

W.A. Horse Council News

December 2010

Patron: The Hon David K. Malcolm AC QC.
Chairperson: Diane Bennit Ph: 9291 0202 Fax: 9291 0206
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held in August, the WAHC Annual General Meeting was well supported with over 40 people attending. The 13 committee persons and minute taker all renominated. Gill Woodstock (Carriage Driving) and Fran Stephens (Trail Riding) also nominated and were accepted.

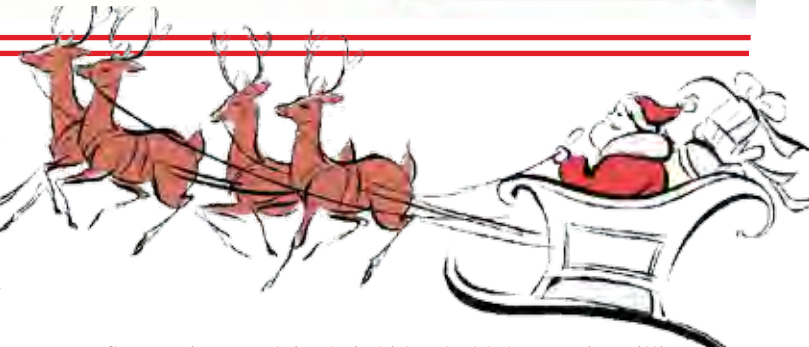
Diane Bennit was awarded Life Membership, for her dedication and commitment to the WA Horse Council.

The Council had a very active year and in many cases it was the only Horse Industry representation at forums. In 2010 WAHC was involved with supporting the following Action Groups and Organisations:

- opposing the licence to slaughter horses for human consumption,
- banning the use of raw poultry manure in horticulture, which contributes to the 'stable fly', and which has become an increasing economic threat to livestock,
- preventing the restriction of horse access to Whitfords Beach
- Department of Sport and Recreation in the setting of guidelines for accreditation of Trails,
- Animal Emergency Group, which rescues pets and horses in Peri-urban and Rural Shires,
- preventing the parking licence permit and fees for Equestrian vehicles in the City of Swan,



Diane Bennit with her Life Membership shield and an inset of the life membership badge organised by Dot Parker.



- Supporting EWA in their bid to hold the Magic Millions 1B Yearling Sales at the State Equestrian Centre,
- Perth Hills Trails Reference Group – community environment grants and updating trails
- Perth Region Natural Resource Management Group – Environmental Best Management Practices
- Australian Horse Industry Council regarding the horse industry becoming a signatory to the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA),
- Swan River Trust on managing Horse Waste in the Healthy Rivers Plan.

'AWARDS OF RECOGNITION'

The WAHC was nominated for a Perth Region National Resource Management (NRM) annual award for their involvement with the Horse Land and Water Environmental Best Management Practice. These Awards are for stake holders in a large range of projects that Perth Region NRM manages on behalf of state and national funding bodies.

Also nominated for the best Individual Stakeholder Project Leader in the environmental section was WAHC committee person Nikki Brooks.

EQUINE INFLUENZA VACCINATION

The 1st December deadline - set by the Council of Agriculture Ministers last May - for agreement on a horse disease levy has been met therefore the contentious issue of compulsory Equine Influenza Vaccinations is no longer applicable. It is expected that legislation establishing the levy will pass through Federal Parliament in the first half of 2011.

IT'S THE BUSHFIRE SEASON

If a bushfire occurs near your property or agistment centre, are you prepared? Do you have an emergency plan? Property owners should not rely on electrical power for water in the event of a fire. Have a plan organised and prepare for it - it is NOT a good idea

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to be doing float training with a fire approaching! It is strongly recommended that agreement agreements clearly define fire plans and that these plans are clearly understood by all parties.

Emergency Evacuation Centres in the Swan Valley are: Brookleigh Equestrian Estate (Great Northern Highway) and the State Equestrian Centre (Cathedral Avenue).

YOUR HORSE – YOUR RESPONSIBILITY – AND YOUR DECISION.

