



Horse Council Courier

The Horsemen's Council of Illinois (HCI) newsletter dedicated to promoting a healthy horse industry statewide through information and education.

Animal Welfare and Animal Rights: A War of Words with Casualties Mounting

By Jill Montgomery on behalf of the Animal Welfare Council

The media and public use animal welfare and animal rights interchangeably, but they are not synonymous terms. In fact, the philosophical gulf between these two belief systems and the advocacy efforts currently underway by each group carry enormous

implications for true welfare of the horses and for the future of the horse industry. In light of legislation pending on the Federal level as well as in various state Houses, it is imperative that the general public, as well as anyone with an interest in horses as work or recreational

animals, come to a full understanding of each philosophy, the methods by which proponents of each carry out their missions, and the implications of each approach for the horse industry and for the animals the industry serves.

Animal welfare is a traditional model that directs stewardship of animals to their best use and humane practices, while setting the value of the animal relative to its benefit for mankind. The American Veterinary Medical Association describes animal welfare as "a human responsibility that encompasses all animal well-being, including proper housing, management, nutrition, responsible care, humane handling, and when necessary humane euthanasia."

Animal welfare reflects the belief that animals have the right to be handled humanely and to live a life free of pain; however, animal welfare advocates do not believe that animals should have rights equal to those of humans. Animal welfare

has been advocated for more than 140 years in the United States. This approach is codified in law at the local, state and federal levels.

The animal rights movement is a relatively new ideology that embraces the philosophy that an animal has rights and that those rights are equivalent to those of humans. Animal rights activists

reject the use of animals for any purpose, whether or not the animals are treated humanely. Animal rights activists do not believe that animals of any type should be used in research, sporting events or entertainment venues, or as food. Animal rights activists do not believe that animals should be used as work animals and believe that breeding and exhibiting animals in zoos and conservation parks is a form of exploitation. Animal rights activists lobby strongly for legislative action to further their agenda; in some instances, such action has drastic consequences

not only for the livestock industries but for the well-being of the animals. That the consequences are, perhaps, unintended is irrelevant.

Animal rights activists have a heavy influence on public attitudes. The horse industry is currently encountering many challenges, not all of them from the animal rights movement—but all exacerbated by the animal rights movement's interference. A number of influences, ranging from social ideology to economic recession, have combined over the past decade to create a shift in the traditional use and value of horses as livestock. Wildly fluctuating fuel prices have increased feed and transport costs. Available land for horse facilities is disappearing, driving land costs up. Changing economics make

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President's Corner



The (Mis)Information Age Trail Riding is Cruel

The instantaneous access and open nature of the internet has revolutionized our society. It is quickly becoming most American's primary source of information. For getting certifiably accurate information, though, the internet is often the last place you should be consulting. Here's a scary statistic – according to the very reputable Pew Research Center, more Americans, particularly those 30 and under, use the internet as their major source of news (1). Why do I consider this scary? Because even though numerous surveys indicate that most people generally don't believe the information gleaned from the internet, there are also a number of human psychology studies showing that known wrong information, repeated often enough, is eventually accepted as true (2,3). This unfortunate truism of human nature (apparently well understood by politicians) can render the internet a navigational nightmare, or convenient propaganda tool, depending on your intent. Another way humans can be tricked into accepting false information as true is to interrupt them during the presentation of the false material. If you briefly take the mind away from the (false) material presented - say with a video imbedded within text, or a commercial interruption during a video presentation – often the false material will be accepted as true (4). Wow; now consider Youtube, Facebook and all those animated websites with all those distracting things flashing and twirling around. How can your attention *not* be interrupted for a moment?

All this amounts to some interesting trivia, but how does it apply to the horse industry and you as a consumer of horse information? People totally unfamiliar with horses and the accepted, responsible practices in the horse industry can form opinions based on (mis)information they get from the internet. That same internet gives them an open platform to voice that opinion and to mount campaigns based on those views. I am sure many of these people

love the notion of horses and admire the animal as a beautiful creature (something few of us would argue with), but because these people don't know horses, and don't know you or me or other responsible horse owners, they can quite easily be led astray by misinformation about what we do with and for our animals. Rather than learning from real horsemen, the internet can foster the introduction of mostly well-meaning but ignorant people to organizations that have become masters of misdirection. Kids are a perfect example of this demographic, and they are rather easily influenced; thus they have become a specific target (<http://www.kidzworld.com/article/5045-should-animals-be-in-sports> and <http://www.petatv.com/kids.html>). The result of all this is a growing assault on the horse industry.

