

LANA TIBBETTS ANSWERS QUESTIONS FROM CIRCUIT MEMBERS
2009 MONTANA CIRCUIT DIRECTOR NOMINEE Q&A

1) Question:

I would like to know what are their 4 top priorities for the upcoming year (in order of importance)?
Example: membership numbers, DT's, rodeos . . .

1) Answer:

CIRCUIT PRIORITIES

- #1. Improve Relationships with Committees
- #2. Improve Ground Conditions at the PRCA rodeos(must do #1 first)
- #3. Continue to establish an attitude of inclusion for all WPRA members, committees, sponsors, stock contractors, judges, and sec.
- #4. Maintain open communication lines with MT circuit members

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

- #1. Improve overall communication with WPRA members across the US and Canada.
- #2. Continue to build the bridge with the PRCA
- #3. Re-evaluate the WPRA Women's Finals, money counting...
- #4. Streamline spending

2) Question:

If elected, what responsibilities do you feel you will have as Montana WPRA Director? These responsibilities should address those concerning the Circuit Rodeos, WPRA jackpots and events, Board meetings, and any other area you feel is important. Considering the answer to this question, do you feel your current responsibilities will allow you to fulfill these duties?

2) Answer:

CIRCUIT RESPONSIBILITIES

- *Continually strive to come up with ideas to open the lines of communication with the members, committees, stock contractors, judges, and secretaries.
- *Respond daily to all requests from WPRA members
- *Approve all rodeos, co-approved rodeos, and co-sanctioned events in the MT circuit.
- *Write the monthly circuit news for the Women's Pro Rodeo News
- *Write for the Cowboy's Digest to keep others interested in the WPRA informed.
- *Acquire circuit awards for MPRCF contestants
- *Oversee montanawpra.com with information and suggestions
- *Communicate with spokeswomen on various issues
- *Encourage the producers of the largest events, barrel races and ropings to co-sanction with the WPRA or have a WPRA sidepot
- *Use the Circuit Finals Breakfast as an event to honor the Circuit Finalists, PRCA committees, and Sponsors
- *Follow-up MPRCF, Women's Finals with sponsor thank-you's
- *Send thank-you's to all the PRCA committees for WPRA barrel races

NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- *Attend 3 meetings per year (Spring 3 days / Summer 3 days / WNFR 6 days)
- *Daily work through a number of issues/decisions faced by the board via internet or phone
- *Participate on conference calls various afternoons throughout the year (1-2 per month, more if needed)
- *Be an active member of various committees (currently on office committee)
- *Attend Judges Seminars
- *Be flexible to attend Finales when needed and meet with PRCA and committees

I DO have the time and have proven I am willing to grow the WPRA, putting the members first and adding value to the sponsors and committees.

3) Question:

Do you feel it is important that the Montana Circuit Director be at the Circuit rodeos?

3) Answer:

Yes, it is important to be at the rodeos to listen to ideas and suggestions. The members' input is vital to operating an efficient effective organization. I'm excited to have my mare sound and anxious to get to go. This association is based on rodeos and spending time developing better relationships with the committees, stock contractors, judges and secretaries takes place at the rodeos.

4) Question:

What are your plans to attract new members to the WPRA and keep the organization growing? It seems to be an organization that in the past, catered mainly to women who want to pro rodeo, but that is a small faction of the barrel racing population . . . so,

4) Answer:

The PWBR membership when it rolled over into the WPRA was 1277. The 2008 WPRA membership was 2128. The average WPRA member attends 11.5 rodeos and 30% of WPRA members are permit holders. We need to continue to add value to the \$315 card and \$265 permit. Establishing better and more consistent ground at the rodeos will encourage more women to want to join the WPRA. We need to continue to co-sanction events to establish growth from the grassroots. Women will purchase their card or permit, attend the events, enter the rodeos in their area and branch out to more rodeos. To establish a more inclusive attitude to make new members feel welcomed is a priority.

4b) Question:

. . . is the WPRA only interested in keeping that group of gals or are they looking to expand into different markets?

4b) Answer:

On the National level the WPRA has established new programs to encourage growth, the Futurity and Juniors. (These will be evaluated) Co-sanctioning break-aways is another option to generate growth in Montana. Co-sanctioning the Wrangler ropings encouraged MT ropers to join the WPRA, compete and qualify for the WPRA Women's Finals in 2008.

5) Question:

What would you like to see changed with the WPRA?

5) Answer:

Better Communication, More Accountability, More Inclusive Attitude, More efficient office Evaluation of the WPRA Women's Finals Event, money counting...

6) Question:

As the future Montana circuit director, how will you attempt to better ground conditions and promote equal fairness to ground conditions at rodeos? (Please do not answer with slack after the perf only because this rule will not always be implemented.)

6) Answer:

- *Establish better relationships with the committees and stock contractors is first and foremost.
- *Promote an attitude of give and take and extend a hand
- *Contact each committee personally and visit with a decision maker in regards to the ground and ask their opinions and thoughts and in return be able to share our opinions and thoughts

6b) Question:

How can we as an organization be helpful to the rodeo committees regarding this topic? How will the persons involved be accountable to see that this is taken care of?

