



PTHA NEWS

Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association Newsletter

We ARE Pennsylvania Racing

Volume 2 2011

Horsemen Celebrate "Night of Excellence"



Richard Malouf's WINK AT THE GIRLS scores Horse of the Year, Winningest Horse, Leading Four-Year-Old & Up Gelding, and Claiming Horse of the Year at the 2010 PTHA Horsemen's Awards Banquet on March 17. BARBARA WEIDL/EQUIPHOTO

The 32nd Annual PTHA Awards Banquet on March 17 was truly a "night of excellence," as PTHA Executive Director Mike Ballezzi stated in his opening remarks to the record crowd of 325 horsemen and their families and friends.

"We celebrate the owners, trainers, jockeys and horses that exhibited the highest standard of excellence in the past year," he said. "We acknowledge and congratulate all nominees, which were selected by a vote of their peers to be honored."

After a moment of silence in honor of those among the local

racing community who had died in 2010, PTHA President Sal DeBunda

Ballezzi then introduced two "special friends of the horsemen," Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo and 18th District representative Gene DiGiralamo. Both were commended for their support and service to the horsemen of Parx. Ballezzi presented Representative DiGirolamo with a check for \$5,000 from the Horsemen's PAC, accumulated through \$10/start form every owner to further efforts to lobby in Harrisburg for our industry.

"I wanted to help the horseracing industry, so I got interested in gaming" said DiGiralamo. "Gaming in the Commonwealth would not be possible without racing."

In agreement, Mayor DiGiralamo said he supports the casinos and feels it is a win-win situation to have racing and gaming working together.

Ballezzi and DeBunda presented a Special Achievement Award to the Mayor, as well as a check for \$1,000 to Girolamo's scholarship fund.

Also in attendance were PTHA board members Steve Appel,

(continued on page 3)



Bensalem Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo was honored with a Special Achievement Award, presented by PTHA President Sal DeBunda (above). A record crowd attended the festivities, held at Celebrations. (below) PHOTOS BY ANNA CASCIO



President's Message

Dear Members of the PTHA:

Finally, spring has arrived after what seemed to be an interminable winter. And with the anticipation of green grass, and sunshine, it has been energizing to see the barn and dormitory renovations on our backstretch begin again in earnest, to hear the talk of new foals dropping on the many new farms in our Commonwealth, and to look forward to warm weather racing and the benefits we are all enjoying as a part of the PA racing community.

It is with pride that we devote this spring issue of the PTHA News to our leading horsemen and horses. What better way to prove what Act 71 has done for us than by honoring the products of better breeding and bigger purses at the March 17 PTHA Awards banquet.

Executive Director Mike Ballezzi aptly phrased it our "Night of Excellence," as he led into a spectacular evening of fine food, awards, and the camaraderie of over 340 of our fellow horsemen and their families celebrating all that is good about Thoroughbred racing. Special congratulations to Horse of the Year connections, owner Richard Malouf and trainer Scott Lake, whose Wink at the Girls also captured Leading Four-Year-Old and Up Colt or Gelding, Claiming Horse of the Year, and Winningest Horse.

We felt honored to have in attendance Bensalem Mayor Joseph DiGiralamo and Representative Gene DiGiralamo from the 18th District. These two dedicated supporters of Parx Racing have been invaluable to us in the past four years and we thank them for their continued efforts on our behalf.

Our new PTHA Board has settled in with our new committees, and as promised, we have established a bulletin board outside the PTHA office where we have posted the minutes of the first two board meetings, and will continue to post any other important news for our members.

There is plenty of work ahead of us outside the stable gate, too: while the legislature works towards balancing this year's budget, we are determined to educate the decision makers in Harrisburg as to the importance of our industry. You may have heard our local radio campaigns, and soon, billboards enroute to the Capitol will showcase some of the many women and men who have jobs because of Pennsylvania racing.

We look forward to representing our very best not just every spring at the awards banquet, but all during the year as we move toward the summer months and our big races. Pennsylvania racing is leading the industry in many ways: horse retirement, health plans for backstretch employees, and one of the highest purse structures on the East Coast. Your PTHA will continue to work hard towards the health and success of all of our horsemen.

