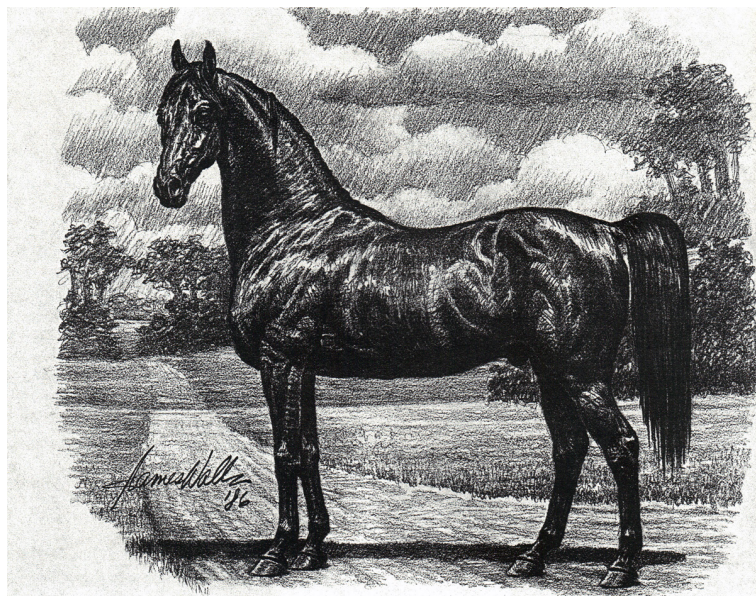


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“the pride and passion of the American Saddlebred is fueled by a far reaching extended family of which I'm proud to be a member.”

Robert Funkhouser



The great stallion Denmark F.S. was credited with being one of the foundation sires of today's American Saddlebred.

The Journal Of The American Saddlebred is a product of pride and passion. Ever since breeders of the Saddle Horse gathered in April of 1891 in the office of Farmers Home Journal editor Col. Jon B. Nall to “encourage more rigid selections of both stallions and mares and for greater and better protection of the American Saddle Horse through adherence to a recognized type,” as was written in Volume I of Susanne’s “Famous Saddle Horses,” both pride and passion have fueled the advancement of the horse we have come to know as the American Saddlebred.

Pride in their stock is what motivated those early breeders and that pride was a result of the passion that came with being associated with a type of horse that Susanne described as “through steadfast adherence to type came a family distinctive in gait, manner, conformation, differing somewhat from all other horses, finer than any, more beautiful, more intelligent, more useful than all – the American Saddle Horse.”

A century and a quarter later and breeders of the American Saddlebred possess that same pride and passion as they strive to raise horses that continue to give the breed the wow factor, no matter what their job. The Journal Of The American Saddlebred was founded on the vision and dedication of these men and women to produce a horse that is superior in the show ring, rugged on the trails, suitable to excel in several disciplines and be a best friend to a 40-pound child.

To pay homage to the stallions, mares and breeders who have left a positive mark on the American Saddlebred of yesteryear and today, pages and pages of statistics fill the Journal for those students

of pedigree. Complementing the breeding reference material and stallion advertising are the pages promoting the successes of those breeders - the champions of the show ring, including those from ASHA programs like the Futurity, the Sweepstakes, National Pleasure Awards, High Point Awards and “CH” status program. Congratulations to all those 2015 champions.

Matching the pride and passion of those subjects in the Journal, are the staffs of the American Saddlebred Horse Association and the American Saddlebred Registry, which produce the Journal. With Executive Director Bill Whitley and Registrar Lisa Duncan coordinating their dedicated staffs, people who love the breed and all it encompasses put the Journal together. The Board of Directors is greatly appreciative of the efforts they give to this project and many other programs provided by the association.

Back in 1891, Gen. John B. Castleman of Louisville, KY, was elected as the first President of the Saddle Horse Breeders Association, whose name would be changed eight years later to the American Saddle Horse Breeders Association. Through the years Castleman and his successors faced ever-changing challenges and with their respective boards navigated those challenges to the best of their abilities and resources.



