

Badge of Honor

By MEGAN CRUDUP



APHA's newest program celebrates its one-year anniversary.

JODIE MOORE
Langley, BC

JAN LARSON
Gilroy, CA

JULIE BLACK
Bakersfield, CA

TAURIE BANKS
Fillmore, CA

DON & VIVIAN BEARD
Cheyenne, WY

CAROLYN DOBBINS
Apache Junction, AZ

RON MORRIS
Belen, NM

TRISHA SHORTEN ARMSTRONG
Cushing, OK

MIKE HACHTEL
Collinsville, TX

Whitesboro, TX

Sanger, TX

Azle, TX

Collinsville, TX

Aubrey, TX

Stephenville, TX

HEATHER YOUNG
Beeville, TX

DELENA DOYLE
Azle, TX

SHERRY HAYNES
Stephenville, TX

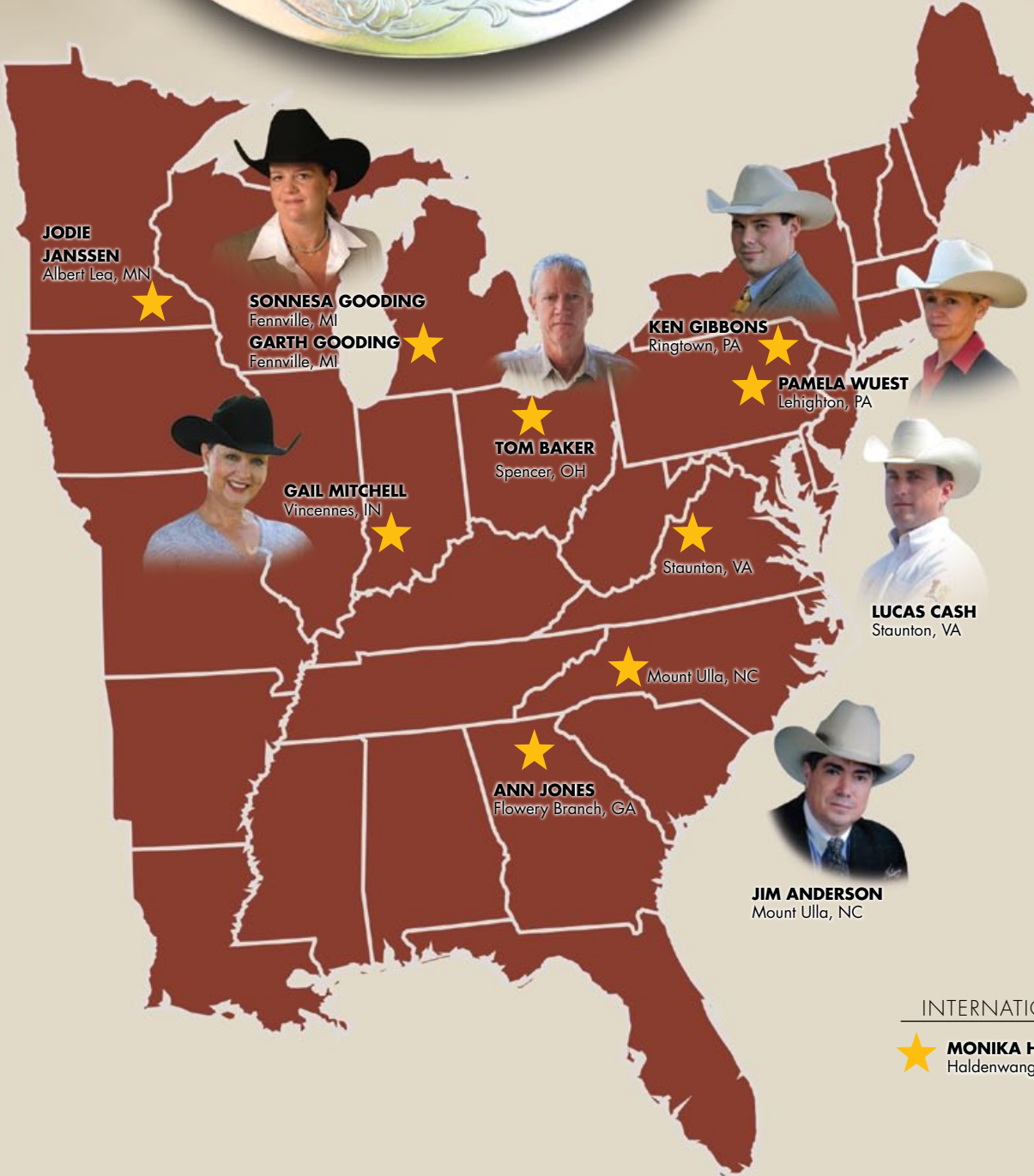
LISA LIGON
Sanger, TX

TWAIN MARA
Whitesboro, TX

FLOYD DANLEY
Whitesboro, TX

RONNIE STALLINGS
Aubrey, TX

Beeville, TX



JODIE JANSSEN
Albert Lea, MN

SONNESA GOODING
Fennville, MI
GARTH GOODING
Fennville, MI

KEN GIBBONS
Ringtown, PA

PAMELA WUEST
Lehighton, PA

TOM BAKER
Spencer, OH

GAIL MITCHELL
Vincennes, IN

Staunton, VA

LUCAS CASH
Staunton, VA

Mount Ulla, NC

ANN JONES
Flowery Branch, GA

JIM ANDERSON
Mount Ulla, NC

INTERNATIONAL

★ **MONIKA HAGEN**
Haldenwang, Germany



Ken Gibbons, of Ringtown, Pennsylvania, shown here during the 2010 Fall World Championship Show with his Aged Mares entry, RH Miss Annie, was the first equine professional to apply for membership in APHA's Professional Horsemen certification program. The program gives Gibbons the perfect opportunity to act as an ambassador of the breed and association.

Honest, ethical and trustworthy are words that describe members of the American Paint Horse Association's Professional Horsemen certification program.

This program, which celebrated its one-year anniversary in December 2010, was designed to identify honest, upstanding equine professionals who are members of APHA. The Professional Horsemen program encourages members to become goodwill ambassadors for the breed and to offer their expertise, while pledging to encourage professionalism, integrity and fairness throughout the horse industry.

"We believe that people who are committed to being a part of the APHA are an asset to the association and can be utilized as a liaison between the APHA and horse show managers," APHA President Travis Titlow said. "The horse show managers I have talked to are very excited to be receiving help at their shows."

Ken Gibbons, a trainer at Amity Acres in Ringtown, Pennsylvania, was the first to apply and become certified as an APHA Professional Horseman. Learning about

the group from friend and fellow trainer Fred Tabor, Gibbons researched the program and was interested in becoming a member.

"This is a fantastic program," Gibbons said. "I can promote the breed I love and help people. It is a great public relations opportunity, and I use it to promote participation in local clubs, which is much needed."

Titlow says Gibbons is a great example of an APHA Professional Horseman.

"He is a young horseman and trainer," Titlow said. "He is the kind of person who can ideally help this program grow and expand. We need young professionals who will step up to the plate and represent our association well."

