



# Figurehead Early Winter 2016

*Newsletter of the Midstates Morgan Horse Club, Inc*

**Go to our Face Book page!!!!** Post quick news, photos, catch up on members.

<https://www.facebook.com/#/MidStatesMorganHorseClub?ref=ts>

**Go to our GREAT web site:** <http://midstatesmorganhorseclub.org>



## *From the President:*

**M**id-States Morgan horse club is small but strong because of our very successful Prairie State Classic Horse Show.

We have always been open to change and again we will be trying some new things by moving the show outside this coming year and adding some exciting new classes.

*Shirley*



## ***MSMHC 2017 Officers and Contacts:***

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# MID-STATES MORGAN HORSE CLUB, INC.

## Membership Form

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

Children:      Name\_\_\_\_\_ Age\_\_\_\_\_

                    Name\_\_\_\_\_ Age\_\_\_\_\_

                    Name\_\_\_\_\_ Age\_\_\_\_\_

AMHA Member? \_\_\_\_\_

General Family Membership (Husband, wife, children under 18)\_\_\_\_\_ \$30.00\_\_\_\_\_

General Individual Membership\_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00\_\_\_\_\_

Associate Family Membership (Family as above, with no voting privileges)\_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00\_\_\_\_\_

Associate Individual Membership (no voting privileges)\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00\_\_\_\_\_

Transitional Youth (18-21)\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00\_\_\_\_\_

Youth Membership (Individual under 18 years old)\_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00\_\_\_\_\_

Please send to: Gail Kelce  
959 High Point Dr.  
Rockton, IL. 61072

Check#\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_



# ***Mid-States Morgan Horse Club Meeting Minutes***

***November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016***

Meeting held at Jessica's Restaurant in Roscoe, IL.

Members in attendance: Cindy Berg, Dennis & Gail Kelce, Holly & Sierra Nash, Gina Ayersman, Shirley Orlando, Nancy Johnson-Tobiasz, Becky Gruenberg, Al and Kris Breyer, Kathy Berkheimer

Youth members in attendance: Cameron & Hayden Gruenberg

Shirley called meeting to order.

Meeting minutes accepted as printed, motioned, second, and passed by voice vote.

Treasurer's report accepted as read, motioned, second, and passed by voice vote.

Sierra voted in as new MSMHC Club Secretary.

Current financials – \$26,305.11 in checking, \$ 18,869.21 in savings = \$44, 934.12 total

Open Show: This year's profit was \$258.72 more than 2015. Numbers were decent.

PSC 2016: Entries and profit were down from last year --\$54,561 (2015) vs \$46,755 (2016),  
Saddlebred entries were lower than past years

PSC 2017: Show to be held outside this year at The Ledges. Paulette has had computer issues, but she is working on the schedule. Planning for Academy classes to be held inside, and in the evening instead of the morning on Sunday.

Performance classes to be held in the morning on Sunday. Paulette has suggested possibly having In-Hand classes inside as well? John Frye will be ringmaster. Shirley suggested Dwayne Knowles or Brendan Heintz as options for judge.

Gene Wright will be asked to be EMT again. Having hospitality outside vs. inside was discussed—with preference being inside due to not having to move in case of inclement weather/not having to rent a tent etc. Suggestions were made for Emmy & Ryan Grayson to be invited to return with their art/crafts booth as well as Gene Wright with T-shirts (maybe come up with PSC logo?). Gina suggested that nice quality trophies/prizes be saved for adult/performance classes vs. kids/Academy classes (ie silver plates/pads/halters etc). It was suggested that we look into new ideas for nice trophies/prizes. Jon McCarthy possibly to be show photographer? Shirley knows he is open for PSC dates; we just have to pin him down.

Class additions: Several requests for class additions were made. Gina, Holly, and Nancy requested a Hunter Pleasure Amateur Masters class be added. Sierra requested Western Dressage to be added. Gina & Holly requested Versatility or Hunter Hack classes to be added (consisting of rail work & couple jumps). Discussed that we all knew of additional exhibitors that would be interested in these classes.

Insurance: Regarding adding Versatility or Hunter Hack—concerns were brought up about the facility and club insurance policies covering this. Kathy checked our policy 'wording' & it did not mention jumping, but needs to be looked into as it may mean extra costs. Additionally, Holly suggested maybe a rider could be added to the policy. Kathy/Sierra to look into the matter.

Entry forms: Entry forms need to be fixed/updated. Shirley & Gail said that Cheryl should be able to do this. Discussion was brought up about setting up things for doing online entries for convenience of exhibitors, trainers, etc. Sierra said that Tami Johnson can do this for us for about \$200 (between set-up and maintenance).

Other business: Becky said that she is not doing any type of holiday party this year. Kris requested that all members send their news/updates to her ASAP so she can get out a current newsletter. The AMHA election is coming up, and Kris is running—please vote for her!