I present to you a few of these assaults on our equine pastimes and our industry:

Trail riding, both private: <http://theanimalrightsactionsite.blogspot.com/2012/02/say-neigh-to-trail-riding.html?m=1> and commercial trail rides: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/animal-games-rides-contests.aspx>

Carriage driving: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/horse-drawn-carriages.aspx>

Nativity scenes and acting: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/animal-actors.aspx>

Horse racing: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/horse-racing-.aspx> or

<http://www.animalliberationfront.com/Practical/Entertainment/wrong%20with%20Horse%20Racing.htm>

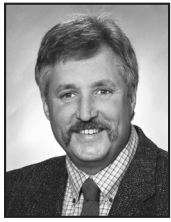
Horses in games: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/animal-games-rides-contests.aspx>; particularly

Rodeo: <http://www.peta.org/issues/animals-in-entertainment/rodeos.aspx> <http://www.lcanimal.org/index.php/campaigns/animals-in-entertainment/rodeos>

The Grand National Steeplechase: <http://www.animalaid.org.uk/h/f/ACTIVE/>

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Executive Director's Report



Policy decisions about your horses made by bureaucrats in Springfield and Washington DC are more often than not being influenced by folks who have maybe never even ridden a horse, yet alone cared for, fed or exercised horses. Coupled with that reality is the way the guise, or pretense, of caring for animals has become such a huge business in today's world. Basically, any group who states "We care about animals" has an abundance of gullible citizens who will donate funding to their stated cause. But as the time honored saying goes... follow the money!

Groups like HSUS, ASPCA, PETA, Best Friends, Farm Sanctuary and the burgeoning mass of "save the horse" organizations have found easy marks among city slickers and the non-horse owning populace across the country. The best salesmen in this increasingly disingenuous movement earn comfortable, if not downright excessive, salaries by peddling their all but religious zeal about being kind to animals, while they generally offer less than lip service to actually taking care of animals or fixing the welfare issue they decry. Let's face it, if they were to actually fix the problem their funding source would simply dry up and blow away.

Certainly, we all want to feel good about the things we believe in. That's just human nature. However, enterprising folks have taken advantage of that fact for millennia, possibly making charitable fundraising the world's second oldest profession. To do the most good make sure you know where your, or your family

member's, money is going and be sure to look before you donate. Your local shelter or equine rescue would be a good place to start.

The current hype in Congress about enforcement of the Horse Protection Act (HPA), a federal regulation with a 43 year history of reasonable success, is a prime example of a solution looking for a problem. There are bad apples in need of policing within the horse world to be sure. But faced with increased exposure about horse soring in the mainstream media, which is being driven entirely by the corporate animal fundraisers, and no resources for hiring and training additional field personnel, USDA is attempting to quiet the publicity storm and step up enforcement of the HPA by "partnering" with stakeholders to provide 3rd party HPA inspection services. Get ready for HSUS trained DQP's and HPA inspectors at a horse show near you. HSUS has actually been offering up to \$5,000.00 "bounties" to those who turn in HPA violators. According to the State Fair Premium Book, Keith Dane, whose day job is acting as the Director of Equine Protection for HSUS, is scheduled as a judge for this year's Paso Fino shows at the Illinois State Fair. Be sure to ask Keith about his and his charismatic boss' vision for horse owners and the horse industry if you have the pleasure of speaking with him.

Meanwhile, back at USDA, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has recently named Kevin Shea to be the next Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health inspection Service (APHIS). APHIS is the agency charged with enforcing the federal government's animal welfare laws including the Horse

Protection Act (HPA).

In an introductory statement to stakeholders Mr. Shea writes "While APHIS will continue to have a regulatory role, it won't be the only—or in some cases even the primary—way we contribute to animal and plant health and animal welfare. And the reality is these new approaches are likely to allow greater flexibility for both APHIS and industry".

