

# Effort to Form Trade Association Continues

The effort to establish the trade association portion of the American Equestrian Trade Association hit a snag in March when a number of the members of the AETA Advisory Board resigned their position, including Clark Davis, who headed the board.

The group began working with trade show organizer Jim Herbert last August to establish the trade show side of the association. The AETA Expo was held in January in Richmond, Va., to rave reviews.

After the Expo, attention was turned to forming a trade association that would work for the benefit of the membership and the industry.

The dream originated with Tom MacGuinness, owner of Horsecare Ireland, having grown out of his disen-

chantment with the status of East Coast trade shows in the United States.

The trade show was conceived as a means of funding the association's efforts; however, since the fledgling group didn't have the capital to front a show, Herbert was brought into the picture.

Herbert has a long and successful history in the trade show world. Although he would own the trade show, he pledged to MacGuinness and others involved early on that he would split profits with a trade association, which was to be formed under the AETA banner. The association members would also be a built-in support base for the trade show.

Weeks went by, and the efforts of the association's advisory board did

not move forward. In mid-February, Herbert took steps to formalize the AETA name, to protect his financial investment, as he viewed the situation.

He also sparred with MacGuinness on several occasions over who "owned" the trade show.

Shortly after that information was communicated to the board, a number of board members resigned, including Nina DePetris, N. Shay Joaquin, Lee Rafeld, Carla Perri and Terri Shulte. A number of the other remaining members of the 15-person panel deemed the effort at an end and did not formally resign.

Several of those who departed said they were pleased with the success of the trade show and believed that satisfied the original goal.

The January inaugural event attracted 754 buyers, representing 417 unique stores, from 39 states plus Canada. More than 200 exhibitors took 61,000 net paid square feet of booth space. Returning and new exhibitors already have contracted more exhibit booths for August's production than were purchased in January.

Davis, for his part, said he resigned because of disagreements with MacGuinness, who had been critical of his leadership of the organization.

Other advisory board members included Mike Libertucci, Kerri Kent, Stephen Day, Frances Bowers, Aiden Keogh, Brad Egolf, Mark Raisbeck and Paul Wahl.

In mid-March, MacGuinness announced that he would reconstitute the AETA advisory board at a meeting in Westford, Ma., on March 23, prior to press deadline for this report.

Details of the efforts to form a trade association will be covered on the Tack 'n Togs Web site and through the magazine's e-newsletter. Visit [www.tackntogs.com](http://www.tackntogs.com) for information.

> Industry In Focus CONTINUED



South Point Hotel, Casino and Equestrian Center in Las Vegas is the new home of the Reno Market.

## Reno Market Bets on Las Vegas

The West Coast Western Wear & Equipment Association will relocate its market from Reno to Las Vegas this fall. The inaugural presentation is planned Sept. 20-22 at the South Point Hotel, Casino and Equestrian Center.

The market, which began its run originally in Sacramento, Calif., in 1965, hopes to attract additional vendors and retailers in its new location, along with capitalizing on the potential

for affiliated equine events.

South Point hosts rodeos, horse shows and other events in its equestrian center. Resistol Hats and Lucchese Boots are both corporate sponsors of the center.

The facility features 1,350 guest rooms and 150,000 square feet of exhibit and convention space, along with the 4,400-seat arena and 1,200 climate-controlled horse stalls.