



4083 Iron Works Parkway
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**AMERICAN SADDLEBRED HORSE ASSOCIATION
MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MONDAY, APRIL 2ND, 2018-5:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: The following ASHA Executive Committee members participated at this meeting: President David Mount; Vice President, Joan Lurie; Treasurer, Leslie Rainbolt-Forbes; Secretary, Owen Weaver; Executive Board Members Kristen Cater and Donna Pettry-Smith. Board members present were Allen Bosworth, Sandy Currier, Candy Covino- Aversenti, Emily Lee, Evan Orr, Holly Nichols, Jenny Taylor, Tandy Patrick, Cheryl Innis, Emily Lee, Marty Schaffel.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: David Mount asked to get a motion to adopt the agenda, it was approved by majority, and seconded it by Tandy Patrick. The board ratified the minutes from January 30 to February 3, 2018. The minutes from March will be available at the next board meeting. David suggested they move one and asked if anyone would declare a conflict of interest. No replies. David began the meeting with the Marketing Committee Report with Tiffany Frey.

3. REPORT FROM MARKETING: Allen introduced Tiffany, who is on the marketing committee and is a marketing director for an online retail store. She has conducted data and analytic analysis of our website.

Please see enclosed attachment A. of her transcript on page 5.

Allen thanked Tiffany and gave an overview of the marketing activities. He stated: Jason Gershman is working on the media plan. He's been informed by everything Tiffany just brought forth, as well as some MRI and Simmons runs that we've done to look for related things that are interesting to them. So, the media plan is in development. Simultaneously, Allen stated that he is working with Ashley Russo and Allison Lambert to create sort of a new way to approach the videos from a branding standpoint, making sure we have consistent close. One of the things they've done is gone through the YouTube site, He will get with Cynthia but he's got to move some stuff off of that that is junk and dated. He suggested to do





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some re-edits on some of the stuff. They are trying to find places to deposit all of the assets so that we have a really strong approach to that.

He is going to keep everyone up to date on a monthly basis. It may not move as quickly as we want it to be, but he wants to make sure that we're doing this right so that when we actually put dollars in the marketplace that they are having the kind of experience that we want them to have, that we can track effectively and optimize over time.

4. REPORT FROM THE REGISTRY: There are 121 foals registered in March of 2017, 340 registered year to date. There are 288 transfers this last month with 745 year to date. Sandy also mentioned that the registry will start the Walk-In Wednesday, stay 2 hours longer and come in 2 hours late. This help anyone who wants to visit the office can do so after work. The other thing Sandy is working on is Live Foal Report. There will be a report that will be sent out to everybody on the Stallion Owner's Report and this will not name stallions because we don't want anybody to hold back because of that. It'll simply be a percentage of mares that are bred and produced actual live foals. There's no cost to anybody. The third thing, they have the name-claiming form. They are doing some tweaks on that so that people can claim names and not actually register the horse until they are ready to do that.

5. REPORT ON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT: David stated that they have 53 applicants to date. They have hired a graduate student to reach out to the higher-level management of equine-based non-profits to gauge interest in our job. Because of this effort, we have received interest from Executive Directors from other breed organizations and other Kentucky-based equine nonprofits.

So, out of the 53 applicants, there are about eight or nine qualified candidates, which is a really good thing. David hopes to start the interviewing process sometime this month once the graduate student has finished with her project.

6. REPORT FROM THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE: Tandy gave her report, that she emailed out the preliminary memo with some potential changes that have been suggested. The committee would really like the board's input and the board's thoughts on additional changes, if any, and whether the changes





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that they've suggested should weigh in on ideas for improvements. The committee suggested to send their input before May call.

7. REPORT FROM THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: Marty updated everyone that their next meeting is scheduled for Thursday. They are close to resolving a scope of work from a consultant to help them through the process. They're trying to target two efforts. One effort is some one-hour interviews with different stakeholders that have not participated so far in some of the exercises that they all have participated in and some deeper drilling down of what's important for those stakeholders.

The committee and some other stakeholders who will be invited and anybody else who wants to attend, we will have a workshop that we are trying to get a date for that will grind out the strategic plan. They will have that hopefully in a published form not long after that workshop. The deliverable will be presented to the board.

8. REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: Leslie Rainbolt-Forbes has an engagement in OK, so David Mount gave the report. The committee had the initial meeting with the auditors last week for our 2017 audit. So, they hope to have the update wrapped up by the end of the month. The ASHA have converted all of the financial data from our old accounting software to QuickBooks, which was quite an ordeal. They had to go to a third party to do it. So, they will start producing the financials in QuickBooks starting with March. The 2018 budget does not listed for January and February, but it will reappear once they are switched over to QuickBooks for March.

As for February financials, just a couple things that stick. On the balance sheet or the statement of financial position, the total receivables are down over \$111,000 over the prior year. We still show \$19,200 in accounts receivable for the journal. All of that, \$800 of that is 2015 and '16. The auditors are going to look at that. Some of this is going to be written off as bad debt but we are looking into it. The auditors are going to give us a recommendation. But the fact that we're down over \$111,000 in receivables over the prior year is very significant.





