

Dear MQHA Membership:

It's July 1, and you don't need me to tell you that we are right smack in the middle of the MQHA show season. Our Maple Leaf show in Columbia was well-attended, the facility was excellent, and once the Boone County Fair folks get the footing fixed up in their new indoor warm-up pen, it will really be nice.

I'm also happy to report that our Boystown show was a success. Everyone who attended had a great time. We're in the process of planning the 2011 show, and some of the changes contemplated are really exciting—more on that later!

At our May board meeting, the MQHA adopted the American Horse Council's Welfare Code of Practice. A copy of the policy, as enacted by the MQHA, is attached. Essentially, the Welfare Code of Practice outlines what it means for an organization like ours to be committed to the responsible breeding, training, care, use, enjoyment, transport and retirement of horses. AQHA also has endorsed this policy.

Congratulations to the MQHA's own Cait Kerber, who just completed her term as the president of the American Quarter Horse Youth Association. You won't want to miss the article on Cait in the July issue of the Quarter Horse Journal. We are, as an organization, and I am, personally, very proud of Cait and look forward to watching her and cheering her on as she goes off to college this fall.

Congratulations also to Casey Willis, who enjoyed great success at the recent Tom Powers Futurity in Michigan. As I understand it, Casey won the 3 year old limited open western pleasure on One Hot Moonlight, owned by Dana Smith of Kentucky. And he was 4th in the 2 year old limited open western pleasure on An Impulsive Machine, owned by Jon Barry. Way to go, Casey!

The AQHA's Youth World Cup is nearly under way in Oklahoma City. It will run from July 3 to July 11, with youth from 16 different countries participating. And, our MQHA youth are getting ready for the 2010 AQHYA World Championship Show, also held in Oklahoma City, the first week of August.

Finally, just a reminder that MQHA's Summer Sizzler and Speed Extravaganza are coming up August 27, 28, and 29 in Sedalia. This will be our fall show and futurity for 2010. And, as an added bonus, the show counts for double MQHA points—so you won't want to miss it. Chairpersons Michelle Forness, Mike Tivoli, and Dawn Smith and their committee are working hard to make this a special event. John Boxell and Clint Fullerton will judge the AQHA events, but I'm also told that the Committee plans to follow last year's format of bringing in "guest judges" from the audience to judge at least some of the futurity/sweepstakes classes. The youth are also planning a fish fry for Saturday night, with Tom Downing at the helm. If you have any questions whatsoever about this show, please don't hesitate to call Michelle, Mike or Dawn. I hope to see you in Sedalia in late August.

Until next month.

Mike Murphy
MQHA President

Welfare Code of Practice Missouri Quarter Horse Association

Introduction

American society has grown away from its agrarian roots of only a few generations ago. The horse, which was once a staple of American agriculture and general transportation, is now used primarily for breeding, competition, sport, recreation and entertainment, although there are still many horses used for work on farms and ranches, and in urban areas and exhibitions.

The horse industry is committed to the safety, health, care and welfare of all horses and to always "Put the Horse First."

We address equine welfare and responsible care (1) by supporting a uniform Code of Practice regarding the responsible breeding, training, competing, care, use, enjoyment, health, transportation, and retirement of horses; and (2) by initiating communication with the public, the media, federal and state officials and within the horse community regarding these issues.

Our Commitment to all Horses and the Horse Industry

This organization is committed to the principle that the welfare and safety of the horse is the guiding principle in the decision-making process for all owners, service providers, organizations, events and activities.

WE ARE COMMITTED to the dignity, humane care, health, safety, and welfare of horses in all our activities and care. These are our highest priorities. We are the stewards of our horses and must be firm in the standards and practices that guide us. Our first principle is:

The welfare, safety and stewardship of the horse is the guiding principle in the decision-making process for all segments for the horse industry.

WE ARE COMMITTED to promoting responsible breeding practices and to produce better horses, not just more horses.

WE ARE COMMITTED to responsible training techniques. All training should be done with the maturation and ability of the horse considered. Horses should be prepared for competition with proper training and conditioning methods. Excessive disciplining methods, whether in stables, training areas, or during competition, will not be tolerated.

WE ARE COMMITTED to educating owners, trainers, veterinarians, competitors, exhibitors, and recreational riders to ensure that they know and respect their horse's abilities and limits, and their own, so as to not push the horse or themselves beyond their ability.

WE ARE COMMITTED to making all competitions fair and ensuring all competitors an equal opportunity to succeed. Performance-enhancing drugs, practices, or equipment have no place in competitions or exhibitions. Effective drug testing by accredited laboratories is essential to the safety and welfare of our horses and the public support of competitions, with appropriate penalties levied for violations. The welfare of the horse must take precedence over the demands or expectations of owners, breeders, trainers, sellers, buyers, organizers, sponsors, officials, or spectators.

WE ARE COMMITTED to the welfare of the horse as paramount during competition. The horse industry should invest in the infrastructure, environment and facilities to provide a safe environment for all horses in all activities, whether breeding, competing, or simply riding. Any facilities that house horses should be committed to the appropriate care and treatment of all horses while in their facility, and should be designed with the environment and the intended use of the horse in mind.

WE ARE COMMITTED to minimizing injuries to horses during training, competition, use, or work. Whenever possible, injury data should be collected, documented and reported to the governing body of the competition or any other injury database for analysis in order to ensure a safer environment.

WE ARE COMMITTED to the continual review, evaluation, and improvement of all rules, regulations, policies and practices in all equine activities, based on science (where indicated). When warranted, they should be refined or changed. This includes existing practices to ensure they are not being perceived as acceptable, particularly if new research has called them into question.

WE ARE COMMITTED to providing continuing education on all activities involving horses and eliminate inhumane practices as well as strengthening sanctions for non-compliance.

WE ARE COMMITTED to educating all people who own or work with horses to ensure they are knowledgeable in the proper husbandry, care, and handling of horses. Each horse should be observed frequently to ensure that they are healthy. In consultation with a veterinarian, all such individuals should develop a sound health care program, appropriate to the facilities, environment and needs of the horses.

WE ARE COMMITTED to providing an environment in which anyone aware of equine cruelty or neglect is willing to report it to the proper local, state or federal

authorities. Should an incident occur at an event, it should be reported to judges, stewards, responsible authorities or the sanctioning organization.

WE ARE COMMITTED to improving the health and welfare of horses through scientific research, collaboration, advocacy, and the development of appropriate rules. The industry should continue to support and work with the many individuals, universities, veterinarians, and foundations doing and funding equine health and welfare research in order to reduce injuries and improve health.

WE ARE COMMITTED to horse owners and caretakers ensuring horses in their care are current on vaccinations and following best practices to minimize infection and disease. When a disease outbreak occurs, horse owners and events must act quickly and responsibly, monitor the horses, report the outbreak to, and cooperate with, veterinarians, authorities, facility management and all stakeholders to bring a rapid resolution to the outbreak.

WE ARE COMMITTED to ensuring that our horses will have an opportunity to transition to additional careers, uses, or activities as the need arises. When necessary, owners and veterinarians may have to consider end-of-life decisions. The welfare, safety and dignity of the horse must continue to be the guiding principle in deciding how and when to provide a humane death.

WE ARE COMMITTED to being transparent about our activities in order to ensure the public, the media, federal, state and local officials and the various segments of the horse community understand what we do, why we do it, and support it.