MATTERS BEING DISCUSSED NATIONALLY

- Australia needs more than one equine quarantine station (Eastern Creek)
- Why horses can quarantine cheaper in New Zealand than in Australia.
- A Parliamentary secretary or junior Minister position should be established within Government to manage Equine Issues.
- There is an urgent need for the collection of accurate data on horse numbers and their location. If this information had been available in 2007, Equine Influenza could have been controlled much quicker. However, nobody knew how many horses there were, or where they were.
- The re-categorization of Equine Influenza from a Category 4 (Industry pays 80% and Government pays 20%) to a Category 3 (Industry and Government pay 50% each)
- Veterinarians being able to prescribe and use non registered substances for horses, providing they make the owners aware of the status of the medication.

STATE FACILITIES PLAN FOR EQUESTRIAN SPORTS

The Council has written to the Director General of the Department of Sport and Recreation, expressing our support for the development of a State Facilities Plan for Equestrian Sports, which would include the need for a regional facility in the southern metropolitan area.

The announcement that the City of Armadale required a Pony Club to vacate its club facilities and grounds to amalgamate with another Pony Club that operated nearby, to make way for a housing development, was the initiation of a survey to ascertain the demand for such facilities in the Armadale area.

The report identified that all local Pony Clubs in the area had waiting lists for membership, but that people travelled even from the western suburbs for the tuition and activities available in the Armadale/Gosnells area. The report further identified an increasing demand for those facilities.

HORSE EUTHANASIA

There may come a time when, for humane, medical, economic or safety reasons, an owner will need to consider euthanasia for their horse. The decision to euthanise or induce a painless death, should never be made without careful consideration. The right choice is clearly the one that is in the best interest of the horse and the people who care for it.

The following questions may be helpful:

- Is the horse suffering
- What is the likelihood of recovery
- Has the horse become depressed or despondent or does it continue to show an interest and desire to live
- How much discomfort or distress can the owner expect the horse to endure
- What kind of special care will the horse require and can the owner meet its needs
- Can the owner continue to provide for the horse economically
- What are the alternatives

A veterinarian can aid clients in making a timely decision, prepare the owner for what will happen and ensure the horses life is ended painlessly and as distress free as possible.

A Billy Tea, organised in November by the WAHC and the Talking Horses radio program, introduced the co-radio show hosts to the delight of riding at Alison Logans property in the Wanneroo.

Right: Darryl Wilkinson, Diane Bennit and Ian Hale.



BILLY TEA AND DAMPER

The WA Horse Council and 91.3 SportFM held a very well attended promotional morning for the equestrian radio show 'Talking Horses' in November. Hosted by Alison Logan from Academy Equestrian in Wanneroo, a supervised trail ride was available and also a special morning tea of Billy T and Damper was provided.

91.3SportFM Station Manager Jason Dattilo welcomed everyone and gave an overview of the radio stations history and proposed future plans. The riders - graded in their ability - consisted of the two Talking Horses co- presenters Darryl Wilkinson and Ian Hale (beginners) who was distinguished by a big yellow L plate on his back. Riders consisted of other 91.3 presenters, Talking Horses sponsors and Council committee persons.

An unwelcome visitor was a Tiger snake, which was very competently dispatched by Darryl.

The morning was a great success, thanks to Academy Equestrian's Alison Logan and her staff for the very professional organisation of the event.

The WA Horse Council's equestrian radio show is proving to be a very successful medium for getting information out to the horse industry and is the most downloaded show at the station. If you want to let the listeners know what is happening with your club, event or breed, email Diane Bennit: bennit@optusnet.com.au or phone 92910202. Tune in to 91.3sportfm on Wednesdays from 6 to 7pm, or www.sportfm.com.au and click listen live – you can catch up on previous shows by clicking on podcast

SOME SCARY STATISTICS

The Foot and Mouth outbreak in England, which started in February 2001 and ended in May, resulted in 17,000 infected cows, sheep and pigs being destroyed, plus many more susceptible, but uninfected animals

The 2007 outbreak of Equine Influenza in Australia, lasted only 19 weeks, yet over 70,000 horses were infected across two states

MEETING BETWEEN HORSE INDUSTRY GROUPS AND DAFWA

After the recent horse industry panic over reports of a suspected strangles 'outbreak', WAHC Committee person Dr Kathy Klein contacted Dr Judith Medd, Chief Veterinarian for Racing and Wagering (RWWA), to discuss what procedures could be implemented to prevent a panic situation re-occurrence again, and whether strangles should be a made a notifiable disease in WA.

