



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Bringing Regional and Continental Pride to a U.S. National Halter Championship Title

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**(23-February-15 – AURORA, CO)** – Excitement, travel and U.S. National halter pride have all been wrapped up into an exciting package designed to bring added prestige to the halter ring during the Arabian Horse Association's (AHA) U.S. National Championship Horse Show. Thanks to the hard work of the AHA Breeding/In-Hand Committee, the U.S. Nationals In-Hand Ad-Hoc Committee, the U.S. Nationals Show Commission and other AHA leadership, there are exciting changes on the horizon for this year's in-hand community.

In an effort to recognize our breeders, beginning in 2015, a Regional Breeding Challenge Cup will begin. This Cup is designed to award top breeders of purebred, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horses. The bronze, perpetual trophy will be awarded to the winning region, to be held by the winning breeder. Designed to recognize quality breeding and beautiful horses within the regions, this challenge will provide added excitement and comradery to all levels of competition.

Secondly, in an effort to raise the prestige of a U.S. National Halter Championship title, the format for championship classes has been changed. The new format consists of just six championship classes: Purebred Yearling Fillies and Colts, Purebred Junior (two and three year olds) Fillies and Colts and Purebred Senior (four year olds and over) Mares and Stallions. The championship North American bred and owned horses from these select classes will be offered the opportunity to travel to the Salon du Cheval in Paris, France in December, representing the North American champions of the breed. Further clarification of the rules will be forthcoming.

Spearheaded by U.S. Nationals In-Hand Ad-Hoc Committee member, Bart van Buggenhout, over \$100,000 was raised to fund the trip to the Salon du Cheval for the champion horses, as well as the bronze trophy for the Regional Breeding Challenge Cup.

Contributing donors for these new initiatives include: Murray Popplewell of Rae-Dawn Arabians, Lara Ames of the Arabian Horse Times, Frank Chisholm of Palmetto Arabians, Frank Hennessey of Hennessey Arabians, LLC, Jack Milam of Regency Cove Farms and other generous contributors. AHA would like to thank those who gave these private funds for their generous donation, their passion for the Arabian breed and their desire to help U.S. Nationals halter flourish.

"This is exciting news and a great opportunity to bring the halter community together," says Cynthia Richardson, AHA President. "It's a great way to encourage everyone to cheer for each other during the Regional Challenge Cup and celebrate our team headed to Paris."

Established by AHA President, Cynthia Richardson the U.S. Nationals In-Hand Ad-Hoc Committee members include Greg Gallun as Chair, Ted Carson, Cynthia Richardson, Isaac Taylor and Bart van

### ARABIAN HORSE ASSOCIATION<sup>SM</sup>

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Buggenhout. Lance Walters, member of the U.S. Show Commission and former AHA President, serves as the Show Commission liaison between the two parties.

AHA is excited about the positive changes that are on the horizon for U.S. Nationals halter and would like to thank those whose efforts and hard work have helped to bring about these exciting ideas.

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