

# AHCnews



## Thomason Elected AHC Trustee

Bill Thomason has been elected to the American Horse Council Board of Trustees. Thomason has been the President and Chief Executive Officer of Keeneland Association in Lexington, KY since September 1, 2012. Previously, he was the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Keeneland.

“I am very pleased to be serving on the AHC Board,” said Thomason. “I have participated with the AHC in various ways over the years, and very much appreciate the importance and good work they have done for many years. I am glad to be a part, and help however I can.”

“The AHC is very pleased that Bill Thomason has agreed to serve on the board,” said AHC president Jay Hickey. “He has been a leader in the racing industry for many years and his experience will be an excellent addition to the AHC’s Board.”

Thomason is a member of The Jockey Club, a board member of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association, Thoroughbred Racing Associations, Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau, Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, University of Kentucky Gluck Equine Research Foundation, Kentucky Chamber and Central Kentucky Chapter of the American Heart Association. He formerly served as the assistant treasurer for the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association/Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders and was a member of the audit committee of Breeders’ Cup Limited. Thomason also previously served as treasurer of the Thoroughbred Club of America.

In addition to his involvement in the equine industry, Thomason is an active community leader. He was chairman of the Greater Lexington Chamber of Commerce (now Commerce Lexington), chairman of the Lexington Arts and Cultural Council, and chairman of the Board of First United Methodist Church.

Thomason graduated from the University of Kentucky with a B.S. in Accounting in 1977 and a Masters in Business Administration in 1978. He worked for two years at the accounting firm of Alexander Grant & Co., before joining Mill Ridge Farm, where he worked for 28 years as Financial and Administrative Manager.

Thomason replaces Nick Nicholson, who was the head of Keeneland for many years and a past Chairman of the AHC. “Nick Nicholson has been involved with the AHC for nearly 30 years in various capacities,” noted Hickey. “We appreciate his long-standing service to our organization and the horse industry in general and know we can call on his expertise whenever we need it.”

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## Despite Washington Gridlock, AHC Advances Horse Industry Priorities

“Gridlock and partisanship were the defining characteristics of Washington, DC in 2013. The government shut down for the first time in 17 years and the first session of the 113th Congress has officially become the least productive Congress in modern history, passing only 58 bills,” said AHC president Jay Hickey. “Despite these challenges the American Horse Council was able to achieve several successes and advance many horse industry priorities concerning equine health, welfare issues, and disaster assistance, in addition to launching a new initiative to get more people involved with horses.”

Contagious equine disease outbreaks have negatively impacted the horse industry in the past and remain a serious threat to all segments of the horse community. For this reason equine health has been and remains a major priority for the AHC. In 2013 the AHC secured a \$1.2 million dollar increase for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) equine health program. The AHC also continued to develop the National Equine Health Plan (NEHP).

“In a year that saw most federal agencies and programs receiving cuts in funding we were pleased to secure an increase for the USDA equine health program. These funds as well as continuing progress on the NEHP will help ensure the USDA and horse industry are able to respond effectively to contagious equine disease outbreaks,” said AHC director of health & regulatory affairs R.J. Layher.

“Like previous years, several bills were introduced dealing with horses and welfare, and these issues will remain in the spotlight. The general public must be made aware that the industry is committed to the welfare of the horses upon which the entire industry depends,” said AHC vice president, government affairs Ben Pendergrass. “That’s why the elimination of ‘soring’ in the Tennessee Walking Horse, Spotted Saddle Horse, and Racking Horse industries and the AHC Welfare Code of Practice. <http://www.horsecouncil.org/welfarecode> are and will continue to be priorities for the AHC.”

In 2013, the AHC led industry support for the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act (H.R. 1518/S.1406) (PAST Act). The PAST Act would strengthen the Horse Protection Act (HPA) and prevent the soring of Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses, and Racking Horses. Soring is an abusive practice used by some horse trainers in the Tennessee Walking Horse, Spotted Saddle Horse, and Racking Horse industries to cause pain in the horse’s forelegs and produce an accentuated show gait for competition. Despite the existence of a federal ban on soring for over forty years, this cruel practice continues in some segments of the walking horse industry. The bill is targeted and would only impact these three breeds that have a history of soring.

The PAST Act is supported by most major national horse show organizations including the American Association of Equine Practitioners, U.S. Equestrian Federation, the American Quarter Horse Association, the American Paint Horse Association, the American Morgan Horse Association, the Pinto Horse Association of America, the Arabian Horse Association, the American Saddlebred Horse Association, the United Professional Horsemen’s Association, the Appaloosa Horse Club and many state and local organizations.