One of the great leaders of the American Saddlebred Horse Association, the late C.J. Cronan is pictured in front of a picture of the first ASHA President, Gen. John B. Castleman.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My first year as President was made much easier by the fact that I had the opportunity to serve as a Director under both Judy Werner and Tandy Patrick before taking the hot seat. I am fortunate to work with our current board on a few programs, which were started by these former Presidents. The new data base project took roots in the Werner era and a dedicated marketing plan was initiated under Patrick's watch. We are proud to continue with both of these badly needed projects.

While the new computer system and data transfer was far from smooth this year as we needed it to be live before it was ready to be live, I am proud to say that many updates effecting the usability have been made with much input from the membership. I apologize that those updates were not able to be implemented in advance and hope that now that the initial shock to the changes have worn off we will all be able to enjoy the features that were never available with the dinosaur, forever remembered as the (AS400). I can't stress enough that we are not done. The cleaning up of data was far more engaging than anyone could have ever anticipated. I am hoping to soon celebrate the advances and tolerate the changes so that we may focus on one of the most active committees, Marketing.

We are extremely thankful for Allen Bosworth who a little over two years ago organized our Marketing Committee and held the sub-committee heads responsible with monthly meetings and deadlines. Four key initiatives were identified: Increase membership in the American Saddlebred Horse Association; Increase the registration of American Saddlebreds; Increase the number of Saddlebred and saddle seat Lesson Programs/Riding Instructors/College Equine Programs using American Saddlebreds; and Effectively position the American Saddlebred so that we consistently represent the breed to key audiences.

After restructuring our membership levels I am happy to report a significant increase in membership following several years of losses. There was also a slight increase in registrations, again after several years of declines. A result of an effort to increase registrations are the Select Series type classes (beginner and intermediate level) and programs that have been added in the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. We need more professionals to get behind these classes/programs and support them just as they would Louisville.

Lesson programs and college programs across the country have been identified and we are looking at ways to get saddle seat and the American Saddlebred into underserved areas. On the collegiate level, ASHA Treasurer and Rock Creek chairman David Mount put together a University of

Kentucky versus University of Louisville ride off at the Rock Creek Horse Show, which garnered lots of press and enthusiasm.

And then there was the program that generated an enormous amount of camaraderie, enthusiasm and fundraising, the ASHA/AMHA Trainers' Equitation Cup. Michelle Krentz and Bill Whitley knocked it out of the park with this program, which featured professionals riding equitation and taking it seriously, well all except Jim Lowry who still competed seriously.

Eight shows across the country held classes in 2015 with 112 trainers participating. Horse shows, the ASHA, the Super Convention and the sport of showing American Saddlebreds all benefitted by the attention and support given to this program.

One of the benefits to ASHA was the ability to hire a Public Relations professional to help us acquire stories and footage to promote the American Saddlebred in various uses in both television and print media. A few of the bigger benefits of this was the opportunity to interject into an ESPN interview with Carolina Panthers star Josh Norman who owns and trail rides an American Saddlebred named Delta 747. He spoke of the American Saddlebred during that interview.

We were also so very indebted to Michele Macfarlane for again taking a string of her homebred spotted American Saddlebreds to participate in the Rose Bowl Parade. Year in and year out Michele and her troops do an incredible job with their presentation on this extremely big stage. Carson Kressley was one of her riders and Ray Drasnin, our PR professional, organized print and local television interviews with Carson promoting the American Saddlebred.

As the calendar turns to a new year we eagerly look forward to participating in the Super Convention where the membership of the ASHA, AHHS, AMHA and UPHA will come together to work on maintaining our presence in this ever changing world as well as honor those who stood out in 2015.

While I am honored to serve and work with a board and staff that are filled with pride and passion, some of the greatest pleasure I got out of this past year was the many stories of American Saddlebred owners, breeders and professionals across this country giving of their time to promote this breed we all love. Whether that was riding in a parade, hosting a barn tour, taking magazines to the libraries and doctors' offices, taking horses to an all-breed show or hosting an area service club event, the pride and passion of the American Saddlebred is fueled by a far reaching extended family of which I'm proud to be a member.