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For Immediate Release

TWHBEA Partner Events

5/27/13

A Statement from TWHBEA President Tracy Boyd

This past weekend, I made perhaps the toughest decision of my life. A decision that carries potential ramifications for many of my friends. It carries potential ramifications for immediate family members as well. I, along with six other members of the Executive Committee, voted to support H.R. 1518, better known as the Whitfield Amendment. That was on Saturday morning. Before lunch, our vote was not ratified by the TWHBEA Board of Directors. Presently, TWHBEA has taken no official stance on the proposed legislation.

Let me be clear... I love all facets of the Tennessee Walking Horse breed. I support the performance division. How then, you say, can I support this legislation? As president of TWHBEA, I represent the oldest and largest membership driven organization in the Tennessee Walking Horse industry. TWHBEA, being an international organization, is also the most widely recognized "brand" representing the Tennessee Walking Horse.

I have always said, "The future of the padded show horse is in the hands of two groups... the trainers who train it and the owners who own it." Unlike the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA), for example, who controls all aspects of the Quarter Horse industry, our industry is not set up that way... primarily due to the regulatory issues involving enforcement of the Horse Protection Act (HPA).

TWHBEA has no say over the padded show horse. TWHBEA has no control over the padded show horse. TWHBEA has no authority over the padded show horse. TWHBEA, does however, bear the brunt of the criticism aimed at the padded show horse. Our membership numbers are directly affected by the controversy. The group with the least input takes the hardest hit. Why? Because as the breed registry and the largest membership driven organization, we are the face of the breed and are perceived as its ultimate authority in the world equine community.

For many years, the padded show horse drove the market and TWHBEA benefited. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, when our industry was breeding 25,000 mares and registering 14,000 foals, it was largely due to the padded market. Breeders were breeding for that \$15,000/\$20,000 yearling. Horses were selling. New people were coming into the breed. In 1997, TWHBEA hit the 20,000-member mark and in the early 2000s operated under a 5 million dollar budget. We had some 25 or 30 employees. We were the second fastest growing breed in America and the fourth largest breed registry overall. Today, we have fewer than 10 employees. We've gone to a four-day work week and cut our staff's salaries by 20 percent. We are down to 8,300 members. Breeding production levels are at 1950s numbers. It is clear to me that what our industry is doing is no longer working in today's world. Times have changed. The world, through technology, gets smaller and smaller every day. We can't hide any longer. It is clear to me that our past has finally caught up with us and the image currently conveyed by our performance horse is no longer accepted in 2013.

TWHBEA has lost members in droves, and the brutal emails I have received tell me why. It is our reputation. It is soring. It is our image. My responsibility lies with TWHBEA and its 8,300 remaining members who represent all 50 states and many foreign countries.

- TWHBEA Lifetime Members
- TWHBEA Past Presidents
- TWHBEA Master Breeder Recipients
- Reese L. Smith Award Recipients
- TWHBEA Presidential Award Recipients
- Thank You 2012 World Versatility Show Sponsors!



THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2013			
TIME	COMMITTEE	CHAIR	MEETING ROOM
10:00 a.m.	Executive Committee	Tracy Boyd	Boardroom
FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013			
TIME	COMMITTEE	CHAIR	MEETING ROOM
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Bylaws	Dr. David Mullis	Boardroom
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Equine Welfare	Dr. Linda Montgomery	Auditorium #1
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	International	Isaac Bachert	Auditorium #2
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Endorsement	Denise Baker-Kryser	Boardroom
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Plenary Floor	Rick Wiles	Auditorium #2
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Admin/Fiscal/Audit	Rob Cornelius	Boardroom
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Training	Wayne Dean	Auditorium #1
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Owners/Exhibitors	Isaac Bachert	Boardroom
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Performance Horse	Christy Lantz	Auditorium #1
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Breeders	Mike Hicks	Auditorium #2
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Marketing	Joyce Meyer	Auditorium #1
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Youth	Caroline Hoffman	Boardroom
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Horse Show	Pat Stout	Boardroom
SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2013			
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast Available		
9:00 a.m. –	TWHBEA Semi-Annual Meeting		
After Meeting	Lunch Available		