Your PTHA President,




I HAVE A JOB

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"WE ARE PENNSYLVANIA RACING"

(continued from page 1)

Phil Aristone, Lisa Allen, Ed Lehman, Butch Reid, John Servis and Randy Swisher.

Parx Racing COO Joe Wilson, Director of Racing Sal Sinatra, and PA Breeders' Association President Brian Sanfratello all joined in the evening's festivities.

The awards presentation began with a few words from emcee Keith Jones, Parx track announcer.

"Kendrick Carmouche, Leading Jockey, joins a group of Philadelphia Park top riders of which only two have won three consecutive titles," said Jones. "Stewart Elliot and Mike McCarthy are now joined by Kendrick."

He also noted the very close trainer's battle which was taken down to the final day of the meet, with Phil Aristone winning by one victory over Carlos Guerrero.

Horse of the Year Honors went to Richard Malouf's Wink at the Girls, trained by Scott Lake. The five-year-old gelding by Halo's Image won or placed in 11 of his 16 starts at Parx last season, also earning him Claiming Horse of the Year, Leading Four-Year-Old and Up Colt or gelding, and Winningest Horse. Trainer Lake's wife, Jennifer Stisted accepted the award for Malouf.

The awards banquet once again offered a silent auction to benefit Turning for Home and the Granny Youman's scholarship fund, which offers yearly scholarships to backstretch workers or members of their families.

A record number of 50 items were bid on, with over \$4,000 raised for the two non-profit organizations. Top bids included \$350 for a framed Secretariat movie poster, signed by author Bill Nack and jockey Ron Turcotte, and the same price for Phillies vs. Mets tickets, donated by Mark and Elizabeth Gory. Raffles for a basket of cheer, 76ers club box tickets for four donated by John Nash, and an overnight stay in the Poconos raised an additional \$1500.

In mid-evening, once again Executive Director Ballezzi took the stage to announce a special video presentation would be shown showcasing Turning For Home. Produced by Bruce Casella and Program Administrator Barbara Luna, the five minute video followed many of the Thoroughbreds who have been placed into the program since its inception in 2008. It also acknowledged the major role that the Ballezzi, the PTHA and its board have played in starting up a model program for the industry. (The video can be seen on YouTube as 'Turning for Home presentation 2011').

Music and dancing rounded out what was deemed a very successful and exciting evening!

From top: Teddy Piluso, Richard Vega, Kendrick Carmouche; Jackie DeSanctis, banquet organizer, and Vicky Mangini; Steve Appel and leading apprentice Rosario Montanez; Cole Yeager, Lisa Allen, Bob Girard, Mike and Shirley Gramiak



Family Ties Lead to PTHA Honors



BARBARA WEIDL/EQUIPHOTO

Wild Geese enroute to victory number 7 in 2010, clinching leading "B" Owner honors for Jaime Guerrero, as well as snatching Outstanding Claim of the Year for owner Guerrero and his brother, trainer Carlos.

If Wild Geese felt he had a stalker, he was right, as Jaime Guerrero, brother of trainers Guadalupe and Carlos, had been keeping close watch on the then 6-year-old gelding, just waiting for the right time to drop in a claim.

"I really wanted him," said Jaime. "But he was at an unreachable price. But I kept watching him. When he raced in New York, I couldn't get him for \$10,000 when I offered to buy him from the owner."

Jaime says he had a good feeling about Wild Geese when he was entered at Monmouth for \$12,500 in 2009 after 3 months off, and travelled up to the NJ track without a halter or leadshank. With the help of trainer Mike Farro, he was able to claim the horse who would help him clinch the 2010 Leading B Owner title at Parx over a year and a half later.

The 10-year-old by Is It True won 7 of 13 starts in 2010, earning him Outstanding Claim of the Year.


A used car salesman, who also owns a junkyard in Williamstown, NJ, 38-year-old Jaime is happiest around his horses, and says it runs in the family. His father, "Concho" Guerrero worked for the late Larry Jennings. "We all followed in his footsteps," said Jaime. "I did try my hand at training, but do better letting Carlos handle that end of it. This way, my business pays for my horses and I let Carlos make all the decisions."

Carlos, who missed the leading training title by just one win this season, says his brother does well when picking his own horses to claim.

"When he follows a horse for awhile, I tell him, just pick what you like. Don't claim something just to claim.

