

# Region 3 Director VP Candidate Call - 4.14.26

## 8pm Central

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[Speaker 3]

Hey, Brian. Hey, good evening, guys. This is Kirby.

So we've got a couple minutes here, and then we'll take a roll and get going. Appreciate everybody getting on. It said seven of us are on already, so that's great.

Hey, Kirby, this is Phil Benadum. I'm going to listen in. Is that all right?

No, good. Good. Pleasure to have you, Phil.

[Speaker 13]

Thank you.

[Speaker 8]

Kirby, this is Ora. I'm on also.

[Speaker 13]

Hey, dear. Glad you're here.

[Speaker 8]

Thank you.

[Speaker 3]

How many do we have on already?

[Speaker 6]

Kirby, we've got 10, but you've got a couple of EC members. May want to give them just another minute. Did you receive that email?

[Speaker 3]

Okay. Yes. Yeah. Sonny Martin can't be on tonight. Something came up, which is too bad. He's great guy. So. I always appreciate his input. So.

[Speaker 6]

Yeah.

[Speaker 3]

well it's three after Cathy what do you think

[Speaker 6]

let's go with it and we've got 14 well probably 13 of your members on well maybe 12 because that's counting me as well but around 12 on right now

[Speaker 3]

I'll watch for more to come on and get them caught up so if you want to well let me kind of tell you the rules and maybe some will get on if I read this right tonight we're going to have the two candidates running for the VP of the NCHA Rock Hedlund and Chase Lackey and is the order Rock then Chase

[Speaker 6]

Let me confirm that Kirby, Chase then Rock

[Speaker 3]

okay yeah read the email backwards so Chase Lackey and we'll introduce him let him give an opening comment and then you guys can we'll go around the room and you guys can ask him whatever question you want then Rock Hedlund will get on.

[Speaker 3]

mm-hmm okay great well if you would do me a favor and call roll and we'll get it rolling here and then we'll ask Chase to join us

[Speaker 6]

perfect thanks Kirby okay

Seth Kirchner here thank you Seth

Rick Jackson here thank you

Scott Shaw here thanks Scott

Danny Bryson here thank you

Kirby Smith here thank you

Brian Cottrell here perfect

JP Bell here thank you JP

Ernie Beutenmiller here thank you Ernie

Greg Beutenmiller

Ryan Moore here thank you Ryan

Sonny Martin had something that came up

JB Atkins are you with us here thanks

Deb Watts here thank you Deb

Jason Reed

Tom Holmes okay Kirby if it's okay I'm going to go ahead and text Chase now

[Speaker 3]

that'd be great guys remember if you're not talking mute your phone so the dog in the background doesn't bark or in my case the wife yelling at you oh and Deb thanks for joining us I'm excited for you to be a director

[Speaker 9]

thanks for having me

[Speaker 6]

yes Deb welcome to region three

[Speaker 9]

thank you

[Speaker 1]

hey Cathy I'm here

[Speaker 3]

thank you this is Kirby Smith I'm the EC representative for region three here and we have most of our directors on tonight so we're pleased to have you join us and if you wouldn't mind going ahead and telling us about yourself or what you would like to have as an opening statement and then we'll have Cathy go down the roll and let people talk to you but thanks again for being here and thank you for throwing your name into this election

[Speaker 1]

great thank you so much I appreciate it so I'm Chase Lackey I'm from Burlington North Carolina I've been a member since 2013 currently serve as a director for North Carolina and I'm also on the limited age committee I own a business in the construction industry operates across the southeast on any given day managing about 200 people and working on about 10 projects those projects are fairly large they last about a year or two I'm fortunate I have a great staff around me I believe surrounding myself with people that are that are better than me or is very important we have a culture that is goal oriented and everyone buys into it and I feel that's very much how Jay operates and his staff as well having a great staff around me affords me the ability to go to horse shows and to run for a position like this I have the time to do it I'm also an active competitor in the non pro and amateur divisions I have horses that show in the open I've done a little bit of everything weekend limited age I've for the for the world a couple times and you know I'm running because I believe this matters you know we need to protect what NCHA has built and I want to help continue moving us forward in a positive path and I believe my business experience along with my knowledge of the equine industry I've shown in NSBA, AQHA, NCHA I've done it my whole life I believe those two together give me valuable assets that will help me make very smart business minded decisions with an understanding of our industry as we move forward and I really

