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## **Arabian Horse Association Celebrates the Future of the Breed at 2026 Youth & Mid Summer Nationals**

*Premier national event brings together the next generation of Arabian horse competitors during the Association's landmark Year of the Horse celebration*

**Oklahoma City, OK — June 2, 2026** — [The Arabian Horse Association](#) (AHA) is proud to welcome youth riders, families, trainers, and Arabian horse enthusiasts from across the country to the 2026 Youth & Mid Summer Nationals, taking place July 17th–25th at the Oklahoma State Fair Park in Oklahoma City.

Now in its 34th year, the [Youth & Mid Summer Nationals](#) began as an exclusively youth-focused event before evolving into a beloved family show that draws an estimated 800–1,000 horses, 3,000 exhibitors, 200 trainers, and 3,500 spectators from across the United States and Canada. Admission is free and open to the public.

As part of AHA's broader Year of the Horse celebration and the 60th Anniversary of U.S. Nationals, the event represents a major moment for the future of the Arabian horse industry — bringing together rising competitors and longtime members while highlighting a renewed focus on accessibility, modernization, and community engagement across the sport.

The Youth & Mid Summer Nationals serves as one of the Association's most anticipated national competitions, showcasing the athleticism, intelligence, versatility, and beauty of the Arabian horse through a wide range of disciplines and youth-focused competition.

"This year carries extraordinary meaning for our community as we celebrate both the legacy and future of the Arabian horse," said [Taryl O'Shea](#), CEO of the [Arabian Horse Association](#). "The Youth & Mid Summer Nationals reflects the next generation of our industry — talented young riders, passionate families, and a community that continues to evolve while honoring the traditions that built it. As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of U.S. Nationals, we are embracing modernization, stronger engagement, and new opportunities to welcome more people into the Arabian horse world."



*The next generation of Arabian horse champions celebrates at the Youth & Mid Summer National Championship*

"The Youth Mid Summer National Show is holding its 34th year this July, and the growth we've witnessed has been remarkable," said Sharon Richards, Chair of the Show. "The recent construction of the OG&E Coliseum turned out to be a beautiful, state-of-the-art facility, and we are eagerly awaiting the completion of the Jim Norick Arena renovation. After all these years, we feel very lucky to call Oklahoma City home for this show. This facility offers so much to the equestrian world, and our community continues to thrive here."

The event arrives during a transformative period for the Association, following the recent removal of qualification requirements designed to encourage broader participation and make national-level competition more accessible to riders and horse owners across the country.

New for 2026, the event introduces a free Cow Horse Clinic on the second Friday evening, open to exhibitors and spectators alike, offering hands-on instruction in herd work and teaching horses to work a cow. The schedule has also been restructured so that the OG&E Coliseum features primarily adult classes during the first four days, shifting to a youth-forward focus for the remainder of the show, while the other two arenas maintain a mix of adult and youth competition throughout.

Hosted in Oklahoma City — a nationally recognized equestrian destination with deep roots in western and performance horse culture — the event is expected to draw competitors and spectators from throughout the United States and Canada while generating significant economic activity for the region.

Throughout the eight-day show — running daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. across three arenas — attendees will experience national championship competition in disciplines ranging from English Pleasure, Western Pleasure, and Dressage to Reining, Ranch Riding, Trail, Native Costume, Ladies Side Saddle, Sport Horse In-Hand and Under Saddle, and Working Cow. Youth exhibitors range in age from 2 to 19 years old, and the electric walk/trot classes offer some of the most crowd-pleasing moments of the week as young riders as young as six confidently guide 1,000-pound horses through multiple disciplines.

Not-to-miss moments include the spectacular Native Costume class, the Stick Horse Class — where children ages 2–10 build their own mount in the Chill Box activity space and parade them in the OG&E Coliseum on Tuesday night — and the ever-popular Dog Costume Class and Dog Races. For families attending with non-competing children, the Chill Box is open daily with supervised creative activities and games. Arabian Barn Tours also offer behind-the-scenes access to meet horses and exhibitors up close.

The event is expected to generate more than \$16.5 million in economic impact for the Oklahoma City region. In a nod to community giving, the Arabian Horse Youth Association's board has chosen the local Ronald McDonald House as the beneficiary of this year's 50/50 raffle.

The Arabian horse remains one of the world's most recognizable and influential breeds, celebrated for its intelligence, endurance, versatility, and enduring connection with riders across generations.



*A champion moment at the Youth and Mid Summer Arabian & Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show*

Jatelyn "Bug" Burcham, President of the Arabian Horse Youth Association and Youth Nationals exhibitor, captures what keeps competitors coming back year after year: "Youth Nationals has always felt like home to me. It's an incredible horse show, but what makes it truly special are the people and the memories that come along with it. Every year, I look forward to seeing my friends who live across the country, spending long days at the arena, cheering each other on from the rail, and making memories that last forever. It's a place where young people grow in confidence, learn the meaning of responsibility and sportsmanship, and feel like they have a place to belong. Some of my most favorite memories and closest friendships have come from this show, and that's why so many of us keep coming back year after year."

For more information about the 2026 Youth & Mid Summer Nationals, visit <https://www.arabianhorses.org/competition/national-events/youth-nationals/>.

## About the Arabian Horse Association

[The Arabian Horse Association](#) is a full-service nonprofit breed association dedicated to the promotion, preservation, and advancement of the Arabian horse breed while supporting the **breeding, competitive, and recreational interests of owners, breeders, competitors, and enthusiasts** across the United States and Canada. Through nationally recognized competitions, registration services, educational initiatives, youth and community engagement programs, and official event and performance record management, the Association works to encourage participation, responsible breeding, and lifelong involvement within the Arabian horse community. The organization also administers approximately **\$1 million in annual prize money** through its prestigious national events and competitive programs.

In 2026, the Arabian horse community celebrates a historic milestone as the “**Year of the Horse**” coincides with the **60th Anniversary of the Arabian and Half-Arabian U.S. Nationals in Tulsa, Oklahoma**. More than **1,700 horses** are expected to compete for national titles during the championship event, honoring six decades of excellence, tradition, and achievement in Arabian horse competition.

For more information, visit [www.arabianhorses.org](http://www.arabianhorses.org).