

Turner, Whitney I - APHIS

From: Diana Hurtt <hurtt@centurylink.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 11:55 AM
To: Cezar, Rachel - APHIS; Gipson, Chester A - APHIS
Cc: ivoryknoll17
Subject: Fwd: Your Comments Regarding USDA

Hello,

Attached is a letter I wrote to Mr. Irby, President of the TWHBEA regarding his response to the USDA Listening Session on April 9, 2012. It is imperative that you continue to stay on top of the Walking horse industry to ensure that these beautiful animals are not being mistreated. There is no excuse for them to be using their cruel and barbaric methods to force a majestic creature to bow to their bidding. These animals cannot fight this fight alone. The horses are completely dependent on us for their care and well being. It makes me physically sick to think about the horrible, painful lives they are forced to live just so their owners can fill their pocket books with piles of money at their expense. I implore you to continue to make this industry change the way they do business and find humane natural ways to show their horses, and the sooner the better. I have had the honor to be a part of the life of one of these beautiful horses, and watched him win hundreds of blue ribbons and receive numerous accolades during his show career and beyond which was all completed barefoot and bit less, so I know it can be done without the painful methods that the TWHBEA is determined to use. Thank you for your assistance.

Diana Hurtt
Life long horse advocate

Dear Mr. Irby,

I am writing in regards to your comments April 9, 2012 about the USDA regulations.

I am a life long horse lover and I have been attending horse shows since 1950. One thing has always remained the same over the years when I attend horse shows that included TWH and that has been my disgust over the treatment of the TWH. At every horse show that I have attended that has included the "performance show horse" I have had to get up and leave during that part of the performance because it made me want to vomit due to the anguish that is always evident in the eyes of these horses. What you do to these poor animals is barbaric. I have never understood how someone who purports to love horses could tolerate causing them such distress. The TWH in its natural state is a thing of beauty as GOD intended them to be and it is absolutely unnecessary to go to the lengths that you do in order to make a buck. Let's get real here that is all it is about for you. You need to take a cold hard look at yourself in the mirror and admit what you are really doing has nothing to do with the horse, but about you. Instead of taking the time to breed naturally high stepping horses to obtain the type you want, you take the easy route and torture these innocent animals so you can out do someone else at a show. My recommendation to you is for you to do for one month to yourselves what you are doing to these animals with the high shoes and caustic wraps around the legs, and then see how you feel about continuing to do it to the animals.

I have been a part of the horse industry for years and have seen Walkers perform without these cruel aides, barefoot, and bit-less who have won blue ribbons, did dressage, and were able to perform amazing feats without being in agony. I truly believe that it would be a blessing if your industry did go out of existence. It would not

be the end of the breed, they will go on long after you are gone because they are such wonderful horses. You aren't afraid of the breed going out of existence you are worried about your self going broke, and if **you were able to regulate yourselves** the government would never have had to get involved.

So don't be ragging on the USDA, but start looking at yourself and your values. It's time for YOU to change and stop your medieval treatment of these amazing horses. SHAME ON YOU MR. IRBY AND SHAME ON YOUR ORGANIZATION FOR NOT SEEING THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING. I dare you to take the high road and do the right thing!

A Devoted Horse Lover