In October, the AHC held a widely attended Congressional briefing on the PAST Act to educate Members of Congress and their staff on the bill and industry support for the bill. AHC President Jay Hickey also testified in support of the bill before the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade. The bill has broad bi-partisan support and currently has 258 co-sponsors in the House and 40 co-sponsors in the Senate

“Additionally, in 2013 the AHC launched a new national marketing initiative, called ‘TimeToRide,’ to increase interest in horse-related activities. The center piece of this effort is a new website and social media platform, TimeToRide.com,” said Hickey. Through this initiative we hope to help more Americans find and participate in all types of horse-related activities.”

For many years the AHC has been calling for passage of a comprehensive immigration reform bill. This past year the Senate approved such a bill the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 (S. 744).

The Senate-passed bill would overhaul the U.S. immigration system and fix many of the immigration and guest worker issues facing the horse industry and all of American agricultural.



“This was an import step closer to the long-term goal of ensuring the horse industry has access to a stable legal work force,” said Pendergrass “We hope the House will take action on immigration reform in 2014 and we will be working to achieve final passage of a bill.”

Working with USDA, the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association and Kentucky Governor Beshear, the AHC was also able to clarify that horse breeding farms are eligible for the USDA Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). The ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by drought, erosion, floods, hurricanes, heavy snow, ice and/or high wind or other natural disasters.

“In 2014 the AHC will be continuing its work to pass immigration reform, an extension of three-year year depreciation for race horses, and the PAST Act. Implementing the NEHP and additional issues like addressing the trail maintenance backlog in our National Forests will be priorities as well. We will also be working to ensure that any legislation to legalize internet gambling does not adversely affect interstate wagering under the Interstate Horseracing Act, and tax reform does not unfairly impact horse owners,” said Hickey. “New issues that impact the horse industry always come up and the AHC will be ready to take action on those if and when they do.”

### **Favorable Tax Provisions Expire; Extender Bill Introduced**

During 2013, horse owners, breeders and businesses enjoyed a number of favorable tax provisions that have now reverted to lower levels or expired. Over sixty tax provisions have expired, some that applied to all businesses, including the horse industry, and one was specifically applicable to owners of race horses.

“While the Tax Extender Act of 2013 has been introduced to extend these various tax provisions, such legislation will not be passed quickly or easily,” said AHC president Jay Hickey. “Opposition has already been expressed by some. In addition, any such extension is affected by the stomach in Congress to deal with broader, fundamental tax reform involving much of the current tax code.”

For the last few years, the so-called Section 179 business expense deduction was set at \$500,000. This meant that anyone in the horse business, or any business for that matter, could immediately depreciate up to \$500,000 of the cost of any investment in business assets, including horses. The deduction was reduced dollar-for-dollar once investment in all one’s business activities hit \$2 million. It applied to horses and other depreciable property purchased and placed in service in the horse business.

This provision was not extended by Congress and has now reverted to \$25,000 for 2014.

Anyone in a business could also write-off up to 50% of new property purchased and placed in service in 2013, including assets used in the horse business, such as horses and other equipment. This was known as “bonus depreciation.” It was restricted to new assets, which meant that the first use of the horse or other property had to begin with the taxpayer.

This was also not extended and has expired completely for 2014.

Finally, from 2009 through 2013 all race horses could be depreciated over three years, regardless of when they were placed in service. This provision was passed in 2008 through the efforts of Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). The change, which eliminated the 7-year depreciation period for race horses and made all race horses eligible for three-year depreciation, expired at the end of 2013. Beginning in 2014, the pre-2009 rules will have to be used, meaning owners will have to decide whether to place a race horses in service at the end of its yearling year and depreciate it over 7 years or wait until it is over 2 (24 months and a day after foaling) and depreciate it over three years.



The tax extender bill would extend over 60 expired tax provisions, including:

- Reinstating the expense deduction at \$500,000;
- Reinstating bonus depreciation at 50%; and
- Reinstating the depreciation of race horses at three years.

“Whether these provisions are extended depends on whether Congress can come to grips with a real tax reform package. If it can, the various expired tax provisions will be dealt with in that package. If it can’t, it’s more likely that a simple tax extender bill will be passed. But as I mentioned earlier, even that will not be done easily or quickly,” said Hickey.

In addition to the tax extender bill, a stand-alone bill has been introduced by Congressman Andy Barr (R-KY), the Race Horse Cost Recovery Act (H.R. 2212), which would make permanent the ability to depreciate all race horses over three years regardless of their age when placed in service.

