AMHA
American Morgan Horse Association

2017 Annual Report
TIME TO CHOOSE
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American Morgan Horse Association, Inc.® • 4066 Shelburne Road, Suite 5, Shelburne, Vermont 05482-4904 P 802.985.4944 • F 802.985.8897 • info@morganhorse.com • www.morganhorse.com

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Executive Director’s Message
Wow! Where did 2017 go? Don’t blink or you might miss 2018. The AMHA theme and slogan for 2017 was “Moving Forward,” and that’s EXACTLY what we did. A previous co-worker (and good friend) always used to respond to added work with the saying “Don’t worry about the mule, just load the cart.” I can tell you that the AMHA office staff, Board of Directors, Committees and MANY volunteers did just that. Every day, we pick up our share of the load and we pull a little harder, dig in a little deeper, and move a little bit further down the path. Some days a lot of ground gets covered and some days don’t get measured in distance but survival!

We are each a puzzle piece in this amazing thing we call “The Morgan Horse Industry.” Some pieces are very colorful, others are simple, some large, some small, only four corners, and there are limited “edges.” The interesting thing about it is, no matter what pieces are put together—the only thing that gets noticed are the MISSING PIECES. What’s the point if all the pieces are not put together at one time?

Everyone who loves or enjoys the Morgan is a piece of the AMHA puzzle and this year, let’s agree it is TIME TO CHOOSE. Time to choose to place your puzzle piece. What will you choose?

• Sponsor a class?
• Run for the Board of Directors?
• Serve on a Committee?
• Introduce someone to the Morgan horse (like our open barn day)?
• Volunteer at a local show—can you operate the out-gate for a couple hours?
• Attend a local club meeting?
• Help with a regional youth contest?
• Encourage cooperation and not separation?
• Get your judging license?
• Start a youth club?

I think you are getting the idea here…Choose what you CAN do! Don’t think your efforts are too small. We need EVERYONE to participate to preserve our beloved Morgan horse or the picture will never be complete.
Imagine what would happen if we focused on working TOGETHER as one team as opposed to working SEPARATELY as individuals. No more “New Type, Vs. Old Type.” No more “Blue collar Vs. White collar.” No more “Show barns Vs. Backyard enthusiasts.” No more rushing to judgment, but instead adopt a ZERO negativity zone and turn ALL disappointments, frustrations, and challenges into opportunities to solve problems and become the standard for others to follow.

Every day is made up of a series of choices, some small and some large. Not making a decision is also a choice. Don’t miss 2018. It’s TIME TO CHOOSE.

Carrie Mortensen, AMHA Executive Director

President’s Message

Welcome to the 2018 AMHA Convention. Since I became the AMHA President in April 2017, the organization has hit the floor running. Not necessarily because of me, but in conjunction with our energetic and competent Executive Director, Carrie Mortensen, and the office staff, the Board has been checking those projects off the “to do list.”

I made a trip to the East Coast in May during the Greater Boston Show for a meet and greet with members. I found out during that trip that the Eastern States Exposition Center may be interested in our Museum. Carrie Mortensen and Amy Mincher, museum director, followed up and in August, the three of us met with numerous heads of the Exposition Center to discuss what might come of this interest. We are still in the “due diligence phase,” but hopefully this endeavor will help us find a permanent home for our museum in a facility with much exposure. I am very committed to finding a suitable permanent home for our museum, wherever it may be. Stacey Hathaway and Nancy Delson from the Exposition Center will both be attending the Convention. If you happen to meet them, please make them feel welcome.

Reducing our Board of Directors has left us with second thoughts. Some of our Board members are also involved with other entities connected to AMHA in some
fashion. It has been suggested by our attorneys that those members abstain from voting on conflicting issues. Obtaining a quorum, though not an issue yet, could conceivably be a problem. The Board will be reviewing those issues.

