

American Horse Council Annual Meeting Underway

AHC Issues Forum on Welfare of Horse takes place today in Washington DC.

June 16, 2009

The American Horse Council's National Issues Forum will focus on the "Welfare of the Horse." The Forum, which will feature speakers from segments of the horse community as varied as competition, sport, work and entertainment, will be held June 16, 2009 in Washington, DC as part of the AHC's annual meeting.

The forum will focus on the many welfare and safety initiatives that various segments of the horse industry have in place or are instituting. "This will be an opportunity for the industry to provide reports on all the safety initiatives in place and being undertaken to 'Put the Horse First'," said AHC president Jay Hickey. "We must let our fans, the general public, the media, and elected officials know how important the safety and welfare of the horse is to the horse community and what the industry is doing."

Dr. Scott Palmer, a nationally-known veterinarian and past-president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners, will deliver the keynote address. Other featured speakers will be Gary Carpenter, executive director of the American Quarter Horse Foundation, Cindy Schonholtz, president of the Animal Welfare Council, and Dr. Tom Lenz, chairman of the Unwanted Horse Coalition. Additional speakers will be announced as they are named.

The forum will also include panels on racing, showing, competition, sport, and horses used in work and entertainment. Representatives from national organizations involved in all these activities will provide an update on their welfare activities. "We believe that this will be the most inclusive presentation on safety and welfare ever assembled in terms of its breadth and the activities and organizations involved," said Hickey. The forum will not only involve racing and showing, but also veterinarians, endurance riding, sport horses, rodeo, carriage operators, horses in entertainment and work. It will be an opportunity for attendees to learn about welfare initiatives in other segments of the horse world and how they might be adapted to their activities.

The horse industry is a broad and diverse community; sometimes one segment is not aware of what other segments are doing. "There is much we can learn from each other," said Hickey. "The AHC hopes that this National Issues Forum will be an opportunity to discuss the common goal of being good stewards of the horse and facilitate our all working together to that end, regardless of our particular activity."

View the schedule of speakers for today's forum [here](#).

More information on this Forum and the entire AHC annual meeting, www.horsecouncil.org.