# Update

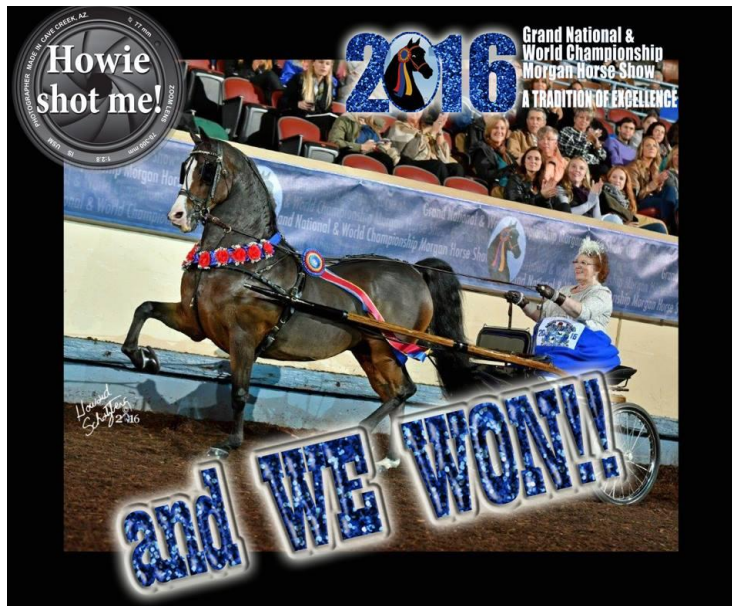
The Morgan Grand Nationals!! What can I say! From the beginning even before the show started the show committee raised the excitement level too, it's the 'place to be'....for me it's beyond words. I have had Morgans for 58 years have shown at the Nationals many times and won at a national level

when I was showing for Bellmara But to win a **WORLD TITLE** amazing!

I owe so much to so many but Emmy and Ryan for letting me lease MATCH BOX and Jamie and Becky for believing in me and making us the team we are.

Hearing your number called out when you knew your drive could have been better, the cheers, the lights out, the standing ovation, spot light  
**MATCH BOX EARS UP! Jamie SMILING....**interview, but most of all Jamie's **GOOD JOB HUG. MATCH BOX** knew he was a world champion very proud of himself.

*Shirley Orlando*





**So...it's been a while since I've composed anything for the newsletter but here goes.**



On March 4, 2016 a colt arrived (21 days late) from the recipient mare, Pharaoh, whose dam is Merriehill Roxie Hart CH and sire is Graycliff Tony GCH. Kodachrome, aka Quinn, is a big chestnut colt with two high white hind sox and a beautiful blaze.

Quinn is very personable and has the "Tony look", he will surely be a show horse in the future; in fact he was pinned Grand Champion weanling of the Illinois Morgan Breeders' Futurity in August at the



Illinois State Fair. Quinn also played with the big boys and was 4th in the Morgan stallions class behind mature stallions, not bad for a 5 month old!

Fall came and Quinn was turned out to play with his buddy Nikki. Nikki is a great mare teaching Quinn manners for colts try to take the upper hand.



With Roxie having been sold I needed a new partner and obtained I-Horse, aka Reagan, in December of last year. Reagan had been a consistent and successful classic driving horse but was green under saddle. Jamie and Becky worked with us all winter and we were under saddle and in the show ring by June. The two of us learned together and completed the show season with 2 reserve championships in hunter pleasure.



I was in an accident in mid September and pretty much all horse activities came to a halt, it was a chore just to get out to the barn to feed and let the two horses out for turnout. I am cleared to do so much more than before but my activities are still restricted as far as the horses go...good thing it is winter or I would be REALLY crazy watching everyone else show. Hopefully I will be cleared soon to assume more horse friendly activities.

I-Horse, or as we called him, Reagan, was a promising hunter having done very well his first year with two reserve championships and many placings with just seven months in his new division. Unfortunately our quest for more was not to be as Reagan colicked on December 2, 2016 and died from complications with the incident.

It was said to me that the, " good ones are the hardest to lose", and Reagan was a good one coming into his own as a hunter. Jamie, Becky, and I had high hopes for him but it was not to be. Reagan will be missed by many, he loved attention and was always willing to be petted by anyone even if there was no treat involved. Take care and run free Reagan, hopefully you will meet up with Jetstar and Sandy till we meet again.

Have a wonderful Christmas everyone and a safe New Yea!