Finally, remember the Morgan horse is “The Horse That Chooses You.” The horse may be choosing us, but what are we choosing to do to perpetuate the breed? IT IS TIME TO CHOOSE. We all know the world is changing. Large breeding farms are no longer the norm. Morgan registrations are back on the rise, but what are we going to do to sustain it? The younger generations need to step up and continue to carry on the Morgan horse promotion. Happily, many have. The tried and true members and supporters in different phases of retirement need to willingly pass on their knowledge. Please, we need to share what we know and our experiences as a testament to the continued effort to support and promote the Morgan horse. Keep in mind they may not take our advice. We need to be aware of that and accept it. Just because “it’s what we have always done” doesn’t mean it shouldn’t change. We should always be moving forward to promote the horse that chooses us. HOW WILL YOU CHOOSE TO HELP?

Thank you,
Mari Sanderson, AMHA President
Protech Software Project

AMHA’s new software program (PROTECH) went live in August and while there were quite a few kinks to work out, it has been moving forward with improvements each month. The selection of this program was not made solely for immediate improvements but rather for the future of the software’s capabilities. The foundation has now been properly built for expansion and growth.

However, the transition does allow for several immediate upgrades. The staff is happy to report that processing both memberships and registry work has been simplified and cross training of staff has proven to shorten the time from membership submission to receipt of card. In addition, some immediate benefits include:

• Ability to pay invoices online
• Ability to purchase/renew premium memberships online
• Ability to purchase/renew member-rate subscriptions online
• Extended pedigrees as well as other reports and data available within the Online Registry
• Increased speed of workflow within the office
• AMHA Memberships appearing on the online USEF membership card *(great assistance to show secretaries; if your membership doesn’t show on the USEF portal, please call our office to provide your USEF number for the data share)*
• Simplified “My Profile” section where AMHA card can easily be printed, ID and Password can be changed, and information updated in a self-service atmosphere

Speaking of your user ID and Password, please know that we realize many have experienced frustration with trying to log on to the Members Only Site and Online Registry. While we attempted to advise the membership via press releases, the weekly global, and the printed newsletter, *The Network*, not everyone received the notification that the transition required us to reset everyone’s ID and Password to their AMHA membership number. There has been quite a bit of confusion but we ask that you try to log in with your individual AMHA number as both your ID and Password. Once logged into the system, you can update/change your ID and Password under the tab titled “My Profile.” If you are unsuccessful, just give the office a quick phone call at (802) 985-4944 and we can easily look up your account and double check/confirm your ID and Password.

As with any minimally staffed, not for profit, breed association, we have to prioritize which projects get attention first and there is a lot of work still to complete on the organization, design/layout and content of our new web portal. Please be patient while we work to improve it for you.
Registry

Morgan Horse Association of Australia Granted International Reciprocity. The American Morgan Horse Association (AMHA) Board of Directors voted unanimously at its November 2017 meeting to grant International Reciprocity to the Morgan Horse Association of Australia (MHAA), effective March 1, 2018. This agreement eliminates the need for Morgan horses foaled in Australia to be registered with AMHA and MHAA, removing the financial burden of this double registration process. Morgans being transferred into or out of Australian ownership will be processed through AMHA.

The AMHA Registry Committee developed an International Reciprocity Agreement and Handbook and the final version was approved in 2010. MHAA submitted their Application for Reciprocity for review in July 2016 and has been working closely with the AMHA Registry to ensure all requirements were met.

MHAA is the fourth organization to be granted International Reciprocity. AMHA granted International Reciprocity to the Canadian Morgan Horse Association in 1985, to the British Morgan Horse Association in 1988, and to the Swedish Morgan Horse Association in 2012.

Registry Outreach. AMHA Registrar Erica Eulau attended the Mid-Atlantic Morgan Horse Sale, the Superior Morgan Horse Sale, and an open barn event at Morningstar Morgans. She was on hand to answer questions regarding registry, membership, and subscriptions, help people with their paperwork, pass out materials and meet people. The reception was wonderful. Plans are underway for representation at these sales and the Buckeye Sale in 2018.

Online Pedigrees. With the launch of the new software and online services, AMHA is now able to provide a printable pedigree for all Morgan horses via its website. Although these printable pedigrees cannot be substituted for an original registration certificate for registry purposes, they will come in handy when doing show entries, for prospective purchasers, and for everyone interested in Morgan history.