"Wild Geese was a running fool, but he kept stopping, so I thought he'd paid too much for him at \$12,500," said Carlos. "But he won that day, and we found out he had throat surgery during those three months off. Jaime always wanted to try him on the grass, and four of his wins last year were on the turf."


"My brother just loves the business, and likes to come to the barn and visit his horses," said Carlos. "We have a very good relationship, you know family is family, and I feel happy when we can do well together."



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Belem Ojeda with Jaime Guerrero accepting Leading B Owner trophy from Randy Swisher, announcer Keith Jones looks on.
ANNA CASCIO PHOTO

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO PTHA MEMBERS

Dear PTHA Member:

With the announcement by Governor Corbett of his budget proposal for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2011, I thought this would be an appropriate time to give you a status report on the possible impact on the slot monies that we now receive.

The good news is that the proposed budget does not specifically reduce our payments under Act 71, which are generated by the slot revenues. The bad news is that there is a long time between now and the expected end of the budget process on June 30, 2011, for possible mischief to occur regarding our funds. We will have to be very diligent in protecting what we now have going into the fiscal year and we are working very hard to do that. We have to inform the legislature of the following message:

1. That Act 71 saved the horse industry in Pennsylvania and all of the jobs associated with it.
2. That we are already contributing to the Pennsylvania budget starting two years ago at the annual rate of \$50 million and are obligated to do that for two more years, starting with the new fiscal year;
3. That the funds from slots to the horse racing industry have a positive economic impact generating more than \$2.00 in economic development for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for every dollar given to the horse industry under Act 71; and
4. That any further deterioration of those funds will not only have a material effect on the horse racing industry in Pennsylvania, but also on the Pennsylvania economy

In order to get this message across, we are doing the following:

1. We now have two lobbyists working for us in Harrisburg to get these messages across;
2. Mike Ballezzi and I and our lobbyists are meeting on a regular basis with State Senators and State Representatives to directly inform them of our situation and to get these messages across to them;
3. We have begun a grass roots radio campaign in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and other important legislative districts to inform the legislators about the impact of Act 71 and thank them for their support of the horse racing industry; and
4. We are engaging in billboard advertising indicating the approximately 20,000 jobs that were saved and created by Act 71. These billboards will appear on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, both east and west of Harrisburg, as the legislators drive into Harrisburg on a weekly basis.

In addition to these steps, we will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to maintain what we now have. We have a tough fight ahead of us, given the significant budget deficit, but you should know that Mike Ballezzi and I, as well as our lobbyists, the PTHA Board of Directors and the staff of the PTHA, are working very hard for our members in connection with the situation. Any support that you can give us will be greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,



Salvatore M. DeBunda, President

I HAVE A JOB

Thanks to the legislature and Act 71.



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BARN RAISING...

Progress is rapid on new Barns 2 and 3 in the Parx backstretch. Now that the weather has warmed and the snow and ice have melted, plans are scheduled for two more barns to be demolished within the next 6 weeks. By the end of 2011, 11 of a total 37 should be finished, along with the remaining dormitory renovations.

2011 Pennsylvania-Bred Stakes Schedule

All stakes will include a 25% PA-Sired Bonus for 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Date	Track	Name of Race	Eligibility/Distance	Purse
Sat., Apr 9	Parx	Lyman H	3 & Up, 7 Fur	\$75,000
Sat , Apr 9	Parx	Foxy J. G. S	3 & Up, f & m, 7 Fur	\$75,000
Sat. , May 21	PID	Presidential Affair S	3 & Up, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Sat , May 21	PID	Ambassador of Luck S	3 & Up, f & m, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Fri May 27	Penn	Danzig S	3YO, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Fri May 27	Penn	Wonders Delight S	3YO fillies, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Tue Jun 14	Penn	Lyphard S	3 & Up, f & m, 1 1/16 Turf	\$75,000
Tue Jun 14	Penn	Docent S	3 & Up, 1 1/16 Miles	\$75,000
Sat Jul 2	Parx	Peppy Addy S	3YO, 7 Fur	\$75,000
Sat Jul 2	Parx	Caught in the Rain S	3YO fillies, 7 Fur	\$75,000
Fri Jul 8	P I D	Leematt S	3 & Up, 1 Mile	\$75,000
Fri Jul 8	P I D	Northern Fling S	3 & Up, f & m, 1 Mile	\$75,000
Sat Jul 30	Parx	Power By Far S	3 & Up, f & m, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Fri Aug 5	Penn	Robellino S	3 & Up, 1 1/16 Turf	\$75,000
Fri Aug 5	Penn	Russian Rhythm	3 & Up, f & m, 5/8 Turf	\$75,000
Fri Aug 12	P I D	Malvern Rose S	3YO fillies, 1 1/16 Miles	\$75,000
Fri Aug 12	P I D	Lil E. Tee H	3YO, 1 1/16 Miles	\$75,000

