

*Horses change lives. They give our young people confidence and self esteem. They provide peace and tranquility to troubled souls- they give us hope!*

~Toni Robinson

The staff at the Horse Council office are in a unique position to talk with hundreds of members over the course of just a few days. Each person who calls us has one thing in common – a love of the horse. They may or may not own a horse but each and every one of them has a story to tell or a dream of the future. Our young riders, drivers or vaulters all have aspirations of being a vet, farrier, Olympian, cowboy or cowgirl, farm manager or coach. The possibilities are endless in our industry as growth within the equine world in BC continues to spiral upwards. The past year has been one of reflection and learning about our past. We are now 25 years old and it is time to look to the future.

When we say “future” it involves not only the next generation of equestrians, but the future of the whole equine industry. Our industry encompasses every facet – agriculture, transportation, recreation, sport, taxation, import and export, medical and pharmaceuticals, health and wellness, the ALR, trail development, the environment and so on. It is the Board of Directors and the staff at HCBC who must make decisions on behalf of the membership as to what are the most pressing issues affecting the well being of our horses, the enjoyment of ownership and continued growth. The organization itself is committed to preserving our right to own and ride horses, education, marketing BC bred equines, doing our part to clean up the environment and support of coaches, officials and the competitive arena.

### **The Member – Your Privacy**

Under the new privacy act, Horse Council has an obligation to each member to ensure that our database information is not sold or made available to any organization without

express permission from each member. On the recent renewals, we included an opt in box for the MBNA mail-out. MBNA is the world's largest credit card banking system. Each province signed an agreement with MBNA back in 2000 to provide membership lists for the sole purpose of soliciting new clients. In return, MBNA reimburses the provincial organization with a royalty cheque to be used for membership programs. MBNA does not pass this information on to a third party and in fact, they have more stringent privacy rules than us. The funding provided has been a great benefit to HCBC over the years and we hope that our members will continue to support this program.

With the new database, verification of membership for club secretaries and competition organizers was identified as a priority due to the liability insurance offered. We have identified the people who require this member verification and given them passworded access to limited database information ie: name, current membership status, city, and zone.

Our national organization, Equine Canada, has also requested membership information. Our Board of Directors has voted **no** to this request but instead offered to give our membership totals to EC. This will enable Equine Canada to use total numbers nationally to obtain funding for national programs and to lobby for national reforms.

### **The Environment**

Efforts to promote the EFP program are finally paying off with several farms completing the EFP workbook and having an environmental planning advisor sign them off. The first completed farm plan was Northlands Equestrian Centre in Pitt Meadows – congratulations! Horse Council will continue its efforts to educate everyone about the need to be environmentally compliant. Many of our members are not bona-fide farmers, therefore do not qualify for funding BUT that should not be the reason we clean up our farms. Water, wildlife, the air we breathe and food we consume is affected by every single person on this planet and we all need to take

responsibility for what we dump on the ground and into the waterways. Our website provides information on how to build an environmentally correct paddock or riding arena, a manure bin, how to compost and the importance of keeping horses out of the streams. Our online courses will also focus on education and these courses will be credited towards coaching updating hours as well as a certificate of completion.

### **Strategic Plan**

In October during the Board of Director's meeting a committee was formed to begin the process for a strategic plan. The first step is to identify issues or areas of concern to the membership in order to rate our priorities within the strategic planning process. This is the list to date:

1. Road Safety
2. Taxation- as a pet / as agriculture
3. Urban Encroachment
4. Park/trail/breach closure
5. Regional Development – supporting zones and organization outside Lower Mainland
6. Relations with national environmental groups– impact of horses on the environment
7. Education – Officials/ members/coaches
8. Animal welfare
9. Bio security - identification
10. Changing demographics – adult amateur/ Juniors etc
11. Succession planning for our volunteers
12. Communication
13. Liaison with other sport groups, government agencies and tourism
14. Continued growth

We would like to hear from our members as to what they feel the pertinent issues within our organization should be. Your comments can be emailed to [administration@hcbc.ca](mailto:administration@hcbc.ca) or mailed in to the office. All correspondence received will be presented to the strategic planning committee.

### **Pacific Ag Show at the Tradex in Abbotsford**

Every effort by the organizers of this agricultural trade show to provide an "equine" experience has not gone unnoticed. The show will be held on February 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> and there will be educational sessions for the horse enthusiast on both the Friday and Saturday.