Registry Fees. The Rush Fee was increased from $75 to $100.
Membership and Programs

2017 was the first year that individual memberships were required and household/business memberships no longer were offered. AMHA was thrilled to see more members choosing Standard and Premium memberships, which increased our revenue by $1,591 from last year ($314,455 in 2017 and $312,864 in 2016). AMHA plans to continue encouraging and promoting Standard and Premium membership benefits.

The Youth of the Year Contest had 16 talented women competing for the top honor. Utilizing new software for the online youth of the year exam, made possible by a grant received from USA Equestrian, allowed AMHA to update the exam and contestants reported that it was more user-friendly and easier to navigate. Many great youth contestants also participated on a local/regional level.

Twenty nine students took advantage of the AMHA/UPHA Open Gate Learning Center at the Grand National & World Championship Morgan Horse Show®. The Learning Center allowed students to take tests and complete homework in a quiet setting so they could balance their work with the horse show.

Youth Council President Sarah Kucza and Director of Youth Programs Katie Hodges attended the American Quarter Horse Association’s Youth Excellence Seminar in Amarillo, Texas. The thought-provoking and fun seminar was filled with great discussions amongst several breed and discipline representatives on how to engage more youth in the equine industry. Katie also attended the American Youth Horse...
Council Symposium in Wakefield, Massachusetts, to meet youth and youth leaders from all different facets of the equine industry for three days of presentations, education, discussion, exhibits, awards, and networking.

New members enrolled in the Open Competition Program and the My Morgan and Me Program.

Exciting new features in Protech will allow participants in the Open Competition Program to enter their show results directly onto their horse's record in the Online Registry, which eliminates much of the cumbersome paperwork the program previously required. These changes should make the program much easier to manage for both participants and staff.

Several horses “graduated” from enrollee and CH status to CH and GCH status at the 2017 Grand National. As of this writing, the stats are: 253 GCH, 126 CH, and 78 enrollees totaling 457 horses, an increase of 138 horses since last year's annual report. The AMHA Board of Directors approved the change to accept all reserve championships retroactively. This change takes effect April 1, 2018.

The Star Rating Program saw an increase in the number of shows in 2017, with 46 shows participating, compared to 35 in 2016 and 43 in 2015. The program was revamped in late 2017, creating the Star Rated show, which is similar to the previous 3 Star Show qualifications in the past.

Participation in the Silver Medal program continues to decrease, yet entries for the Gold Medal class at Nationals continues to be steady. The Medal Class program changed in 2016, with payment up front and the riders receiving unengraved silver medals at the show. There was a loss of 60 from 2016 compared to 2017, 113 compared to five years ago. The majority of classes have zero or one rider.

**2017 Program Statistics**

**AMHA Medal Classes**

- Riders for silver: 293
  - (353 in 2016)
- Riders for gold: 87 (88 in 2016)

**Youth Programs**

- Local/Regional Contests: 19
- Grand National Contestants: 16
- Junior Invitational Participants: 7
- Horsemastership Badges: 31
- Youth Clubs: 10
- Youth Council Members: 11

**My Morgan & Me**

Members Achieving Milestones in 2017: 43

**Open Competition**

- Active member horses: 92
- Active Junior Exhibitors: 9

**Top Regionals By Show Entries**

- New England: 428
- Gold Cup: 266
- New York: 230
- Jubilee: 176

**Star Rated Shows**

- 4 Star: 11 shows
- 3 Star: 28 shows
- 2 Star: 1 show
- 1 Star: 4 shows
- Cancelled shows: 2

**Champion Title**

- Grand Champion (GCH): 253
- Champion (CH): 126
- 78 new enrollees • 457 horses

**Youth Presence on Social Media**

- AMHAY Say Hay Facebook Page: 2,513 likes
- AMHAY Instagram: 1,036 followers
Marketing and Promotion

AMHA continues to publish its popular weekly newsletter every Thursday morning. The newsletter is designed and produced by staff and sent through Constant Contact. Producing it in-house allows for flexibility of printing more up-to-date news. It is emailed to more than 15,000 readers each Thursday morning.

