



May 4, 2011

**Canadian Nationals 2011 status report from Glenn Petty EVP Arabian Horse Association:** On April 25-28 I spent 4 days in Brandon Manitoba with the Canadian Show Commission. We were welcomed into the most hospitable and welcoming community we could have imagined. Brandon is located in southern Manitoba, which is known as the Keystone Province because of its shape and central location in Canada (and the US), making it the ideal location for the show geographically. From the time we arrived at the Keystone Centre ([www.keystonecentre.com](http://www.keystonecentre.com)), we were impressed both with the facility and the staff. This is a facility dedicated to agriculture and host to frequent horse shows. It is located in a community with all the amenities we require but isn't such a large community you get lost in. The first thing that hit me was the cleanliness of the facility; next the fact the entire complex is under one roof. A show arena is located on each end of the Centre with stabling and 3 indoor schooling rings in between (with 1 large additional one outside). But in addition to all the normal amenities common to a horse complex, there is a 159 room 11 story hotel featuring a full service restaurant, grill/bar, and large lounge. Every day we were there we ate at a different restaurant for lunch and dinner. All of them, from fancy to normal, were wonderful (an Applebee's is located across the street). In addition, the Patron's Lounge overlooks the main arena in a private carpeted room including fireplace which we don't expect to need in August. A YMCA pool is also on the grounds convenient to the camping area located on the grounds.

On our tour, one of the first things that impressed us was that the footing was excellent for all the rings and it is stored indoors religiously. This facility and staff understands the importance of "no hoof, no horse". But our great welcome wasn't limited to the Keystone Centre staff. The Brandon City Council voted on Tuesday night of our arrival to fund \$100,000 of our stabling costs. At a reception in our honor on Wednesday night, Mayor Shari Decter Hurst again confirmed this decision. Then Member of Provincial Parliament Drew Caldwell, on behalf of the Premier (equivalent to a Governor in the US), announced the Manitoba Provincial Government was matching the city's contribution with another \$100,000. Because the facility was pretty sure of this money, its effect was already covered within their original financial proposal to us. What it does though is affirms the communities desire for us to be there. The Province is also working on further funding of between \$1 and 5 million dollars for future improvements to the Centre because of our commitment which would eliminate the need for supplemental outdoor stalls. In addition to the politicians at the reception, there were many business people from the community including hotel and restaurant managers. We also learned that the Memorial Cup Canadian Junior Hockey Championships were held there last year with scouts and hockey executives from around the world. This eliminated any question that the town could handle an event of our size.

For those arriving to the show via the air, Brandon has shuttle service both by air and land. From Winnipeg, it is an easy 2 hour 15 minute 4 lane drive from the airport on Canada Highway 1. There is only one turn after leaving Winnipeg. There is also Perimeter Air Shuttle and Brandon Air Shuttle (via van) from Winnipeg. But from the south, it is also easy to fly into Minot, ND and drive across the border. Coming with horses, the Boissevain crossing works well. One of the last people who met with us on our visit was the Canadian District Veterinarian, Dr. Wayne Clayton, who pledged to work closely with us to make everyone's entry as smooth as possible.

For this first year, about a third of the stalls will be outside on a paved parking lot convenient to both show arenas. But included in the provincial funding mentioned earlier, this requirement hopefully will go away in the future with all stabling under one roof. We firmly believe our exhibitors are going to love Brandon and the Keystone Centre.