

Dear APHA Members,

I'm David Lands from Gloucester, Virginia, and I'm a candidate for the sixth committee member position on the APHA Executive Committee. I would like to thank the EC Nominating Committee for their confidence in my ability to contribute to APHA's mission and vision, and positively influence the future of our great association.

My adventure with horses began in California at Vandenberg Air Force Base, when I was 8. My parents purchased a painted Shetland pony, Tonka, for my brother and me to grow up with. For three years I learned about the responsibility, time and commitment required to care for Tonka and share in the chores of a co-op barn. The transient lifestyle of a military family eventually forced us to leave Tonka when we moved, but my passion for horses was rekindled with visits to a family ranch in Moberly, Missouri, during adolescence.

The summer of 1988 changed my world forever, as I met the love of my life: Carol, my wife and best friend of 28 years. We met on a farm in Hampton, Virginia, and—not surprisingly—she was on a horse when we were introduced! Our infatuation with Paints began in 2003 when a barn mate bred to LAA Heza Deluxe, and we shared in raising the colt. We bred one of our mares to “JoJo” three years later, just before being offered the opportunity to purchase him. Our first official APHA business transaction was an ownership transfer and a lifetime membership. Fast forward to today, we have bred 45 Breeders' Trust-eligible foals, 20 of which were raised at our DreamLands Farm, where “we dream in color.”

Our Paint competition journey began with visiting APHA shows in Delaware and Virginia, not to show, but to experience the environment. We found it fun, friendly and competitive—the way it should be. That was just the beginning! I'm an exhibitor, show manager, breeder, promoter, and leader in the horse community. I was elected to the Virginia Paint Horse Club board of directors in 2010, then elected president in 2011 and continued in that capacity until 2017. I have served as an APHA national director for the past five years, first as an alternate and as voting director since 2016. I've attended APHA's Convention and annual member meetings, and participated on the Regional Club Advisory Committee as a member, vice-chair and chairman. I'm currently on the Long Range Planning Committee. In 2016, Carol and I attended the Color Breed Council International Equine Judging Academy. I've attended multiple APHA Youth and Open/Amateur World Championship Shows; this year, we sent a 3-year-old we raised to compete for the first time, and we earned two reserve world championships. I was appointed to the Virginia Horse Industry Board by our state governor and served as a board member and chairman from 2011 to 2017. I've represented the Virginia Horse Council as a state affiliate of the American Horse Council, gaining national perspective of the horse industry. When I'm not tending to farm chores, I serve our nation as a member of the Virginia Air National Guard.

I'm excited about APHA's future, and I'm dedicated to our continued focus on director and Youth development. Education is vital to the development of our leaders, young and old. Demonstrating educational leadership is one of APHA's goals and, if successful, will ensure we have a solid foundation that will enable us to lead the horse world. I've personally contributed to developing educational opportunities for APHA leadership, which included delivering a

presentation on volunteer recruiting, retention and recognition with the Regional Club Committee at the 2015 Convention [link: <http://apha.com/clubs/marketing-tools/vr/>]. Expanding our understanding of genetics as it relates to refining how we identify Paint Horses, and sharing that information with customers, members and directors, is vital to our success.

Leadership is my passion. I've spent 32 years in the military learning, failing, succeeding and teaching—leading, in other words. I don't read fiction novels for pleasure; I read to learn more about leadership and self-improvement. I'm an advocate for lifelong learning and have an insatiable appetite for knowledge. Combining my passion for leadership with my excitement for APHA's future brings us to a natural intersection that will improve our collective ability to lead APHA and the horse industry into the future. We might not be the largest breed association, but we can be the most financially stable, fastest-growing, strategically motivated equine association in the world. We represent the most unique and beautiful breed. With an effective foundation of engaged and effective leaders, we will be the best!

Thank you for your consideration, please contact me with any questions or concerns you would like to discuss. I invite you to attend the 2019 APHA Convention, March 1–3, 2019, at the DFW Marriott South in Fort Worth, Texas, and I hope you'll encourage your area's directors to vote for me as the sixth committee member of the EC. I look forward to seeing you at Convention and hope to serve you in the future.

Respectfully,

David R. Lands
drlands@cox.net