*Nancy Johnson-Jobiasz--Oakleaf Morgans*



Equinox Black Jack in the Fox Valley Saddle Association Dressage show on October 16th  
**Rita Boserup**

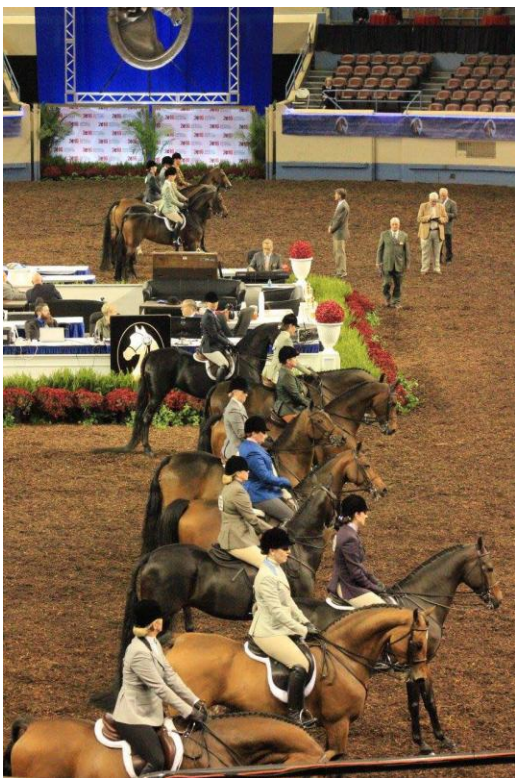
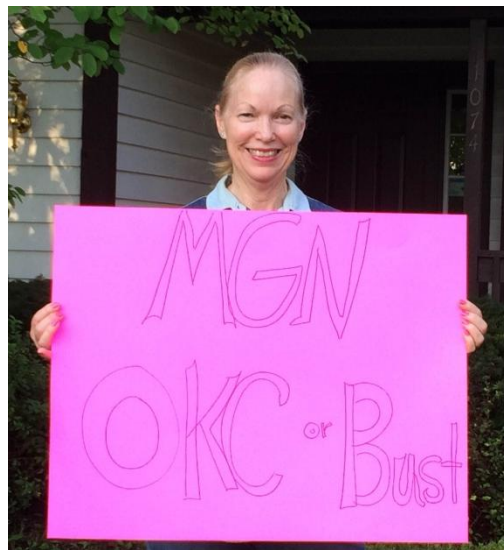






2016 was an unforgettable year for the Nash family! In February, we welcomed a new member to our family - RCV An Affair to Remember aka "Rocky" or Rockstar as we like to call him! Rocky & I teamed up to compete in the Western Pleasure division this past summer. With the awesome training team of Becky & Jamie Gruenberg, we had a very successful first show season together. In our debut showing at Prairie State Classic, we were undefeated taking home the Amateur qualifier & Amateur WP Championship. In

our second showing at Morgan Masterpiece, we won the Ladies WP class and Western Type In-Hand. We also took home a very respectable red ribbon out of a very competitive field of 14 in the Amateur WP qualifier. My Mom & I have enjoyed getting



to know this wonderful boy, and he is loving his down-time right now! Rocky & I are looking forward to trying some Western Dressage in addition to Pleasure classes next summer.

Our beautiful girl Tori (Century Oak Notorious) continues to make us proud mamas! After a fabulous show season with many clean rides & great ribbons in the Hunter Pleasure division, I'm so proud to say that my Mom & Tori accomplished one of her 'bucket-list' items & traveled to OKC to compete in the Morgan Grand Nationals! Tori was National 3 YO Hunter Pleasure Mare in 2010, Top Ten HP Ladies Mare with Becky in 2013, and we were ecstatic to see her become Top Eight Amateur Masters HP in 2016! My Mom & Tori worked very hard to get there, and



they took home an amazing 8th place ribbon out of a huge field of 18! They also did an incredible job in a huge class of 26 while they were there. Tori continues to amaze us with her athletic ability. She is currently jumping with my Mom & Becky, and loves it !!! Gotta love that Morgan versatility!

Although our show seasons were definitely 'icing on the cake', we have to say we are just so thankful for all the love & joy that our Morgan horses bring to our lives everyday! Looking forward to 2017!

- *Sierra Nash*





# Meet the Candidate for the 2017 AMHA Board of Directors

The Annual Meeting of Members of the American Morgan Horse Association Inc. (AMHA) will be tentatively held at The Mission Inn and Spa in Riverside, California, on Friday, February 24, 2017 at 3 p.m. Pacific Time for the following purposes:

## **ELECT THE FOLLOWING:**

Three Central Regional Directors (one for a 3 year term; one for a 2 year term; one for a 1 year term), which includes Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin (including the remainder of North America except Canada)

- See more at: <http://www.morganhorse.com/media-events/news/article/10108/#sthash.DJWfIIMM.dpuf>