“One way or another we hope to reinstate the ability to depreciate all race horses over three years,” continued Hickey.

## **House Passes Farm Bill, Senate Approval Expected**

On January 29, 2013, The House of Representatives passed a multi-year Farm Bill known as the Agricultural Act of 2014. The bill will set national agriculture policy and reauthorize many U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs for the next five years.

“The horse industry is not as dependent on programs authorized by the Farm Bill as other segments of American agriculture,” said AHC vice president of government affairs Ben Pendergrass. “However, several programs important to the horse industry are reauthorized by the bill, including livestock disaster programs, the Market Access Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.”

The bill is expected to be passed by the Senate and signed by the President in the near future.

### **Agricultural Act of 2014**

The bill will reauthorize and maintain current funding levels for the Market Access Program (MAP) until 2018. MAP provides funding for overseas marketing and promotional activities to help build commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural products and commodities. The program is used by the horse industry to promote American horses to foreign markets.

The bill will also reauthorize the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers. Assistance includes help to plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and provide opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. Horse farms and ranches are eligible for this program.

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), the Livestock Forage Program (LFP), and the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP), which expired in 2011, are reauthorized. These programs are administered by the USDA Farm Service Administration and compensate livestock producers, including horse breeding farms and ranches, for the loss of animals from natural disasters and diseases, and help producers who have lost grazing land from drought pay for feed.

The bill explicitly includes horses in the definition of livestock and ensures horse farms and ranches are eligible for disaster programs open to other livestock producers.



Additionally, the manager's statement accompanying the bill recognized the importance of equine health and encouraged USDA to increase resources for equine health research in its annual budget request.

"The AHC supported reauthorization of these programs that are beneficial to the horse industry and the manager's statement regarding equine health," said Pendergrass.

## **Omnibus Appropriations Bill Approved**

On January 16, 2014, an omnibus appropriations bill that will fund the government was passed by Congress and signed by the President on the 17th. This bill is a package of all 12 annual appropriations bills and will fund all government agencies and programs until the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2014.

"Normally, Congress debates and approves separate appropriation bills for each federal agency. However, Congress has been unable to pass any individual FY 2014 appropriations bills and has been relying on Continuing Resolutions (CRs) that are extensions of previous bills to keep the government operating," said AHC president Jay Hickey. "The omnibus bill contains several provisions that impact the horse industry, including the U.S. Department Agriculture (USDA) FY 2014 appropriations bill."

The USDA division of the bill appropriates \$821.7 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). APHIS is the USDA agency responsible for protecting and promoting U.S. agricultural health, including responding to contagious equine disease outbreaks. Funding for Equine, Cervid, and Small Ruminant health is set at \$19.5 million, a \$300,000 increase over FY 2013.

Additionally, the bill provides \$697,000 for enforcement of the Horse Protection Act (HPA). "Adequate funding for APHIS, equine health, and the HPA are important for the welfare of U.S. horses and the economic health of the horse industry," said Hickey.

The bill also contains language that would prohibit USDA from using any funds to provide inspectors at meat processing facilities that slaughter horses. For several years beginning in 2005 the USDA was prohibited from funding inspections at horse slaughter facilities, which prevented any such facility from operating in the United States. However, the FY 2012 USDA appropriations bill lifted the prohibition on funding for USDA inspections and would have allowed horse processing to resume.

To date, no horse slaughter facilities have resumed operating in the U.S. Several are planned, but have been prevented from opening because of pending litigation. Regardless of the outcome of any ongoing litigation, this bill would prevent any facility from opening until the bill expires on September 30, 2014.

The language was included in the omnibus bill because both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees adopted amendments that prohibited funding for inspectors at horse slaughter facilities when they debated and approved their respective versions of the FY 2014 USDA appropriations bill. The Senate amendment was offered by Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC), the House amendment was offered by Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA). Both were approved on voice votes.

The omnibus bill also contains a new provision that would prohibit the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from euthanizing healthy wild horses in its care or from selling wild horses or burros that results in their destruction for processing into commercial products. A 2004 change to the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act allowed excess wild horse and burros to be sold by the BLM without restriction if they were more than ten years old or had been unsuccessfully offered for adoption at least three times. However, it is the current policy of the BLM not to sell or send any wild horses or burros to slaughter.



## **AHC Testifies Before House Committee on Soring Bill**

On November 13, 2013, the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade, held a hearing regarding the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act of 2013 (H.R. 1518) or PAST Act. American Horse Council (AHC) President Jay Hickey testified in support of the bill.