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The income statement or the statement of activities, you'll see for the year – January and February – we have a net loss of \$85,000, which is consistent to the prior year. And some of this is due to the deferred and allocated on a monthly basis. We will catch up so, this is nothing to be alarmed at.

One thing that did stand out for me was under the general administration section 10, if you look at salaries, we have an increase of about \$25,000 over the prior year. The reason for this is because we paid out commissions and the severance. So, that's included in that number. We also paid Bill's salary through March 7 so, his salary's reflected in January and February, as well.

9. REPORT ON WCHS: David updated the board on the World Championship Horse Show. On March 22, the Kentucky State Fair Board voted not to have classes on the two new extra days of the show and just leave them as days to work horses in Freedom Hall. They also voted not to increase the ticket prices by \$40. So, they voted not to increase the ticket prices to cover the two extra days. So, basically, in their mind, they're leaving \$100 – \$100,000 in total ticket revenue – on the table for us this year. But in return – this was kind of a surprise – they decided to make the two extra days permanent, which is contrary to what we were told previously. David requested feedback from the board on how to proceed on this, come up with a plan whether to fight it or try to reshape the show. They plan to add the 100 classes over those two extra days starting next year. Donna suggested putting a town hall meeting together so that people feel that they are being heard with their class suggestions or any suggestions they have. Several members chimed in on different ideas as well.

David also added that the Kentucky State Fair Board are going to give the Association and the museum a 400-square-foot end stall in the South Wing at the Kentucky State Fair. The booth will be part of a new Ag Land area, which they estimate will have attendance of about 300,000 for the 13-day run of the fair.

Meeting was adjourned by a motion from David Mount with a second from Candi Aversenti and a unanimous vote.





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Attachment A. of Tiffany's transcript.

Her report states: I just went through the website through the analytics and the data. I also used some of my software to analyze competitors and our overall – kind of how the ASHA's site is represented on the internet, in general, how it's found and things like that.

So, just to go through the information that I've shared. So, the traffic that's coming to the website is almost an even split between organic, which is people who go to Google or Bing and do a search, that's organic. And direct traffic, which is people who go directly to the website. There's a small percent that's coming from referrals, which would be linked on other websites that point to the ASHA site. And then, a small percent is coming from social media.

So, a healthy mix of traffic would have a higher organic component, higher social component, and there would be some advertising bringing in traffic and less direct. Because what this is telling me is that almost half of the visitors to the site already know about the site and are coming here for a purpose. And in terms of market, you want to reach new people.

So, the next point is the affinity – and we'll look over this real quickly. This is kind a very high-level overview of what our visitors to the site enjoy doing when they're not on our site. So, they like food-related websites, news, lifestyle – which could be home remodeling and pets – anything around media or entertainment, real estate, travel, and home décor. And those actually coincided with some of the data that Allen found in his MRIs that he's run. So, it's nice to see those parallels there. And we can use that information to think about other areas that we might want to reach out and advertise. So, when we're doing our PPC advertising like the Google AdWords, we can specify what types of websites the ads would run on. We can't actually control the specific sites themselves but we could say, "Let's run our ad on real estate and travel websites," so, then, the ad would show there. Since we know that that's what our visitors tend to look at, they would see our ads.

The top ten pages on the website that have the most visitors are all related to existing members or Saddlebred people. These top ten pages have nothing to do with people who are new to the breed or curious about Saddlebreds. And all of the top 100 keywords that brought people to the site had the words, "Saddlebred" or "ASHA" in the keywords.

So, we're not bringing people to the site if they're doing other types of searches like, "What's the best show horse?" Or, "What's a good versatile breed for my family?" So, we're bringing in people who are already familiar





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with Saddlebreds and they tend to visit these pages that are member pages. You know, the pedigree search, competitions list, how to become a member, things like that.

The next part of this is the activity. So, these are just a few things that kind of jumped out at me about what people do when they're on the website. So, fully 80% of our visitors followed the same path. They land on the homepage, they go to the Members section, and do a pedigree search. 80% of our traffic is doing that. So, it doesn't really matter where they're coming from, that's what they do. And that's obviously not who we want to target with our advertising.

About half the people come in on desktops and about half come in on mobile or tablet. And I put the bounce right there to show kind of the big spread between the two. Google counts a bounce as somebody who lands on your website and immediately leaves. They have to leave within three seconds. They don't click on anything, they don't go to another page, and they don't scroll.

So, 23% of the traffic bounces when they come to the site on a computer but 40% bounces when they come in on a mobile device. And that's because the site is really not very mobile-friendly, particularly, the homepage. And since most of the traffic lands on the homepage, 40% of it that's using a phone to browse the site is just leaving immediately. They don't even wait for the page to fully load, they just leave.

So, any of the pages that we create for these marketing campaigns that people will be landing on have to be mobile-friendly. Everything has to load quickly, it has to be tappable with your finger, they can't just be little test links. A lot of graphics, fewer words. It has to be formatted to fit on a phone screen.