[Speaker 3]

look forward everyone's questions thank you Cathy you mind doing the roll

[Speaker 6]

you betcha okay we're gonna start with Seth Kirchner

[Speaker 10]

thank you hey Chase this is Seth Kirchner hey you know something that's kind of I guess part of region three is where we're struggling it's probably in some membership and shows in certain areas in certain parts of our region what do you think I mean what can NCHA do to help promote growth back in our area

[Speaker 1]

well I don't know if you've seen much of what I've been putting out on social media following along on my page or any of the podcasts I've been doing but I really believe we

have a lot of opportunities you know our marketing we do a good job of marketing but we can do more and I believe we need to continue to invest in that I have a few ideas it takes me a minute to go through it but if you'll bear with me I think we need to continue to produce our reels you know our short video clips that get out on Instagram and Facebook and all the social media sites I think we need to continue to get visible you know we have been riding the coat tails of Yellowstone and it really helped us for a long time but we are on the back end of that so we're gonna as an industry and as an association we're gonna have to figure out how we continue forward without that being the driving factor so if we're getting those reels out there I would like to see us invest in an app for NCHA and let's figure out a way to connect the two so that when you're watching a reel you see something on Instagram or Facebook and you click on that it takes you to the to the app you download it the app will provide us opportunity to integrate everything as well but it also can show us where local shows are you know maybe you pull up that app and you're looking at your location you say hey there's a horse show 30 miles down the road I'm gonna go check that out and let's tie that in with an ambassador program or just people that are willing to volunteer their time and be looking to the new faces in the crowd let's engage them let's ask questions you know is this your first time at a cutting you know what have you ever cut before do you know any of the trainers let me introduce you to some exhibitors let's ask questions to get them actively engaged so I feel like that is some things we could do on a high level nationally but also think NCHA needs to help do some local outreach as well I believe that looking into potentially doing like radio advertising you know we could go to our local radio stations especially our country stations that where we have people that may be like-minded for equestrian events and maybe some outreach to the local feed stores that things like that I think could help and drive membership we also have something we've been working on that's a flag class and it's geared towards people that do not cut right now but we want to actively try to find people in the stands that that we can get on a cutting horse and either have them flag for the first time with a trainer helping and we can get them on a turn back forth or something like that and I'm really looking forward to it as a director of North Carolina and an officer for Area 18 we are going to have one of the first flag classes NCHA has ever hosted and I'm excited about that I think there's lots of things we can do for outreach and I'm looking forward to other ideas as well but there's just a few of mine. Thank you. Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Seth. Rick Jackson.

[Speaker 11]

Hello, yeah, hi Chase. Hey, Rick Jackson here from Illinois. I was just in your country last weekend so one of the problems that we're all going to be facing is this expense. Cattle are getting higher. Entry fees are higher. Costs more to go. How are we going to keep this from becoming a rich man's game that can't appeal to the average person? Got any ideas on that?

[Speaker 1]

You know, there are some things that obviously are going to be out of our control. You know, the cattle market NCHA probably is not going to heavily dictate the cost and something like that but I do believe in my time going around the country so far and talking to people as I'm running for this position a lot of the feedback I get from the show

producers, the show secretaries is just the ability to not put them in a box. You know, let's make sure they can adapt and do their shows in the most efficient manner possible because we see a variety of shows, right?

