

UPPER MIDWEST ENDURANCE AND COMPETITIVE RIDES ASSOCIATION



Ride Calendar!

Under construction for 2012!!!



Get Ready for the UMECRA Convention!

Mark January 19-22nd 2012 on your calendar! We have a very special guest speaker – one you won't want to miss!

The convention room rate is **\$89** per night.
Clock Tower Resort in Rockford, IL

Call 815-398-6000 to make reservations! Ask for the UMECRA group rate. **Reservations must be made by Dec 20th to get the discounted rate!**

The Clock Tower features a water park and "Coco Keys" for the kids. **Water park wristbands will be available for only \$10/day!** *Nutzy Turtle* will be playing after the AHDRA awards on Friday.

Convention Schedule!

January 19th - Thursday: Check in at 4pm
Evening Reception

January 20th – Friday: Check in at 8am
UMECRA - In the Beginning w/ Dr. Beecher 9am (A must see!!)

UMECRA- Round Table- with members of all ages!!
Dr. Beecher, JoAnn Gernot, & Lori Window & more!!
(This will be filled with so much fun!!)
AHDRA - Cocktails & Awards 6pm
A Blast from the past....Nutzy Turtle with his band!!

January 21st – Saturday: Check in 8am
BoD Meeting 7am (or earlier!)
Speaker- Dr. Meg Sleeper 9am-11:30am
Annual Meeting: 1pm -4pm
Cocktails: 5:30pm
Dinner / Awards Banquet: 6:30pm
Dancing and Fun!!

January 22nd – Sunday: AHDRA Meeting -7am
Check Out

We need your old photos! Email photos to Tony Troyer or Olivia Rudolphi for inclusion in the event. Please submit all photos ASAP so that they can be processed accordingly. Photos are accepted in hard copy, via email, or via CD or DVD.

MEMBERSHIP CARD UPDATE

Our UMECRA Board of Directors voted to distribute membership cards for the 2012 season. We are optimistic that the cards will provide confirmation that membership dues have been received and processed. The cards will be mailed upon receipt of your dues payment. In the event you do not receive your card within thirty (30) days of payment, please notify Jill. She can be reached at:
Jfeller@nconnect.net or [920.948.9502](tel:920.948.9502).

Make sure you include your membership number on all 2012 ride entry forms as it will be used to calculate points.

Riders Choice Nominations Sought!

It is time to make your nominations for this year's Rider's Choice Award. This award originated in 1981, and has been presented annually at the UMECRA Convention and Awards banquet following a vote of those present at the convention.

The guidelines to be considered when nominated a horse for this honor are as follows:

1. A horse that has shown superior ability in it division
2. A horse that has been a consistent competitor
3. A horse that has shown its ability to overcome setbacks
4. Any horse, for any reasons, the nominator admires and feels is a superior representative of the "Distance Horse."

When submitting your nomination, please include a description of the horse's accomplishments and the reasons why you are nominating the horse. There is a form on the UMECRA website under the Awards tab,

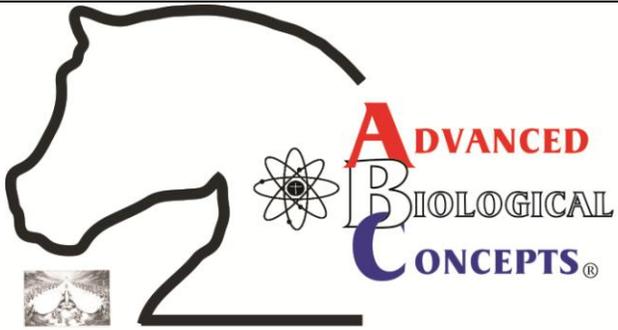
then scroll down all the way to the bottom of the page to Rider's Choice. Or you can just mail or email your nomination. This nomination will appear in the UMECRA Convention program, and may be the basis for attendees at the convention to making their selection.

Nominations should be submitted to:

Theresa Meyer,
3028 181st Ave. NW,
Cedar, MN 55011

or email to tmeyer@tpt.org

Deadline for nominations - Sunday, January 8, 2012



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As most of you know, I took Tazmanian Angel (Taz) to the Tevis Cup and he was pulled at 20 miles. He strained a tendon when he stumbled on a rock in the river crossing. The vets at the next check said it was superficial and they had me walk him in-hand 3 miles back up the hill - ummm....mountain....so they must've thought he was fine to do that anyway. 10 days after Tevis, he's back to 100%. He is a better horse on more level terrain, but he has done lots of hills here - just not the really steep rocky descents of Tevis-type trail. Taz was top in UMECRA in CTRs in 2005, and he's also been shown in English Pleasure. He

could show in Western also - he's got a very pretty jog trot. I'd like to see him go to a home where his loveable personality will be appreciated: he likes attention and is very much a mama's boy. Taz is 11 yrs old, 15.2H, almost 15.3. He's also sweepstakes. Check out his AERC record: <http://www.doublejoy.com/erol/Individual/HorseHistory.asp> I'm listing Taz for \$3000.

