

## MOVIN' FORWARD INTO 2009

To all WCHA members whom I haven't seen since the last show or the awards banquet, Happy New Year. That's quite a mouthful considering the state of the nation and the world but I feel that it's important to remain optimistic about the future because really, we don't have yesterday and we have today for only a short period of time. But, we have the future forever and it's within our power to make a difference.

There are the typical new year changes of horses being bought & sold, horses going back into training, news from other affiliates regarding show schedules and 2009 changes and members making changes in their life. We too are experiencing some changes. Our web site expert, Shannon Needell, has taken on a new and exciting job which won't leave her time to continue dealing with [www.wchacutting.com](http://www.wchacutting.com). She provided outstanding service to this club by developing and implementing our current web site and performing the ongoing necessary maintenance. So, where do we go from here? New plans are in the making to continue Shannon's good work and further enhance the site because at this point, it is our main news and informational outlet.

Our 2009 show schedule has been set and we are pleased to announce that WCHA will once again have a home base at Pete Sartin's facility in Sunnyside. While we strive to have shows at other facilities, it's always nice to have a home. Pete has made more changes during the year we've been absent which will only improve the already popular series of shows.

After a successful LAE at Tom Norton's arena in Madras, Oregon, your board of directors has decided to not only return there for the 2009 LAE and finals show, but to hold our spring show there as well. Tom Norton and his crew made every effort to insure our show's success and make us feel welcome. It's also important to note that through the efforts of WCHA President, Scott Tullis, and those working with our stock contractors, we able to hold the line on 2009 cattle costs and continue to generate revenue of our practice pens. Given the current uncertain and unprecedented ugly economic conditions, this is a huge benefit to our goal of maintaining the quality of our shows and economic balance.

We are also looking at the possibility of parking some portable stalls at Pete Sartin's in our attempt to have stalls available on site for most if not all of our members. With so many members having invested in living quarters trailers, it has become increasingly important to accommodate their needs.

The 2008 LAE and finals show was a success despite some bumps in the road. The 2009 LAE and finals show will find us again in Madras, Oregon with few changes but a few improvements. We've seated a new LAE committee and it was agreed to change the 7-Up classes to a Pro-Am format which has proven to be very popular and exciting at other similar events.

If you elected not to attend the 2008 annual meeting & banquet, you missed an opportunity to participate in the planning process for 2009 and you also missed a great time. Liz Southard did a terrific job organizing this event. Krista Parypa once again convinced her brother and professional auctioneer, Joe Parypa, to relieve members of their money during our live auction. I'd say that the highlight of the entire evening was the drawing from 2008 class winners for our 4<sup>th</sup> but yet to be awarded trophy saddle. It was a Kodak moment to watch the face of Krista Parypa as she tried to process (and it did take a moment) that she was the winner. She had a great year on her horse, *SNW Heavens Powder*, making that saddle a well-deserved reward for all of her hard work. So, is 2009 just going to be more of the same? Definitely not. While your Board of Directors understands that it's not usually productive to tinker around with what's working, they always strive to meet the needs of the members and give the membership what they want to the best of the club's ability. WCHA faces new and sometimes different challenges every year always keeping in mind the needs of the members because the members and the entries they bring to the shows are the very reason for the existence of WCHA. As each year goes by, the job of producing quality shows, meeting the member needs and being fiscally responsibility gets harder & harder. The membership owes a huge *thank you* to the officers, directors and committee members for their hard work and service.

As a unified affiliate, let's ride into 2009 and make it yet another successful year. Success is the responsibility of each & every member.