I mean, you have Harriman, Tennessee that has a lot of rerun classes and their class structure tends to lend itself to help reduce cost or be a lower entry level fee for most people and then we have some that are catering to a higher added money. So, I think letting our local producers be able to adapt to their needs, NCHA just needs to be aware of that and make sure we're creating opportunity for them.

[Speaker 11]

All right. Thank you, sir.

[Speaker 1]

Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Rick. Scott Shaw.

[Speaker 12]

Hello. Got one quick question here. How would you ensure decisions are made to benefit all members rather than special interest groups?

[Speaker 1]

Scott, when you say special interest groups, do you mind elaborating just to answer your question?

[Speaker 12]

I mean, just any groups. I mean, other than the membership.

[Speaker 1]

Okay. Yeah, I understand. You know, I think right now, first of all, Jay does a really good job running our association day-to-day.

He's got a great staff. I think they make very good decisions for NCHA. You know, there was a time when we didn't have Jay and eight to ten years ago, we were a little bit of chaos.

I believe the EC will continue to serve its membership. I want to serve and represent all of our members, and I think it's important we have people in place that have that type of mindset. We need to make sure we are transparent.

It's vitally important, in my opinion, that we understand how leadership is representing us and the decisions they're making. You know, I think it's very important when even when you look at the EC minutes, you know, there was a time and a place where we didn't know how people voted. I mean, if you look eight or ten years ago, I encourage you to go back and look at those minutes.

There are redacted votes on that. We need to be transparent as leadership. That's why you put us there, and you need to understand what we're doing to represent you.

Thanks. Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Scott. Danny Bryson.

[Speaker 7]

Sorry about that. Hey, it's Danny. I'm in Kansas.

Welcome to Region 3. One of the issues we struggle with, much like where you're at, because you're at the far north end of your circuit, is letting people to get to all the circuits, because it's such a big land area. What are your thoughts about allowing one, maybe two, but at least one other circuit to have joint circuit shows, because some of these places are pretty far out, and we just can't get the attendance.

Therefore, the, I don't know, the 2,000 gets three people in it. They don't even make their entry fee for first place, or we just, it's just the cost is so heavy on it. Like Rick said, it's becoming a rich man's sport.

What do you think about supporting a single circuit joining an existing circuit for a one-show deal?

[Speaker 1]

So, I believe we had some dual circuit stuff at one point. I remember specifically a show we had in Virginia that was dual circuit approved, and you know, I think there could be a place where we revisit that and allow something. We certainly need to send that back to the committees to get a full understanding of how that works.

I'm concerned that it didn't work so well in the past, and that's probably why we took it away, and I would love to have a little more detailed answer for you, and I'll be happy to get back with you to research that a little bit as well.

[Speaker 7]

Thank you.

[Speaker 1]

Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Danny. Okay, Kirby, we're going to come back to you. Brian Cottrell.

[Speaker 13]

Hey, thank you. I'm Brian Cottrell from Minnesota. So, you said in your opening statement that you would help to protect the NCHA.

What do we need protecting from in your language?

[Speaker 1]

Oh, that's a great question. I'm glad you asked that. I think NCHA has come a long ways.

You know, there was a time when we were on the brink of disaster, if you go back and look. Eight or ten years ago, financially, we were struggling. There was a time when we were looking at loans to make our payments.

We are no longer in that, and I want to continue making the sound decisions we've made over the last five years, you know, really probably eight years, where we have built a nest egg, and we have something we can rely on, and I believe that is because we've made great business-minded decisions that have helped advance NCHA. I mean, no question about it, NCHA is a big business. You know, we are a large organization, operates worldwide.

You have to have a deep understanding of how big business works, know how to delegate, and make those decisions, and I want to help us sustain that and grow. My background is growing a company, and I took a small family-owned company and grown it to a very large company that works across the southeast. I want to apply those skills and help NCHA.

Thank you. Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Brian. J.P. Bell?