Coming in at number 4 and 5 on Mr. Shea's list of "10 specific goals" for the agency are;

4. Reduce by at least half the number of detections of the cruel and inhumane practice of horse soring in the Tennessee Walking Horse industry.

5. Fully implement a functioning animal disease traceability program that proves its traceback value after a disease detection.

Further Mr. Shea states "I do want to emphasize that I certainly cannot accomplish these goals alone; only through the great work of APHIS' talented employees – working in tandem with you as partners – will that happen."

"I've said it before, but it's worth repeating: I have an open door policy and I'm interested in hearing your perspective on those issues that matter to you most" Mr. Shea continues. "I look forward to working with all of our many and diverse stakeholders in the months and years ahead.

I recommend each of us take Mr. Shea to task and let him hear some of the positive news and views about what horse ownership means to you.

See you at the State Fair! 

Frank Bowman



From Trailer to Trail

Summer has arrived seems a pretty repetitious statement by now, right?

Reports circulating on Facebook from the University of Minnesota

would have us believe that most summer riding is extremely “dangerous” to our horses. To not be considered “dangerous” the sum of temperature and relative humidity must be under 150, ideally under 130. Our 80F evening ride in 70% relative humidity (not at all unusual in Illinois) is ill advised

according to these reports. Even the early morning ride in 70F/80% relative humidity might be questionable. I hope that everyone that sees this information thinks about the horse’s athletic condition while they ride and pays attention to their companion. I generally attempt to schedule my rides, which usually are at least 1-1/2 hours long (a long walk down flat country roads in the flat corn country of central Illinois) for cool days or in the evening so that I return home in the cool evening immediately before dark. Yes, I produce (somewhat) wet saddle blankets, but no gasping for air or hiccups, in fact not even heavy breathing from my mount. And then as I return my horse to his pasture mates, he runs off into the sunset and immediately rolls in his favorite dusty spot to finish rearranging his hairdo.

Reports have also crossed HCI’s desks of late about The “Humane” Society’s efforts in promoting the idea of whether horses “like” to be ridden. While those of us lucky enough to actually care for horses might understand how they respond to our wishes (isn’t that really what our performance cues are – after

all, why should we puny 160# humans be able to make a 1200# animal do something they really did not WANT to do?) and requests, people outside of

that circle of experience find it a much farther step in thinking. My horses typically enjoy getting out and covering country.

How about yours? For more information please write hci@horsemencouncil.org.

Several friends and I were able to take advantage of an unseasonably cool 4th of July

and enjoyed a riding holiday at Wolf Creek State Park. We were pleasantly welcomed at a park that none of us had been to for a long time with a mown camping area (REALLY helped control the bugs), paths that showed evidence of maintenance work (fallen trees addressed, etc.) and a wide variety of trails available.

We had arrived after quite a series of rain events and expected to find wet conditions (and were even prepared to move on to another park if the trails were closed or too sucky) but found

the grounds, while wet and mucky in a few spots, in reasonable riding condition overall. The trail system consisted of both a broad and easy meadow path system with more adventuresome trails into “fingers” (as one friend described it) of hilly land that diverted around the lake. I found an amazing number of varieties of mushrooms/ toadstools/ fungi throughout the area (some were rather striking, such as the one with the bright barn red top!), although I didn’t taste any of them – I am not that adventurous.

While we heard a lot of activity from boats on the lake and firework activity on the fourth, we ran across no bicycles on the trails, a hot topic of

late in Illinois, which is currently studying paths and proposals for a state/nationwide bike plan. HCI has heard from several members of late who are experiencing issues with mountain bikers which in some areas are becoming rude and antagonistic. These are NOT flat path riders, but basically the thrill seeker mountain

biker that plunges headfirst down hillsides for their adrenaline fix. If you have had experiences (either positive OR negative) regarding such activity, please pass this information along to us so that we can help effect a solution as we work with various state agencies.

Remember the famous words by Winston Churchill – “No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle.” Get out and enjoy life – whether it be on the trail or in the arena – or even in your own backyard! 🐾



Author Ron Rhoades and Blue on the trail.



Author's steed Blue stands tied impatiently waiting for feed or to get going on the trail!



