

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE SOUND HORSE CONFERENCE**

Hello, I'm Lori Northrup, President of FOSH, Friends of Sound Horses. I am so pleased to welcome everyone today. You have travelled far, many of you travelled late last night, you have doubled up on your work, you have arranged for others to care for your horses and jobs, you have invested a lot of travel expenses and time, and you made it here to the First Annual Sound Horse Conference.

On behalf of all of the conference sponsors, we appreciate your efforts to be here.

Please take time during the conference to thank the people here representing our sponsors: the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the American Horse Protection Association, the Friends of Sound Horses, The Humane Society of the United States, the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association, and Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. I deeply appreciate each of your contributions in money, resources, good ideas, facilities and support.

A few logistics: cell phones in silent mode, please. No video-taping or recording of the Conference; we will have official documentation. We'll have a break this morning at 10:15am, and lunch with a special presentation at 11:45am. Our Conference Staff will be happy to help you should you need anything.

We are going to tackle some problems and issues involving an illegal and cruel practice done to horses. We are going to raise questions, suggest changes, point out facts, challenge tradition, and discover new information. I hope that every one of you will

participate, ask questions, and be involved. Please honor our goal of coming together in a productive, respectful atmosphere to work toward the end of soring of horses.

Let's remind each other of the importance of treating each other respectfully and professionally. No doubt, every-one of us here is doing the best we can with what we know **now**. To quote Dr. Robert Miller, the veterinarian famous for his horse imprinting work, in his recent book on Natural Horsemanship, "We all have a lot to learn from each other. None of these people were intentionally cruel, I am sure. They simply were doing what they had been taught and what had become tradition."

We are here to focus on making things better for the horses. The focus will be on the welfare of the horse.

Please spend the next few minutes absorbing some background about the topics that bring us here today.