### **KRISTEN BREYER Wauconda, Illinois**

My husband, Al, and I live on five acres next to a large forest preserve with riding trails in northern Illinois. We have been here 33 years with our small herd of Morgans. We have been actively involved with horses since 1972, and have owned Morgans since 1975. Working with a small budget has limited some of the things we would have liked to have done with our horses, but it has also made us very "hands on" and creative in our endeavors! We have done competitive trail riding, pleasure trail riding/driving, local showing, the "A" circuit, ridden & driven dressage, historical reenacting, parades, horse expos, reining, working western, carriage pleasure, and CDE showing/driving. I have been involved with breed and discipline local clubs for many years. I have

worked with a number of youth in the AMHA Youth Program over the years, as well as developed the AMHA Adult Badge program. I have also served on the AMHA Hunter/Jumper committee, Western Working, Carriage, Open Competition and Sport Horse committees over the last 25 or so years. I have served as the Region Five AMHA Director for eight years serving on the Finance, Bylaws, Clubs and various other committees. I am currently Co-chair of the National Museum of the Morgan Horse Committee. My background is in Field Ecology/ Biology, Animal husbandry, teaching High School Sciences, Museum exhibits creation, design and management of collections.

I would like to see AMHA continue to seek ways to keep the Morgan horse breed in good stead and increase involvement in the breed by owners and non-owners of Morgans alike, maintain a healthy registry and increase Morgan ownership in these trying times for all horse breeds and disciplines.



*Here at the Briar Patch, Merriehill Angel Dust finished her Open Competition Bronze Carriage medallion with points to spare in*



**2016...**

**Unfortunately,**

**Ultra's Special Glow slipped her foal BUT, is safely in foal to Cingate Revelation for a May 2017 baby....**

**Merriehill Worth the Wait showed his versatility by showing in Hunter Pleasure, Western Pleasure AND Carriage Driving this year!**

*Kris Breyer*





# Four simple rules for preventing winter colic

When the weather turns colder, certain types of colic are more common. But four measures can help protect your horse from seasonal pains in the gut. **By Katie Seabaugh, DVM**



Colic doesn't follow a calendar. Virtually any horse can be stricken with gut pain at any time of year. That said, there are certain types of colic that are more likely to occur in winter than at other times of year. A veterinarian called out to see a colicky horse on a frigid day in January is going to expect to find a certain scenario that she wouldn't for the same type of call in June.

The colics most associated with the cold weather months are impaction- related. When ingested feed stops moving through the horse's gut efficiently, the material can accumulate and form a blockage. Feed and gas then back up behind the blockage, causing distention of the intestine and associated pain. Impactions are

often found in an area called the "pelvic flexure," a hairpin turn the large colon makes back on itself, but can also occur in other locations.

Thankfully, impactions are typically easy to diagnose---many can be confirmed during rectal palpations---and treatment is often straightforward. A dose of painkillers, possibly a sedative, along with hydration usually gets things moving again. In more severe cases, hospitalization so that intravenous fluids can be administered might be necessary, but even those horses tend to recover quickly. Of course, it's easier on everyone if colic doesn't occur in the first place.

In that spirit, I'm going to share the four management tips that will contribute the most to protecting your horse from winter colic or, at the very least, recognizing it early when it's easier to treat. These aren't things you haven't heard before, but it pays to refresh your memory and resolve as we head into winter.

## 1. Keep your horse hydrated.

Any discussion of winter colic needs to start with hydration. Impactions are more likely to form with dry feed, and horses, for a number of reasons, tend to drink less in the winter. As simple as it may seem, frozen water is the most common reason I see for horses becoming dehydrated in the winter.

A water bucket can freeze within six to 12 hours, so if you've filled it in the early evening, your horse very well may spend some part of the night without water. If you chip away the ice and refill the bucket in the morning, the water may freeze again by the afternoon. A horse needs to drink from eight to 10 gallons of water a day, and that can be difficult if all he has is ice half the time.

So your first line of defense against winter colic is to make sure your horse's water source never freezes. There are many methods to accomplish this.

A variety of products, ranging from insulated buckets to tank heaters, can help keep water flowing. Keep in mind, however, that if an electrical component for one of these products shorts out, your horse will be zapped each time he goes for a drink. If he isn't drinking from a bucket or trough equipped with a heating element, offer him water in a "low-tech" plain bucket. If he drinks, there may be something wrong in the heated water supply.

A second reason horses can become dehydrated in winter has to do with water temperature. A study compared how much horses drank when offered ambient, near-freezing water compared to hot water. The researchers found that the study horses drank 41 percent more water when offered continuously heated water. The horses drank 38 percent more when offered buckets filled with hot water twice daily compared to ambient, near-freezing water. They seem to prefer to drink warm water when it's cold outside. Few of us have the luxury of hot running water in the barn, but an electric teakettle can come in handy. Filling a bucket with hot water has the added benefit of slowing the freezing process. Ideally, horses have access to water all day, but the most important time is in the three hours after feeding.