Paula Leifel, Cricket & Vicky Simons at Wolf Creek

Federal Bill Would Make Equine Therapy Eligible for Military Insurance

AHC News/American Horse Council


Winston Churchill said “there is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man.” Horse people have known that for a long time. If Representatives Michael Burgess (R-TX) and Tom Cotton (R-AR) have their way, TRICARE, the health care program serving uniformed active duty service members, veterans and their families, will understand that too.

Over the last decade as many forms of therapy have failed, more and more military personnel and family members who suffer from wounds and debilitating diseases have sought treatment through therapeutic riding programs or hippotherapy. Unfortunately, TRICARE, does not cover therapeutic riding because it considers such therapy as experimental and unproven.

This issue has been highlighted by the plight of Kaitlyn Samules, a member of a military family who suffers from scoliosis and epilepsy. Her condition was severe enough for her doctors to prescribe therapeutic riding as her physical therapy. While TRICARE will cover any physical therapy that is medically necessary or proven to work, it denied coverage for Kaitlyn’s care. Even after a court battle won by the Samuels, TRICARE and the Department of Defense still continue to deny coverage to Kaitlyn.

That’s when Congressmen Burgess and Cotton stepped in, introducing the Rehabilitative Therapy Parity for Military Beneficiaries Act of 2013 (H.R 1705). This legislation would amend Federal law to include “therapies provided on a horse” to treatments covered by TRICARE.

“The American Horse Council fully supports this legislation and encourages its members to reach out to their Representatives in the House of Representatives and ask for their support,” said R.J. Layher, Director of Health & Regulatory Affairs for the AHC. “This is good for our servicemen and women, veterans and their families and it is good for our riding rehabilitation programs and horses.”

Currently, the bill has nine co-sponsors and has been referred to the House Armed Services Committee where it awaits further action. 

Benefits of Membership in the Horsemen’s Council of Illinois

As a member of the Horsemen’s Council of Illinois, you may take advantage of a host of discount programs offered through the American Horse Council (AHC) and our insurance provider, Association Resource Group (ARG).

AHC Saving Plus will provide you discounts with John Deere, Sherwin-Williams, OfficeMax, and Prescription Drug Card. You can buy products directly from these companies at greatly reduced prices – no minimums required!

Below is a sample of discounts available through ARG. For details on how these valuable Horsemen’s Council of Illinois member benefits can help you save money, go to www.horsecouncil.org/ahc-advantage-plan and www.associationresource.net.

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continuing horse ownership unrealistic for many owners. The closing of processing plants has dropped the baseline value for horses to zero, increased the number of marginal horses on the market, overloaded rescues and sanctuaries, and lowered the market value of horses being sold and resold within their useful lifespans.¹ Yet proponents of animal rights have put increased pressure on an already vulnerable industry by insisting that the humane treatment of a horse be defined as having one unchanging guardian from the cradle to grave, regardless of that person's capacity to provide ongoing care. Even the change in nomenclature from "owner" to "guardian" implies an enormous shift in attitude toward the rights and duties of animal management.

The "Unwanted Horse" has become a battle zone between animal welfare and animal rights proponents. The American Association of Equine Practitioners defines unwanted horses as "horses that are no longer wanted by their current owners because they are old, sick, injured, and unmanageable (e.g. vicious or dangerous), fail to meet their owner's expectations (e.g. performance, color, or breeding) or their owner can no longer afford them." While numbers that encompass all unwanted horses are not well defined, the number of US horses that are exported and processed for food in Mexico and Canada has been widely adopted as a figure that tracks the overall number of unwanted horses. In the US, for 2012 that number is estimated to be 158,657, or 1.7% of the 9,200,000 US horse population.² This number represents the additional number of animals each year that, absent an option for processing, must be housed in rescues or sanctuaries, euthanized by other (generally more expensive with greater environmental impact) methods, or simply abandoned—and there is certainly no "humane treatment" in this last alternative. In fact, since the U.S. processing plants were closed in 2007, a dramatic increase has been documented in the number of horses being neglected or abandoned, further straining the capacities of local and state government animal control departments.

The severe economic consequences of a ban on processing cannot be ignored, and must be addressed.³

How do animal rights activists further their mission? The general population's increasing distance from agriculture creates an opening for animal rights extremists to sway the public perception of the role animals play in our lives.