AMHA’s presence on Facebook continues to grow every day under the names “Sharing Carrots” and “Say Hay.” As of this writing, Sharing Carrots has 12,500 “likes.” Daily posts of questions, news, comments, and photographs allow our fans to interact with AMHA and one another with positive results.

The Network produced two issues in 2017, Summer and Winter, which was sent to all current members. The issues were paid for in part by funds from the United States Equestrian Federation’s “Membership Incentive Grant Program.”

AMHA’s Promotional Grant is open to any AMHA club, organized Morgan group, Morgan barn, or AMHA-affiliated organization (individuals are ineligible).

The following awardees promoted the Morgan breed to nearly more than one million people across the country and in Australia!

- Champlain Valley Morgan Horse Club promoted the breed at the 2017 Clinton County Fair at “The Morgan Horse Row.”
- Connecticut Morgan Horse Association, Inc. held an all-breed saddle fitting clinic.
- Cornerstone Morgan Horse, Inc. promoted the breed at three Mother Earth New Fairs across the country.
- Friends of Pt. Reyes Morgan Horse Ranch helped with the promotion and upkeep of the breed Morgan Horse Ranch at Pt. Reyes.
- Morgan Horse Association of Oregon assisted with breed demos at two local equine expos.
- Missouri Valley Morgan Horse Club for updated breed and club promotional materials.
- Morgan Stock Horse Association placed advertisements in Western Horseman magazine.
• **Morgan Horse Association of Australia** promoted the breed at its national Morgan horse show.

• **Morgan Horse Club of Washington State** promoted the breed at the Washington State Horse Expo.

• **New York State Morgan Horse Society** received two grants: one for breed promotion at the state fair and one for a promotional booth at the Western New York Equifest Equine Exposition.

• **Show Me Morgan Horse Club** attended the Ozark Spring Roundup trade show.

• **W. H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute** had a booth at the 2017 Equine Affaire.

• **The Wisconsin Morgan Horse Club** promoted the breed at the Midwest Horse Fair.

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**Day of the Morgan 2017**

Fertilizing our grassroots and expanding the base from which to grow Morgan ownership, participation and love was the objective of AMHA’s Day of the Morgan. The feature event was an open barn day, where 100 stables opened their doors to the general public, giving people the opportunity to meet Morgan horses on a personal level for their first time. On October 28, 2017 people from Maine to California, and Florida to Michigan touched a Morgan horse for the very first time.

The success stories of the day were nothing short of inspirational. Yet “The Day of the Morgan” event was more than just a promotional effort. It was also a celebration. It was a way of sharing what made us all fall in love with the breed in the first place. It created a common goal among our family of Morgan owners. The camaraderie, paired with the competition, created for those who did not want to be outdone was healthy and fun.

After going through this journey, I find myself awash in gratitude. Pennsylvania Morgan owner, Diane Garrow, was so incredibly helpful. When I was overwhelmed, she jumped in and took a big chunk of my to-do list off my hands. She maintained the super-useful interactive map and helped with the tedious job of local publicity. AMHA Executive Director, Carrie Mortensen, and Chris Koliander were very helpful in the national office. I am so thankful to all of the participants, some of whom only did it because I begged. And the horses! All those magnificent Morgans! Look at the pictures of all those wonderful horses. It simply melts my heart.

*By Sandy Sessink*
Publication

The Morgan Horse magazine and its staff are proud to serve the Morgan community. We strive to produce a journal in which AMHA’s membership can take great pride.

We take seriously our responsibility to be as diverse as the breed we serve. History, ranching, Morgans in sport horse competition, the Morgan show circuit, educational roundtables, Morgan people, the international scene and much more are all part of our editorial mix.

Profitability is part of our mission and we are proud of our record. We encourage members to examine the magazine’s numbers. TMH is a significant contributor to AMHA’s financial well-being thanks to the support of our advertisers and readers.

