

League of Agricultural and Equine Centers
November 2016 News

We hope you are all making plans to join us in Jacksonville, Florida, this January for The League Footing Academy and Symposium 2017! Bring in the new year with new insights, relationships, and ideas by joining with fellow industry professionals at this valuable event. Read on for more information, including a tentative list of topics that will be covered.

Also in this issue, we have a profile on Jil Goodson from The Georgia International Horse Park, recaps from this year's Symposium, some great information on preparing footing for English events, and more.

Member Profile: M. Jil Goodson
Business and Marketing Manager
The Georgia International Horse Park

Jil Goodson is a vital member of the team at The Georgia International Horse Park, but the path she took to get there is a little unusual. "My career began in the retail world," she shares. "I was a dress buyer for Macy's, and I absolutely loved my career. Upon receiving the promotion to buyer, I became engaged within a very short time thereafter, and I became a wife and mother of two all at the same time! An opportunity to join the City of Conyers came up, and it provided me a more normal schedule which was better suited for my family at the time."

Jil started in the finance department, but almost immediately an even better opportunity came up. "Our community took on the task of the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, and with that came the unveiling of an extensive marketing campaign. Guess what was needed? Merchandise. And who better to design it? I couldn't believe it: I was now back in my world and doing it at the City of Conyers. I opened and managed our very own GIHP Merchandise Outlet here at the Park. I am now the Business and Marketing Manager for the Horse Park and have served in this position since 2003."

Jil's position at the Horse Park offers its share of rewards and challenges. "I like having the opportunity to work on various projects within the facility. One of the most recent was our 20th year commemorative ceremony where I and a coworker had the opportunity to design the concept for our marker, plan the ceremony, and experience the joy and gratitude as we gathered many from the original team that were instrumental in the facility coming to fruition. We are very fortunate here at the park in that we are fully supported by the City of Conyers, but that doesn't mean that at times we have not had to trim budgets and find creative ways to meet challenges head on. One that comes to mind is when we lost a sales position. Duties were divided, roles were taken on that we had not performed before, and a bit more was placed on each of our plates."

Because of its size, the facility is able to host many different types of events, and often more than one on the same weekend. "We have an excellent team who goes over and beyond on a daily

basis to make sure that each and every one of our events has an excellent experience while at our facility,” she explains. “We most recently hosted the USDF Region 3 Championship and Atlanta National Fall Dressage Show. One of our Facility Maintenance members returned early from his vacation in Miami to assist with the show since he knew it was such a large event and that it would take the entire team to ensure that they had a wonderful experience. These folks are the reason that we can successfully host between eight and ten events on any given weekend and do it successfully.”

Like many of our members, Jil is keenly aware of the value of her League membership. “Previous management at the park was familiar with the League and I was given the opportunity to travel with my Director, Jennifer Bexley, to see what the League was all about and how I could it relate to what we do here in the park. I quickly found myself surrounded with these wonderful folks that enjoyed talking about manure, footing, food services, liability issues and impossible promoters. I knew immediately that this was the group for me. From there I was given the opportunity to complete my CMEC and continue to be a part of this organization. While my role at the park is unique and for that I am most grateful, I truly believe that everyone eventually ends up where they are supposed to be. I am home!”

Benefits of Membership

The League offers a wide range of benefits to its members in order to support and promote management personnel and maintenance procedures at agricultural and equine centers. As a primary resource for industry education, networking, and advocacy for members, advantages also include:

- Outstanding educational opportunities, such as through The League Footing Academy to gain new insights and build relationships
- The League Forum bi-monthly teleconference on pertinent industry topics
- A nationally recognized Certified Manager of Equine Centers (CMEC) program
- Access via member directory to fellow facility managers for networking opportunities
- Manuals such as the Footing Manual, produced by Populous, Manure Management, Composting, and Recycling
- Discounts from League sponsors and vendors on their products or services, as well as discounts on educational programs and reduced rates at League events

These are just a few of the benefits membership in The League can offer. If you’re not a member, join now to bring your career, your facility, and the industry you love to its greatest level. If you are already a member, visit The League’s website to see how you can take the greatest advantage of your membership.

