

**MICHIGAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION**  
**ANNUAL OPEN MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**January 18, 2025**

President Rob Kirkpatrick called the Annual Open Membership meeting of the Michigan Quarter Horse Association to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Firekeepers Casino Hotel, Battle Creek, MI. The following Directors and staff were present: Linda Barnes, Heather Boggetta, Kevin Cubitt, Rob Kirkpatrick, Danielle Lindsay, Monty Montgomery, Jeff Moody, Kelly Nichols, Chris Perniciaro, Nicole Veldhoff, Katherine West and Kris Woroniecki. Austin Gooding was excused. There were nine MQHA members present.

**AGENDA:** Kelly Nichols made a motion to approve the agenda. Kevin Cubitt seconded the motion. Motion passed with none opposed.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES:** Monty Montgomery made a motion to approve the February 10, 2024 Annual Membership Meeting minutes. Heather Boggetta seconded the motion. Motion passed with none opposed.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Kevin Cubitt presented the tentative financial statements for December 2024. The total assets of the Association as of December 31, 2024, are listed at \$563,636.77; the total liabilities at \$224,131.72 and the total members' equity is listed at \$339,495.05. The net income as of the end of December is \$33,072.95 compared to -\$34,490.67 for the same period in 2023. The total income for 2024 is up 4.7% and the total expenses are down 2.30 % for the year. Jeff Moody made a motion to accept the December 2024 statement. Monty Montgomery seconded the motion. Kevin then presented his report:

*The Michigan Quarter Horse Association should end the year with about a \$30,000 profit. This was due mostly to the executive committee and the finance committee making the decision to invest in a couple of short-term cd's. They also chose to change the savings account to one earning a promotional interest rate. These decisions resulted in interest earned for 2024 in the amount of \$15,210 compared to about \$2600 in the prior year. Additionally, many of the individual committees worked hard this year to acquire sponsorships and to fundraise. This resulted in approximately \$13,000 more in revenue this year between all the committees.*

*MQHA paid the balance on the temporary stalls we purchased in 2023 and used for the first time in 2024 at Ludington. The \$39,000 was expensed in 2024. We paid our \$7,500 commitment to the Grand Agricultural Center and we supported a Year End Awards budget of \$45,000.*

*The Stallion Service Sale was successful again in 2024 and appears to be well on its way for 2025. The Futurity was well attended. The additional money added to the purses is helping to keep the momentum and the event on exhibitor's calendars for 2025.*

*While the Association finished 2024 on a high note, the Board is keenly aware of the challenges that continue to face us as we enter our 70<sup>th</sup> year as an Association. Agriculture is becoming a much smaller part of daily life and showing horses is becoming a sport for the elite. The Board and especially the Executive Committee agonize over financial decisions, keeping affordability and sustainability in the forefront of the conversation. "Super circuits" are emptying the exhibitor checkbooks and leaving little for the state events. We hope the membership understands this challenge and will continue to support the MQHA approved events. We are only as strong as those who choose to spend their time with us. Remember your support comes in all forms. We thank you for being a part of our Association.*

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**CONVENTION:** Nicole Veldhoff gave the following report: *After we were at Firekeepers in 2023, the membership was excited to go back there. We received multiple requests for us to return. The committee reached out immediately and were not able to secure a date for 2024 so we found a date at the Crowne Plaza in Lansing. Last year's event was "Crowning Success" for our membership. We sold 173 dinner tickets. The venue was great to work with and we enjoyed the event. The committee discussed possibly rotating between a casino type venue and more of a hotel as the casinos restrict what the youth can do on site.*

*While trying to get a 2024 date at Firekeepers, we were able to secure these dates for 2025. Welcome to the 2025 Convention at the Firekeepers Casino Hotel. We sold 257 dinner tickets, proving that our membership does enjoy this venue. We have a great evening planned tonight with some exceptional food and entertainment. And, the icing on the cake is that the venue is helping us to stream the Detroit Lions game! We are so excited about the event and look forward to seeing you all tonight.*

**EASTER SHOW:** Monty Montgomery provided the summary for the 2024 Easter Eggstravaganza horse show. *This year's Easter show proved to be another success. Entries remained consistent with prior years at just under 6,000 AQHA entries. NSBA entries were down by approximately 200 entries. Stalls were consistent at 329. Camping spots have been consistently increasing, with 95 this year. We thank everyone for their hard work to make the luncheon and all of the kids Easter activities a success. We are thankful to the*

many sponsors whose generosity helped with the show expenses which also made this show a success. The 2025 schedule will reflect some minor changes based on last year's start and completion times to try to not have extremely long days. The 2025 Easter show will be held April 2 through 6 at the MSU pavilion.

