

Unwanted Horse Coalition ---States Councils Report

The Unwanted Horse Coalition has progressed since it was folded into the American Horse Council in June.

The coalition hired Katy Carter as its coordinator. She has served in legislative and press capacities in the House of Representatives and most recently for former Representative Jack Quinn of New York.

In October, the coalition met officially for the first time under the auspices of the AHC. The coalition established a number of committees during the meeting.

The Communications and Education Committee will work to develop a Web site, informational brochures, and a guide to responsible horse ownership and will continue to develop public outreach strategies. The Research Committee will focus on compiling up-to-date information on issues such as horsemanship, alternative careers, retirement, retraining, and euthanasia and disposal options. The Funding Committee will continue to recruit new UHC members, in addition to individual donors and corporate sponsorships. The Steering Committee will oversee the overall direction of the coalition.

The mission of the UHC is to reduce the number of unwanted horses and to improve their welfare through education and the efforts of organizations committed to the health, safety, and responsible care of horses.

The meeting in October was attended by representatives from the American Association of Equine Practitioners, AVMA, American Paint Horse Association, American Quarter Horse Association, The Jockey Club, National Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association, National Thoroughbred Racing Association, Professional Rodeo Stock Contractors, Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, U.S. Equestrian Federation, and U.S. Trotting Association.

In November, the (SHCAC) States Horse Council's Executive Board approved a membership in the coalition and creation of a liaison relationship. Dr. Ann Swinker, Associate Professor at Penn State University will serve as the SHCAC's liaison representative. Dr Swinker was assigned to the fund raising sub-committee of the UH Coalition.

On March 9, 2007, the Unwanted Horse Coalition has been busy getting many initiatives rolling. The Communications, Research and Steering Committees all met to discuss plans for the Coalition. The Research Committee is drafting an Educational Handbook, which will include chapters on

- the responsibilities of horse ownership
- options for owners on what to do with horses that are potentially "unwanted"
- programs already in place by breed associations or other organizations that extend the useful lives of horses
- euthanasia and carcass disposal considerations
- the tax ramifications of charitable contributions

A new web site for the coalition is well underway. Coalition members have approved the initial web content and The Jockey Club Information Technologies is designing the site. Additionally, the first Informational Brochure on the Coalition was printed. Visit the web site.

<http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org/?id=1>

The website will be updated regularly with news releases and publications describing the progress of the UHC and the plight of the unwanted horse. Both the website and the brochure provide information on how to become a member of the UHC and how to contribute to the UHC.

Reported by Ann Swinker,