

Looking Back at a

by Keith Deaville

The year since our last NCHA Convention has been one of the most eventful times in our

Association's history. We've seen some big changes, like an increase of more than a million dollars in added money at our Triple Crown events; an overwhelming response to the revamped Super Stakes program; and the introduction of a medication policy that underscores our commitment to the well being of the horses that we all love.

And in the past year, we've also faced some major challenges, like the outbreak of the EHV-1, and a weak econ-

Through it all, our members and staff have worked together to provide the services and benefits we've all come to expect from the world's greatest equine organiza-

Let's take a look at some of the highlights of the past year . . .

Positive signs at NCHA shows

With NCHA's inclusion in the Texas Major Events Fund, added money in our Triple Crown events has grown from \$2.5 million to \$3,650,000. Added money for our shows from all sources exceeds \$4.5 million.

We've implemented a new Stallion Subscription / Foal Nomination program for the Super Stakes, with the result that the number of participating stallions increased from 112 to a record of 181. That's a 62% increase in the first year of the program.

Our goal with the new Super Stakes program was to have 400 horses nominated from the 2011 foal crop. To date, we've received 2,439 nominations of 2011 foals, a number that we were hoping to reach eight years into the program.

Entries in the Triple Crown events are growing again. The 2011 Futurity had 1,663 total entries, up from 1,611 in 2010. The 2012 Super Stakes had 2,051 total entries, up from 1,825 in 2011.

There was a good response to the new gelding classes at the Summer Spectacular, with 47 Open and 29 Non-Pro entries in 2011.

Overall, NCHA-produced shows received 443 more entries in 2011 than had been budgeted for. Purses at NCHA-produced shows totaled \$9.2 million in 2011, which was \$800,000 more than budget.

More than \$31 million was paid out in NCHA-produced and NCHA-approved shows in 2011, including more than \$9.5 million in added money.

The Mercuria NCHA World Series shows continued to

draw good crowds at most venues, and the new show in Lyon, France exposed cutting to an international audi-

Like other major equine organizations, we've introduced a medication policy at our shows to help safeguard the health and well being of the horses we depend on.

Advancing technology

A complete restructuring of NCHA's internal software systems is now underway. The new software will provide a foundation for improving all connections between members and the NCHA office. Two full-time programmers are dedicated to developing the new software.

In the past year, we began taking online entries for Triple Crown events, and we've implemented an email notification system for payment reminders.

Membership recruitment and retention

Membership recruitment and retention continued throughout the year via NCHA's website, Facebook, e-newsletter, e-mail blasts, personal phone calls and snail mail.

An Automatic Recurring Billing system was put in place for 2011, giving members the convenient option of automatically renewing their membership each year through a credit card or bank account.

All membership records have been migrated from paper files to the computerized Docuware storage system, resulting in secure storage of the records while making the records easily accessible to all departments.

While the numbers of life members grew slightly, the overall membership, although slightly down, held steady in the struggling economy.

Preserving our heritage

Celebrating our 50th NCHA Futurity in 2011 gave us a unique opportunity to focus on the history of our sport.

An enthusiastic, standingroom-only crowd watched the Neiman Marcus NCHA Futurity Champions Cup which brought past Open Futurity Champions together in Will Rogers Coliseum. This once-in-a-lifetime received tremendous media coverage, raised money Joe Heim and Sophisticated Catt.



for the NCHA Foundation and energized everyone who attended. Videos of the event continue to sell briskly.

The 50th Futurity gave us the opportunity to build our archives by recording in-depth video interviews with more than a dozen individuals who have been an important part of our history.

Building a solid foundation



The NCHA Foundation, now in its 30th year, had several key fund-raising initiatives in the past 12 months.

The 2nd Annual Zack Wood NCHA Memorial Golf Tournament at Canyon West Golf Course, Weatherford, Texas, with a silent auction and dinner party was held July 1. A 12-gauge Stoeger Stagecoach Shotgun was raffled.

Breedings to top stallions were auctioned live during the World Finals at the 2011 NCHA Futurity, including High Brow CD (donated by Chris & Staci Thibodeaux); Third Cutting (Carl & Shawnea Smith); Spots Hot (Wes Galyean); Metallic Cat (Alvin Fults).

The Zack Wood bronze, sculpted by Kelly Graham, was unveiled at the 2011 Futurity before taking its place in the NCHA office.

An auction was held at the 50th NCHA Futurity for Sean Ryon custom chaps autographed by past NCHA Futurity Open Champions combined with a once-in-a-lifetime experience to sit in the 6th box of the judges stand during the 2011 Open Futurity Finals.

Raffle tickets were sold for 30 pre-paid practice works, a \$1,350 value.

Autographed pictures were sold during a Meet & Greet with Buster Welch at the NCHA Futurity.

Ticket sales for the NCHA Futurity Champions Cup and the Pat Parelli Clinic supported the NCHA Foundation.

Our next generation

NYCHA has introduced a "Cut Above Incentive Program" to generate income for youth programs, with an added incentive for the individual who collects the most donations each year

Reaching out



CHA's Grass Roots Clinics continued to gain popularity in the past year, with members benefiting greatly from the clinics. Since June of 2011, we have held Grass Roots Clinics in Gonzales, Texas; Delta, Utah; Weatherford, Texas; Nevis, Minnesota; and Gonzales, Louisiana.

