed away about a week later. Of course the day he was hospitalized I dropped everything and headed to Arizona to be with my grandma and after he passed I stayed with her until early May. My Convention notes did not make it into my suitcase under the circumstances. So now that I'm home I'm going to do my best to remember the things that I didn't write down



Our first day started with a report from the American Horse Council. Highlights are that they've had major wins in the farm bill especially with addressing animal health priorities. They are making progress on immigration – there is still a shortage of guest worker visas available. Biggest success (in my opinion) is getting horses NOT classified as pets but kept as livestock (this had far reaching legal implications for how we can treat our horses even though we might treat & love them like pets). They also were able to obtain increased funding for Equine Assisted Therapy. Both of the trail bills stalled last year but they are hoping they might get funded through an infrastructure package. The “soring” bill (related to Walking Horses) is likely to get out of the House but will likely die in the Senate as McConnell opposes. However, this will still likely raise the profile of the issue with other members of Congress. The hot topic of 2018 – the ELD mandate – is currently in a status quo. Nothing really going forward to get resolved. But the CDL requirements for each individual state have not changed.

Next Billy Smith gave us his report. Some of those highlights:

- Office should be moving into the Stockyards in October 2019
- Planning on having the 2020 Convention in the Stockyards
- Visitors to the APHA offices will be able to ride all kinds of disciplines via virtual reality
- Developing a Ranch Work Championship (3 events, timed, handicapped). Allows competition as close to actual ranch work plus relatively inexpensive.
- The Open/Amateur World Show saw an increase in entries due to outreach to other programs like the futurity programs.
- Twisted J Boutique will be managing our Barn Door (formerly General Store)
- Building sold above it's appraised value – there was a bidding war and building sold “as is” which was good because there were some maintenance items that likely could have been required without it.
- Registrations were down 0.74%. In an interesting stat, Europe registered over 20% of our total APHA horses.
- Membership was down 4.94% (AQHA down 6.75% and ApHC down 3.29%)
- Industry is no longer “breed loyal” but is now considered “discipline loyal”
- Show entries were down 7.8% but there were quite a few show cancellations
- Total number of exhibitors is up
- International is up 6.92%

- Platinum Futurity nominations up. Breeders Trust subscriptions down.
- PBRIP program is now self sustaining and APHA injects no monies

AjPHA President Sabine Lazo gave a presentation on her Presidential Project “Color The Community”

We then broke for lunch and into committees. I’m on the Long Range Planning committee but had quite a bit of interest in things in the Joint Show & Contest / Youth / Amateur committees so I went to that meeting and popped in & out of LRP. Then trying to help some things in Show & Contest I popped between LRP and S&C. To be honest, I really struggle with the Long Range Planning Committee because throughout 2018 we just talked issues to death (in my opinion) and had no actions to put forward except an Amateur Coaching permit which was going to be dead on arrival with the Amateur Committee and the Show & Contest Committee. This was a proposal that I also could not support and shared my objections multiple times during us talking it to death 😊

The big discussion in Long Range Planning is the Governance Proposal that we are being asked to adopt. In a nutshell, right now the Association is owned & governed by the elected National Directors. We elect an Executive Committee to handle things throughout the year but we Directors have the ability to overrule any decision they make throughout the year (which doesn’t happen often but has happened). This Governance Proposal would expand the number of Executive Committee members from 7 to 12 (something many of us like), would change the way people advance to being the President (something many directors also like), but effectively would change the National Directors to being solely advisory votes as the Executive Committee can overturn any vote the Directors take (currently the reverse is true). Much time was spent trying to convince me & others that this change does not make the National Directors advisory, but in my opinion it truly does. The proposal changed multiple times after discussion with the committees so I’m not sure exactly how it will look. I felt it was unfortunate that the Directors in a majority voted to allow a new set of bylaws to be drafted for our consideration at 2020 Convention. If anyone is interested in the last draft of the proposal that we were given, let me know and I will forward it. I’m hoping that we will see the proposed bylaws by October 2019 to allow lots of time to parse through the changes before we meet again in March.

Day 2 started with the review of the financials. Youth World had a net operating loss. Open/Amateur World had a net operating profit. Our total market value is over \$15M.

The Standing Committees gave their reports. The only things I wrote down of note were that the International Committee asked that the Green classes be left at 10 points in their Zones because of the number classified as Green and how long it currently takes for them to point out of Green (so increasing to 25 would keep those horses Green forever). Regional Club will have the criteria for Gold Star & Club of Distinction changing. The Regional Club committee will also be taking over regional club reviews and taking this task off APHA staff. The APHA Foundation currently has \$1.7M in investments.

We then discussed what rule changes passed out of the respective committees. Dr. Craig Wood also discussed the Governance Proposal and why it’s being recommended. There

were several things that I felt were unnecessary reasons: we might miss an opportunity for a business venture if it has to be run by the Directors (first, no one could give me an example of what kind of opportunities we might miss; and second, we give much of this authority to our Executive Committee now – understandably they must have confidence we won't overrule them after a decision has been made with an outside entity, but that is pretty unlikely because they can do a quick run through of the committees before making a decision). They got a few people concerned because the current structure makes the National Directors legally responsible for the actions of APHA (first, Texas law gives us pretty broad indemnity, and second, APHA carries a Directors & Officers policy which protects us).

Since Long Range Planning did not meet on day 2 (many committees didn't), I met with several other Directors and discussed the pros & cons of the Governance Proposal. Even after those discussions I'm still not in favor of the change.

Day 3 was an interesting day. We started with the committee reports for those committees who met the afternoon of day 2. I didn't write anything of special note. Dr. Wood also clarified for the rumors that had been going around that the international travel APHA EC members and others take is paid for by a US Government grant and not by APHA. We get that grant because we are working to build APHA and the horse industry abroad.

We then went into the rule change proposals. Because I'm writing this report late and the press release with information has already been widely disseminated by APHA I'm not including here. But if anyone has any questions about how I voted on an issue, or how the vote count went on any item (we are now doing electronic voting so we know the number for or against), please let me know and I'll get that information to you.

David Lands was the only candidate put forward by the Executive Committee nominating committee (that committee cannot discuss it's business but I understand there are some good reasons why they were not able to put forth at least 1 additional candidate). Randall Roser was nominated from the floor so we had 2 candidates to consider. David was elected as the 6th committee member for 2019-20.

I did ask Mike Short to please move me to a different committee for 2020, but he advised that he had plans for a different type of Long Range Planning committee and felt I would be valuable for what he envisions. So I will do my best to stay engaged with that committee, and hopefully we can have some meaningful things come out.

As always, I enjoy representing the members of Washington and the Northwest. So if you have any ideas that APHA should be considering, please contact me and I will let you know if there is a committee already working on it or where we can go with it.

Respectfully submitted,
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