The APHA Professional Horsemen program is open to those whose livelihood is derived from an equine business. Candidates submit a three-page application form, four references and must agree to the APHA Professional Horsemen Code of Ethics, which summarizes the ethical practices that members must follow in regard to horse care, sale transactions and actions in the show arena. Once certified, members pay \$25 annual dues. Approved Professional Horsemen and –women receive a certificate and a lapel pin. Members are listed on apha.com, as well as in APHA publications.

Gibbons emphasizes the importance of the process.



JESSICA HEIN

APHA President Dr. Travis Titlow believes programs like APHA's Professional Horsemen will increase the association's visibility and maintain its position as a force within the horse industry.

"Being selected to be part of this upstanding program and being presented with the Professional Horseman's pin is like wearing a badge of honor," he said.

Gibbons has been involved with Paint Horses for several years and is vice president of the Pennsylvania Paint Horse Club. He actively encourages participation in regional Paint Horse clubs and last year arranged for a Paint Horse show during the Keystone International Livestock Exposition in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Furthermore, Gibbons volunteers his time at shows and local 4-H events—perfect examples of what the APHA Professional Horsemen certification program is all about.


"I just try to give helpful advice," Gibbons said. "At horse shows, I try to stay as long as I can and help out the show staff. Actions speak louder than words."

The Professional Horsemen program has received applications since December 2009. To date, 28 people have been accepted into the program with a dozen other pending applications, and Titlow hopes the number will continue to grow.

"The Professional Horsemen program can offer a lot to the association," Titlow said. "We hope that eventually they can handle most horse show complaints and relieve the Executive Committee of this responsibility."

Gibbons says certified APHA Professional Horsemen and —women are role models for the industry.

"Professional Horsemen are held to the highest of standards and should set examples for others," he said. "We are here to promote the breed."

If you are seeking a trainer or interested in becoming an APHA Professional Horseman, visit apha.com/professional_horsemen for more information. 

To comment on this article, e-mail feedback@apha.com.



CURRENT APHA PROFESSIONAL HORSEMEN

Ken Gibbons
Jodie Janssen
Jan Larsen
Ron Morris
Monika Hagen
Julie Black
Lisa Ligon
Lucas Cash
Heather Young
Ronnie Stallings
Jodie Moore
Trisha Shorten Armstrong
Delena Doyle
Sonnesa Gooding
Pamela A. Wuest
Ann Jones
Floyd Danley
Mike Hachtel
Carolyn Dobbins
Twain Mara
Taurie Banks
Gail Mitchell
Garth Gooding
Jim Anderson
Tom Baker
Vivian Beard
Don Beard
Sherry Haynes