



## ILLINOIS QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION

### General membership meeting

Jan. 12, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am. Gene Allen gave a general welcome after introducing the 3 officers at the front table. He indicated that he planned a different format for the general membership meeting this year. Minutes from previous meetings and committee reports were presented as handouts instead of going over reports as had been done in the past.

**Financial report:** Pat Fewell will be our new treasurer. A summary of the general account was provided, emphasizing that for the first time in 4 years the association turned a profit.

**Youth:** Dylan Easley talked about youth activities from the past year and thanked the association members for their support. He introduced Alyssa Lombardi, the incoming president as well as the new youth board members.

**Futurity:** We sold 32 stallions last year as well as paid out \$32300 at the futurity last year. For this year we have 66 stallions in this year's auction.

**Shows:** Our shows made a profit of \$15000 total last year, which was up from the previous year. Some of the profit was attributed to more sponsorship money being obtained.

Gene had a couple of discussion questions for the rest of the meeting to gain input from the audience:

#### 1. What can we do as an association to gain more participation?

Although the association belongs to everyone present as well as many more, the association could use more help. Everyone is busy but if we had more help the jobs could be more spread out. Finding some way to get the word out at the local level, to fairs, 4-H groups, etc. around the state was one suggestion. More localized non show events such as taking a more active role in the Horse Fair in order to create a larger Quarter Horse presence was suggested. Holding meetings at introductory shows or open shows could provide information to non-members. We do miss those youth and adults who only participate at speed events since most of our shows do not include speed events. A central picnic in the central part of the state was suggested. The recreational riding program seems to be fairly successful at getting the word out to more people not Quarter Horse oriented. There are more hours logged in their all-breed division than the Quarter Horse division. Kay Miller said she could get a list of open show clubs to send packets of information to in order to communicate with more people. Makayla Maciejewski offered to get information out to more groups in her area of the state.

#### 2. What can we do to increase numbers at shows?

The Amateur group had a costume class with a \$500 award last year at the futurity shows. Those present seemed to have fun with the class, which was one of their goals (to put "fun" back into our shows). More entries in that class, possibly an entry from each division of the association, was suggested. An Illinois owner/rider class at shows was suggested. Exhibitor parties are fun but do not increase numbers at the shows. Rookie classes should bring in people new to showing at AQHA. Having a rookie circuit award was suggested. Assigning a "hospitality group" at shows to welcome people and meet new people was another suggestion. Providing coffee and donuts in a barn, at the shows, in the morning was another suggestion. Cost is an issue at QH shows. If possible, we need ways to lower the cost as much as possible. Auctioning off a stall for a show was suggested. Groups have done this in the past and found it successful. Another suggestion was to encourage trainers to

promote association membership with their clients. This suggestion brought up a discussion on what the association provides with membership. It was suggested that we need to provide a packet with information about what people get for their membership dollars. People do want to feel they are getting something in return for their membership. Spending more money on year end awards was suggested. Since adult walk trot is sometimes the largest class we might offer some payback to association members in those classes. The recreational riding program offers awards at different hour levels so that program has incentive and rewards built into it. – donate stalls

### **3. What would members like to see the association do in 2013?**

Improving attendance and participation at our shows was the first comment. The 4-H clinic was popular and brought new people to that show. They need incentives to come back to later shows. Holding a clinic between the 2 weekends in March at Gordyville was suggested. The clinic would provide information and an activity for those non-showing days. Bringing in an equine college group to help with the clinic was suggested. Another suggestion was to double point shows run by IQHA (spring, youth, fall) which would, hopefully, translate to bigger and better year end awards.

Inviting other groups or associations to have their convention with our convention was mentioned. More than one association would spread out costs and cross over interests. Other groups such as Midwest reiners, penners & sorters, and/or buckskin groups were mentioned as possibilities.

Providing a free stall to someone attending their very first show was also suggested. Mary Hannagan had given a cheaper rate for stalls at the 4-H clinic/show. Investing money in shows to help draw more people was mentioned—providing breakfast, sponsoring some larger awards, etc. A flat fee per back number at the shows has helped with expenses at those shows that provide such deals. It also helps the participant know up front what some of the expenses will be. Creating a program where people can ask a trainer questions might be a good idea. It would make people seem more approachable at shows and encourage people to help newcomers. Jeff Greaves offered to help out to get professional horseman, trainers, etc. together to be a designated person who was approachable at shows.

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.