The horse is undeniably familiar and beloved, with a universally positive image, but that image is no longer necessarily agricultural; the populist view of horses has shifted from work partner to recreational partner and backyard pet. Those who own horses may identify the animal's role (livestock or companion animal) by the specific purpose for which they use their animals, but those who do not own horses are more likely to identify them most as companion animals. (Western Horseman Survey 1998)


This perception shift opens the door for the animal rights movement to promote the drive to change the status of the equine species from livestock (part of agriculture's food and fiber industry) to companion animal. They are helped with their agenda by the simple fact that today a large number of Americans have no direct experience with food production, harvest, or hunting; instead, most demonstrate a disconnected "meat comes in plastic from the grocery store" mentality. To this group, the concept of processing and consuming an animal with which one is familiar is acutely uncomfortable; it seems to violate an unspoken social contract between human and animal whereby the human is obligated at all costs to prolong the life of an animal deemed a "pet." The unintended consequences of that belief have not proven to be the best way to protect the welfare of some horses.

It is important to remember that there are laws in place to protect horses now. Following the animal welfare model, laws and regulations have been developed and refined by government process at local, county, state, and federal levels to ensure humane treatment of animals. These address abuse and neglect, set minimum standards for care and custody, and establish owners' rights for disposition

of the animal. Final disposition of horses (humane euthanasia) within the context of existing laws is taken seriously by responsible horse owners and animal welfare advocates.

The public (and some segments of the horse-owning population) may not grasp the gravity of this divisive argument about horse classification and humane treatment. In fact, horses and their owners enjoy many benefits from horses' livestock status, ranging from federal health and disease programs to property tax considerations. In the quest to further their vegan agenda, animal rights activists would welcome the loss of these benefits, making horse ownership more expensive and problematic, ultimately diminishing some of the very protections that guarantee the horse's welfare.

The primary tool animal rights extremists use for this approach has been lobbying to propel legislation through emotionally laden marketing efforts. Unfortunately the legislation behind the emotional appeals has not addressed the necessary practical issues, such as adequately funded rescues and sanctuaries, setting capacities and standards of care at such facilities, and ensuring that appropriate options are available for euthanasia and carcass disposal. In fact, it is the animal rights movement itself that has created the problem of unwanted horses; they have raised millions of dollars to support legislative campaigns to ban horse slaughter, all the while providing almost no financial support for the actual care of the unwanted horses their agenda has produced. (Humane Society of the United States spends less than 1% of their \$1,000,000+ annual budget for direct animal care⁴)

In evaluating propositions (including legislation) for changing established humane management practices, it is imperative to be aware of the source of offered information and the slant of such material. Discerning the philosophical foundation for proposed laws at any level is critical not only for the survival of the horse industry, but also vital for the welfare of the horse itself. 

When Is a Horse Placed in Service?

By: Robert B. Dale, III, CPA, Yount, Hyde & Barbour, PLLC, Middleburg, VA
AHC Tax Bulletin

The date a horse is deemed to be placed in service is important for purposes of computing depreciation and determining the holding period of the horse for possible capital gain treatment. Although taxpayers are given guidance on this issue in the Internal Revenue Service regulations, interestingly enough there are no IRS or Tax Court rulings to offer further guidance.

The best definition of "placed in service" is found in IRS Regs. 1.179-4(e) which states "the term means the time that the property is first placed by the taxpayer in a condition or state of readiness and availability for a specifically assigned function, whether for use in a trade or business, for the production of income,". Now let's apply this definition to horses.

Breeding Horses

One has to first determine the "specifically assigned function" or intended purpose of the horse. For stallions and broodmares this is relatively easy. These breeding horses are placed in service when they are ready to breed or to be bred. If a horse owner/breeder purchases a stallion or broodmare with the intention of breeding the horse, the date placed in service will be the date of the purchase. The same would be true for a stallion share purchased by a horse owner/breeder. In the case of a race horse that has been retired from the track and sent to the breeding shed, the date placed in service will be the date the race horse returns to the farm to begin its breeding career. This date can be important because the change in the use of such a horse causes a change in the method of computing depreciation.