A meeting was held in September, at the Veterinary Surgeons Board in South Perth. In attendance were Dr Tony Higgs - Department of Agriculture & Food WA (DAFWA), Dr Judith Medd - RWWA, Diane Bennit and Dr Kathy Klein from the WA Horse Council. Also invited were Equestrian WA CEO Hamish Johnson, Dr Rachel Stone from Equine Veterinarians Australia and Dr Warwick Vale.

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

There was an interesting poster at the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky, USA ;

You can tell a gelding - you can ask a stallion - but you must discuss it with a mare.....

The group discussed communications to the horse industry, when there are reports of outbreaks of disease coming from unofficial sources. It was agreed that ensuring the accuracy of information was paramount, before industry groups should make comment.

To facilitate communications, a working party consisting of representatives of horse industry groups and DAFWA should communicate on joint information releases.

STRANGLES STATUS

Regarding the change of status for Strangles; Dr Higgs indicated that as the disease is endemic within WA, can be treated, is rarely fatal and horse owners can choose to vaccinate their horses, it was unlikely that DAFWA would place Strangles on the notifiable disease list.

TRAIL TALK

To discuss Trail Ride information, e.g. horses allowed, events, equipment, facilities, type of track, parking etc., log on to the WAH Council's forum page – www.trailtalk.com.au

UPDATE ON MICROCHIPPING

At this time there is no National Register for microchipped horses. Under the current system, it is left to the owner to register the details with one of the existing registers. Many owners do not follow this procedure, which means there is no way of tracing the horse's owner. It is essential, that uniform microchipping regulations be implemented - not like branding, which has different laws in each state. It is possible to buy microchips over the internet for \$80 !!

Pathways to nationally accredit non veterinarians to do microchipping are being investigated. Victoria already has accredited some people for small animals, not horses.

Excerpts -WA Liberal Senator DR CHRIS BACK

A landmark agreement to fight exotic diseases, proposed by Animal Health Australia, has received universal support by all sectors of the Australian horse industry and by a Senate committee, which tabled its report on Friday.

Western Australian Senator Dr Chris Back, an equine veterinarian, has strongly endorsed the recommendations of the Rural Affairs and Transport References committee, which has examined the implications of the industry Emergency Animal Disease Response (EADRA) agreement.

Once approved by parliament, the federal government can coordinate a nationwide response in the event that any one of the



SAY NO TO HORSE MEAT RALLY

The 'Stop the sale of Horsemeat for Human Consumption' Action Group, have developed a petition for people to sign, which will support them in their protest. Go to www.nohorsemeat.wordpress.com

22 exotic diseases affecting horses was detected in Australia. Hendra, rabies, and equine influenza are examples of such diseases.

Dr Back said Australia had a wake-up call when Equine Influenza was diagnosed in 2007. "While EI was highly contagious, it did not kill many horses," he said.

"If we were to get African Horse Sickness or any other insect-borne neurological disease, we could lose tens of thousands of horses before it could be brought under control. We have the insect species, which is capable of carrying some of these diseases here in Australia."

Glanders, a disease first identified in the third century AD, has recently been diagnosed in the Persian Gulf. Horses have been put down in an attempt to control the disease. The Gulf is only 10 hours flying time from Australia.

"By speaking with one voice, the industry will achieve more when dealing with Government. Hopefully signing up to the EADRA is the catalyst for all industry sectors to see the benefit of this approach," Dr Back said.

WAHC MEMBERSHIP - Seasons Greetings

Support the Council that is supporting the Horse Industry

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