

My name is Tracy Taft from Springfield, IL and I would like to be considered as a board member candidate, for the Clydesdale Breeders of the U.S. My parents, Jim and Sharon Winch, were introduced to the Clydesdales in 1982 and our family immediately began breeding, raising, and showing them throughout the Midwest. I was raised, with the Clydesdale breed and its membership family. In 1980's I began my own journey representing the association with the honor of National Queen by attending shows, presenting ribbons, and helping with the sale (and for those of you that remember, YES, I even wore the kilt). Twenty years passed and I married into another generational Clydesdale family. My husband Mike and I, have two girls that are now the next generation involved with the horses. Our farm, Double Shoe Clydesdales, is a family operation. We all work together as a team, year round, to make our breeding and showing successful.

Many of you I know personally, some I have worked with on committees and events, some just talked to on the phone and some I don't know, but would like the opportunity to. I have a degrees in Ag Business, Equine Management, Agriculture Education and my Masters in Biology – Conservation Genetics. My final Masters project was written about maintaining purity and history for the Clydesdale breed, which included an online survey that many of you may have participated in. In 2018, at the World Show in Madison, WI, I created an educational opportunity for members and spectators of all ages to experience hands-on, many facets of the Clydesdale horse which included building a single horse driving simulator, shoeing tools with function explanations, feeds sample, washing and cleaning products, measuring, etc. As you might see, my passion and additionally my occupation is teaching. I strive daily to pass information to my students which allows them to make informed decisions about the world around them. I believe that the association members are much like my students, in which they deserve the opportunity to be informed and to be allowed to make decisions that impact their families and their farms.

Last spring, when the association was in an interim state, I assumed the responsibility of the registration and transfer of horses, maintaining daily member needs, representing the association at events and running the office for last year's sale. I know the procedures and paper work of the association, I understand the struggles and needs of the membership, and I worked for the board upon request. I am willing to do what is necessary to recreate a healthy, up to date and member oriented/run association. To be transparent, my husband Mike Taft is on the board, but I am not one who voices my opinions through other people. I represent myself as well as those who have asked me to speak for them. I work well with the other board members, which includes him. I decided to run for the board because the association needs someone who is available, willing to listen, respond and work with people. Our association had a rough year, last year and in my opinion, we need to remember the past but look forward to opportunities ahead of us. This is your opportunity to vote and make a difference in the CBUSA.

Sincerely,

Tracy Taft