“The AHC supports the PAST Act and believes it has the potential to end the abusive practice of soring in the Tennessee Walking Horse, Racking Horse, and Spotted Saddle Horse industries,” said Hickey. “I was happy to appear before the committee and explain why the AHC and the major national horse show associations support the bill.”

Soring is an abusive practice used to cause pain in a horse’s forelegs and produce an accentuated show gait for competition. It usually involves the use of action devices, chemicals, pads, wedges alone or in combination with the application of irritating or blistering chemical agents to a horse’s forelegs. The showing, sale, auction, exhibition, or transport of horses that have been “sored” has been prohibited by the Horse Protection Act (HPA) since 1970.

“Despite the HPA’s 43 year prohibition on soring, a 2010 USDA Office of Inspector General (OIG) report found that this practice continues to be a problem in the ‘big lick’ or ‘performance horse’ segments of the Tennessee Walking Horse, Racking Horse, and Spotted Saddle Horse industry,” said Hickey.

The PAST act would amend the HPA to prohibit a Tennessee Walking Horse, a Racking Horse, or a Spotted Saddle Horse from being shown, exhibited, or auctioned with an “action device,” or “a weighted shoe, pad, wedge, hoof band or other device or material” if it is constructed to artificially alter the gait of the horse and is not strictly protective or therapeutic. These new prohibitions would not apply to other breeds that do not have a history of soring.

The legislation would also increase fines and penalties for violations, including the potential for a lifetime ban for repeat offenders.

Additionally, the bill would create a new licensing process for horse show inspectors, eliminating the current ineffective Designated Qualified Persons (DQPs) program. The bill would require the U.S. Department of Agriculture to train, license and appoint new independent inspectors for shows and other HPA-regulated activities that wish to hire an inspector. Licensed or accredited veterinarians would be given preference for these positions. The decision to hire and cost of an inspector would still reside with the management of a show, sale or auction.

“Because soring remains a problem, the PAST Act amendments to the HPA are clearly needed and justified. The bill is narrowly focused on the problem it is intended to solve and does not adversely affect or unnecessarily burden other segments of the horse show industry that are not soring horses and have no history of soring horses,” continued Hickey. “Soring is unquestionably abusive and its continued prevalence is severely damaging the Tennessee Walking Horse, Racking Horse, and Spotted Saddle Horse industries and negatively impacting public perception of other segments of the horse industry. The public sees other breeds doing an animated gait and thinks it is a walking horse and being sored, rather than performing its natural gaits. That reflects badly on the entire show horse industry.”

Also, testifying in support of the PAST Act were Dr. W. Ron DeHaven, Executive Vice President & CEO of the American Veterinary Medical Association; Marty Irby, International Director and Former President Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders’ & Exhibitors’ Association; Teresa Bippen, President Friends of Sound Horses; and Donna Benefield, International Walking Horse Association.

Witnesses opposing the bill were Julius Johnson, Commissioner Tennessee Department of Agriculture, and Dr. John Bennett, on behalf of Performance Show Horse Association.



Other national organizations that support the bill include, the American Association of Equine Practitioners, U.S. Equestrian Federation, the American Quarter Horse Association, the American Paint Horse Association, the American Morgan Horse Association, the Pinto Horse Association of America, the Arabian Horse Association, the American Saddlebred Horse Association, the United Professional Horsemen's Association, the Appaloosa Horse Club, and the American Veterinarian Medical Association as well as many other state and local organizations.

The bill has broad bipartisan support and currently has 258 co-sponsors in the House and 40 co-sponsors in the Senate.

The full written testimony of the AHC and full hearing can be viewed at: <http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearing/legislative-hearing-hr-1518-bill-amend-horse-protection-act>

### **Persechino to Chair Horse Show Committee**

The American Horse Council (AHC) has named Tom Persechino the new Chairman of the AHC Horse Show Committee, replacing outgoing Chairman Cam Foreman.

“The knowledge and expertise of the Horse Show Committee is an invaluable resource for the AHC,” said Jay Hickey, President of the AHC. “Cam has been a great chairman of the committee and we appreciate his service. Tom has been involved with the Horse Show Committee for many years and we are pleased to have him take over,” said Hickey.

Persechino is the Executive Director of Competition and Breed Integrity for the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA). In this role, he is in charge of show and race competition and assists with coordinating AQHA's marquee events. He also guides the AQHA's new Breed Integrity and Animal Welfare Department, oversees the Association's public policy efforts and works to help grow international markets for the American Quarter Horse and the AQHA members.