Upcoming League Events

The 2017 League Footing Academy and Symposium are right around the corner! Make your plans now to attend, January 20-21 (Footing Academy) and January 22-25 (Symposium) in Jacksonville, Florida.

Registration for The League Footing Academy and Symposium is now open. The costs are:

- Footing academy \$415 per person
- Symposium \$465 per person
- Footing academy and Symposium \$815 per person
- Room rates at DoubleTree \$102 per night

Tentative Symposium Topics are:

- Current Insurance issues
- Websites
- Event Software
- Employee Law
- Marketing Plans
- ADA Requirements
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Security Issues
- Business Plan vs Strategic Plan
- Show Managers
- Emergency Plans
- Bio-Security
- Obtaining & Retaining Sponsorships, Naming Rights
- Setting Rates
- Speedy Turnarounds
- Vendors – costs, rules, inside, outside
- Non-equine Revenue Sources

Symposium Recaps

The League Symposium 2016 featured a wide range of topics and presentations, and we have shared highlights of some of them here each month. Be aware that these sessions were highly informative with a lot of information, so we can only scratch the surface here. Many of the presentations are available to members only through the website.

Lighting for Agricultural and Equine Facilities

Presented by J.T. Little, Jr., P.E., of Frankfurt Short Bruza

There are many different factors to consider when lighting a facility, from light source type to various controls to placement and number of light fixtures. First off, there are three main light source types: high intensity discharge (HID), fluorescent, and LED. Within HID lighting, different metals can be used to create the light, such as metal halide (MH), high pressure sodium (HPS), and mercury vapor (MV).

Typically, fluorescent lighting is more efficient and has a better Color Rendering Index (CRI) than HID lighting. To go one step further, LED technology, while still evolving, has even higher efficiency and longer life. However, LED lighting can also potentially be sensitive to ambient heat. LEDs can be dimmable, come in a range of color temperatures and CRI values, and can be utilized in both high bay and low bay environments.

Color temperature of a light source is measured in Kelvin. Around 2,700K, which is a warm light, might be used for a home environment. 35,000K is a whiter light that may be used in an office setting. 5,500K is a vibrant, cooler light close to daylight. Different from the light temperature is the lighting level, which is measured in Foot Candles, and lighting uniformity, measured in terms of a maximum to minimum ratio. In general, appropriate lighting levels and uniformity are defined by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America's (IESNA) Lighting Handbook.

According to the IESNA, for instance, a Level II Rodeo and Animal Show (associated with semi-professional, sports clubs, and amateur leagues with a spectator count of 5,000 or less) should be lit with at least 50 foot candles horizontal and have a uniformity max/min of 2.5/1 or less. Under the same category, the amount of direct glare (being able to look directly into light source), shadows, and horizontal illuminance are very important. Light distribution on the task plane, or uniformity of light on the arena floor, is important. Listed as somewhat important are the color appearance and contrast, light pollution, luminaire noise, reflected glare, and vertical illuminance.

Roundtable Discussion – Pest Control

With facilities all over the United States, League members face varying pest problems. Maintenance and cleanliness of the facility seems to be key to most pest control, and posting signs and rules for attendees may help. Here are a few of the problems and possible solutions discussed in a group led by George Chatigny of the Los Angeles Equestrian Center:

- Raccoons – Raccoons can live in barn roofs, creating problems with trash, feces, and tearing up grass. One solution is searching for and blocking the raccoons' entrance.
- Flies – A common agricultural facility problem, flies can congregate around food areas and trash. Solutions mentioned included taking out trash every hour; spraying often, such as five times per year; fly strips; trash bags lined with citronella; and ARBICO Fly Predators.
- Pigeons – Pigeons are a common problem in barns and other areas; they are messy where they roost, leaving droppings and feathers which are poisonous to horses all around. One facility has a contract with their county to shoot pigeons roosting on the property. Another regularly removes nests in boarding barns and stalls, and has ceiling nets over the grandstands to keep pigeons from roosting over the arena. Pigeon strips can be useful in diverting the birds, and one facility recommended leaving grain soaked in alcohol out for them: the pigeons then become drunk, can't fly, and are easy to catch and relocate.