[Speaker 5]

Evening, Chase. Thanks for running, and I'm from Minnesota as well as Brian, and I guess my question would be one that would be kind of pertain to what you're doing in your show career as well, is do you feel like we have the best model that we could have in terms of, and really in terms of age to then, and the weekend as well, and in our non-pro and amateurs with a different leveling we've got. I mean, we've got a, you know, a good uptick in the amateur side, a bit of a slide maybe on the non-pro is how do you, how do you feel is, right now, how do you feel that model is working, and if I'd just like to know your comments on that.

[Speaker 1]

Sure. I think the model has been very successful. Again, if you look at our finances, we're in a very, very good place.

We've created the leveling within the amateur to give them opportunity to enter. That has been widely successful, and NCHA, in my mind, is a four-division structure, and a lot of people call it three. I call it four.

We're an open, a non-pro, an amateur, and a youth. I think it's important we count the youth in there. Sometimes that doesn't get talked about, and they're vitally important to us, but going back to what it's done for us financially, it would be hard to fathom us making any adjustments without heavily vetting how that could impact us.

We don't want to make drastic changes when things are working so well within our organization. You know, typically in business, you don't see a business change their model while things are going well. You tend to make big adjustments when they're not, so I'm supportive of our current structure.

[Speaker 5]

All right. Thank you. Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, JP. Ernie Beutenmiller?

[Speaker 4]

Yes, ma'am. Thank you. First of all, Chase, I want to applaud you for throwing your name in the hat to do this.

It can be very time-consuming, I know, and I do applaud you. One thing I do have to bring up, in 2019, we had a show producer in the Ohio area that for three years produced a flag class with a challenger event, and it was a very well-attended class, and I do applaud the promotion of that class. I think that JP asked my question that I was thinking of on the amateur thing.

I've heard some debate about the World Finals being changed where we just had three classes, the Open, the Non-Pro, and the Unlimited, and did not have the other classes. I want to hear your opinion on that.

[Speaker 1]

You know, I believe that our membership right now would be pretty upset if we remove something like that. I think I'm one of them that participated in the 15 amateur and the 50 amateur when I hauled. I would be greatly disappointed if I didn't have that opportunity, so I think we need to be supportive to honor all of our classes, and I believe there's a place for the World Finals.

I know there's been discussion about, you know, what was the place in the world for that, and I believe we have a membership that wants that. I appreciate your... Yes, sir, and just to add to that, I think, you know, if we are going to make any changes, it needs to be sent to the appropriate committees and heavily vetted as well, you know, to make sure we're making a proper decision.

You know, you got to have all the data to make a strong decision.

[Speaker 4]

Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 5]

Hey, Ernie, Ernie, JP, so is one of the reasons financial, I mean, it's just hard to make a show like that work with 15 members. I mean, or 15 riders, and maybe that was said, I don't know.

[Speaker 4]

You know, the thing that's always been of interest to me is what the MERP repercussions are of that event. Can you hear me yet, JP? Yep, yep.

Yeah, because when they submit those numbers, it's all on one, but I really wonder what the MERP program pays back for the World Finals, because I'm not sure, not so sure we're not

covering our costs. Just an opinion, just an opinion, but I've often wondered that, you know, and so much has evolved the last few years. I'm not privy to that anymore.

I mean, you've seen all the changes we've made throughout the years with the World Finals. I mean, hell, I remember when we couldn't find anybody to do it in Houston, we were glad to have it there. Then we moved the thing to Amarillo and all we wanted, but when it became eligible for the MERP program, it was a no brainer to move it to Fort Worth.

Anyway, I'm getting away. Let Chase continue his. Thank you very much.

Thank you. Yes, sir.

[Speaker 1]

Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Ernie. Greg Beutenmiller.

[Speaker 6]

Greg, are you on mute? I know I saw him pop up. Okay, we'll come back to Greg. Ryan Moore.

[Speaker 14]

Chase has answered my questions and I just appreciate your time, Chase, and thank you for running.