Advertising pages are both important and interesting. We enjoy tremendous support in terms of advertising from AMHA’s members. These ads are part of both the entertainment and educational value of reading the official breed journal.

Production is an asset of which many members may not be aware. A staff of just four people turn out eight issues a year. This includes two graphic designers who create 90 percent or more of the ads and all of the editorial layout in the magazine. Between the October and November/December issues, more than 700 pages were produced. This is a daunting page-per-person per-day ratio and involves many hours of overtime.

We flood the field with correspondents and photographers who are passionate about the breed. As many as 30 writers and correspondents contribute content to the magazine. This may involve show and event coverage or detailed history articles. We value good candid photography that captures living Morgan history (in 2017 our photographers took 8,000 candids at Grand National alone). We also invite reader input through our columns such as “View From My Saddle.”

2017 Publication Statistics
Advertisement/Editorial Ratio 44%/56%  Issues 8 • Pages 1,740  Average pages per issue 218
National Museum of the Morgan Horse

It was an exciting year for the National Museum of the Morgan Horse. Although closed to the public, the collections are still safely housed at the Middlebury College Davis Family Library in Special Collections. We also have a small display at the AMHA offices in Shelburne.

We have been working with officials from the Eastern States Exposition, sometimes referred to as “The Big E,” to determine if it would be feasible for them to move the museum to their fairgrounds in West Springfield, Massachusetts. We believe this would be a fitting situation as Justin Morgan and Figure were from West Springfield and the Eastern States Exposition has shown a dedication to teaching about agriculture and local history. They are currently researching fundraising options. If you are interested in supporting this project, please contact Nancy Delson or Stacey Hathaway from the Big E at ndelson@thebige.com or shathaway@thebige.com.

We were fortunate to be asked by the Vermont Historical Society to install a large exhibit for their Vermont History Museum in Montpelier. The exhibit featured Morgan horses in Vermont history and was on display for six months. We received an impressive amount of positive feedback about the exhibit.

Work continued on the digitization project with more than 1,000 objects added to the catalog this year. Using the digitized collection, museum director Amy Mincher can easily search the collection by keyword, subject, title, author, and collection. The Museum receives several research requests each week about pedigrees, photographs, and general Morgan horse history. Having so much of the collection at Amy’s fingertips in the digitized collection makes it easy to search and find results. There is still much more of the collection that needs to be cataloged and digitized. This year, Amy has also researched old long term loans made to the museum. If you have loaned a painting or other object to the museum and would like it to be returned, please email Amy directly at morganmuseum@gmail.com.
A Final Note

We provided numerous statistics and lots of information for your review in this report. Each year, we do our best to work closely with the accounting firm that handles AMHA’s yearly audit and tax return (McSoley, McCoy and Company). They try their best to get everything finalized PRIOR to our Annual Meeting and Convention so we may relay accurate information to our membership. However, staff must compile this report and send it to the printer several weeks prior to the final data being available. Therefore, we will be providing year-end financial information at the time of the meeting via the Finance Committee Chair’s report AND hard copy handouts. Members also will be able to access this information on the website following the convention. We look forward to sharing the Association’s success at that time.

Here’s to a year of great CHOICES regarding our beloved Morgan horses. Enjoy the Convention!
Affinity Partners
ACSIA Partners • Liberty Mutual • Foy Insurance • VPI Pet Insurance • Constant Contact • Constellation Energy
• Dana’s Doodles • Equine Wellness Magazine • Free Prescriptions Savings Card • Office Depot • SaddleOnline
.com • Teleflora Flowers • Avis Car Rental • Budget Car Rental • Enterprise • Hertz • CruisesOnly • Endless Vacation
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Discipline Colleagues
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ference • American Horse Council • The Carriage Driving Association of America • Equine Land Conservation
Resource • Equus Foundation • National Pedigreed Livestock Council • North American Trail Riding Conference • PATH
International • United States Dressage Federation • United States Equestrian Federation • United States Pony Club
• Western Dressage Association • United States Hunter Jumper Association