TWHBEA WORLD VERSATILITY SHOW
 July 25-27, 2013
 Madison, Tennessee, TN

CLASS SCHEDULE

- THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2013 - 6:00 AM**
 - 8:00 AM Registration
 - 8:30 AM Show Starts
 - 9:00 AM Performance Classes
 - 10:00 AM Show Ends
 - 10:30 AM Lunch
 - 11:00 AM Show Starts
 - 12:00 PM Show Ends
 - 12:30 PM Lunch
 - 1:00 PM Show Starts
 - 2:00 PM Show Ends
 - 2:30 PM Lunch
 - 3:00 PM Show Starts
 - 4:00 PM Show Ends
 - 4:30 PM Lunch
 - 5:00 PM Show Starts
 - 6:00 PM Show Ends
- FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2013 - 6:00 AM**
 - 8:00 AM Registration
 - 8:30 AM Show Starts
 - 9:00 AM Performance Classes
 - 10:00 AM Show Ends
 - 10:30 AM Lunch
 - 11:00 AM Show Starts
 - 12:00 PM Show Ends
 - 12:30 PM Lunch
 - 1:00 PM Show Starts
 - 2:00 PM Show Ends
 - 2:30 PM Lunch
 - 3:00 PM Show Starts
 - 4:00 PM Show Ends
 - 4:30 PM Lunch
 - 5:00 PM Show Starts
 - 6:00 PM Show Ends
- SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2013 - 6:00 AM**
 - 8:00 AM Registration
 - 8:30 AM Show Starts
 - 9:00 AM Performance Classes
 - 10:00 AM Show Ends
 - 10:30 AM Lunch
 - 11:00 AM Show Starts
 - 12:00 PM Show Ends
 - 12:30 PM Lunch
 - 1:00 PM Show Starts
 - 2:00 PM Show Ends
 - 2:30 PM Lunch
 - 3:00 PM Show Starts
 - 4:00 PM Show Ends
 - 4:30 PM Lunch
 - 5:00 PM Show Starts
 - 6:00 PM Show Ends

many foreign countries.

Sadly, we have no more friends outside our industry. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) no longer supports us. The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) no longer supports us. The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) will not recognize our padded show horse. The American Horse Council, whom we've cultivated a close working relationship with for many years, has turned away from us, declining our annual sponsorship this year. The World Equestrian Games refused our sponsorship and returned it to us. The Kentucky After Christmas Sale had no performance horses this year. Last fall, the University of Tennessee featured a flat-shod horse rather than a padded show horse to perform at its annual homecoming football game. All of this breaks my heart.

I believe our modern-day padded show horses are cleaner than they've ever been. The problem is that nobody outside our industry believes it. And when you've lost the public you have lost it all... and we have clearly lost the public.

For two years our industry has known that Congress would attempt to take our pads and chains unless we provided an acceptable alternative. How did we know that? Chester Gipson, Deputy Administrator for Animal Care at USDA-APHIS, told us so. He told TWHBEA, he told the Trainers' Association, he told the Celebration and WHOA. Since that announcement the padded horse leadership's response has been to paint the chains and implement an ambiguous swabbing program. Now the padded leadership is threatening to suspend the licenses of trainers who show under compliant HIOs. Anything beyond that... "Hell No" was the answer. "No compromises!"

I understand that the Performance Show Horse Association (PSHA) may be working on proposed legislation to the Whitfield Amendment. I first heard this in January and have heard it again recently. I hope so. My understanding is that versions of the Whitfield Amendment will continue to be introduced in Congress year after year until something gets passed. It is not going away. So I applaud PSHA if they are working on an alternative. I hope they come up with something soon.

I want the performance division to survive. I believe in the need for the division. I only know that it can't and won't survive as it is currently presented. This to me is obvious. The padded show horse's survival lies at the feet of the trainers who train it and the owners who own it. If I lose some friendships over my vote then so be it. But I hope and pray that the trainers who train padded horses and the owners who own padded horses will find a way to put a horse in the ring that the public can support. Until then, we will remain alienated from the mainstream equine world. It's as simple as that.

In order for this industry to grow and attract new people, strong, bold, drastic action is needed. A different direction will be required. I just hope our industry will choose the direction rather than have it chosen for us. We all know that the pads and chains alone do not harm the horse, that is no longer the point.

For most of us, our show industry is more about people and families than it is about winning blue ribbons. It's about the people, the fellowship, the family fun, the friendly competition. Let's not lose sight of that.

No matter what happens with the Whitfield Amendment, proposed legislation or future versions... the pads and chains do not define this breed.

The Tennessee Walking Horse is the greatest breed in the world. We all agree on that. Just imagine the possibilities that exist for us if we could rid ourselves of this black cloud, this stigma once and for all. Forty-three years is long enough.

I'm sorry to those I've offended and hope that one day you will forgive me.

For further details or information, please contact (931) 359-1574.



to Drinking, Drugs and Bad Decisions
Activity Book





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