**FUTURITY:** The Great Lakes Classic and MQHA Futurity report was given by Chris Perniciaro: The event was held at MSU in September of 2024, and it was a big success. Camping sold out very quickly and we had to utilize the upper barn again for the overflow of stalls. We paid over \$120,000 in prize money alone for this 4-day horse show. Thank you to all of our sponsors. Our big fundraiser for the year was our Harris Saddle raffle. That fundraiser made over \$9000 and helped cover the cost of the added money, and we will be continuing with the saddle raffle again in 2025. The dates for this year will be September 11-14 at the MSU Pavilion.

**HALL OF FAME:** Hall of Fame Committee Chairperson, Kevin Cubitt presented the following report: The Hall of Fame committee chose a member team and a breeding horse to add to the MQHA Hall of Fame. Tom and Mary Robertson along with Breezy Version are our 2025 Hall of Fame inductees. Breezy Version is Renee Holstege's former MQHA show partner who was retired to Infinity Quarter Horse's breeding program. Even though we have recipients in mind for next year, please submit your suggestions to the MQHA office with a brief description of why we should consider them for the MQHA Hall of Fame.

**HARBOR CLASSIC:** Kelly Dykstra Nichols, Co-Chairperson for the Harbor Classic gave a report: The 2024 Harbor Classic was held in Ludington from July 2 to July 7. We revamped the High Point Awards to Leather Binders for High Point, Spurs or Aisle Mats for Reserve and Fleece Coolers for third. The Walk Trot and Small Fry received a Belt Buckle for High Point, Fleece Coolers for Reserve and a Polo Wrap Gift Basket for third. Added this year was a bonus award for High Point Non-Pro Exhibitor and High Point Open Horse with combined points for Spartan Spectacular and Harbor Classic. The winners received a JH Leather Works Saddle (Thad O'Boyle won the non pro saddle and Total Hotness won the open saddle. The Youth held a couple fundraisers. The Annual Dog Race was again a huge success and lots of fun to watch. There was also a cash raffle with tickets drawn at the show. The Welcome Party was a lot of fun. Ludington Meat Market had a wonderful array of tasty dips, crackers and meats. There was an added money no entry fee Western Pleasure Class on Saturday the 6th. The competition was steep, and Lilly Rice and her mare VS Sugar and Spice won the class and took home over \$400.

Overall, financially we did well. We had more Sponsorships, but our entries and stall numbers were slightly down from last year. The general expenses were down, and the cost of the awards were less than the previous year (but the JH Saddles were listed on awards for Harbor which caused the awards cost to be up \$944.10). We ended the show with a profit.

**HARVEST CLASSIC:** Show Chair, Heather Boggetta gave this report: The Harvest Classic Horse Show held in November is a popular event that marks the end of the show season. This annual event brings together riders, breeders, and horse enthusiasts to celebrate the sport and community. This year's Harvest Classic had some fun community-building activities alongside the competitive events. A movie night was hosted for participants and spectators to relax and enjoy a film together, creating a more relaxed, social atmosphere. Additionally, a potato bar was set up, offering a warm and customizable meal for attendees to enjoy. This casual meal option helped fuel the participants while they took a break from the ring or socialized with fellow exhibitors. The Harvest Classic is not only a chance to compete, but also a time for people to connect, celebrate the end of the season, and look forward to next year's events. The show continues to grow overall year after year in revenue and attendance.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Linda Barnes and Kelly Dykstra Nicols provided a 2024 Annual Membership report: Audrey Barnes, the 2024 MQHA Queen and Linda Barnes attended State 4-H Show at MSU. During that time, they talked about the newer walk trot classes, the blanket fees and other things that AQHA has to offer the youth such as the Y.E.S. program as well as the judging, scrapbook and speech contests that are offered at the youth world show. They also handed out MQHA merchandise.

Linda drafted a letter that was sent to the new AQHA members in our state. This is an informative letter to inform them of when our shows are and information regarding youth. It also has Jessi Jo Boulters information as she is currently an AQHA Amateur Ambassador for Michigan. Currently we are showing a total of 570 memberships. The revenue from 2023 was \$14,885 and 2024 was \$15,100, showing an increase of \$215. In the past we have rented a booth space at the Michigan Horse Expo, but the cost has gotten really high and the Board felt that it wasn't a great way to spend membership money. As with most organizations, we need to work on continuing to positively work on growing.

**NOMINATIONS:** Nominations and Elections-2024 Committee Report given by Rob Kirkpatrick. There were two open board positions this year. Monty Montgomery's term was expiring. The term of President Rob Kirkpatrick would also be up for election. There were two candidates who submitted the required paperwork and application by the deadline to be placed on the ballot. The candidates are Monty Montgomery and Vanessa Knoblock. There were 53 ballots that were counted by the Nominations Committee.