6b) Answer:

Rodeos where the ground needs improvement, a couple of members will be assigned to work with the committees. The members will need to meet and work with them several days in advance. Members who have shown responsibility will be chosen, as they will need to be reliable and have follow-through.

7) Question:

I would like to see the WPRA communicate with all the fairgrounds in Montana to see that the grounds stay open and available through out the rodeo season for easier access to those traveling to and fro throughout the state even when they do not have an event going on. Personally I found it very frustrating as I traveled this past summer to find a place to stay overnight only to have the grounds locked up tight and inaccessible. This is a rodeo state and I believe that we should be doing all we can to make sure that all facilities are open and available no matter what the date or time of arrival can be. It is not like you can pull into local Walmart and rest and water your horses. I feel very strongly as an association we should be communicating with these fairgrounds to keep their facilities open to those traveling . . . I am more than willing to pay fees . . . What will you do as a director to help facilitate this?

7) Answer:

This is an issue with TWO sides

WPRA STANDPOINT

- *Establish better relations with committees. Inviting the committees to the circuit breakfast was a success. Brenda Jones from the Polson Committee informed us of Polson's availability for over night stays.
- *Put together a book as was done in 2001 or on the net for available stabling locations
- *Check out cautionhorses.com, Nationwide Overnight Stabling

FAIRGROUNDS STANDPOINT

Liability, clean-up, destruction, theft, grounds person available, and overnight guests bringing in contaminated livestock (Plentywood 2008)

8) Question:

How long have you been a member of the WPRA?

8) Answer:

Since 2001.

9) Question:

What would you do to make the top divisional barrel racing competitors in Montana want to join the WPRA?

9) Answer:

- *Improve the rodeo ground
- *Promote an attitude of inclusion
- *Promote the WPRA as an organization where members are valued and feel special

10) Question:

As a future Montana circuit director, do you feel it's necessary to present yourself at rodeos to get a real grasp of what's happening in your circuit as well as for the future of professional barrel racing at rodeos?

10) Answer:

A vital part of this position is to hear and be among the members to know their thoughts and suggestions. Spending time developing better relationships with the committees, stock contractors, judges and secretaries; making everyone feel more like a family is key. Also, the spokewomens have stepped up and have proven to be very valuable assets to this association.

11) Question:

With the state of professional rodeos turning more to limited entries, how can you help the average card holder who has paid her dues and holds a daily job be able to have the opportunity to enter some of the more elite rodeos?

11) Answer:

The committees are the decision makers on the number of entries and if permits are accepted at their rodeo. As a circuit director communicating with the committees so they are able to see both sides of the coin, theirs and the WPRA's. I assisted in opening up the Nile and entries increased 35%. Communication and relationships are key.

12) Question:

Across the nation, professional sports are represented by adults. Why should the Women's Professional Rodeo Association feel it necessary to add a Jr. division to the WPRA and count the money won towards future professional rodeos, when they were not actually competing against the professional adults?

12) Answer:

The Jr money won does not count for future pro rodeo. It only counts for our Junior standings. The WPRA believes the youth is the future to our association and wants to encourage a grass roots effort to promote our future.

13) Question:

As a future Montana director, how do you feel about WPRA events other than rodeo?

13) Answer:

An organization goes in one of two directions: forwards or backwards. The co-sanctioned events barrels, break-away, and team-roping are where many new members start. These events need to be encouraged and promoted.

REASONS

1. Membership growth
2. Membership members attract sponsor dollars
3. Due to the economic climate, the WPRA needs to branch out and encourage gals to buy their permit or card, go to the events and enter the rodeos. Value is added to the membership by more places to attend. When they initially purchase their card or permit they may go to the co-sanctions and a few rodeos, but as time passes they enter more rodeos, increasing entry numbers. This is where the 34% growth in the Montana Circuit came from when fuel was \$4.50. We need to promote grassroots growth.
4. The WPRA was formed on the backs of many in the All-Women's division of this association. MT needs to promote the break-away and team-roping. This gives the Montana Circuit members an opportunity to qualify for the WPRA Women's Finals.



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February 4, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the NILE Rodeo Committee and myself, I would like to express our support of Ms. Lana Tibbetts in her role as Montana Circuit Director for the Women's Professional Rodeo Association.

In the short time Ms. Tibbetts has been the director of the Montana WPRA I have noticed an increase in activity from the organization. From growth of the membership to the support provided to local rodeos, there was a clear increase in involvement from the Montana WPRA due to the efforts and work of Ms. Tibbetts.

On behalf of the Montana WPRA membership, Ms. Tibbetts worked with the NILE to open up entries to All Permits. In return, we saw record entries for 2008 and gave more WPRA members a chance at the highest paying rodeo in Montana.

The work and effort that we have seen from Ms. Tibbetts on behalf of the Montana WPRA is why we fully support her as director of the organization.

Respectfully,

Justin Mills, General Manager
Northern International Livestock Exposition