



## **WHAT THE ALABAMA HORSE COUNCIL DOES FOR YOU!**

*Started in 1996, the Alabama Horse Council (AHC) provides an ongoing, unified voice in promotion, protection, education, legislation, commerce and the general development of a more stable and rewarding equine industry for all those involved - human and horse. Its volunteer Board works hours upon hours to protect and enhance our equine industry for all horse interests. Members of the Board come from various equine backgrounds, represent varied equine disciplines, and focus on the general horse population, rather than their individual interests. This makes for a highly functional and effective group doing business for YOU!*

*Some highlights of the AHC's work over the years are:*

- Established a partnership with eight other Alabama equine associations to host the 2011 Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference ([www.southeasternequestriantrails.com](http://www.southeasternequestriantrails.com)) – the first ever for our state! Held in Auburn, this conference brought together top-notch folks from the private and public sectors focused on “Creating, Coordinating and Conserving a Trail Friendly Environment”. The conference received excellent reviews and is the first time that so many equine associations in our state worked together for one common equine cause.
- Conducted the ALABAMA HORSE FAIR annually 1996 thru 2017 (except 2006 after Katrina) bringing in top headliners, such as Chris Cox, Craig Cameron, Monty Roberts, Tommie Turvey, Richard Winters, Richard Shrake, GaWaNi Pony Boy, Curt Pate, Larry Whitesell & Jennifer Bauer, Donna West, Lynn Palm, Stacy Westfall, Ken McNabb, Rick Wheat, Tommy Garland, Steve Jones, Dan James, Pat Parelli, Donna Maye West, Bobby Richards, Jimmie Munroe, David Lee Archer, Stan Smith, Taylor McIntosh, Terry Nichols, Steve Edwards Lisa Wysocki, and many others. The Fair facilitates educational demos and lectures covering numerous topics presented by top professionals, and hosts the largest equine trade show in Alabama. At the Fair, our State professionals volunteer their time and expertise to answer questions from horse owners at the popular. “Ask the Vet” and “Ask the Farrier” booths. On the average, approximately 8,000 volunteer hours are needed to put on the Fair every year starting one month after the previous Fair!
- Re-established, and actively involve, a County Representative system to provide information and support between local equine interests and the AHC Board. These folks volunteer their time and energy to promote horses and the horse industry in Alabama and are the “eyes and ears” of our horse world.
- Joined the Alabama Coalition for Farm Animal Care and Well Being as a Charter member. This coalition provides factual information to legislators on issues of farm animal care and is a viable and highly respected organization.
- Funded an extensive Equine Economic Impact Study in 2006. Results of the study “Alabama Equine Industry: Inventory, Impacts, and Prospects” documents the \$2.4 BILLION Alabama equine industry and its value to our State. See the study on <http://repo.lib.auburn.edu/repo/bitstream/handle/123456789/4102/BULL0662.pdf?sequence=1>
- Attended the 2012 Alabama Trails Conference working in conjunction with various recreational trail users.
- Developed an official Memorandum of Understanding in 2008 with the U. S. National Forest Service to promote a more effective working relationship to enhance equestrian use of our trail system.
- Secured a grant from Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries to develop a televised Public Service Announcement to promote horses in Alabama.
- Worked with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries to update Coggins Testing requirements for horse events.
- Assisted TOP TRAILS Outdoor Park in obtaining a \$100,000 ADECA RTP grant to develop equestrian trails in the facility.

- Involved with “Best of America by Horseback” coverage of three separate trail facilities in Alabama and brought BOABH to the Alabama Horse Fair. The corresponding events were aired on RFD-TV, again publicizing Alabama’s facilities and events.
- Developed and operated an Annual Trail Horse Competition in conjunction with the Alabama Horse Fair with \$2,500 prize money for four years.
- Awarded scholarships to students planning careers in the horse industry (2009 to 2018 we have been awarding two \$1,000 scholarships annually).
- Obtained a grant from the Alabama Tourism Department to develop a brochure, “Welcome to Alabama’s Horse World”, listing contact information for trail facilities, breed associations, vet schools, farrier associations, etc. with over 5,000 copies being distributed to our 8 Alabama Welcome Centers and other locations and organizations.
- Provided yearly Trophy Belt Buckles to State 4-H Horse Show High Point winners and provided judges for the educational competitions at the show.
- Initiated first Trail Facilities Group Meeting at the 2006 AHC Annual General Membership Meeting to encourage growth and cooperation among our state trail facilities.
- Developed and conducted REIN (Regional Equine Information Network) educating horse owners across the State with classes offered via remote locations and by manual.
- Provided discounts for Alabama trail facilities, equine supply retailers, trainers, etc. to our membership.
- Maintained a website with equine links and information, which is a free service available to all horse interests. We also offer yearly links for our Business Members.
- Maintain Social Media pages on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Our pages have the latest news, events and accomplishments of AHC.
- Developed, and maintain, an active relationship with the Alabama Cattlemen’s Association for a more unified voice in issues facing livestock producers and owners and to promote a joint scholarship program.
- During our initial years, hosted trail rides across State of Alabama to promote trail facilities, increase AHC membership and better unite horse people. Hosted Trail Ride in Moundville, AL in October of 2017
- Supported equine research in Alabama through grant programs.
- Hosted “The Horse and You” educational seminar in 1999.
- Provide yearly financial support to “Horse U”, a youth educational program conducted by Auburn University Department of Animal Sciences.
- Increased the profile and awareness of the Alabama Horse Industry to State and local governments. Governor Bob Riley, Agriculture Commissioners Charles Bishop and Ron Sparks and other leaders have been guests at the Alabama Horse Fair and have been involved with equine-related issues.
- Obtained funding for the Alabama Horse Industry Directory (published in 1998).
- Provided funding for FFA Spring Judging Clinics and Horse Judging Team.
- Hosted a Colt Starting Competition in Cullman, Alabama 2017, 2018 and 2019 complete with vendors, food, entertainment, education, clinics, fun and belt buckles for the Crowd Favorite and the JUDGES winner of the competition.
- Sponsor “Horse U” each fall at Auburn University.
- Formed a partnership with Faye Whittemore Farms in Jasper, Alabama to hold an Annual Spring Trail Ride started in 2018. Ride weekend includes a Silent Auction, Cowboy Church, Games on Horseback, Clinics, Flag Team Presentation, and a Saturday night dinner and entertainment.
- Have representation and a voice (2017 to present) on the Alabama Ag Department/Alabama Extension Services Ag Partners group at Auburn University.
- Have regular AHC Membership and Special Events promotions, advertisements through *Alabama Horse Talk* and *All About Horses* radio and on line shows held live each week in Alabama.