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Certified Horsemanship Association Announces Winners at 2009 Awards Banquet

(October 2009) The Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) honored top individuals, horses and organizations at the annual awards banquet held at the International Conference in Fort Collins, Colorado at Colorado State University on October 10th.

Clinic Instructor of the Year is Stan Loewen from Mead, Kansas

Clinic instructors are the CHA Master Level Instructors that are clinic staff and certify instructors for CHA throughout North America. At the end of each clinic, participants write evaluations of the clinic staff, it is from these evaluations that this winner is chosen. Stan Loewen is a lifetime member of CHA and has been involved since the 1970s. Stan has conducted Standard, Combined, Seasonal and Trail Clinics for CHA. He has been known to give back his pay in order for Trail Clinics to go on. He has put his heart and soul into CHA and has done over 70 clinics so has certified at the very least over 500 riding instructors and trail guides. Stan has been on the CHA Board of Directors and very helpful in the creation of the Trail Program and the new *CHA Trail Guide Manual* of which he is on the cover.

“I am so honored to have won this award as I believe so strongly in CHA,” says Stan Loewen. “CHA is continuing to grow and we will never be at a loss of folks to help educate about horses and how to safely and effectively teach others to work with them.”

CHA Distinguished Service Award goes to Fred Bruce from Crandall, Georgia

This is a lifetime achievement award for an individual who has gone above and beyond through the years promoting and upholding the mission of CHA. Fred Bruce is a Standard, Combined, Seasonal, Trail, Driving and Equine Facility Managers Clinic Instructor for CHA. He has been a part of CHA since 1981 and has been instrumental in starting and improving many CHA

certification programs. Fred has been a contributing author for many of the CHA manuals and has served on the CHA Board of Directors. He is always willing to help in whatever way he can to see our association grow and prosper.

“Fred Bruce in my opinion has truly been a leader in his profession,” says Diana Garber former Guest Services Director, Cohutta Springs Conference Center. “He could have made more money teaching or instructing at a large facility, but his love and passion was teaching individuals in small groups the love of horsemanship. He has repeatedly demonstrated his desire to educate the public, small communities and people traveling around the world on how to love, care, train and ride one of man’s best friends...the horse.”

The CHA Partnership in Safety Award Goes to Equisure, Inc.

This award is given to an outstanding organization that has demonstrated excellent commitment to safety in equestrian endeavors. This year it goes to a company that has been in the horse business for many years. A company that has worked closely with CHA to give the best discounts possible to its certified instructors on professional limited liability insurance, mortality insurance and others. The 2009 Partnership in Safety Award goes to Equisure, Inc.

CHA Instructor of the Year is Steven Lantvit from La Porte, Indiana

This award is given to an outstanding CHA certified instructor who demonstrates safe, effective and fun lessons. Students from around the continent send in nominations about their instructors and why they should be awarded this honor. This year’s winner had so many letters of support sent in for him, it was amazing. Steven Lantvit is a Level 4 Western and Level 3 English instructor with CHA.

“I found Steven to be knowledgeable, versatile, articulate and fun,” says Kristin Little Senior Instructor of Science at Culver Academies. “He quickly found all my bad habits and offered sound solutions in correcting them. Steven runs a fine facility, his horses are

happy, well schooled and are excellent teachers, tack is clean and well cared for and his facility is top notch.”

“You would be amazed at how well Steven works with kids,” says Kimberly Pennington of La Porte, IN. “They all worship him and think he is the greatest thing in the world. My daughter wants to grow up to be just like him. That he can teach anyone, no matter who they are, is wonderful. He is very professional and respectful all the time with a lot of personality and humor.”

The CHA School Horse of the Year is BoJangles from Paradise Ranch in Springfield, Tennessee

We often recognize people and organizations that have done great things in the horse industry, but what about the horses themselves? The Stone CHA School Horse of the Year Program is about these wonderful animals that spend countless hours being patient with new riders and not-so-new riders. The winner of this award, not only gets recognition, but is immortalized into a Stone Horse model that is going to go into the Stone line of model horses that the public can purchase next year and into CHA product line as a fundraiser for CHA, thanks to the generosity of Peter and Elaine Stone.

BoJangles from Paradise Ranch in Springfield, Tennessee is a 19-year-old Appaloosa gelding who has been referred to as homely and lumbering, but what he might lack in looks he makes up for in gentleness of spirit and heart. He has been called “Mr. Unflappable” and the constant of the ranch.

He had numerous instructors and students send in letters of support on his behalf. “Whether is it enduring the unintentional mishandlings of a beginning rider or tolerating the over-zealous weekend warrior trail rider, Bo handles it all with a stoic attitude,” says Lynne Aston of Cross Plains, TN.

**Finalists for the 2009 CHA School Horse of the Year Award are:
Beaumeister from Susquehana Farms in Fort Lupton, Colorado
Chance from Maple Ridge Stables in Guilford, Vermont
Lady from Pegasus Farm in Hartville, Ohio
Tahoma from The Urban Farm in Denver, Colorado**

The Volunteer of the Year is Tim Alderson from Tyler, Texas

Tim has been involved for over 20 years in the camping industry. He is a lifetime member of CHA who joined in 1997 and a certified instructor in both English and Western. His camp, Pine Cove Christian Conference Center, has also been involved with CHA for many years as a clinic host site, board member meeting location and international conference location. As a member of the board for three years, Tim was instrumental in helping with the trail program and fundraising for CHA. As a matter of fact, for over 10 years now, Tim has been instrumental in providing a saddle for our annual raffle that takes place at the CHA International Conference each year and has raised many dollars for CHA.

The purpose of CHA is to promote excellence in safety and education for the benefit of individuals and group riding programs. CHA certifies instructors and trail guides, accredits equestrian facilities, publishes manuals and provides support and educational resources. For more information on the Certified Horsemanship Association and the annual conference, please visit www.cha-ahse.org, www.CHAINstructors.com or call 800-399-0138. The 2010 CHA Annual Conference is set for October 21 – 24 at The Oaks Equestrian Center – an O'Connor Signature Facility in Lake City, Florida just outside of Gainesville.

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