Another strategy for getting water into a horse during winter is feeding mashes. Bran is, of course, the traditional mash base, but I prefer to make more nutritionally balanced mashes---senior feeds work particularly well. The notion that it's the bran preventing colic is outdated thinking; it's the water keeping him hydrated that is helpful. So just add some warm water to your horse's regular feed to make a slurry and serve it right away. Most horses love mashes. You can also add a teaspoon of salt to encourage the horse to drink more, just like we would after eating a bag of salty chips.

## 2. Provide as much turn out as possible.

It's a well-established fact that a horse who is kept in a stall for most of the day is more likely to colic than one who is turned out. Pasture living keeps a horse's gut moving. Not only is the physical activity of walking around beneficial, but continual grazing is what he was designed for. That's why we strive for frequent, small meals to mimic the natural, healthiest eating patterns of a horse at pasture. And while confined horses are at higher risk of colic, those who were recently moved to a stall are even more likely to develop digestive upset. A recent British study showed that a horse's gut motility slows significantly in the first five days after a move from pasture living to stall confinement. This, combined with less water in their diet as they shift from pasture to dry forage, adds up to an increased risk of colic.

All of this becomes crucial during the winter, because that's the season when horses are more likely to be confined, due to either inclement weather or convenience for riders. Horses may have to be pulled off pasture abruptly if a snowstorm hits, leading to the dramatic change in management that immediately increases their chances of colic. The best way to mitigate this risk is to leave your horse turned out as much as possible. A horse with a thick winter coat or an appropriate blanket can live outside comfortably even in single-digit temperatures. A run-in shed or even a thick stand of trees is adequate shelter in a snowstorm. If full-time turnout doesn't work for you in winter, keep your horse outdoors as many hours as are feasible. It's also helpful to set up your pasture in a way that encourages your horse to walk as much as he might while grazing in spring or summer---spread out hay piles and put the water trough far from the gate so he'll have to move around. If pasture turnout simply isn't an option for a period of time, look for other ways to help your horse exercise. A few hours of liberty in an indoor arena are better than an entire day spent in a stall, as is hand-walking up and down the aisle.

### **3. Feed plenty of forage.**

When pasture dies back in winter, hay replaces grass as the foundation of a horse's diet. A horse on adequate pasture full-time will be continuously digesting water-rich grass, ideal for preventing colic. In winter, however, meals of dry hay are more common and can be associated with colic. Not only is drier forage more likely to create intestinal blockages, but the gut slows in the hours spent waiting for hay to be served twice a day.

Forage also figures in another common wintertime challenge: Horses will burn more calories in cold weather to stay warm and, in some cases, may begin to drop weight as a result. The natural instinct is to increase a horse's feed to counteract the weight loss. But increasing grain instead of forage is a mistake. Not only are you missing the opportunity to provide more gut-healthy hay, but the additional concentrates can lead to gas colic as the high-calorie feed ferments in the gut.

The best wintertime feeding practices include frequent, primarily hay-based meals. Using a slow feeder to make hay available to your horse 24-7 is a great idea. If your horse is dropping weight and he already has free-choice forage and no underlying health issues, consult with your veterinarian about the best way to add more calories to his diet. Rather than doubling up on grain, switching to more energy-dense hay might be a safer choice. In addition, many complete feeds that can be used to increase caloric intake are not as rich as straight corn or other grains. Remember to always make the transition to a new feed over several days.

### **4. Be vigilant when storms roll in.**

There are plenty of anecdotes about horses colicking when the weather changes dramatically. Talk to enough people and you'll hear stories of horses ---maybe even several in one barn---that colicked just as a large nor'easter snowstorm blew into the area. And as a veterinarian I see it, too. When we know a cold front is coming through, causing a dramatic change in the weather, we prepare ourselves for a rash of colic calls. However, studies looking to conclusively link weather change to colic haven't found a correlation. This could be because of the difficulty in quantifying weather patterns. Or extremely localized conditions may complicate analysis: What's happening on your farm atmospherically may not be the case a few miles down the road.

So we can't say with certainty that weather changes cause colic, much less explain why, but it is a phenomenon that is observable enough to take it into consideration when thinking about winter colic.

With that in mind, keep one eye on the forecast and be extra vigilant when a storm front is moving in. If there is an increased risk of colic when the weather changes, you don't want to pile on with other risk factors. That means making sure your horse has water, forage and some room to move around as soon as is feasible. Also, try to avoid making changes to his routine and management when the weather changes. When the storm arrives, check your horses regularly and watch closely for signs of colic. A colicky horse in winter may not be especially sweaty, but be on the lookout for restlessness, dry and/or scant manure, lying down more than usual and "flank gazing" as he looks back at his painful sides.

*This article first appeared in EQUUS issue #447, December 2014.*



**Dear Region 5 Members,**

December 1, 2016

The AMHA Board of Directors held their fourth quarter meeting in Kansas City, Missouri on November 20, 2016. Below you will find the meeting highlights.