He has held several positions with AQHA since 1993 including Executive Director of Marketing and Director of Racing Marketing. He was part of the original management team that opened Remington Park in Oklahoma City and managed the Park's fan education programs and simulcasting network.

Tom is a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma where he received a Bachelor of Arts in communications with an emphasis on marketing.

### **Senate Passes Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act**

On January 8, 2014, the United States Senate passed the Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act (S. 1171), sponsored by Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS). The bill was passed unanimously without amendment and has been sent to the House of Representatives where it awaits further action.

The Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act amends the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to clarify that veterinarians are allowed to transport, administer and dispense controlled substances and medications outside of their registered offices and hospitals. It would ensure equine veterinarians have the ability provide mobile or ambulatory services in the field to the horse community.

“The horse community is very happy to see the Vet Mobility Act passed the Senate,” said R.J. Layher, Director of Health & Regulatory Affairs. “This is a step in the right direction and helps veterinarians do what they do best by caring for the horses and keeping them healthy.”

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) recently changed its interpretation of provisions within the CSA regarding what veterinarians may carry with them. The DEA has stated it now believes it is illegal for veterinarians to transport controlled substances and medications for use outside of their registered locations, such as an animal hospital.



Equine veterinarians often provide mobile services and treat horses at farms, training facilities, horse shows, or racetracks. In many cases it is not possible for owners to bring their horses to a clinic or hospital. For this reason, veterinarians have for years carried any medications they may have needed with them secured in their vehicle. However, their ability to do this and provide care to horse in the field is now in jeopardy.

“This legislation would allow vets to continue to treat horses as they always have. The AHC supports this bill and hopes the House will pass the bill quickly,” said Layher.

### **House Sub-Committee Holds Hearing on Racing Medication Bill**

On November 21, 2013, the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade, held a hearing regarding the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act of 2013 (H.R. 2012/S. 937).

The bill would regulate/prohibit substances and treatments that may be used in racing and was introduced by Congressman Joe Pitts (R-PA) earlier this year. It would also, give the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency authority to permit/prohibit the drugs and medications that may be administered to a horse in a race subject to an interstate off-track wager and set the withdrawal period for its administration.

Witnesses included: Jesse Overton, Former Minnesota Racing Commissioner; Phil Hanrahan, Chief Executive Officer National Horsemen’s Benevolent & Protective Association; Dr. Lawrence Soma, Professor Emeritus of Anesthesia and Clinical Pharmacology University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine; Travis Tygart, Chief Executive Officer U.S. Anti-Doping Agency; Sheila Lyons, DVM; Wayne Pacelle, Chief Executive Officer and President, Humane Society of the United States.

Written testimony and the full hearing can be viewed at:

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearing/hr-2012-bill-improve-integrity-and-safety-interstate-horseracing-and-other-purposes>

“No action has been taken on this legislation in either the House or Senate, but the AHC will continue to monitor the bill closely,” said AHC Vice President, Government Affairs Ben Pendergrass.

### **National Equine Health Plan Continues to Take Shape**

The American Horse Council (AHC), the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) and State and Federal Animal Health Officials have been working on the final stages of the National Equine Health Plan (NEHP), including the establishment of the Equine Disease Communication Center.

The NEHP is an industry driven initiative that will mitigate the threat of infectious equine diseases through sound bio-security practices and will serve as an educational tool for all horse owners. Because horses move constantly for breeding, shows, races and recreation, infectious diseases are a major concern for the horse industry.

“A healthy horse is a healthy industry,” said R.J. Layher, AHC Director of Health & Regulatory Affairs. “The NEHP will not only help keep the industry economically viable, it will be a plan that individual owners can custom tailor to fit their operation.”

Dr. Nat White, Professor Emeritus of Equine Surgery at the Marion duPont-Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Virginia, has been heading up work on the EDCC. When operational, the EDCC will collect and disseminate information regarding disease outbreaks all around the country and serve as an educational tool for horse owners when they need information on specific diseases or bio-security procedures.



“Due to social media today, incorrect information about an outbreak can spread quickly and have a devastating effect on the industry and the communities involved with hosting equine events. The EDCC will reduce the chances of false statements being made on Facebook, Twitter or other social media outlets and help keep the industry informed.” said Layher.