Daisy: Our little "energizer bunny"!!! Daisy and her 12 yr old Jr. rider are at this point, #1 in UMECRA, MnDRA and the Midwest for Jr. LD mileage. Daisy is just 5 yrs old, and 13.2H. Her young rider doesn't want to part with her, but she's just getting too tall for Daisy. Daisy loves to go but is very sane about vetting, trailering, picketing, blanketing, etc. She is low in the pecking order but has enough sass to be very competitive in endurance. She has been barefoot all year, even completing the SE ride without a hitch. Daisy is extremely sure-footed, well-balanced and also loves to jump; she would also be an excellent pony club prospect. Daisy isn't registered, but we believe her to be a pony/Arab cross. She will be at Point Chaser this weekend. I'm asking \$2000 for her.

RC Kalypso: 3 yr old grey filly, 14.2H, Dam was Rushcreek Posh. Sire was either TB or QH (one of the two jumped the fence... She might get a couple inches on her yet.) This filly is an awesome mover and has a great attitude. She was very easy to start under saddle and she's had a couple weeks on her, including going down the trail. She'll go out alone or with a group and is confident on the trail. Sacrificing for \$800 because I need time with my other horses, can't keep them all, no matter how good they are!

Please email me at: sarahmaass@hotmail.com or call: 507-340-7859 if you are interested in one of my horses.

4.5-yr. old Shagya-Arabian mare for sale by breeder. Grey. 15.1+hh. Well built. Correct mover. Level headed. Sire: Proven Sporthorse. Dam: Proven 100-mile CTR horse. Under saddle. Loves to work. Great out on the trails and in the arena. Nice prospect for someone trying to find for a partner for distance and more. Registered and Approved for Breeding. Contact for price and photos. halliergot@aol.com 802-293-5783



2011 UMECRA SENIOR EQUINE RESULTS

The winner of this year's award is Honey, ridden by Whitney Meinders. This completes a hat trick for Honey as it is her third time winning the award. Go pony! We had six nominated senior horses that completed a ride this year.

Horse Name	Nominator	Points	Miles	Total Score
Honey	Diane Meinders	230.4	545	775.4
Chub Lake Jack Daniel ("JD")	Linda Jacobson	113.6	380	493.6
ELD Jetta Bee	Sandra Wright	48	155	203
RR Ghazrael ("Gazzy")*	Malinda Zielke	54.8	148	202.8
RFR Northern Thunder ("Thunder the Barbarian")	Pamela Fullerton	17	104	121
My Cameo Love	Sharon Hahn	10.2	78	88.2

This annual award is given to the senior equine with the highest score (UMECRA points + UMECRA miles) in any combination of divisions (Endurance, Limited Distance, Competitive, Novice & Driving) and with any number of riders. A senior equine is defined as one that is 20+ of age prior to the end of the current ride season.

If your horse was previously nominated but is now permanently retired from competing, please notify Sharon Hahn (sharon.hahn@usa.com or 612-770-5846).

If your equine will turn 20 in 2012 (or is already 20 or older) and will be competing next year, please nominate by sending the form and proof of age to Sharon. Details are available on www.umecra.com/awards Previously nominated equines do not need to re-apply.

Honorable mention goes to Gazzy, who won the novice division this year despite being old and blind!

Youth and Enthusiasm vs. Age and Experience

By Lori Windows

It has always been a source of discussion: In whose hands does the future of UMECRA lie? Is it a certain age group, a certain sex, advocates of a particular horse breed, or a certain economic group? To what groups should ride managers target their ride advertising? How do we get the new blood to keep our club memberships strong and financially self-supporting? I won't be so arrogant as to say I have the answers, but I do have some pretty interesting quotes and calculations regarding this year's Top Ten winners.

I decided to do a little number crunching after the final Year-End winners were printed. I averaged the ages in each of the major divisions with the exception

of Juniors since they are age restricted. Here are the results:

Heavyweight Endurance: 49.5 Heavyweight Competitive: 58
Lightweight Endurance: 46
Lightweight Competitive: 56
Limited Distance: 58

There were only 4 of the 50 represented riders under the age of 40. Two of those riders were in the Lightweight Endurance division, greatly reducing the average age.