Please note that the upcoming election for the Board of Directors will be completed entirely online. 2016 members in



good standing with valid e-mails on file will receive the electronic ballot and instructions on or around January 5, 2017. Anyone wishing to receive a hard copy "paper" ballot must request one from the AMHA office no later than December 14th, 2016. All the election information is outlined in the winter edition of the NETWORK which was mailed to all members this past week.

In addition, we hope you will consider joining us at the upcoming AMHA Annual Meeting and Convention at the Mission Inn & Spa in Riverside, CA February 22-25, 2017. An exciting schedule of events is planned and we would love to have a record attendance. More information and registration materials can be found in the winter edition of the NETWORK or on the AMHA website.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the AMHA office at (802) 985-4944, ext. 201.

Sincerely,

Carrie J. Mortensen, Executive Director

## AMHA Board of Director Meeting Highlights-Fourth Quarter

The AMHA Board of Directors held their standing committee meetings and fourth quarter board meeting in Kansas City, Missouri, on November 19 & 20, 2016. Below are the meeting highlights.

### Bylaws Committee

\*The AMHA Bylaws Committee met on November 19, 2016.

\*Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

\*The Committee submitted two "housekeeping" bylaw changes for review that would remove the references to "Household/Business" memberships since AMHA no longer will offer those options.

### Finance Committee

\*The AMHA Finance Committee met on November 19, 2016.

\*Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

\*Executive Director, C. Mortensen provided balances for all accounts. The September 2016 Financials (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) were reviewed and discussed.

\*The 2017 AMHA Budget was the focus of the Finance Committee and much discussion was held and edits made in order to submit a positive budget to the Board of Directors for approval.

### Registry Committee

\*The AMHA Registry Committee met on November 19, 2016.

\*Minutes from previous meetings were approved.

\*The Registrar gave a comprehensive report, which included statistics on registrations, transfers, etc. A status on open orders, parentage verification program, and waived signatures was also provided.

\*Items of Note and Discussion Topics Included:

- A continuation of positive gains in registry activity over the past 5 months was reported.

-The committee reviewed several member requests.

-An update of the Easter Twilight Herd was presented by the Registrar.

-Name Prefixes were also discussed and will be further researched.

### Board Meeting

\*The AMHA Board of Directors met on November 20, 2016.

\*The August 13, 2016 Board meeting minutes and standing committee reports were approved (including the above mentioned Bylaw amendments recommended by the Bylaws Committee and the 2017 Balanced Budget submitted by the Finance Committee).

\*Executive Director, C. Mortensen provided the board with written staff reports, web statistics and the updated strategic plan dashboard as well as a short oral overview of the same.

\*It was noted that the upcoming election for the new Board of Directors will be done entirely online. Members in good standing for the 2016 year that have valid e-mails on file will be sent an electronic ballot on or around January 5, 2017. Any eligible member wishing to vote with a paper ballot must request the paper ballot from AMHA no later than Dec. 14, 2016. This information was sent to all members via the Winter edition of the NETWORK mailed just prior to Thanksgiving.

\*Working Committee Chairs shared reports.

\*Items of Note:

- The Morgan Horse Magazine held a successful subscription special and it was very well received. TMH magazine

reports increased ad sales in comparison to last year at this same time.

-The Spring Edition of the NETWORK newsletter will be available on the AMHA website only. The Fall Edition of the NETWORK newsletter will continue to be printed and mailed to all members.

- The 2017 Grand National Horse Show was a wonderful show and very well received but down approximately 74 horses.

-The 2017 Board Meeting locations were finalized as follows: 1st Quarter at Annual Convention in Riverside, CA, 2nd Quarter at the O'Hare airport Sheraton in Chicago, IL, 3rd Quarter at the Marriott Courtyard Burlington Harbor in Burlington, VT, and 4th Quarter at the O'Hare airport Sheraton in Chicago, IL.

-The 2018 Convention will be held in Lexington, KY and hotels are being reviewed.

-Two SOP's (standard operating procedures) were amended. The first to remove the references to Household/Business memberships that will no longer be offered. The second clearly outlines the procedures regarding the hiring and succession of the AMHA Executive Director. Both will be posted on the AMHA website.

-The 2017 Regional shows were approved as follows:

### **Eastern Region**

Citrus Cup Regional (April 5-8)

Southern States Regional Morgan Horse Show (May 24-27)

New England Morgan Horse Show (July 25-29)

New York Regional Morgan Horse Show (Sept. 13-16)

### **Central Region**

Morgan Gold Cup (June 14-17)

Summer Daze Regional Morgan Horse Show (July 6-8)

Jubilee Regional Morgan Horse Show (Aug. 30 - Sept. 2)

### **Western Region**

Oregon Morgan Classic Featuring Far West Regional Championship (July 13-15)

Circle J Regional Morgan Horse Show (July 13-16)

Morgan Medallion Classic (July 26-29)

-It was reported that an initial conference call was held on November 19, 2016 to discuss the future of "regional shows." Each of the current 10 regions had someone representing their region on the call and it was determined that each of these representatives would go back to their respective regions for input and report back again in January of 2017. Additional meetings will be scheduled to continue the discussion and review all options and proposals.