**QUEEN:** Katherine West gave her Queen report. *2024 was another successful year for the Queen committee. With the help of Minae Kroeze and Kathy Christensen, we were able to once again gather a great number of sponsorships for the 2024 MQHA Queen's Contest. Thank you to all of the sponsors who help make the MQHA Queen Contest a continued success. The 2024 MQHA Queen Contest at the 2024 Easter Eggstravaganza had three contestants: Audrey Barnes, Carli Kerns, and Katie Hartman. Each young lady won a category of the contest. Audrey Barnes was crowned the 2024 Queen on April 6, 2024. Audrey is a 2024 graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in Animal Science with a concentration in Animal Biology and Pre-Veterinary Medicine. The 2024 MQHA Princess and Junior Princess contest took place in July at the Harbor Classic. There were 13 beautiful contestants in this year's contest. The judges consisted of Danielle Lindsay, Diane Mahoney, and Michelle Savage. Xandrea Sandusky was crowned the 2024 Princess, and Charley Grendell was crowned the 2024 Junior Princess. Audrey Barnes represented Michigan well at the 2024 All-American Quarter Horse Congress. There were 12 contestants from various Quarter Horse affiliates. The contest consists of an interview, a written exam over the AQHA rulebook and OQHA knowledge, and a Horsemanship class. Audrey won the Horsemanship class aboard Cool Lookin Ladysman, owned by the Collins family. She also placed fifth in the written exam portion of the contest. The Committee consisted of Chair, Katherine West with support from Kathy Christensen, Minae Kroeze, and Linda Barnes.*

**RULES AND CONSTITUTION:** Rob Kirkpatrick presented the annual report for this committee. *The association adopted new rules in regard to the small fry division. There were also rules adopted that outline expectations for the youth and adult walk trot divisions. Additionally, there were some updates to the Futurity and Stallion Service Sale sections. Rules changes will be reflected in the 2025 rule book.*

**SPARTAN SPECTACULAR:** Katherine West gave a Spartan Spectacular annual report. *The 2024 Spartan Spectacular was successful with the transition back to Ludington, Michigan, with it held prior to the Harbor Classic. Both AQHA and NSBA entries were up from 2023, in addition to an increase in stalls and camping. Overall, the net income from the show was up from 2023. It appears that moving the horse show back to Ludington influenced attendance. The High Point Awards for the Youth Divisions were Corn Hole Boards. High Point to the Amateur Divisions were Igloo Party Bar Coolers and the Small Fry, Youth Walk Trot and the Adult Walk Trot received Directors Chairs. The Reserve High Point Awards to the Youth and Amateur Divisions were ZEHO Leatherworks Halters. The Small Fry, Youth Walk Trot and Adult Walk Trot received Schneider's Storage Bags. The Thayne Miner Memorial Horsemanship Class was once again an exciting time, with a great group of exhibitors. The winner of the class was Taylin Collins and Cool Lookin Ladysman. The 2023 winner, Rilynn Lindsay, and 2024 MQHA Queen, Audrey Barnes, were in attendance to assist in the awards presentation. Committee Members: Katherine West, Linda Barnes, Dainelle Lindsay, Kelly Dykstra Nichols and Nicole Veldhoff*

**STALLION SERVICE SALE:** Chris Perniciaro stated that 62 stallions were sold on sale day, totaling \$81,050. *This is an average of \$1307 per stud. We sold more stallions on sale day, but for less money than last year when we sold 56 but made \$87,100 where the average was \$1555. There were five more stallions sold on the Bidding Owl platform which closed a week later. That was an additional \$6725 in revenue. There are still a lot of great stallions available, and the committee is hoping that we will get several more sold.*

**SUMMER SERIES:** Summer Series Committee Report 2024 was given by Rob Kirkpatrick. *The Summer Series was once again held in Midland on Memorial Day Weekend. The committee did some rearranging of the showbill, and the show ran Friday through Monday with the intention that exhibitors and spectators would need less time off work. The show ran smoothly, and it was a nice sized show. The show experienced a significant decline in participation which we attributed to other major conflicting shows. The Level 1 Championship show and The SOQHA Madness are right before the Summer Series and this year The Premier was the same weekend as our show. The show was still profitable, and the committee is entertaining ideas to help boost attendance in the future.*

**YEAR END AWARDS:** Monty Montgomery provided his report for year end awards. *This year, hard work by everyone on the committee to look for different prizes that are useful without repeating prior years and ordering well ahead of time proved successful. While retaining award spreadsheets from prior years we have always tried not to give anyone the same thing as last year or give multiples of the same thing this year. The 2024 awards expense will be under last year at approximately \$43,000 without sacrificing quality, thanks to all looking for special deals while shopping. A special thanks to Kris and Heather for working with everyone to coordinate all of these awards.*

