

# Missouri Quarter Horse Association

## Member Spotlight

### David McElwain

From his humble, horseless beginnings in Diggins, Missouri, David has always had a passion for horses, and as soon as he was able to buy one, he did, thus beginning quite an eventful life. In the late 80s, for example, while a member of the Crossroads Stock Horse Association, David, along with Donna Dove and Duane Scott, came up with a plan to get the first open horse show invited to the All American Quarter Horse Congress.

David has been a member of MQHA since the mid-80s and started serving as a director for the Association right from the start. He continued in that capacity until he became president in 2001. While president, David attended an AQHA Leadership Conference in Amarillo where one of the topics discussed was the establishment of the All-Novice shows. David was so enthusiastic about this new venture that upon his return he announced he would oversee its implementation in Missouri. That was 12 years ago, and David has been a fixture at every novice show since then. Missouri's All-Novice Show has more than once been in the Top 10 for this AQHA program.

Most people don't know for the majority of time David was a MQHA member and running the novice shows that he was considered legally blind. Infected with histoplasmosis from inhaling spores from the histoplasma fungus, David developed ocular histoplasmosis when the spores spread from his lungs to his eyes which led to his loss of vision. Fortunately, and inexplicably, David's vision came back about five years ago.

In addition to MQHA, David has also served as president for Ozark Quarter Horse Association (2000), Crossroads Stock Horse Association (three times), and for Southwest Missouri Cutting Horse Association, which he helped form through the NCHA affiliate.

David is very proud of his children and their accomplishments as a family showing horses. Together they won the Sho-Me Champion of Champions on Chipper W Too, winning the use of an aluminum trailer for a year with four 1<sup>st</sup> place finishes and one 2nd place finish in various events. He was impressed that he and his children were able to accomplish winning the trailer without a full-time trainer and having several riders on the same mount – not an easy feat. In 1989 he accompanied his daughter to watch her compete in the National Youth Team Tournament for which the youth had to qualify and raise funds to enable them to attend and compete on a national level. In 1990 both David's children qualified and competed with Seven's Pal in Pleasure, Showmanship, English, and Horsemanship at Congress. Now David's children, son Jason and daughter Beth Anne, are grown and have kids of their own. Jason and his wife, Amanda, have three children: Baylea, Donna, and David. Beth Anne and her husband, J.J., welcomed a baby boy, Garret Thomas, last November. Although the grandkids got buckles for participating in Lead Line when they were younger, sports and such are a priority for them now. However, David says the horses and tack are at his place just waiting for them should they decide to become involved with horses.

David has met all sorts of people in the horse business that he calls friends. He has enjoyed sharing stories and competing with them throughout his show career.



Photo courtesy of Rosemary Lahmann