-There will be two AMHA judges' schools in 2017, one at the Carousel Horse Show in Scottsdale, AZ and one at the Massachusetts Morgan Horse Show in West Springfield, MA. In addition, there will be a Large R school/clinic at the 2017

AMHA Convention in Riverside, CA.

-The Judges Committee is also looking into updating the current DVD's used at the judges' schools.

-The results from the various USEF Morgan Rules Forums were discussed and overwhelmingly approved across the board at all forums.

-The Young Adult Alliance and Youth portions of the current "Customer Relations" Committee were determined to need their own, individual committees going forward.

-There are 36 stallions included in the 2017 AMHA/WMF Stallion Service Auction. Those stallions are showcased in the Winter edition of the NETWORK as well as on the AMHA website.

-The new software project with PROTECH is moving forward and AMHA staff is meeting regularly with the team to ensure proper transition. Training will be scheduled in the Spring with a go-live date of mid to late summer.

-The Morgan horse is featured in the December issue of EQUUS magazine.

-The Board approved a National "Day of the Morgan" to be organized by Sandy Sessink after her overwhelmingly successful leadership with the 2016 Ohio Day of the Morgan. This is a grass roots effort to expose the general public to the Morgan horse. More information will follow as the planning gets underway but the event is tentatively scheduled for October of 2017 (a couple weeks after the Grand National).

-Discussion was held regarding the upcoming AMHA Annual Meeting and Convention being held at the Mission Inn & Spa in Riverside, CA. The convention dates will be February 22nd - 25th, 2017. There is quite a bit of excitement about this historic location, the great barn tours on Wednesday, the official clinic on Thursday and the numerous meetings, seminars, and events the remainder of the week. Registration information can be found in the winter edition of the NETWORK or on the AMHA Website.

The next Board meeting will be held February 22, 2017 in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and Convention in Riverside, CA.



# To Blanket or Not to Blanket: That is the Question

Dr. Joyce Harman

This time of year, us humans are pulling out our wool overcoats, our down jackets and our all-weather parkas. Many of us are also pulling out the outerwear for our horses...but not so fast!

Horses are much better adapted to the cold weather than we give them credit for. They grow an excellent winter coat that insulates them and keeps them warm and dry down to the skin. However, there are some factors to take into consideration when deciding how to manage our horses in the winter.

Let's look at horses in nature. In the fall they put on extra weight so they have fat reserves to burn to keep warm in the winter. This is the reason our domestic horses (dogs, cats and humans, too) always seem to get fat in the fall. In winter, the main food available is roughage, dead or dormant grasses and weeds. Roughage, and that includes hay, actually helps warm the horses because it releases heat as it is digested. Have you noticed that your horses eat more hay on very cold days? They are keeping warm.

Wild horses live in some of the harshest environments in the country and, though they often lose weight during the winter months, they survive on roughage alone. As Mother Nature intended, they're ready to gain weight rapidly in the spring. In nature, horses stay warm by moving around, since they often have to travel to get unfrozen water, and we all know how much exercise keeps us warm— just clean your barn and sweep your aisle to find out!

Now let's look at our modern well-kept horse. They are fat and well-fed so no problem in that department. Most have plenty of hay to keep them warm on a cold day and most have shelter from the wind and rain (either in the woods, shed or barn). It is good to give them more hay on a cold night, or at least the choice to eat more. But if your horse is in and the barn is closed up and it's 40 degrees inside, he does not need extra hay. Outside horses with a round bale often do not move much; they leave the round bale only to get water (at least that is what my lazy beasts do). So movement to keep warm does not occur much. However, if you are observant, you will notice that every now and then all your horses will run around for no apparent reason—but the reason actually is to get warm. Then they go back to eating.

## Winter Coats

Two horses are in the snow, one with a blanket, one without. Notice the unmelted snow on the unblanketed horse. His fur is working by insulating him. His body heat is not escaping; if his fur did not work the snow would melt immediately. The unblanketed horse has the same amount of unmelted snow on his back as the blanketed one.

Eventually since the horse is warmer than the frozen ground the snow will melt on both of them. The problem we humans have when we pat our horses in the winter is that they feel cold to touch, but this is because their fur has insulated them and is keeping all the warmth next to the skin. Horses can have icicles hanging off their fur and be perfectly warm underneath.