So, if we want these campaigns to be successful, we really need to pay attention to that mobile experience.

Allen further stated: none of this is particularly surprising because we haven't really run any campaigns that drive toward our website. So, the fact that most of the people coming in are people that already know what they're doing, that isn't a particular surprising fact. Though what we're going to be doing is utilizing analytics like this to see if we can affect the mix so that we can know whether or not we are driving appropriate people through to our website and then, through the behaviors that we want them to do.

You know, when Tiffany's talking about optimizing for mobile and load rates and things like that, there are some simple things we can do and some more complicated things we can do. And I've talked to David about this a little bit. We want to make sure before we go out with our advertising that we have done those things. Tiffany and





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Cynthia and myself and Allison Lambert are getting on the phone to try to create better kind of experiences through landing pages and finding out from Cynthia exactly what we can do on our homepage in order to decrease our bounce rate by doing some of the very simple things that Tiffany suggests. So, that's where we stand in terms of the site itself.

Now, her analytics went much deeper than this but I just wanted to give you an overview of the types of things we'll be looking at and reporting on as we move through this effort.

Allen asked Tiffany to go over her observations from some of the competitors keywords: Tiffany states, So, a big part of my everyday job is FDO and analytics but then, the other big part is content marketing. So, that revolves around keywords and blogging and social media and things that have to do with the actual content of a website.

So, I did some looking at the keywords that drive traffic to ASHA, which I told you before, we don't have any – we don't rank for anything that doesn't have the word "Saddlebred" in it. But if you look down at the "Quarter Horse" and "Morgan" keywords, you'll see quite a few keywords and key phrases that don't mention the breed. They're a lot more generic. We call those long-tail or broad keywords.

So, at some point, I really think it would be very important and very beneficial for us to consider having a blog or some sort of content repository on the website that we can populate with articles that have more generic content that is quasi-related to the breed but is also appealing to just horse people, in general. For example, an article on, you know, grooming for the show ring or how to keep horseshoes on a horse with shelly hook walls or things like that, that we might be able to get some additional traffic.

And part of the reason for this is exposing people to the breed, of course. But another reason is that the more traffic that comes to the site that does not bounce and the more our content is shared through social media and on other websites, the more our trust score goes up with Google. And the higher our trust score, the better we rank for other things. So, it is kind of like it starts almost a little bit of an avalanche. Once you get going, it starts to go.

Now, there's no way to actually know what your real trust score is. Google hides all of that. We can get some estimates of it. But it's built through content that are relevant and not copied from other websites. It has to be unique and it has to be popular. So, it has to be shared. And the people who come to read the content have to stay on the page more than three seconds.





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So, just taking a look at these keywords, you know, obviously, a lot of these don't apply to Saddlebreds but I'm sure we could come up with our own list of topics that we could create content for that. Arabians, the AHA has the same problem we do.

Sandy Currier indicated she got the Breeder's Committee to send an article on breeding every month to go on our website. She also has setup a new committee called the Diplomat Committee, for horses that do not go to Kentucky State Fair but somehow have affected somebody's life to submit an article each month to be shared with our members. Both Allen and Tiffany thought that was great.

Tiffany continued on to say: the last page is just some keyword research that I did around related content. So, I did a search for "versatile horse breeds" so they know that's one of the areas that we thought maybe we could have a campaign around that concept. And there's actually no data in Google because no one is searching for versatile horse breeds. So, that right there kind of educates us that, well, maybe that's not the best campaign.

But there were some other ideas that it came up with. So, if you look at the list below that, those are all concepts that are kind of related to versatile horse breeds. So, we can brainstorm and you know, do some cards to come up with some content around that if we did want to pursue that as an advertising idea.

I did a search for "American horse breeds." There were about 390 searches per month for that term, "American horse breeds."

In the top ten websites that show up, none of them are actually breed websites. So, the list below, the Morgan, Paint, Quarter Horse, American Indian Horse, those were related ideas but none of those websites actually come up on page 1 if you do a Google search for American horse breeds. So, that's an opportunity there perhaps that we could find a way to rank on page 1 for that.

I did a search for "Saddlebreds" and then, all the concepts are below that. So, you can see, you know, we're familiar with quite a few of those. I did a search for "pleasure horse." That one, also, is about 390 searches per month. There's, again, no breed websites that show up when you do a search for pleasure horse-related terms. And then, the related ideas are there below.

And then, I saw "show horse" was in there and I said, "Oh, let me check that out." So, I did some research on show horse. 1,300 searches per month. In the top 10 websites, you see ShowHorse TV, USEF, Showhorse.com, and there





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was Johnson – I think that’s the Arabian horses. I don’t quite remember what WIHS.org is. But those are really the only horse-related websites that show up when you do a search for show horse.

But the concepts that came up are all related to Saddlebreds. So, that’s kind of some low-hanging fruit if you want to pursue that route to start with and then, we can expand it a little bit later. But these are just some ideas to help us maybe focus what we’re doing in terms of the campaign that we create.

