

Council works for horses and horsemen In Kansas

The Kansas Horse Council is working for horses and horse owners.

"Lots of people contact us for their horse needs," explained Lisa Streit, executive director of the Kansas Horse Council. "We're very much a contact source for the horse industry. We get lots of calls and e-mails every day."

Founded in 1992 by Bud Newell at Lecompton, the Kansas Horse Council was "basically started to watch over legislative matters related to horses and the horse industry," according to Streit, at the group's Manhattan headquarters.

A membership-funded,

nonprofit organization, the council continues to represent and lobby for the horse industry on the state and national levels.

"We've expanded our services to represent the entire equine industry, speaking for all breeds and all disciplines. We create a powerful network against equine abuse, theft and many other issues," Streit said. "We are the horse and horseman's voice in keeping the industry thriving."

The group was instrumental in passage of the Kansas Equine Limited Liability Law, which protects equine owners against frivolous lawsuits.

Working for the horse council since 1994, Streit, a horse owner and rider who has a vast equine background, opened the office at Manhattan in 2001. It is located at 8831 Quail Lane, Suite 200 in Manhattan.

Membership totals over 700, including individuals, families and groups such as breed associations and saddle clubs. "We receive no subsidies or outside funding," Streit said.

The group isn't limited to Kansas horse enthusiasts though. "We have many out-of-state members because of the liability insurance in-

cluded in our fees. That drives our membership. Liability coverage is essential to the horse owner," she said.

All members receive a subscription to the group's official monthly publication, *Horses Sales and Tales*.

Main activity of the horse council is the EquiFest, founded by the group as an annual event dedicated to the equine industry of Kansas.

"EquiFest is for the purpose of education, promotion and entertainment. We draw several thousand people to Wichita every February," detailed Streit, who manages the main annual horse event in the state as the major fund raiser for the horse council.

While the KHC receives many requests to assist with coordination and sponsorship of all types of horse-related activities, funding prohibits such important endeavors. "Our budget is very, very tight, and we cannot do the extra things we

would like to do," Streit said.

To help ease the financial shortfall, the horse council is working to draft a proposal for a state regulated horse checkoff program. A legislative bill could be drafted from that proposal, and if approved would provide a regular added income for the council.

"Cost to individual owners would be very minimal, less than \$2 a year," Streit tabulated. "Combined though, these funds could go towards helping support many horse activities in the state."

In addition to Streit, the Kansas Horse Council is governed by a nine-member board of directors representing all segments of the industry. Included are veterinarians, farriers, western and English disciplines, trail riders, race, rodeo and horse show groups, etc.

"Our membership, governing body and services are very diversified for the entire horse industry," Streit said.

While an annual meeting has been conducted in conjunction with the EquiFest, there has been a format change with the 2006 meeting set for Lawrence on January 28. "We will have an all-day event with seminars and a special dinner, so we expect to draw a large number of interested horse people," Streit elaborated.

Horse liability signs are offered by the council to all horse professionals and groups who have public riders of horses on their property. "When these signs are posted, the liability laws in effect, providing protection against lawsuits," Streit commented.

Individual membership in the council is \$50, with a family membership rate of \$80 and group membership at \$35.

Information and memberships for the horse council are available at www.kansashorsecouncil.com, by calling Streit at (785) 776-0662 or sending an e-mail to director@kansashorsecouncil.com.

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Membership roles total over 700, including individuals, families and groups, such as breed associations and saddle clubs. "We receive no subsidies or outside funding," Streit related.

Of that membership total, Streit said, "We have many out-of-state members because of the liability insurance included in our fees. That drives our membership. Liability coverage is essential to the horse owner."

All members receive a subscription to the group's official monthly publication, Horses Sales and Tales, published and edited by Dia Fowles. "This lets the horse people know what is going on in the council and with horses and the industry throughout the country," Streit confirmed.

Additionally, members of the council receive a purchasing package, in which horse businesses throughout the Midwest offer special discounts to membership card holders.

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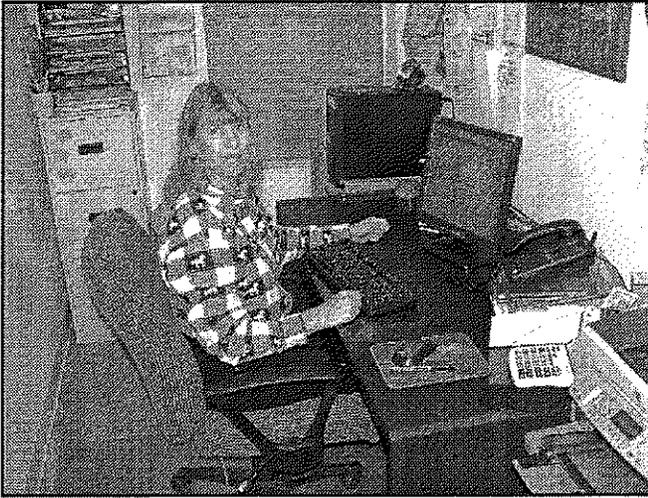
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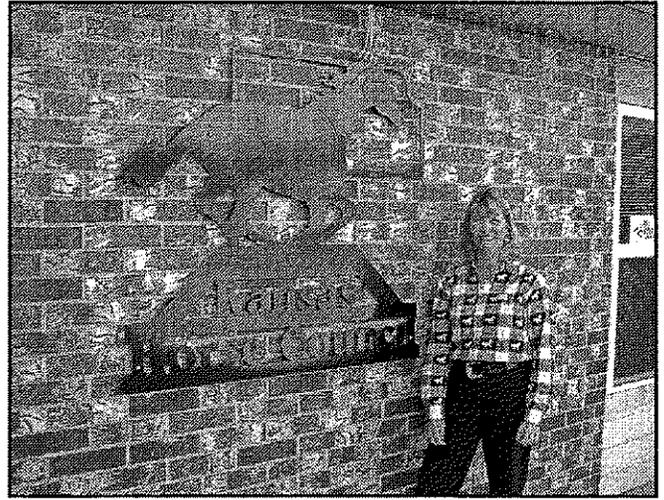
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Individual membership in the council is \$50, with a family membership rate of \$80 and group membership at \$35. "The group rate is lower because we can not provide the liability insurance in that package," Streit clarified.

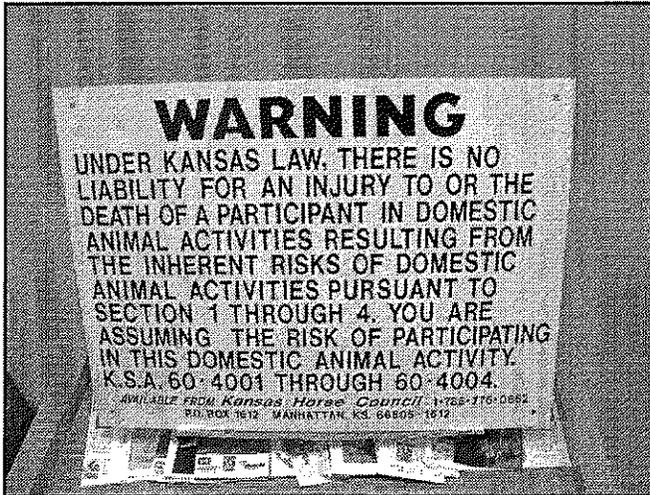
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Lise Streit is executive director of the Kansas Horse Council, a horse industry contact source headquartered at Manhattan. The membership-funded, non-profit organization speaks for all breeds and all disciplines, representing and lobbying for the horse industry on the state and national level.



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