## Blankets

There are a few reasons to use blankets and a bunch of reasons not to. Horses who are clipped need to be blanketed, since we have taken their fur off. There are many wonderful, lightweight and well-fitting blankets on the market (blanket fit is for another day). Old horses who cannot keep warm need blankets, even if they never needed them when they were younger. In nature those old horses would have been eaten by a mountain lion, so they would not need a blanket. Horses who have been sick, are too thin, have been rescued or have any other health problems may need blankets. Some individuals of any age are cold-natured and really do need to be blanketed, as do horses who have no shelter. The rest of the unclipped population does not.

How many blankets do horses need? That depends on how much clipping has been done and the weather conditions. However, in most cases a single blanket will do the trick, with heavy blankets being used in the cold weather. You can stick your hand under the blanket and if it is toasty and warm, it is heavy enough for the weather. If it feels cool under the blanket, you may need a heavier one. Please do not get a great fitting outer blanket and add an old-fashioned design sheet underneath. The sheet does not add much warmth, and it usually rubs the shoulders and causes a lot of pain.

If you choose to blanket and start early in the season you will need to keep it up, since the horse will adapt to wearing it, and



his temperature regulation will be accustomed to it. Most of the time we blanket because we humans are cold and think our horses must be, too.

A vet friend of mine visiting early one December from Vermont remarked that the horses she saw in Virginia had many more layers of blankets on in December than her clients' horses had on in Vermont in January. Hmmm... they are all horses, right? So what is the difference? Vermont owners are accustomed to the cold, so they expect their horses to be adapted as they are. Virginia owners see much less cold weather, so they think their horses are cold when they are cold. The horses in Vermont were all warm and happy with single blankets.

If you do blanket, remember that a horse's fur fluffs out when it is cold. This adds air space like your down jacket has, and that air fills with warmth making the fur more efficient. Blankets crush down that air space, so you need a heavy enough blanket to provide true warmth. A thin sheet may protect a horse from rain, but it may not provide much warmth and may leave the horse colder than if he had no blanket.

How do you tell if your horse is warm enough? You have to get to know your horse and pay attention to small behaviors. Horses who are cold tend to huddle up in a sheltered place and may not be willing to go out into the pasture area even to eat hay to keep warm. They may really crave their stalls. They may shiver. However, shivering is also just a perfectly normal way to warm up, so a warm horse may shiver for a short while when he is cold and be happy. The cold horse will be seen shivering much more frequently or when all the other horses are not. Wet cold weather is harder on horses than dry cold, and a rainy 35-degree day will cause a lot more shivering than any other weather condition. Horses really appreciate some sort of shelter on those wet days, so they can dry off a bit and get warm. But it will not hurt a healthy horse to be outside and get wet and shiver a bit. Sheds are most used on rainy days, while a 10-degree day with snow may not find a single horse near the shed since they are happy in the cold.

## Sweating

Clipping a working horse in the winter becomes a necessity when you work hard enough to break a sweat. Sweat adds moisture from the skin out, which means the dry fluffy fur cannot work. Horses will get very cold if not dried off completely after working. Heavy winter coats do not dry easily, since the fur is very dense and is designed to not let water penetrate (so that the horse can stay warm when it is raining). Since many of our high quality blankets do breathe and allow water vapor to pass through them, it is possible to put a blanket on a horse who is well cooled out but still a bit damp and let him dry underneath it. But you cannot put a blanket on a warm or hot horse as they will just sweat more. Some horses, especially those with a partial clip, will sweat anyway under a blanket if not totally cool and dry.

Horses left blanketed in warm weather will sweat quite a bit under the blanket. This is a problem when you leave home for work at 5 a.m. when it is 15 degrees out, and by noon it is 60 degrees. There is no perfect answer, but unclipped horses can end up with rain rot and skin infections when they sweat for hours and do not properly dry out. See if a friend could stop over and take blankets off later in the morning, if possible. Or perhaps put a lighter blanket for the day—it may not be perfect, but it would be more comfortable than being too hot for most of the day.

In conclusion, don't simply assume your horse needs a blanket just because you're cold. Also, keep in mind that he gets warm by doing horsey things like frolicking in the pasture with his buddies. Let your horses enjoy the cold weather and go out for a ride!







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## **MID-STATES MORGAN HORSE CLUB, INC.**

### **Membership Form 2017**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

AMHA Member? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Children: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

All members (general, associate, and youth) who have paid their dues will have their name and address listed in the directory free of charge.

GENERAL FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (husband, wife, children under 18) . . . . . \$30.00

GENERAL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP . . . . . \$20.00

ASSOCIATE FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (family as above, no voting privileges) . . . . . \$25.00

.ASSOCIATE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (no voting privileges) . . . . . \$15.00

TRANSITIONAL YOUTH (18-21 years old) . . . . . \$15.00

YOUTH MEMBERSHIP (individual under 18 years old) . . . . . \$5.00

SEND TO: Gail Kelce, 959 High Point Dr., Rockton, IL 61072

Total \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Ck# \_\_\_\_\_