Race Horses

For young race horses, determining the date placed in service is not as easy. The issue is when is a young race horse, in most cases a yearling, "in a condition or state of readiness" to fulfill his or her intended purpose. Most horse owners/breeders agree that young race

horses are placed in service when they begin their conditioning and training regimen. This training usually begins when the horses are approximately eighteen months old. In some cases the owner or trainer may determine that the yearling is not developed enough to start training at that age and will hold them back and place them in service when they are older. Keep in mind that the date placed in service for young race horses is only relevant to horses purchased as weanlings and yearlings because they have a cost basis on which depreciation is computed. Young race horses which are bred by the owner do not have a cost basis so there is no allowable depreciation so the date placed in service is not applicable.


Show, Jumpers and Others

As for horses used for showing, jumping, draft and other intended purposes, in most cases the 10 AHC Tax Bulletin # 363 the same rule as with race horses should apply, that being the horse is considered to be placed in service when it starts its conditioning and training regimen. Depending upon the intended activity, this regimen may not begin until the horse is older.

Conclusion

Just like a lot of issues involving the tax law, what may seem like a straightforward matter can end up being more complicated than one would think. This is certainly true for some aspects of determining when an asset is placed in service.

As always, I strongly recommend that you consult your tax advisor regarding the applicability of these issues to your horse operation and tax situation.

Robert B. Dale, III, CPA is a partner in the Middleburg, Virginia office of the CPA firm Yount, Hyde & Barbour, P.C. Mr. Dale has numerous clients in the horse business. His practice is primarily in the area of taxes, including income and estate for high net worth individuals. He is a graduate of the University of Richmond. 

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The (Mis)Information Age: Trail Riding is Cruel
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[petition/?id=10&campaign=horse](http://www.hsi.org.au/?catID=567) or
all steeplechase: <http://www.hsi.org.au/?catID=567>

Eventing: <http://eventingnation.com/home/peta-calls-for-end-to-eventing.html>

Show Jumping: <http://www.naracampaigns.org/showjumping.html>

All Olympic horse disciplines: <http://www.animalaid.org.uk/h/f/ACTIVE/petition/?id=10&campaign=horse>

In fact, you can find a website or blog that indicts nearly every equine sport, practice or tool. In my opinion, some are justified (we *can* be our own worst enemy sometimes), some are sensationalized and some are just plain crazy.

The end game of animal rights groups is to remove all animals from human ownership and accord them the same legal rights as humans (<http://www.nonhumanrightsproject.org/?gclid=CKbzvLw7gCFWJIMgoddHAAnQ>). Their tactics are at once complex and simple – cruelty and enslavement of animals is wrong. They gain a following and many millions of dollars in donations through Exploiting Misinformation in the Information Age. What facts do these extremists use to justify their positions? Very few, if any, and many of those are twisted into nearly unrecognizable form to fuel their fire. But in the end, this movement doesn't need to rely on facts;

they use something far more powerful than truth, science, or facts – they use emotion. These groups can succeed in striking at the very heart of our horse passion and limit or eliminate our ability to own and enjoy our horses because they have developed an incredible network of followers and donors and because they use emotional and sensational tactics to enrage an unsuspecting public.

Meanwhile, we are so busy taking care of the horses that we love that we ignore this tide rising against us. Folks, if we don't start speaking out, if we don't start defending this animal and our industry, if we don't mount the same level of public education – using facts instead of fiction and emotion, we may deserve what we get. Hate me for saying that, but history clearly shows us that apathy and inaction have played a major role in the success of the world's coups.

1. <http://www.people-press.org/2012/09/27/in-changing-news-landscape-even-television-is-vulnerable/>

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3. Misinformation and Its Correction; Continued Influence and Successful Debiasing, S. Lewandowsky, U.K.H.

Vendor Application Online for the 25th Annual Illinois Horse Fair March 7-9, 2014

Prepare for a weekend of fun, education, and shopping as we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Illinois Horse Fair at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield! Your State Horse Council is actively preparing an exciting event for 2014 themed "East Meets West" featuring a well-rounded line up of both English and Western riding disciplines. Vendor and clinician applications are available online at www.horsemen-scouncil.org/horsefair Encourage your favorite tack suppliers, clinicians, or breed to sign up today. Visit the Illinois Horse Fair Facebook page often for on-going updates and information.

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