

## **League of Agricultural and Equine Centers July 2017 News**

Summer is here, which means your facilities are all in full swing of events. We're sure this month's features will be worth the time out of your busy schedule, such as a spotlight on our new Allied Board Member James Holloway, and an article on the importance of the shavings offered to your events or exhibitors. If you haven't already, be sure to mark your calendars for the 2018 League Footing Academy and Symposium!

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### **Welcome & Acknowledgements**

The League would like to welcome Mark Clarke of Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wisconsin, and Darlene Confer of Grange Park Equine Facility in Centre Hall, Pennsylvania. We are sure you will find your membership to be a valuable experience!

### **Hall of Fame and Facility of the Year Awards**

The League is proud to introduce the new Hall of Fame and Facility of the Year awards. The Hall of Fame will recognize those people who have greatly contributed to our industry, and the Facility of the Year will likewise recognize a facility that has been a leader in facilities and all aspects of facility management. The applications are available on the League's website, and the deadline for submission is September 1. [Contact](#) the League office with questions.

### **New Allied Board Member: James Holloway**

*Synbiont Global*

James Holloway's interest in agriculture stems from a 50-year-old family business. "My uncle grows tomatoes; he's a tomato farmer here in Florida, and he's one of the larger independent tomato growers on the East Coast," James shares. "So if you were to eat tomatoes in the winter time, most probably it came out of Florida, and there's a 10-20% chance that you eat our tomatoes during that time. So not that I was raised in it, but I was definitely exposed to it."

Playing soccer through college, James studied history and psychology – but jumped right into business and agriculture afterward. "When I graduated from college, being in the agricultural field was an interest to me. The world of agriculture seemed to have both blue collar and white collar parts of it, which was really cool to me. You could sweat in the field and work hard on the ground all day, then have to get to the office and make sure the numbers all matched up."

James began his career at CH Robinson, a large transportation and brokerage company. "I didn't go into the family business right away; I became a produce broker and handled commodity sales. We would sell loads of lettuce and carrots and stuff like that to the big grocery store chains."

After 20 years working for CH Robinson, James had had enough of the corporate environment and wanted a change. “At that point, my uncle had invented the Synbiont product, patented it, had done all the efficacy work to justify the claims, the registrations and all that. But because he's got other jobs, it wasn't moving forward. We made a deal; I bought into the company, and because nobody was really running it I took control and lead of Synbiont and started to grow that business.”

With Synbiont Global, James enjoys the diverse group of people he associates with. “I get to talk to a lot of different people,” he shares. “It's scientists one day, it's facility managers the next day; it could be growers or large grocery store chains, so the diversity of people I get to interact with is a lot of fun.”

Because of the numerous applications of Synbiont and the small size of the company, James also enjoys the challenge of working all different aspects of the business. “It allows me to be very creative and try to figure out where our product best fits: What is Synbiont? What does it mean? It's business school 101, so whether it's the accounting, the marketing, the selling or promoting, it encompasses all of those pieces. We're a very small company, so it's very lean. We get our hands into all of it, and all of it really is fun. The people I get to interact with are the best. They are really great people that are very passionate and very smart..”

James notes that part of what he enjoys about the League is that same passion. “What I learned about the League is that the people you are talking to are the decision-makers, first and foremost. There's no bureaucracy. You're dealing with the people who are hands-on every day. All of the members of the League—I haven't met one who's not—are passionate and really engaged in what they're doing, which makes your time together very fun. It's an important conversation that you're having, there are things to learn, and you're sharing best practices, so the League has been a great step and a great partner for us.”

### **Upcoming League Events**

#### **The League Forum**

The League Forum is a round table teleconference sponsored bi-monthly by The League. Every other month a topic will be announced. Interested participants are asked to sign up through the League office: [info@laec.info](mailto:info@laec.info) or 859-887-0033. A dial-in number and passcode will be sent the day prior to the call. It is not a toll free call. Long distance charges will accrue depending on your telephone calling plan. Each call will be moderated by a board member or CMEC graduate. Experts may be included on the call to give their knowledge of the specific topic. The times will be 2:00 eastern, 1:00 central, 12:00 mountain, 11:00 pacific and 10:00 Alaskan time.

Be sure to mark your calendars and contact the League office if you wish to be on a call.

#### *Upcoming Forum Dates*

August 2: Fees Beyond Facility Rental & Stalls with Jennifer Bexley & Jil Goodson, Georgia International Horse Park

#### **The League Footing Academy & Symposium**

Mark your calendars! The 2018 Footing Academy will be held January 12-13 at the George Ingalls Equestrian Event Center in Norco, California. The Symposium will be held January 14-17 in Ontario, California, and will feature a tour of the Los Angeles Equestrian Center.