**YOUTH:** *The 2024 MQHA Youth Board of Directors consisted of 15 Youth members: President – Lizzi Smith, Vice President – Taylin Collins, Secretary – Lauren Deeds, Treasurer – Dana Moody and Reporter – Myah Chaput. The Board members were: Jorja Boulter, Brylee Bunting, Sophia Dong, Elly Erbes, Rye Gill, Lauren Lauver (Past President), Emelia Perex, Xandrea Sandusky and Ava Savage. The Youth held several fundraisers which consisted of a bake sale held during the Tack Sale in February, the Easter Egg Fundraiser at the Easter show, a 50/50 raffle at the Summer Series, class sponsorships at the Spartan Spectacular, Dog Races and the Trainer Showmanship along with the annual cash raffle all held during the Harbor Classic. The MQHYA would like to thank the Collins Family for sponsoring the Tomahawk Sweeper prize for the Class Sponsorship Fundraiser. The Youth ended the year with an increase in*

revenue due to the Easter show and Spartan shows being profitable. The youth recognized the MQHYA Academic Achievement Award winners at the Gold Award level which is a 3.5 GPA or higher. Those kids were Jorja Boulter, Myah Chaput, Madisyn Clark, Jessica Jubik, Samantha Jubik, Lauren Lauver, Dana Moody, Xandrea Sandusky, Isabella Rice and Ella Spies. The Youth President, Lizzi Smith was elected to a Region 4 National Director position for AQHYA.

The 2024 Youth World Show team consisted of 17 youth exhibitors and 27 horses. The team members were each given a stall sign and a jersey style t-shirt. MQHYA purchased a hospitality stall, a refrigerator for the team to use and a team lunch. Michigan had many finalists or placings in the top ten and top three. Michigan also had numerous World Champions and Level 2 Champions. Ava Hathaway won the All Around 14-18 Award with "I Will Be A Good RV". Trace Toteff won the Youth Halter All Around Exhibitor for the show. MQHYA would like to recognize sponsors, Stacy Chaput for the MQHYA pop up displays and table covers and Bronson Veterinary Service for the team lunch during the horse show.

The 2024 NYATT teams did well with the MQHA team placing third in Division 1 and the MSBA team placing eighth in Division 1. Highlights included – Calla Thomas won the NYATT Reining for team MQHA. Isabel Cumper won the NYATT Barrels for team MQHA. Elly Erbes was second in NYATT Barrels for Team MSBA. Both teams had numerous top ten and finalist placings. MQHYA would like to recognize NYATT sponsors, Dr Brad Cumper with Saginaw Valley Equine Clinic for the team jackets, the Collins Family for sponsoring the team shirts and Haala Denim for the team jeans.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** National Director, Chris Perniciaro introduced himself as the new AQHA National Director for Michigan. He was elected at the 2024 Convention and currently sits on the Marketing and Membership Committee. He reminded everyone that AQHA will hold their Annual Convention from March 28 – 31 at the South Point Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. He also shared that AQHA has opened up nominations for their 2026 Hall of Fame and the deadline is April 1, 2025.

Chris went on to mention some updates to the current Horse Protection Act that is set to go into effect on February 1. There was a zoom call hosted by the National Cutting Horse Association with Western Justice. There is a link that people can go to and read about the impact the Horse Protection Act will have on horse shows, associations and the equine industry in general. Western Justice with their legislative efforts is working to protect the western way of life. The website address [www.westernjusticeinfo](http://www.westernjusticeinfo). There was a meeting led by Dave Duquette who previously was CEO of Protect the Harvest and was high up within the Equine Promotions of Lucas Oil when they were the title sponsor of the AQHA World Show. Chris had an hour-long phone call with Dave this past weekend prior to the zoom meeting. Jarrell Jackson was in attendance at the meeting in Fort Worth yesterday and represented WCHA. Everyone appreciates the efforts of these groups and individuals and the representation! Chris stated that in his opinion, the overreach that the HPA would do within our industry by over-regulating; many associations, state clubs, 4H groups, horse sales, horse dentistry, farriers, and more would find themselves out of business. He has hopes that this will be stopped for all those reasons and more.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTION RESULTS:** President Kirkpatrick announced the results of the MQHA Board Election. Elected to a three (3) year term:

- Venessa Knoblock (2028)
- Monty Montgomery (2028)

**GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Rob Kirkpatrick stated that the MQHA Board of Directors voted to try to return to the Firekeepers Casino for 2026. The office and the committee will try to get that in motion. Kevin Cubitt mentioned that there are a lot of quality stallions available through the auction.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. by unanimous consent without objection.