Combined with judging clinics and other outreach initiatives, NCHA has kept a busy schedule in the past year:

- 6-1-11 AQHA Seminar, Dallas, TX
- 6-10-11 Grassroots, Lebanon, TN
- 8-18-11 Grassroots, Utah
- 9-1-11 Judging Clinic, Weatherford, TX
- 9-2-11 Judge Applicant Clinic, Weatherford, TX
- 9-16-11 Judging Clinic & Applicant Clinic, Skara, Sweden
- 9-21-11 Grassroots Clinic, Weatherford, TX
- 9-30-11 Grassroots Clinic, Gonzales, TX
- 10-4-11 Barbara Schulte Clinic, Brenham, TX
- 10-14-11 Lecture at the Quarter Horse Congress, Columbus, OH
- 10-31-11 Grassroots Clinic Lyon, France
- 2-23-12 APHA judging clinic, Fort Worth, TX
- 3-19-12 AQHA judging clinic, DFW Airport, TX
- 4-20-12 Grassroots Clinic, Nevis, MN
- 4-21-12 Judge Applicant Clinic and Recertification, Toronto, ON Canada
- 4-21-12 Judging Clinic and Applicant Clinic, Italy (Bobby Hunt)
- 4-24-12 Judging Clinic and Applicant Clinic, Germany (Bobby Hunt)
- 5-10-12 Grassroots Clinic, Gonzales, LA
- 5-18-12 Grassroots Clinic, Lewisburg, West Virginia

The NYCHA stallion auction website was redesigned and the stallion service program exceeded its goal by raising more than \$100,000.

The new NYCHA trainer auction brought in over \$30,000 for our youth members through three auctions.

We've instituted a new point year for our Youth so that the Grace Ranch NCHA Youth World Finals can be held during the Summer Spectacular, our most heavily attended Youth event.

NYCHA was featured in *Dyanamath* magazine, which has a circulation of 200,000 readers.

Camp Fire USA and NYCHA joined forces with an equine education and mentoring program.

A whole range of partnerships and projects have helped NYCHA raise the funds it needs to support scholarships and our Youth programs. In the past year, these have included a silent auction at the summer show; a payment from Peggy's Blankets for each item washed; a silent auction of a Billy Klapper bit; a Gist 50th Futurity buckle in a gift basket; Trails West's donation of a magnificent gate; Pat Parelli's clinic at the Futurity and his new "Cuttin' for Kidz" program are a few of the ways our members and partners have helped raise tens of thousands of dollars this year.

In addition, the NCHA Foundation raised \$50,000 for the NYCHA.

A word about our sponsors

The value we provide to our sponsors is reflected in the growing support we receive from them. This year, we've welcomed new supporters like Grace Ranch/High Brow CD, title sponsor of the Youth World Finals; Seth Wadley Auto Group, the "Official Weekend Cutter Automotive Group"; eyeD; and Choice Barns.

A key part of our marketing program is to provide special events that benefit our members, attract potential new members, and give our sponsors exposure. In the last 12 months, these events have included the Futurity Champions' Cup, the World Finals Party, the Cajun Cutter Party, Cut Like A Champion Clinic and SynBioNt "Draws & Drums" Party at the Super Stakes.

Telling the world

We're using the internet more and more to communicate with our members and to reach out to cutting horse fans around the world.

The number of our fans on Facebook passed 25,000 this spring. Facebook gave us a valuable forum for getting timely and accurate information out to the horse world during last year's EHV-1 outbreak. We've also used it to publicize our events, spotlight our champions, and work with sponsors on special promotions.

We've redesigned NCHAtv.com to showcase our news, show and feature videos, and to provide a market for our DVD library. NCHA's online videos on NCHAtv.com have had 400,000 views in the past 12 months.

This year, we invited our NCHA Vice President candidates to appear in videos to tell members about them-



selves, and to stimulate participation in this important election.

We've used the internet to increase our daily promotion of the Eastern and Western National Championships, as well as our Triple Crown shows.

In the office

While the US and world economies have continued to struggle, NCHA has been able to hold its own. In 2011, we budgeted for a net income of \$2,500, but ended the year with a net of more than \$458,000.

Since 2000, we have seen really remarkable growth in terms of purses, participation, and exposure of our sport to the world. This growth has been a tremendous credit to our former Executive Director, Jeff Hooper, and the dedicated staff that he worked with over the years. The Executive Committee and I recognize the huge contribution Jeff made to the NCHA, and we wish him well deserved success in his new endeavors.

We were very fortunate that Bill Brewer, former Executive Director of the American Quarter Horse Association, agreed to step in as Interim Executive Director, and help us with our executive search. It would be hard to imagine anyone more capable than Bill to help us during this crucial transition.

And we have also been very fortunate to recruit Alan Steen as our new Executive Director. Alan understands our association and he has the experience and skills to keep us moving forward.

With the celebration of the 50th Futurity, launching new Super Stakes and medication programs, dealing with the EHV-1 virus, and finding a new Executive Director, the past twelve months may have been the busiest and most eventful year our association has ever known. There have been some tough patches, but I'm proud to have worked with this Executive Committee and the NCHA staff who have helped us get to where we are today. The staff has hundreds of years of collective experience and they are dedicated to making NCHA the best organization of its kind in the world.

I believe we're in a very strong position as an association and with our membership, our staff and our love for the cutting horse, we can continue to make progress in the coming years.

-Keith Deaville, NCHA President