Then I separated each division by sex. And sorry, Tony Troyer - as much as you would like to think that the men rule the Heavyweight Division, it isn't true. Maybe if UMECRA's Heavyweight was comparable to AERC's Heavyweight, your statement to me would be more accurate. Heavyweight Comp had 2 men, 8 women. Heavyweight Endurance was split, 5 and 5. Lightweight Endurance and Comp were all women, and LD had 2 men who were Top Ten finishers.

Armed with this information, I asked several Top Ten finishers how, when, and why they got involved in distance riding. A few common threads wove among the answers. An interest in horses as a youngster was stated by many of the respondents, as was a history of pleasure or trail riding but an underlying desire to do more.

Julie Jackson told me she was living in Houston 13 years ago and she kept on "running in to endurance riders on trail." She was encouraged to move her horse to their barn. "They warned me once I got hooked, I'd be hooked for life," she said. She found out they were right. Deb Searle said she read an article about distance riding as a teenager but put the memory on the back burner for 25 years. In 2002, she met a girl at a local riding park who was training for an LD and she told Deb about UMECRA. Deb did her 1st Novice ride 2 weeks later, and last year completed TEVIS! Kathy Schauer said she started the sport 21 years ago because she was looking for "a group of people who really rode." I think she found them.

Diane Meinders had a horse as a child but didn't get another until her husband surprised her with one several years ago. Diane still thinks it was all a trick in order to give her husband an excuse to buy a truck. Whatever the reason, she started riding her country roads and met up with an endurance rider. "She was pretty fun to ride with," Diane recalls. "She did something besides walk and she went a long way!"

Speaking for myself, I saw a movie in 1972 called BITE THE BULLET, loosely based on a 500-mile horse race in the American West at the turn of

the century. It took me ten years before I found out that such a sport still thrived!

Next I contacted our Champion and Reserve Champion Rookie Comp riders. The competition in this division was strong this year, and interesting to watch. Vicki Wright told me she had been involved with horses for years and tried many different disciplines, but said that “nothing creates a partnership with your horse like this sport because your horse must take care of you, and you must take care of your horse.”

Our Comp Rookie Champion, Leslie Bennet was a different story. Although an active person, working with herding dogs and snowshoeing for fun, she had never ridden. A few years ago, she “fell in with a group of women who endurance rode and they put me on one of their mustangs.” Next thing you know, she was trading in her tractor for a horse trailer and buying her first horse.

Eileen Kirsch related a similar story to me. An Achilles injury had caused her to give up triathlons. She used the money she had been saving to go the World Championships to buy her first horse. “I had always wanted a horse and have never regretted giving up triathlons.”

Not be seem prejudicial, I spent some time talking to the junior riders. I have often heard the quote that Juniors are the future of UMECRA, but I have trouble believing that. Don’t get me wrong, I love juniors. The kids I meet in this sport are the charming, independent, responsible, mature and fun to be around. In my 30+ years in Distance Riding, I have sponsored a large number of juniors. This year, I sponsored and supported another one. But I see no indication that the juniors are the sport’s lifeblood. It is interesting to note, however, that this year a Top Ten Finisher in both endurance and LD was a former junior rider over 30 years ago. That is what juniors do, if they are lucky. They have fun in the sport and then go on to start their “real” lives – college, careers, and raising families. Some of them come back, and some of them bring their juniors with them!

Two other Top Ten Finishers were juniors much more recently. One of the most eloquently stated responses I received was from one of them, 21-year-old Larissa Sprecher. She talked about the sacrifices she, as a college student, has to make in order to compete. She does none of her peer group activities (laments only slightly about missing a Bon Jovi concert this year) and forgoes fashion and electronic gadgets in order to support her distance habit, but does so willingly. She told me that “one of the great things about this sport is that anyone any age can do it. It is amazing to have a sport where winners are not determined by youth or strength.” I

do love seeing young people who are passionate about the sport and I sure wish there were more of them. It is not that I think the sport necessarily needs “young blood” because I think all endurance riders are young at heart.” Thank you Larissa!

Twenty-four year old Jen Allen, who never competed as a junior but has a good handle on the sacrifices young people must make in order to compete, sees juniors as reaching a “leaving” phase. “Then 40 years later they reminisce about the good ol’ days, and might return.”

Diane Meinders, who competes with her two junior daughters, feels like the secret to getting juniors involved in this sport is to find ones whose parents ride or who are close to an adult who rides and is willing to bring them along and sponsor them. Non-horsey parents are not interested in camping out in all kinds of weather and hanging around camp waiting for their kids to come off trail.

So who do we target as the future of UMECRA? The horse people who are tired of the show ring or bored with the trail rides? The middle-aged, empty nester, financially secure women who finally have time and opportunity to fulfill their girlhood dream of sharing a life with a horse? My advice is to not overlook any of these people. Hidden within might lie next year’s Rookie or next decade’s Tevis Top Ten finisher.