[Speaker 1]

Yes, sir. Absolutely, and if something comes to mind, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Yes, sir.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Ryan. Deb Watts.

[Speaker 9]

Hi, Chase. I'm kind of piggybacking a little bit on Seth's interest in, you know, growing our membership and it's a little bit difficult. Our shows are very widespread.

You know, we have to drive quite a ways to get to our shows and so it's been difficult to keep people interested, but one of the things that has really increased our show attendance has been the circuit program and I know that people are very excited about being able to qualify to go down and show in Fort Worth for the circuit finals. Just curious about, I guess, your anticipation of the longevity of that program if you see that continuing for the unforeseeable future.

[Speaker 1]

I do. I think the circuit program has been widely successful. It's helped our weekends.

We've had great participation in Texas. I was fortunate enough to spend the whole time the circuit panels were going on over there and visiting with people and they love it. I don't see any reason why we would move away from that and not support it.

It's been very, very, very good for our industry.

[Speaker 16]  
Thanks.

[Speaker 1]  
Absolutely.

[Speaker 6]  
Thank you, Deb. JB Atkins, are you with us? How about Jason Reed?

Tom Holmes? Okay, let's go back to Kirby Smith.

[Speaker 15]  
Kirby?

[Speaker 3]  
You know, Chase, I worry about your app because I can't seem to get my phone off mute. Wow. Wow.

Hey, thank you very much. I really don't have anything that I'd like to add other than, you know, great job tonight. We're really excited to have you run.

If you would like to give a little wrap-up here, we appreciate it and thank you.

[Speaker 1]  
Yes, absolutely. Thank you so much. Thank you, everyone, for the time and thoughtful questions.

I really appreciate it. I look forward to working together with everyone and continuing to grow the NCHA and I kindly ask for your vote.

[Speaker 3]  
Thanks. Thank you very much. Cathy, if you want to sign Chase off and give Rock Hedlund a call, we appreciate it.

Thank you, everyone.

[Speaker 16]  
Thank you.

[Speaker 3]  
So, while Rock's getting on, you know, a very thoughtful individual, but I'll do my rant. On the World Finals, I wish it was just Open Non-Pro and Unlimited and I wish we paid a million dollars to the Open Champion. I think that would be so exciting.

It wouldn't be funny, but we're probably light years away from that, but I think if the Futurity Open Champion and the Open World Champion paid a million dollars, this association would run away with people. That's my two cents.

[Speaker 7]

Does that mean you're going to run again for an EC Director position?

[Speaker 3]

You know what, six years is enough. The NCHA, the EC has enough of Kirby, but, you know, I will warn people that it takes a few years to kind of learn to do that. When I first got on, I had some great mentors on the EC so you're a little quiet for the deal, and by the end of the sixth year, I'm surprised I haven't been kicked off for my comments, but luckily they've learned to adjust to it. But no, six years is enough for me.

Seth can attest to that, how that feels, and it's been a great experience and probably the greatest is, you know, getting to know all of you better. You know, we're lucky. We got a very intimate region and we all show against each other.

We all know each other and that can be good or bad where some of these regions have 25-30 directors and all that stuff, but I've enjoyed my experience on there, but they've had enough of me.

[Speaker 6]

Kirby, Rock has joined us.

[Speaker 3]

Hey, Rock. Hi, Kirby. Glad you could join us tonight.

So we got a pretty good representation of our region. Phil Benadum and Ora Diehl have joined us on the call tonight, just so you know. I forgot to tell Chase that.

I didn't mean it. So, but if you'd go ahead and introduce yourself and then we'll go around the room and let the directors that are in attendance ask you some questions and appreciate you being here, pal.

[Speaker 2]

Thank you, Kirby. I want to thank you all for taking the time to serve as directors of the NCHA and I want to thank you for the opportunity for me to be able to run as vice president-elect of the NCHA. My name is Rock Hedlund.

I've been a member of this association for over 40 years. I love this association. It has been very, very good to me.

