

BRINGING 2020 *Into Focus*

An Editorial by Christy Howard Womack

Here we are! A new show season in a new decade – and it certainly feels like our leadership is positioning itself to take advantage of this breath of fresh air to put aside our differences and to work together for the betterment of the show horse industry. I'm excited to see what this new decade brings.

Here at Saddle Horse Report, we are also excited to be looking forward. My father David Howard was a visionary when he started Saddle Horse Report in 1976, believing that a credible news source that gave complete and accurate data to the horse owner, trainer and breeder would change the game. As the first publication to print each judge's card from each class they judged, SHR helped bring accountability and integrity to the show horse industry.

As the first publication to maintain a database of horses' show records, also my father's idea in 1997, SHR put the ability to evaluate a horse and his relative value into the hands of a much wider audience.

In 2002, we added the searchable breeding tools so that not only was our reader able to know how each horse was bred, but there is an infinite amount of data that can serve the amateur and professional breeder alike, by allowing access to broodmare sire data to more closely understand what crosses have been the most successful in which divisions.

The sheer amount of data is sometimes overwhelming to the amateur breeder, so we are launching a new trivia contest this month on Facebook to encourage our readers to dig deeper into the website to discover the treasure trove of information that is available to you. There are prizes involved so be sure to check us out on our Facebook page.

I take our credibility and responsibility to our advertiser to serve them well very seriously, and I have spent a lot of time deliberating how we can best use our digital media, combined with our print media, to deliver the best value to our customers. With the volume of ads that make up Saddle Horse Report and Horse World, I'm not sure that inundating our print advertisers with upcharges for digital media fits our mission to deliver on value added services.

It's important to me that our advertiser sees the value that we see of advertising in our publications. With the success of our 2019 Spring Sales Spectacular ad blasts, we are going to expand our email blasts for 2020.

This year we're going to expand our email blast offerings to horses listed for sale and congratulatory ads. Congratulatory ads in our new First To REPORT section of the paper will be sent to our email blast list as well as

posted to our Facebook page in the First to REPORT album, so you will be the first to know when a horse changes hands. The Sales REPORT will be a new section on our website that features ads on horses for sale, that also rotate throughout the site; these ads will be email blasted out and posted on Facebook as well. This online package will be available for sale as a digital only component but will also be a free upgrade for all print ads on horses for sale that opt for the digital upgrade.

Also for 2020, you'll see a concerted effort from our staff at Saddle Horse Report and Horse World, to toot our own horn a little more. My personal belief in humility and professionalism, coupled with our commitment to serving our customer, has resulted in a lack of emphasis on educating the public in the ways that we serve the horse community. You won't see Saddle Horse Report or Horse World's name splashed across your photos at awards ceremonies, we won't ever be the loudest voice in the room shouting our accolades, but we will do a better job informing you of the length and breadth of experience of our staff and their commitment to serving the horse industry at large.

As of 2020, the core sales and editorial staff of Dabora, Inc., Bob Funkhouser, Diana Davidson, Leeann Mione, Katherine Hansil and John Privette, has a combined 121 years of experience with the company my father started. Together we bring our professionalism, dedication and commitment to excellence to serving our customers, the breed associations and industry organizations as well as the horse community as a whole. We continue to offer our services and photos to make your award ceremonies great. We continue to offer tribute stories and in-depth feature articles to inform you, promote you, and honor you. We will continue to bring you the news free of bias and to provide our thousands of candid photographs available online free of charge. We will continue to honor my father's legacy, and our commitment to the professionals of our industry without whom our business truly could not survive.

We are grateful to our readers, our subscribers, our advertisers, and to each member of the show horse community we are so proud to serve. I welcome your feedback and suggestions – you can email me anytime at cwomack@horseworld.net or call me at 931-575-7277. Rick and I look forward to seeing you at horse shows as the new unified commitment to promoting the show horse becomes everyone's clear vision.

Sincerely,

Christy Howard Womack
Publisher