



January 25, 2011

To All ADHHA Members, Breeders and Owners:

In the coming days and weeks you will probably hear, or may have already heard, all sorts of rumors and stories about ADHHA. The purpose of this letter is to help you understand the circumstances, and to provide information about our plans for the future of the registry.

Recently, we were offered a price for the sale of ADHHA. At first, we were inclined to sell because there had been threats and intimidation. But, after careful consideration, we finally decided to keep ADHHA registry and continue our work to move the industry forward.

We are firmly committed to promoting and supporting ADHHA as the only registry for Dutch Harness Horses and crossbreds in North America. We understand that these horses are your investments, and this registry is here to serve you and to help you protect your investments.

With that in mind, I'd like to begin with some recent topics of concerns.

BACKGROUND

This registry was originally established in 2005 to create a standard of breeding and performance that would enable all of us to sell our horses at a sale, namely the Ashland sale. In the short time since the registry was established, it has grown far beyond the simple means to a sale; it has grown, not only in numbers, but in many other ways as well. How many of us are now driving Dutch crossbreds instead of Standardbreds? How many of us now gain income from standing a Dutch or crossbred stallion? How many of us sell yearlings and two year olds for twice the amount we could sell them for previously? The answers to these questions underscore the importance of supporting, maintaining and growing the registry for the future benefit of all members, breeders and owners.

REGISTRY REQUIREMENTS

While the registry's requirements are not vast, they are very specific.

The first requirement is that any horse registered with ADHHA must have (minimum) 50% Dutch blood, as shown by the horse's pedigree. DNA testing has not been required, but it is a consideration for the future as the value of ADHHA horses would be enhanced if all stallions had a DNA case number on file. An arrangement has been made between Davis University and the KWPN to implement a DNA testing and recording program. We don't expect this to be a costly process for our members as many of the stallions in our registry already have a case number on file.

The second requirement concerns the Ashland sale. There has been some debate about this, but it's important to note that **all horses must still be registered with ADHHA in order to be sold at the Ashland sale**. The registry was sold to its present owners with this restriction included in the contract.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

There has also been some discussion about ADHHA becoming a not-for-profit organization. It's important to understand that the term "not-for-profit" does not exactly mean what it sounds like it means. There are important differences between a "for-profit" organization and a "not-for-profit" organization. A for-profit organization has shareholders who have invested in the organization and it typically distributes profit to the shareholders. A not-for-profit organization does not have private owners but has controlling members, or boards. Profit is called a "surplus" and the surplus is used to maintain and improve the organization; surplus is NOT distributed to individuals. Because it is not entirely self-supporting, ADHHA is not suitable to become a not-for-profit organization, but we do foresee that, at some time in the future when the organization IS able to support itself, it may indeed become a not-for-profit organization.

BENEFITS

Quite simply, the overarching goal of many members, breeders and owners is to gain the highest possible price in the sale ring or through sale by private treaty. When this occurs, it is no accident. There are many factors involved and ADHHA strives to provide the community with benefits that will help them achieve success and meet their goals.

Demonstration of Quality. Like any registry, ADHHA truly exists to demonstrate that horses meet an established standard of high quality. Based on pedigree, registration alone adds a high level of value to your stock. Success in Keuring adds an even greater value.

Through its association with the KWPN-NA, ADHHA offers Keuring, which is a tried and true way of assessing the conformation, movement and temperament of our stock. This process has been in place for a long time and is the backbone of the highly successful KWPN Sport Horse Industry worldwide. The KWPN is renowned for producing the very best Harness Horses, Dressage, Show Jumpers and Eventers. A horse favorably rated in the Keuring process shows an indisputable level of quality.

Crossbred Registry. Just recently the World Equestrian Games were held in Lexington KY. There were four in hand teams of driving horses from seven different nations and approximately half of all of these horses (100 horses) were KWPN Dutch horses. Not all were Dutch Harness Horses - some were bred for Dressage or Jumping. Because of the success these horses have achieved, I am certain that our crossbred horses would also fit this market of high level competition. We can never, nor should we, change the fact that we are a crossbred registry. But this is a positive thing and gives us all a huge scope within which to include other breeds, each of which brings something special to our breed.

Knowledge and Education. In order to achieve the best possible results in the sale and breeding of your horses, it all starts with management, care and nutrition. When these issues are addressed properly, the results will come. As a benefit to our members, ADHHA plans to provide programs targeted at sharing the latest knowledge in all of these areas. This will help you, as members, owners and breeders, to maintain the highest possible quality in your stock and better achieve your financial goals.

Showing and Training. I'm sure many of you have an interest in showing your horses where they can be seen by large numbers people outside of the ADHHA community. While there are not currently any dedicated ADHHA shows, there are many venues in which your horses can be shown today:

- Saddlebred shows, in open classes
- Morgan Shows, in open classes
- All Breed Pleasure Shows
- Combined Driving Events
- Combined Training, Hunter Jumper and Eventing Shows
- National Show Horse and Renai Shows
- Ohio State Fair

In 2010, Ron and I competed in eight Combined Driving Events, which allowed hundreds of people outside of our registry to observe our horses and see what they could do. From this campaign alone, sales were made by us, and by other members, that would not have happened otherwise, and we received many, many compliments as to the beauty and capability of the horses.

We don't see many ADHHA horses in competitions of this sort today, and one reason is that most of the horses are not prepared. But that can all change in short order. ADHHA horses can be competitive in the show ring with the proper training. This is not just the case for ADHHA – training is essential for all breeds. To help those who have an interest in showing, ADHHA will do what it can to identify trainers who would be suitable for working with our breed. As more and more horses become trained for the show ring, we could even see the possibility of producing ADHHA-only shows.

Harness Horse Express. We do apologize that this magazine was not published in the fall as promised. When discussions arose about the possible sale of the registry, we postponed publication until we were certain as to the direction ADHHA would follow.

As we move forward, Harness Horse Express will continue to be the printed "voice" of ADHHA. In upcoming issues we plan to address, in detail, many of the topics mentioned above, such as management, care, nutrition, training, DNA, breeding, Keurings and much more. Be sure to look to the next issue for updates on registry requirements.

Harness Horse Express also provides you with an excellent way to advertise your horses or your driving-related products and services. As an added value, we are setting up a website where your print ads will be posted at no additional cost. This will allow many people beyond the scope of the printed magazine to see your ads and learn about your offerings.

We have added a staff member, Barb Voyer, whose primary responsibility is to produce Harness Horse Express. If you have advertised in the past, she will be contacting you to discuss future ads. If you have not advertised before, and would like to, call Barb at (440)829-9776 and leave a message. She will be happy to discuss your needs and provide advertising rates. She will even create your ad for you if you wish. Email inquiries may also be sent to info@harnesshorseexpress.com.

ADHHA Website. We have recently updated our website and we are offering more services for the ADHHA community. Even if you do not personally use the Internet, members are invited to offer items for sale at no cost. Sale categories include horses, carriages, harness and tack and accessories. If you would like to offer something for sale, please contact Barb as listed above.

In closing, I'd just like to reiterate our commitment to improving the registry, providing greater benefits and services for our members and working to help members, owners and breeders achieve the greatest possible success with their horses.

We are also interested in hearing your ideas about the future of the registry and the breed. Please don't hesitate to call or write with your thoughts and ideas.

Once again, your horses are your investment and, if we all work together, we will be successful in further promoting the breed, which will benefit everyone involved.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Egan