It has allowed me to have a career, raise a family. I have a son that started off in the youth, became a non-pro, and now he's a very successful young horse trainer and I could not be more proud of him. I've spent 25 years in the politics of the NCHA and the Pacific Coast Cutting Horse Association.

Served on many committees and a lot of different task forces over the years. I feel with this background that I have the leadership and the experience to take NCHA into the future and I want to thank you again for listening to me tonight.

[Speaker 3]

Thank you, Rock. Cathy, if you'll lead our roll call again, I really appreciate you.

[Speaker 6]

You betcha. Thank you, Rock. Let's start with Seth Kirchner.

[Speaker 10]

Hey, Rock. Seth Kirchner. Hey, so the question I asked Chase was, I guess the membership in our region is maybe struggling in certain parts of it and just, do you have any thoughts of what we could do to grow that and build it up, you know, outside of, obviously, I think, you know, Weatherford and that area is doing strong, but in the hinterlands, I guess.

[Speaker 2]

Seth, that's a very good question and with me not being in that area, it's hard for me to kind of understand the dynamics of it. What I would look at is I would want to hear from you and your directors in that area as to what you feel your struggles are and your concerns are going forward and how you feel NCHA needs to help you and how they can help you. It's hard for us at NCHA to know what's going on in the outlying areas and that's why we have the directors in all the different regions.

So, I would say whatever you all would need to come to me with your concerns and your questions and your problems and then together, we could formulate a plan to decide what would fit best for your region.

[Speaker 10]

Very good. Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Seth. Rick Jackson.

[Speaker 11]

Hello. Hey, Rock. Rick Jackson from Illinois here.

I'm going to pose the same type question that I did to Chase. You know, this has become a very expensive sport. Entry fees, horses, cattle prices, everything's higher.

What do you think NCHA can do to try to keep from this going through the roof on our costs that are involved?

[Speaker 2]

Well, thank you and that's a very, very good question. We cannot control our cattle prices at this time. That's governed by a whole different industry, but I think we need to look at, as smaller affiliates in your area and the grassroots cutters, we need to look at what we, you would need to do to attract new members to be able to keep cutting going at a cost effective way for your membership.

As a show producer or as an affiliate, you would need to, in my mind, you need to look at what you could do to keep your customer happy or your members happy. And if it meant changing the number of cows that you have to give to a cutter, I know nobody likes to hear that, but I think we're going to have to start looking at some very drastic changes going forward because the cost of what everything is going up to now is just getting way over the top in my mind. And we need to, we just need to step back and take a look at it, but I think each area and each grassroots cutting club affiliate has their own issues they have to deal with.

And granted, the cattle cost is number one. I mean, that's the big thing that's going up between that and our diesel right now. We need to see how we need to survive to go forward and then you need to come to NCHA with what you think and how you think NCHA could help you get to that point.

[Speaker 11]

Okay.

[Speaker 2]

If it meant changing, I'll add a little bit more. If it meant, you know, looking into a different fee structure or something like that, I think that's something that could all be looked at. I don't have all the answers and I'm going to look to you all for what the problems are in your areas so that together we can go forward as one.

[Speaker 11]

Okay. Thanks, Rock.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Rick. Scott Shaw.

[Speaker 12]

Yeah, Rock, thanks for throwing your name in the hat. How would you ensure decisions are made to benefit all members?

[Speaker 2]

Well, I could not ever assure that all decisions were made right. All I can assure you is that with the experience that I've had in the past, I can make sure that whatever changes that we think we need to make going forward get sent to the proper committees and get sent to the levels that they need to be sent at and get delivered in the proper way so that it has the best chance of passing. Thank you, Scott.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Scott. Danny Bryson.

[Speaker 7]

Hey, Rock. Thank you for running. We're from Kansas here.

