

TONY LUCAS - HORSEMAN OF THE YEAR

If anyone is deserving of horseman of the year, Tony Lucas certainly is. He has dedicated many long hours tirelessly laboring to promote the Paint Horses he loves and the Paint Horse Clubs that support them. He has always put the membership and the clubs first, never having a personal agenda. Always fair and objective, trying to make sure everyone who shows their Paint Horses can do so on a level playing field, which is not always an easy thing to do

He currently serves as Vice President of the Temecula Valley Paint Horse Club, is the Chairperson for the California Coordinating Committee, a Zone 2 Rep for California and represented California as an Alternate National Director to APHA. He has done all of the above for many years, without complaint and at his own expense, never asking for anything in return.

As most of you well know, the Zone 2 show was to be held in California beginning in 2008. However, as it turned out, this was not to be. Tony was determined to see this wrong made right for the California APHA membership.

As Chairman of the California Coordinating Committee, he embarked on a telephone and letter writing campaign to the APHA Executive Committee to try to persuade them to uphold the agreement that was made 4 years earlier between the Zone 2 States. When the agreement was not upheld, Tony regrouped and continues to fight for the best interests of the California APHA members, and since has become the Vice President of Zone 2, and continues to try to find a way to bring the Zone 2 show to California.

Tony became involved with Paint Horses 15 years ago because he liked their beauty, intelligence and disposition. Tony became involved in the breeding side of the business attending Colorado State University to become certified in Equine Reproduction and is the owner of two well known stallions, The Land Cruiser and Zipparock.

Tony Lucas, aka RTL Paint Horses, has had numerous State Champions, Top Ten World Show Horses, Reserve Congress Champions as well as multiple Circuit Champions and horses on the APHA Honor Roll.

While traveling to various shows and spending so much time on the road, if a fellow horseman is broken down or stranded on the highway, Tony always stops to help.

If at a show, and horses are sick and needing veterinary care, he is right there to lend a helping hand and on occasion, has left the show to haul horses to the local veterinary hospital for their distraught owners.

At home, he is frequently called by friends, neighbors and sometimes total strangers with sick and injured horses or foaling mares, no matter what time of day or night, he drops everything to run and help.

In March of 2006, while phantom training an outside stallion, Tony suffered a life threatening injury from being kicked in the face. After enduring painful reconstructive surgery and recovery, being given a second chance at life, when most people would have given up on horses, he was more determined than ever to make a difference in the Paint Horse Industry he so loves.

Tony is also very active in his local horse community. He became the President of the High Desert Pinto Horse Club allowing him to interact with Paint Horse owners who are not quite ready to show at the APHA level, yet still want to show their Paint Horses.

Frequently, you will find Tony volunteering his time and energy at local horse clubs, helping with the special needs kids' rodeo at the County Fair, judging a rodeo Queens contest or donating Paint Horses to deserving 4 H kids who cannot afford to buy a quality horse of their own.

During the devastating Southern California wildfires, Tony received several frantic phone calls in the middle of the night from fellow horse owners who needed help in evacuating their animals. He immediately responded with truck and trailer and without consequence to himself even though the fires were a short distance from his own home.

Tony Lucas exemplifies the meaning of volunteering and self sacrifice when it comes to the Paint Horse Breed. If only there were more people like him, that would just take a little time to volunteer, imagine what could be accomplished!!!!