

Amber Wilson: MFTHBA Region 4 Director Candidate

First, let me start by thanking you for being an MFTHBA member. MFTHBA members are a dedicated group, and our love for this versatile breed is rooted in great tradition and passion. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you, and I'm fortunate to have built relationships nationally and internationally with wonderful people involved in promoting and preserving this amazing breed.

My decision to run for the Region 4 Director position was one of careful consideration. Not because I didn't want to serve the MFTHBA and its members, but because I wanted to ensure I could serve it the way it deserves. To me, a director is the champion for the breed within his/her respective region. Promotion of the breed, recognition of our members, and support of our affiliates starts with the regional director. Our Association is dependent upon volunteer manpower, and Directors must take the lead, investing their time and resources to move the Association forward. I believe so much in this organization. Like all groups, there are things that need improvement, but I am 100% confident that the MFTHBA and the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse have a bright future. And I am willing to commit the time and work it will take to make that a reality.

SOME OF MY BACKGROUND

For those in Region 4 that I haven't met, I'd like to share with you some of my background. I grew up riding Missouri Fox Trotters. My mother would take me trail riding sitting in front of her on the saddle before I could walk. I showed locally at our county fair, participated in an equine drill team, carried flags during rodeo grand entries, and went on week long trail rides -- all on a Missouri Fox Trotting Horse. My favorite trip every year was going to the Show and Celebration where we would sit and cheer on my uncle as he showed. I loved visiting the vendors, walking the grounds and talking to fellow MFTHBA enthusiasts. After living in an area dominated by quarter horses, a trip to Ava felt like Disney World for Fox Trotters!

I received a Bachelor's of Science in Agriculture from Kansas State University and a Master's of Science in Management from Saint Mary University. I have spent 15 years working for SES, Inc. in Merriam, Kansas, and the last 5 years as part of the company's Board of Directors.

Ten years ago this past February, my mother and I re-established the Wilson Farms breeding program. Two years later, I decided to give showing a try. Today, I show, trail ride and breed Missouri Fox Trotting Horses.

My volunteer work for the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse began in 2007, and I served as Second Vice-President/Marketing Manager for the Kansas City Regional Fox Trotting Horse Association for six years. In early 2010, I was asked to serve as the MFTHBA Promotions Committee Chairman, a position I still hold. Budgets have been tight in the post-recession era, and we've had to make tough decisions and get creative. Here are some of the things I've led in accomplishing as Promotions Committee Chairman:

- Launched and managed the MFTHBA's social media presence and implemented the MFTHBA News e-newsletter to reach broad audiences online
- Established Western Dressage Association of America as a MFTHBA Partner Organization
- Worked with MFTHBA partner organizations such as ACTHA, AERC, NATRC and WDAA to recognize the accomplishments of Fox Trotters within each organization
- Managed the two MFTHBA show programs, turning them into money generating publications
- Spearheaded updates to the Fox Trot America Program to include regional award recognition
- Managed and assisted in the development of new promotional materials including the newly released MFTHBA Education pamphlet and the MFTHBA website
- Helped to launch the MFTHBA Stallion Tour
- Attended the following on behalf of the MFTHBA to represent and promote Fox Trotters (at my own expense): the NATRC National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri; Western Dressage Association of

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America in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Equine Affaire in Columbus, Ohio (2015, 2014, and 2013); Equifest of Kansas in Wichita, Kansas (2015, 2014, and 2013); Horsefest in Springfield, Missouri (2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011)

LOOKING FORWARD

The key to building a strong organization is being committed to constant improvement. In order to build on the foundation and ensure a strong future, I will advocate that the MFTHBA:

- Commit to regularly identifying our strengths and challenges. From this, an improvement plan can be developed to sustain the strengths and look at short term and long term solutions for addressing challenges.
- Create a clear vision for the MFTHBA by focusing on short term and long term goals. It is important for this vision to be communicated to all involved with the MFTHBA and for all committees to be focused on working toward this vision.
- Improve technology capabilities within the MFTHBA office to support our office staff in working effectively and efficiently. This technology can also be used to provide additional services to our members.
- Increase member satisfaction by engaging members in the MFTHBA, enhancing MFTHBA programs and increasing the use of surveys to obtain member feedback.
- Provide open communication to members and the general public

In addition to the overarching MFTHBA objectives. As Region 4 Director, I will focus on strengthening the MFTHBA presence within the Region. Over the next three years, my goals for Region 4 include:

- Supporting the value and enjoyment that members receive from belonging to MFTHBA
- Increasing MFTHBA membership in Region 4 by 10 percent
- Personally recognizing achievements by Region 4 MFTHBA members in MFTHBA Programs, MFTHBA Partner Organization competitions and other competitions
- Representing the values, objectives and feedback of the members of Region 4
- Regularly communicating with Region 4 affiliates
- Increasing Region 4 awareness of and participation in rewarding MFTHBA programs such as:
 - Fox Trot America
 - National Trail Ride Program
 - National High Point Program
 - Youth Program
- Personally attending Region 4 promotional events

I would appreciate your support in this election, but most importantly I encourage you to vote -- regardless of who you cast your ballot for. To build a strong MFTHBA, we as members must engage and participate. Thank you!

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Building a Strong Future Together