

### ***California Riding Magazine founder Cheryl Erpelding receives the 2015 AHP Chris Brune Spirit Award.***

The American Horse Publication's Chris Brune Spirit Award was the brainchild of the 2015 AHP Champion, Deborah Taylor, who saw the award as a way of recognizing the efforts of members other than the Board of Directors. She hoped that this award would encourage members to seek involvement in the association and eventually lead into leadership roles. Initially titled the President's Spirit Award, the award is presented to the member who has done the most consistently to assist and support the association. The Board of Directors selects the winner. In 2004, the inaugural award was presented to Chris Brune and the title changed to the AHP Chris Brune Spirit Award.



“Cheryl is not only a professional that I admire, she’s a person that I like. Her enthusiasm for AHP and the horse industry spans decades,” says Kim Brown, who earned the Spirit Award in 2014.

She started her publishing business in December 1986, with this magazine’s original incarnation: San Diego County Riding Magazine. Cheryl was an eventing rider and wanted a way to find and distribute information on when competitions were coming up. It began as an eight-page newsletter with a press run of 2,500 copies. She hand drew her logo, typeset and shot her printing plate negatives with a graphics arts camera in her garage. Nearly 30 years later, California Riding Magazine covers the whole state and much of the surrounding West Coast region and averages 80 to 100 pages, month in and month out, with a press run of 20,000-plus.

“Many of us in the horse industry have seen lean times as well as flush times, and Cheryl is no exception,” says Jennifer Bryant, the 2013 AHP Spirit Award winner. She has generously shared her experience as publisher of California Riding Magazine in “Small, But Mighty” sessions held at AHP seminars as well as in conference calls with other small publishers.

## August 2015 - Saluting Cheryl

Written by CRM

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Pat Trowbridge, the 2012 AHP Spirit Award winner, says, "Cheryl always took the time to offer great business advice to small publishers sharing her expertise. I respect Cheryl for her business knowledge and willingness to be available in her busy life for others. She is so well deserving of this award."

In August 2013, Cheryl made the difficult decision to sell her business to MPM Publications, publishers of Horseman's News, Pacific Coast Journal, Texas Horseman, and West Coast Horsemen. She continues on as the Sales Manager and front woman for California Riding Magazine and sales consultant for other MPM publications.

"Although life has handed Cheryl some lemons, she perseveres with grit and grace. That's what I call spirit," says Bryant. "She is the first to be happy for your success or to commiserate when things take a downturn."

In 2011, Cheryl developed secondary lymphedema one year after undergoing surgery for uterine cancer. She is an advocate for further research and better health insurance benefits for people who suffer from this debilitating lifelong disease.

### **AHP Champion**

"Cheryl has always and continues to champion AHP. She has been instrumental in recruiting new members and has gone over and above giving extra time to promote AHP at the trade shows and various events," says Trowbridge.

She has worn many hats in her career, from publisher to horse show announcer, riding instructor, advocate and photographer.

In the AHP world, the hat she has worn is that of mentor and champion. It was her determination that motivated many of AHP's old-timers to embrace and learn to love the new AHP logo. Her best one liner was the tagline, "Promoting excellence in equine media."

"There are many types of spirit in life," says Chris Brune, AHP Executive Director. "Kindred spirit that you share with others of like interest. A cheerful spirit that roots for the underdog and applauds the achiever. Cheryl has both those spirits, but the spirit I admire most is her optimistic spirit."

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Cheryl was unable attend the AHP seminar in San Antonio, however fellow spirit award team member, Pat Trowbridge, and AHP past president, Warren Wilson, surprised her with the announcement of her award at the Western States Horse Expo in California.

AHP congratulates Cheryl Erpelding and welcomes her to this special AHP “spirit team!” She joins a growing list of enthusiastic AHP supporters including previous award winners Chris Brune, Lua Oas Southard, Barrie Reightler, Ellen Kiser, Daniel Lew, Christy West, Becki Pitcher, Doug Hayes, Pat Trowbridge, Jennifer Bryant, and Kim Brown.

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*Edited press release provided by American Horse Publications, a non-profit association promoting excellence in equine publishing media. Its members include equine-related print and online media, professionals, students, organizations and businesses that share an interest in equine publishing. For further information visit the AHP web site at [www.americanhorsepubs.org](http://www.americanhorsepubs.org)*