We will have our booth in the AG Zone with the other non-profit associations. Staff will be on hand to answer questions, take your membership and provide a resource to the general public. Educational sessions will be listed on our website and in the February newsletter.

### **Horse Council BC announces a new program for its Commercial Members.**

The Commercial Members Insurance Program (CMIP) is being developed to promote standards and safety for equine commercial operations. At present, Certified Coaches & Instructors benefit from lower insurance premiums. Through the new program, Commercial Operators who are active in applicable Certification Programs will also enjoy greater premium savings. The details are being finalized and it is expected that this members' benefit will be available in January 2006.

### **2006 Western Coaching Update**

**March 30 - April 1, Qualicum Beach – details to follow or check with Wendy in the office**

## **Drug Testing at Competitions – Fee Increase**

Equine Canada's Drugs and Medication committee implemented a levy for 2006. This means we must raise the drug fees collected by the competitions.

National drug fee will go from \$5.00 per horse to \$7.00 per horse

PaRC drug fee will go from \$2.00 per horse to \$3.00 per horse

There will be no fees charged for testing at a primary schooling show.

## **Equine Canada – Director at Large and Convention**

We would like to bring your attention to a couple of items upcoming within the scope of Equine Canada:

1. Director At Large – every adult member of HCBC is entitled to vote for the EC Director at Large. To do this you must register by January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Registration forms and further information can be found on the EC website [www.equestrian.ca](http://www.equestrian.ca). There are three candidates running for the director at large position– **John Platz, Diane Callaghan Chasle, Randy White**. The number of concerns and issues surrounding our national organization, their finances and how they relate to you, as a HCBC member, is critical so take the time to vote.

2. The EC Annual Convention and AGM will be held in Saint John, New Brunswick this year beginning on February 6<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>. Horse Council will be sending a number of representatives to the convention, so if you have any concerns or issues you feel are significant enough to bring forward please contact the HCBC office.

## **Summer Games – Kamloops**

There is a still lot of time to qualify for the BC Summer Games 2006. A number of

competition facilities will be holding qualifiers during the winter months in jumper, dressage and reining. The Summer Games are open for youth 13 to 18 – for further information please speak to kelly [competition@hcbc.ca](mailto:competition@hcbc.ca) or check out our website.

## **New staff person at the HCBC office**

We would like to welcome our newest staff person – Kym Slater. Kym will be handling the front desk and incoming calls, especially the ones pertaining to new and renewing members, video rentals, the bookstore sales and parts of the website. Amanda, who was our receptionist, will now be responsible for the website, database, business members and communication with our clubs and affiliates. Kym's email is [reception@hcbc.ca](mailto:reception@hcbc.ca)

## **Competitions in BC – Did you know?**

*There were 270 sanctioned Primary competitions held in 2005. These are the schooling shows and PaRC competitions that feature every discipline and breed. Want to know the breakdown of show types?*

*81 – Dressage  
57 – General Performance (mixed classes english and western)  
49 – Hunter jumper  
41 – Western Heritage  
5 – breed  
37 – miscellaneous*

*Of the 41 national sanctioned competitions – the breakdown is as follows:*

*7 – breed  
11 – horse trials  
12 – dressage  
8 – hunter jumper  
3 – driving*

**Equine Canada is looking at the idea of taking the administration of the national competitions from the provinces and placing all administrative duties at the Equine Canada office in Ottawa.** We need to hear from our competition organizers, once again, how they feel about this. Please contact Kelly or Vicki for further information on this.

### **The Annual Industry Guide**

Each of our members will receive, by mail, a copy of the 2006 Industry Guide. Coaches and officials are reminded to get their consent forms in by Jan 10<sup>th</sup> in order to be listed in the Guide.

### **The Forums on [www.hcbc.ca](http://www.hcbc.ca)**

Our frequent forum users will already be aware of the fact that our forum format has changed. We will be looking to adding new hot topics and blogs. One major change to the forums is the addition of the commercial section. We still offer free classified to non-commercial users but businesses will be required to join HCBC as a business member to obtain free advertising on our forums. In addition, we will provide a website link in our online business directory for each business member. Contact Amanda at the office for more details and **benefits of becoming a business member.**