### **2014 Horse Industry Directory Now Available**

The American Horse Council’s (AHC) annual Horse Industry Directory is a yearly effort to publish a definitive source that puts the entire equine industry at your fingertips. It is the most comprehensive national directory of breed and sport organizations, equine publications, state resources and racing and gaming organizations available.

The 2014 Horse Industry Directory had a staggering 1,000+ listings including equine publications, state agriculture resources, federal contacts, breed registries and associations, show and sport organizations, equine service providers and more. No other publication provides the depth of national horse industry resources found in the Horse Industry Directory.

For just \$25, you can have the ultimate horse industry resource available. The 2014 Horse Industry Directory is also a member benefit at certain levels of membership with the AHC.

You can join the AHC or order the 2014 Horse Industry Directory by visiting the AHC web site at [www.horsecouncil.org](http://www.horsecouncil.org) or by phone at 202-296-4031. AHC members at the Legislative Level and above will receive their copies of the 2014 Directory automatically.

### **The Unwanted Horse Coalition- 2013 in Review**

The Unwanted Horse Coalition has been operating for over 7 years under the auspices of the American Horse Council and is under the direction of Ericka Caslin. Its mission is to reduce the number of unwanted horses and to improve their welfare through education and the efforts of organizations committed to the health, safety, and responsible care and disposition of these horses. Through the UHC website, strong committees, educational materials (brochures, flyers, handbooks, surveys, and books) hands-on projects directly benefitting horses and horse owners, and a constant e-news summary the UHC’s mission continues to hold fast.

The UHC has been working on many different projects in 2013. In 2014 we will continue to improve and build upon our current programs while brainstorming new ideas and forming new, important partnerships that will help the welfare of unwanted horses. We will also continue to educate the public about unwanted horses, owning responsibly, and breeding responsibly.

For questions about the UHC or how you can get involved, contact UHC Director, Ericka Caslin at [ecaslin@horsecouncil.org](mailto:ecaslin@horsecouncil.org) or call the office at 202-296-4031.

#### **A Glimpse of 2013 for the Unwanted Horse Coalition:**

- The UHC’s Operation Gelding Program continues to be an industry role model for castration clinics and castration clinic grant programs. The program has aided in the castration of 849 stallions in 28 states since its inception in September 2010. Thanks to the AAEP Foundation, the USEF, and Zoetis, we have been able to fund the program through the fall.

- The UHC is a partner in The Equine Network’s A Home for Every Horse program (AHFEH). AHFEH is a universal website where rescues may list their horses available for adoption. The service is free and available to all 501 (c)(3) registered facilities ([www.ahomeforeveryhorse.com](http://www.ahomeforeveryhorse.com)) The website was launched in November, 2011. Current program stats: more than 1,000 adoptable horses are currently listed on the website and there are more than 500 rescues participating. AHFEH sponsor, Purina, gave over \$150,000 worth of free feed to participating rescues. Weatherbeeta, another sponsor of AHFEH, has a special AHFEH blanket and is donating them to rescue horses in need. AHFEH Facebook page currently has over 8,000 ‘likes’.



- The UHC is still distributing Dr. Jennifer Williams' book *How to Start and Run a Rescue*. The book is \$20, which includes shipping and all proceeds go to our Operation Gelding grant program. This book is an indispensable resource that offers practical and insightful advice to those who are interested in starting a rescue or those who may already have a rescue, but may need help improving upon their business. The book covers topics such as formation of a nonprofit, fundraising, public relations and marketing, networking, formulating policies, successful bookkeeping, and much more. Dr. Williams discusses the complex issues involved in founding a rescue, long-term management, and improving upon a currently existing rescue.

- The UHC website ([www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org](http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org)) still provides information for horse owners and lovers alike. We currently have a list of over 700 facilities that accept horses listed on our site, all categorized by state. We also have a growing directory of resources for horse owners in need. We have lists of available grants, haybanks/feedbanks, castration clinics, vaccination and veterinary grant programs, free equine classified websites, and more.

- The UHC has a variety of materials at the public's disposal from brochures and flyers, to surveys and handbooks. These materials are all available for free download on the UHC website. If you'd like any of these materials in hard copy, contact UHC director, Ericka Caslin at [ecaslin@horsecouncil.org](mailto:ecaslin@horsecouncil.org) or call the office at 202-296-4031.

- The UHC committee chairs will begin to discuss updating UHC materials, hosting UHC webinars, and UHC regional meetings. To stay up to date on UHC news and information, join the UHC Media Roundup by e-mailing [ecaslin@horsecouncil.org](mailto:ecaslin@horsecouncil.org) and requesting to join our e-mail list.