I would like to end this article with a quote from Leslie Bennet. “This sport and working with a horse for a Novice such as myself is incredibly empowering. I am surprised at my newfound competitive nature and my ability to excel through my horse.”

MESSAGE FROM THE AHDRA PRESIDENT

Hi everyone! What a wonderful and interesting season this has been! Congratulations to EVERYONE who took part in the competitions this year. From those of you who competed in your first ride, to our members who participated and placed well in the North American Championships, we are proud of all of you. From horses who completed their first miles, to those who completed up to their multi-thousandth mile, we applaud all. We say a special prayer for those horses who have left us to run tirelessly across the heavens. We rejoice for those members who have found the horse of their dreams, the one with whom they will share a bond and span the miles across the years.

We would like to invite everyone to attend the AHDRA awards ceremony on Friday, January 20th, at the annual UMECRA convention at the Clock Tower Inn in Rockford, Illinois. You need not be an

AHDRA member to join us. Hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar are an extra enticement. I assure you that the AHDRA awards this year are nothing short of spectacular, and watching their presentation and unveiling will be close to an art show. Hope to see all of you there!

Lori Windows



*** Convention***Convention***Convention***Convention***Convention***

Attendee(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Convention fee: \$5.00 per person

What days you will be attending? **Thur, Fri, Sat** (*circle*)

Awards Banquet / Meal Reservations: # of meals _____ X \$30.00 = _____

Convention fees: # attending _____ X \$ 5.00 = _____

Total: \$ _____

Make checks payable to UMECRA

I am bringing a Door Prize or Auction Item: **Yes / No** (*circle*)

If you are bringing an auction item, please contact Peggy Pasillas at peggy@pasillas.net or call 651-450-7959.

COCO Keys Water Park tickets can be purchased at the registration desk for \$10.00 per day.

Please send your reservations to Tony Troyer by Jan10th, 2012

Tony Troyer
 867 North 45th Road
 Earlville, IL 60518

Call or email if you have questions: 815-530-4464 or 815-539-7375 or ii4aerc@aol.com

UMECRA

UPPER MIDWEST
ENDURANCE AND COMPETITIVE RIDE
ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP FORM



PERSEVERE

CIRCLE ONE:

- Single \$35** Family \$45 - hard copy newsletter and/or ride book
- Single \$ 25** Family \$35- electronic newsletter and CD for ride book

NOTE: to receive the reduced rate, you MUST receive the newsletter electronically AND receive a CD for the ride book. If you have either the newsletter or ride book delivered via USPS you MUST pay the higher membership fees.

Check one: **RENEWAL** _____ **NEW MEMBERSHIP** _____

Please include all names of family members. Juniors are riders who are 16 and under as of December 15 or previous year; identify which names are junior riders. **Please write clearly!**

PRINT CLEARLY

Date: _____ MEMBERSHIP YEAR: 20 _____

Names: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

If you do NOT want ANY newsletter sent to you- please check this box:

Please mail completed form along with **check made out to UMECRA** to:
Jill Feller
UMECRA Secretary/Treasurer
N9280 County Road TW
Mayville, WI 53050

Awards, Awards, Awards!

Congratulations to all who are receiving awards this year. You have all worked hard and done a great job. Awards will NOT and are NEVER mailed. If you cannot be at convention to receive your award, please make arrangements to have someone pick it/them up for you.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Our condolences to Char Tuhy and Vicki Wright for the loss of their wonderful horses.

Basic Convention Schedule (more details to come!):
Thursday night – meet and greet w/ hors de vours
Friday – Trade Show/AHDRA Awards followed by a dance with Nutzy Turtle
Saturday – Board Meeting, Seminars (Dr Meg Sleeper)/Trade Show/Annual Meeting/Dinner/Silent Auction/ Awards/ Dance!
Sunday - AHDRA Annual Meeting

Lost at Point Chaser – AHDRA Award Jacket – If you happen to find it in your trailer, please contact Rick Nelson – it has his name embroidered on it! ☺

Important

Watch your mail! Voting ballots for Rider Reps will be sent to you in a separate mailing via Snail mail! One vote for single members, 2 votes for a Family membership.

Votes must be mailed to Jill Feller!

Got a product you want to sell? Vendor spaces at the convention are available! The spaces are \$50 for member or \$70 for non members. Contact Tony Troyer at 815.539.7375 or il4aerc@aol.com

UMECRA Newsletter
c/o Peggy Pasillas
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Deadline for Next Newsletter:
5th of each month
Send news to:
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