- Squirrels – Another common problem is squirrels; the holes they leave in grass are particularly detrimental when an area might be used for people or animals to walk on. Some facilities hire a trapping service to trap squirrels (and also skunks) in the spring. Flooding the squirrel tunnels with water not only collapses them, but may make the squirrels easier to trap. Others recommended smoking the squirrels out by putting a smoke bomb in a hole, then applying a concrete patch wherever smoke comes out. Poison pellets are another option, which can be injected into gopher or squirrel holes, but it can also be a danger to dogs or other pets and livestock.

Arena Footing for English Disciplines

Many people do not realize how much goes into preparing footing for an equestrian event. As we in the League know, dirt is not just dirt. Just as the many differing types of footing vary, the materials and preparation will also vary even among horse sports.

“I have been researching biomechanics for years and have discovered that the main qualifier in determining how a surface performs is velocity or speed,” says Heidi Zorn, owner and president of Premier Equestrian. “For example, a dressage horse will trot and canter at about 15 mph, while a racehorse will run at around 40 mph. A racehorse at that speed and velocity can load one leg up to 10,000 lbs. The racetrack surface would need to have some slide and depth for cushion built into it to absorb that force. Stopping the motion of the foot would cause injury. A dressage surface would need to be built for traction and grip with very little slide.”

Dressage and jumping footing are similar, but not identical, Heidi explains. A jumping horse needs more stabilized footing for take-off and landing. “A horse show needs to have a pretty tight surface because of the amount of traffic that goes through each day,” Heidi says. “They can only groom every eighth round, so to keep a fair advantage for competitors, the surface should not be displaced nor have deep spots on take-off and landing areas.” While this is not ideal for the horse in long-term training situations, it is a necessary consideration for professional events.

“A western type surface is usually deep and has lots of shear and is designed for a fast pace, such as in barrel racing, reining and cutting,” says Heidi. “The horse will need lots of movement in the surface to take up the velocity and force of the fast movements. Jumping in this type of arena would not be good for a jumper. The jumper needs stability with little to no shear. The hoof should not dig very deep into the surface. Traction will help on take off and on landing. A deep unstable surface will cause additional strain on tendons and joints, not to mention jolt the horse’s confidence that he might fall down.” When jumping, a horse’s toe should dip into the surface but not dig too deep or slide backwards at take-off. “Sliding backwards can stress the extensor tendons, especially when taking off to jump.”

In preparing an arena for English disciplines, Heidi recommends the following scenarios:

Good: A surface that has a stable flat base with either a fine sand/textile mixture that prevents the hoof from digging too deep but still allows for some movement. This surface will stay stable but also possess cushion and rebound. Another scenario would be to use a larger angular sand that packs well and add a rubber type additive, for additional cushion and rebound. Some capacity to groom and water is recommended.

Better: A professionally installed base with drainage pipes and sprinkling system. The sand mixture would be roughly 4" of fine silica sand with a textile additive that possessed some cushioning additives. The cushioning additives will help the surface move and absorb some of the energy, while the textile/sand mixture will provide a rooting system like grass to help keep the surface stable.

Best: The best surface I believe is the OTTO Sport Arena base mat system. This consists of a professionally installed base, a drain rock layer with a base mat on top of drain layer, finished on top of the mat with a fine silica sand mixed with a textile. The reason this surface is superior is the base mat absorbs 50% of the concussion, drains excess water immediately and provides a skid-resistant layer. This system was used at the 2016 Rio Games and performed extremely well for both the dressage and jumping events.

LEGIS Corner: Saddles Are Expensive

If you have bought a saddle lately, you know how expensive tack and equipment can be. Make sure you have protection in case your tack is stolen or damaged. If your trainer's tack room is broken into, do not expect that your trainer carries coverage for tack and equipment he does not own. You might have coverage through a homeowner's policy, but check and make sure and list your items individually along with purchase amounts. If you have a commercial policy you can easily add property items, like tack to the policy. If you are not sure whether your tack is covered, contact one of our LEGISequine.com horsemen to check for you.