One thing we're seeing, and I ask this of your person you're running against, Chase, we have small circuits. Our circuit's been cut in half and it's tough to fill all the classes, and we used to allow multiple circuits to participate in shows. What are your thoughts on that?

Because it's tough to fill classes and tough to make any money at them.

[Speaker 2]

That's a very good question and I know that question had been brought up before about approving multiple circuits and I believe you're talking about the same weekend. Is that correct?

[Speaker 7]

I'm talking about multiple circuits at the same show.

[Speaker 2]

Multiple circuits at the same show.

[Speaker 7]

Like the old 150 mile rule, Danny? Yes, sir. That's fine.

I mean, I live in Kansas City. I could go either way. I could go Heartland or I could go Ozark and it's a long way to go to the far side of either one of those.

[Speaker 2]

Okay, so you're asking me if I think we should implement that rule back in or take it away. Is that correct?

[Speaker 7]

Implement it back in. It was, it made our shows larger. Okay.

And there were more participants. Granted, they lasted very long sometimes, but it just allowed more people, and it wasn't a three-person race in three or four classes.

[Speaker 2]

Okay, I think that would be something that your circuits up there should discuss and talk about and if your circuits up there and you all feel that that is what's best for the area that you all are in, then that is something that you should propose as a rule change for that area. I think part of our rules need to be looked at to where they need to accommodate our outlying areas better for the customers that are serving and wanting to go cut in those areas. It's very, very hard when we make a blanket rule across the whole United States because there's so many different factors that play into so many different of our areas and I think that part of it needs to be looked at.

[Speaker 7]

Thank you, sir. Good luck to you. Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Danny. Brian Cottrell?

[Speaker 13]

Thank you. Thanks, Rock, for running. So, you said that you want to be the leader for the future.

What does the NCHA look like for you in the future? What plans do you have for the future?

[Speaker 2]

Well, NCHA is financially as strong as it's ever been in its history. When I first came on the EC and it was been nine years ago, NCHA was not in very good financial shape. We were looking at getting a line of credit so that we could pay our bills because we were operating almost solely off of our state money that we were getting from the state of Texas.

Over the years, with good management and good leadership that we've had in there, we have grown to the to the place that we are today and now we can operate and we can do things. We're able to build up our purses. We have money in the bank and right now we're riding the wave.

The wave is going up and we're on top. Our horse sales are strong. Our entry numbers are strong at our Triple Crown events.

We have to start looking forward. We need to put a three-year, a five-year, and a ten-year plan in place because we are not going to be at this point forever. Nothing stays on top forever and we need to start looking forward so that this association will be able to stay financially strong going forward so it can continue to live and breathe so that our kids and their kids and their kids can enjoy this sport as much as we all do.

[Speaker 13]

Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Brian. JP Bell?

[Speaker 5]

Thank you. I'll mute there. Yeah, thanks for thanks for running Rock and this JP Bell and appreciated your comments about really looking at things case-by-case for affiliates and regions and I think definitely think that is important to allow our outside areas and regions some flexibility so I appreciate those comments and what is there one thing or a couple things that you're truly passionate about?

I mean Steve Norris of course had the circuit. Is there something out there that that you've got your eyes on that you really feel like you can get a hold of or help with that that's really kind of your juice of life?

[Speaker 2]

I don't want to keep you guys on the phone for an hour and I could probably do that but I feel we need to get NCHA needs to become much more transparent. We need to reach out to our directors and our membership. I've had a numerous directors come up to me and tell me why am I a member?

Why do I even become a director? I don't know nothing and maybe you all can tell me different but we got to let our directors know what is going on in our association so that they can tell our members so that they feel they are a part of something. Right now we're just like a bunch of sheep in my mind.

I'm sorry and I hope I'm not offending anyone. We're just getting down this road and nobody really has a say in anything and that's not what this association was built for and designed to do. We love cutting and we love all being a part of it and when somebody asks us if we want to be a director we stand up and say yes I'll be a director.

