

2015 APHA Convention Report

Patty Baker, WA Director Serving on the General Show & Contest Committee

Feb. 26th - March 2nd, 2015

Our Convention started off cold and snowy and stayed that way for the duration. Thankfully we were kept busy inside the Ft. Worth, TX Champion Circle Marriott Hotel and Conference Center. Though the staff was not prepared for ice and snow and the facility was left shorthanded with long lines at the Restaurant when everyone was stuck at the hotel. But we survived and I got to know many APHA members around the Nation as well as reconnect with friends I only get to see at shows.

Billy Smith, Executive Director presented the APHA Progress Report & Strategic Plan, to start off the Convention. He reported our 2014 Revenues were up more than \$99,000. over our expenses. And our Membership increased for the first time since 2006. With both of these things being good news, he encouraged us to help APHA continue to grow by being "inclusive" rather than "exclusive" with our programs.

He also informed us that only 45% of the foals listed on the Stallion's Breeding Report ever get registered. Many choose Not to join our club and register their horses. He said while specialty organizations are growing, NSBA, NRHA, NCRHA & such, our influence in the horse industry is shrinking as well as other Breed Specific Organizations. In 2000 APHA was 28% of the Horse Industry. In 2013 we were half that at 14%. As our Leader, he suggests we strengthen our clubs, broaden our appeal to a wider range of people, expand our outreach to newcomers, be enthusiastic about what we do, share that with others and focus on awarding scholarships to bring back the Youth to our shows. (Fairs, FFA, Stock Shows have learned that reaching out to young people in their need of finances is key).

A few points from the Annual Financial Report that were of interest to me was that the 2014 Fall World Show Posted a \$50,000 profit over the previous year. Yet the APHA Youth World Show lost money even though they shared the grounds and expenses with the Appaloosa Horse Club Youth for the first time.

Motivational speaker, Dr. Rick Rigsby had the large meeting room packed and at attention as he shared ideas and made points on his theme, "Shared Leadership: Working Together". We all enjoyed his teaching style. One of the points I remember was, People will stay committed to a club or a job if they feel it has goals and positive Leadership that works well as a Team, which identify the talents and skills in each individual and utilize those. That is a challenge for all of us and well worth the effort. Together we can accomplish much more than any of us can do alone.

The APHA President appointed me to serve on the General Show and Contest Committee, at the beginning of the year. We met in a 2 1/2 hr Conference call 2 weeks prior to the Convention to go over all of the Rule Proposals. Then we met several times at the Convention. Holly Slaughter is our staff liaison. She handed out several interesting pages of statistics to go over. One page was the top 20 shows by entries per Judge. South Jordan, UT is still #1 and our own Zone One Show has moved into 15th position since we moved it to the Albany, OR location last year. The previous year it wasn't on the list at all. The fastest growing group at the 2014 Shows was the Amateur Walk/Trot which was up 32% from 2013.

I'll go over some of the interesting new rules which passed out of the Show Committee.

- A large section was added on what drugs are permitted, which there are several new ones and their suggested dosages. These were added to help guide exhibitors and show officials but they are not going to be part of the drug testing program. These are to stay in line with many other organizations.
- Additional entries for any class may be accepted until the last exhibitor completes the pattern in any individual working event or the gate is closed in any rail/group class. Show management may post other specific entry deadline at each show, if necessary.
- One of the hottest topics was upping the points in Novice Youth and Novice Amateur. That proposal did not pass but this one did. To be eligible for Novice Youth status in a category the applicant cannot have earned 40 pts (it was 20) revalued performance points (Open and/or Youth Combined, excluding Walk/Trot and Leadline) in that category in any recognized equine Assoc. including, but not limited to APHA, AQHA, ApHC, IBHA, PHBA, PtHA, AHA, AMHA, ABRA & POA. Exception - European Zones. The above passed for the Novice Amateur eligibility as well.

These are just a few of the Rule Changes. You will be able to read the Rule Changes in their entirety in the Report from the APHA.

It was a fun 2015 Convention packed with much information and enough time to get to know others better. I encourage anyone to take the opportunity to go. It's open to all APHA Members. 2016 Convention will be held in Richmond, VA.

Submitted by Patty Baker, WSPHC Pres, Manager of Baker Training Stable LLC, Olympia, WA