

Council Update

Just a quick update for members ...life has been so busy the past couple of months, the last few months of this year have slipped by way too fast. For those of you who have been out showing – we hope you have enjoyed the shows and had personal success with your horses in the show ring. Every horse is a winner – those we lovingly prepare to show hold a special place in our hearts – and rarely would we chose to change them. We have seen many photos of gorgeous foals frolicking about the paddocks – they are beautiful. Congratulations to all of you– we enjoy watching them grow and seeing how they develop under all that fluff.

The next Council Meeting has had to be changed due to Council members availability. It is now scheduled for Wellington the weekend of January 6-7 at the Willis Wellington Hotel. We are still working on the agendas – so if you have anything you would like discussed, please let us know.

Allan Tonner has stepped down from the interim Treasurer's role and completed his hand over to Helen Meikle who has kindly offered her services. Helen is a trained accountant and an expert in Xero so we are pleased to have someone on hand who is able to hit the ground running.

We would like to thank Allan for his support to the team and for the advice he will undoubtedly continue to provide us from the sidelines. His knowledge, gained from more than 25 years with NZMHA in both service and support roles, has been invaluable. We will most definitely miss him and the support he has provided.

We have had a few members raising concern that they were not being consulted about any potential changes, and that “secret squirrel” groups were making the decisions. That is not the case. Focus Groups are simply a faster way to gain an understanding from a broad spectrum of members – both those actively engaged in NZMHA – as well as those that have stepped away. We are grateful to those who have volunteered to help with these Focus Groups. We understand everyone is busy and appreciate the time members make themselves available to assist. The remaining Focus Groups will kick off after Christmas and, once we have all the input, we will take the information gathered and prepare the necessary Remits for review and voting by **ALL** NZMHA members.

We are currently finalising two surveys, for Publications and Showing, that have been collated from member input and Focus Group discussions. All ideas suggested have been collated into a survey that members, and recently resigned members, will be invited to respond to. This will provide Council with a better idea of where the broader membership stands. Thanks to everyone who has contributed constructive ideas for change. We hope as many of you as possible take the opportunity to provide your input by responding to the surveys to make sure you have your say into NZMHA's future. If you choose not to contribute – you only have yourself to blame.

As you will have seen, a couple of new show competitions will kick off in 2018. These will be based on the results of Hi-Points shows taking place in the new year. More details will follow from the organisers in the next week or so. We are also working on confirming sponsorship the existing competitions to maintain or improve the prize pools.

We are very pleased to announce the generous sponsorship of the A&P HiPoints Awards this year by Ubersnug. The competition has been split into North and South Islands events to cater for the differences in schedule. We have agreed to accept late entries up until the end of the year due to this split and the introduction of prizes, as we recognise others may have entered the competition had they known prizes were involved.

We are looking to enhance the A&P competitions to encourage more entries and make more shows available to our members. To that end, we have had a couple of new perpetual trophies committed

for South Island A&P Award winners as well as some trophies for local A&P events. If you are interested in sponsoring a trophy, please contact Alyssa King who can provide a list of available trophies and prices,

A couple of local A&P organisations have agreed to trial the acceptance of NZMHA height cards at their shows. NZMHA will be encouraging members local to those shows to enter and support these shows wherever possible, to demonstrate that NZMHA members will be more likely to attend if they are not required to invest in the re-measuring of our horses. A special thanks to those who have spent so much time and effort in getting these shows approved. We know that, without you, they would not happen.

A Childrens' Photo competition will launch online over the holiday period. We are looking for photos of children engaging with and enjoying miniature horses. We are regularly being asked to establish more activity for younger children and expand what is on offer for the Youth classes so this is a way of gauging what interest there is out there. There will be prizes and a feature article of the winners and stories behind the photos in a future issue of Tiny Tales. Start digging out those cute photos in preparation. There will be a nominal charge to enter each photo.

Preparations for the Showcase and National Shows are progressing well, with all NZMHA judges having been secured and the booking of travel and accommodation now in progress. A couple of changes have been made to the schedules and we hope to have the majority of these up for you to review during the Christmas period. We are pleased to announce that Pub Charities have provided funding for the National Show and, as previously announced, Shona Milsom has confirmed the Horsecare House, as our major sponsor for the National Show. Discussions regarding sponsorship and donations from several local and national businesses are progressing and look positive. We will be contacting our loyal member studs and businesses in the New Year to see if they are able to support by sponsoring any of the activities. We continue to be grateful for all our sponsors provide, especially those member sponsors who continue contribute year after year – thank you so much for your generosity.

You may have seen the Christmas Auction go up – many thanks to those who have donated items for this event. There were some lovely Christmas gifts as well as some great items for show preparation, we raised over \$800. If you have any items you would like to donate for future auctions – you can either get the item or a photo to your Regional Delegate.

May Council take this opportunity to wish all our members and their families a very good Christmas and a fantastic start to 2018. May the new year bring you joy, good health and every success with your horses.