Well we don't know anything when we're directors. We need to know what's going on so that we can tell our members. I'm sorry but this is just how I feel.

We got to feel like we are all part of a family because we are at the end of the day and I don't feel that we have that right now and I'm passionate about getting our directors back involved again and making us feel comfortable and like we're wanted and like we're needed and the same way with our members. We need to make them feel that they're needed and that they have a purpose and that they enjoy doing what they're doing because we're losing membership. We got to see why we're losing membership.

We should send out a survey asking someone why they didn't renew their membership. Did we do something wrong? That doesn't cost very much money.

We send out free memberships for many years, but when they didn't renew and they had to pay nobody asked them why. Maybe we're really doing something wrong that we don't know about. We need to know these things.

If we want this association to grow and get to the next level we got to know how our membership feels and we got to make them feel wanted. That's what I'm passionate about. Sorry if I took the long way around the barn. Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you JP. Ernie Beutenmiller.

[Speaker 4]

Rocko, I applaud you man. I'm sure everybody on this phone knows that you and I have been friends for a long time. One of the relationships I value the most.

I love your answer to Danny Bryson and the passion that you have for this organization was just, I mean, you just showed. The one thing that I have always admired, and you and I have been through some tough times there was the way that you stopped, thought about it from both sides before you thought, before you talked. I don't need to say anymore.

I'm sure everybody here reads how I feel. Thank you very much for throwing your name in the hat.

[Speaker 2]

Thank you, Ernie.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Ernie. Greg, are you back with us? Let's go to Ryan Moore, please.

[Speaker 14]

Hey, Rock. You've answered all my questions there, bud. I appreciate your time and visiting with you as much as I have and your family, man.

I respect you and I wish you luck, bud.

[Speaker 2]

Thank you. Thank you, Ryan. I appreciate that.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Ryan. Deb Watts.

[Speaker 9]

I just would like to say that I appreciate the emphasis that you're putting on individualizing things at local levels because I don't feel that things run in Nebraska the way that they do in Texas. My concern, however, is if we offer this flexibility, if that's something we can still govern on a national level. What are your thoughts on that?

[Speaker 2]

I believe that if we put the changes and the rules in place correctly, where you list how you do things in certain areas, because we all know that cutting outside of Texas and Oklahoma is different. And we are the outlying areas. We are what is going to grow our membership for the NCHA is these outlying areas along with strengthening your own local clubs and your local affiliates.

So there has to be some flexibility there. How to put it together, I don't have the answers for that. I will tell you that I will go to work very hard on it if I am to be elected to see that we can take care of our outlying areas and our affiliates to help this grow.

Now I know that there's been lots of vice presidents come ahead of me that have said these same things. Trust me, I will see this through. I will do what the membership wants me to do and what the membership in these outlying areas need us to do if I'm at all possible to do it, to make it happen.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you.

[Speaker 2]

Thank you.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Deb. Jason Reed, did you join us? Tom Holmes.

Okay, Kirby, let's go back to you please.

[Speaker 2]

I put Kirby to sleep.

[Speaker 3]

I tell you what, the freaking phone, I sit here and stick it on mute so you don't hear me grumbling and then that deal, man, I think I'm losing it guys. Rocko, I appreciate you. I'm glad you're on here.

Please tell us, give us your wrap-up tonight and thank you for running.

[Speaker 2]

Thank you, Kirby. I want to thank you all again for taking the time to listen to me tonight. I want you all to know how much this association means to me and this whole industry and I appreciate the opportunity that I have to run and hopefully I'll be elected president-elect.

I want to thank you all and I'm going to ask you all to please vote for me. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 3]

Thank you, Rocco. Appreciate it. So if you guys don't mind taking a few more minutes, I'm glad you all got here.

If anybody wants to discuss anything they heard tonight, we can sure do it.

Appreciate you. Cathy, I think we're done.

[Speaker 6]

Thank you, Kirby. Thank you, everyone, for joining us this evening.