### **Feature Article: The Importance of Shavings**

As anyone involved knows, the first priority of an exhibitor arriving at the show grounds is to get the horses off their trailers and into the stalls. However, few facility or event organizers stop to think about this. “When you go to a horse show, the very first thing you do when you get there is put shavings in the stall so that you can unload the horses,” says Tim Zuidema of TZ Bedding, who has experience on both sides from his lifetime showing horses to his shavings business. “When you open up a bag of shavings, I've seen bags that are so compressed that when you cut the bag, the shavings don't come out. You're sitting there picking at the bag trying to get the shavings out. I've also seen shavings that after spreading 10 bags in a stall, you can't see the other end of the stall through the dust.”

For a facility, selling shavings – whether to the show organizer or directly to exhibitors – is an important piece of financial stability. “What people don't understand when a facility charges \$8 a bag for shavings it isn't just the bag of shavings,” Tim explains. “It's getting the bag of shavings from the storage area to the stall, and even more importantly it's getting the used shavings out of the stall to wherever they're going to go. There's a big expense there. If a facility allows outside shavings to be brought in, they're doing all that work for nothing.”

In addition to being easy to get out of the bag and producing as little dust as possible, the desired shavings size depends on the event. “It's pretty specific based on breed and discipline, believe it or not,” says Tim. “The Quarter Horse people and stock horse people generally prefer a finer shaving with smaller flake. The hunter-jumper people, especially the high-end ones, will use a lot of shavings and they like the big fluffy flake that makes a pillow in the middle of the stall for the horse, and they don't care about waste and how long it takes to clean the stall. As a show or facility manager, you have to know what your users want. What a lot of facilities will do, and what we do with a lot of facilities, is meet in the middle — you don't get a real fine shaving in there, but you don't get the real big flake in there; you get a medium blended shaving. Then if you get a hunter-jumper group that likes having the big flake, you know that going in and you schedule that with the shavings manufacturer, and make sure you get those flakes there for the ones that are really insistent about it.”

When choosing a shavings provider, Tim suggests credibility and longevity as important factors. “The biggest thing is that you need to know, as a show or facility manager, is that when you call and place your order for shavings they're going to be there,” he says. “There's nothing worse than 200 horse trailers on the grounds and no shavings. You'll have a bunch of angry people who have driven a long way. You'd be surprised how often it happens; a shavings provider just didn't show up, or said, ‘I'm sorry, our truck broke down.’ Well, that's just not good enough. You have got to have the shavings there, period. There are no excuses.”

Shavings can be the difference in the exhibitor experience at a facility. “The very first thing people do when they show up at the grounds is put their horse in the stall, and they’ve got to have shavings in the stall,” Tim summarizes. “You’re going to have a rough week if things start out on the wrong foot for people when they first get to the show grounds.”

### **2017 Symposium Recaps**

The annual 2017 League Footing Academy and Symposium were held in January, featuring a broad range of speakers, presentations and discussions. In each issue of the newsletter, we will bring you recaps of some of those sessions. PowerPoints and other resources are available in the Members Only section of the website.

#### **Insurance and Your Facility**

*Presented by Marnye Langer, LEG Insurance Solutions*

Insurance is necessary, but can also be a tool we use in our businesses. Generally, insurance agents don’t understand our industry. They don’t understand the relationship between facilities and the event producer or the other nuances of large agricultural facilities.

A facility insurance policy has two main points: property and liability. The property portion insures your physical facility, such a structures and equipment. The liability portion covers things happening to those attending your facility, whether bodily injury or damage to others’ property. The most important part of liability commercial insurance property is the inclusion of legal defense, which can be very expensive. This insurance can cover the employment of a lawyer in the case of a lawsuit involving a participant.

The bottom line: talk to your insurance agent. Get more information; get to know your agents; tell them even more than you think might be necessary. Insurance can be a useful tool in the management of your facilities and the operation of your events. Having staff aware of the issues and ideas are very beneficial, and will help you adhere to the best practices you can do.

#### **OSHA**

*Presented by???*

Some of the hazards in the facility management industry can come from equipment, horses, livestock, and vehicles. Management of risks comes down to industry practices. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, was created in 1970 to help prevent work-related injuries and deaths. Injuries at work cost the country and our businesses money, so OSHA aims to provide safe workplaces by setting and enforcing standards, as well as by providing training and resources for employers.

Employers are responsible to provide a safe workplace and to act on any issues brought to their attention. If an employee contacts you or OSHA, that employee cannot be discriminated against. OSHA has jurisdiction only where there are more than ten employees, and when there is no other organization to take responsibility, such as the Federal Aviation Administration or the Railroad Administration. OSHA does not cover state, county, or city employees, so government-owned facilities may not be required to adhere to OSHA standards.

Having a consultation or an evaluation of your workplace will give insight into what safety precautions you may be missing. Resources for locating these services in your area can be found at the OSHA website or OSHA offices. Private consultants also exist for setting up health and safety programs, but local consultation programs are OSHA funded.



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