Pennsylvania's Day at the Races* - Saturday, September 10, 2011 Noon, PARX/Phila. Park

Sat Sep 10	Parx	PHBA Sprint	3 & Up, 7 Fur	\$100,000
Sat Sep 10	Parx	Mrs. Penny S	3 & Up, f & m, 1 1/16 Turf	\$100,000
Sat Sep 10	Parx	Mr. Jenney H	3 & Up, 5/8 Turf	\$100,000
Sat Sep 10	Parx	Crowd Pleaser	3YO, 1 1/16 Turf	\$75,000
Sat Sep 10	Parx	Dr. Teresa Garofalo Mem	3YO fillies, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Sat Sep 24	Parx	Roanoke S	3 & Up, 1 1/16 Miles	\$75,000
Sat Oct 1	Parx	PA Horse Breeders Distaff	3 & Up, f & m, 1 1/16 Miles	\$100,000
Sat Oct 8	Parx	Alphabet Soup H	3 & Up, 1 1/16 Turf	\$75,000
Fri Oct 14	Penn	Nepal S	3 & Up, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Fri Oct 14	Penn	Ligature S.	3 & Up, f & m, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Wed Nov 23	Penn	Blue Mountain Juvenile S	2YO fillies, 6 Fur	\$75,000
Sat Nov 27	Parx	PA Nursery S	2YO, 7 Fur	\$75,000



"Team Servis" Behind Leading Apprentice at Parx

By Craig Donnelly

Seven years ago, when Smarty Jones was beginning his domination of the racing world while becoming the most famous and significant Pennsylvania horse of all time, Rosario Montanez was a 13-year-old kid dreaming of riding in the big races.

"I'd get to the track (a training center in Southern California) and walk hots and groom horses and then go to school," he recalled. "I looked at the Kentucky Derby and Preakness but really didn't follow what was going on."

The San Diego native was bred to be a jockey. His grandfather rode in Mexico and his father was an exercise rider at Pomona, outside of Los Angeles.

At the tender age of 11, Montanez was riding in match races and earned his way to the saddle at Santa Anita last year where he debuted in elite riding company.

"I was so nervous. We were coming to the quarter pole and Rafael (Bejarano) was inside and yelled at me. I wasn't bothering him but I was so scared I practically pulled my horse up," he laughed.

Although he finished fifth that day and his mount was beaten just a half-length, he packed his tack and headed to Northern California to pursue his career.

"I wanted to make my mistakes somewhere else and return home to ride."

Since arriving at Parx last September 18, Montanez has made few mistakes. He quickly caught on, winning races for numerous stables and was awarded Apprentice of the Year at the Bensalem track at their awards banquet on March 17.

Experience is essential for any rider, and Montanez feels he is a better jockey now than he was several months ago. Montanez goes home at night to study the replays and horses he is scheduled to ride the next afternoon.

Much of his success is due to his agent, Donna Servis, presently the only female agent on the grounds, but from a family deep in racing roots.

Her father, Jack Servis, was a legendary agent on the Pennsylvania-New Jersey circuit who included Rick Wilson among his clients, and her cousin, John Servis, was the trainer of Smarty Jones.

Donna Servis had worked for 10 years in the local racing office (at that time the only female) and one year in New York and had watched her father endure the ups and downs of the business for 25 years.

"My family said I should be an agent but I lived it through my father. Everybody thinks it's a cake job but it isn't. Some of the other agents said I was too nice for the job," she remembered. "But I'd spent 14 years working in corporate America in the housing industry in marketing, human resources, and sold new construction. That business is also male dominated."

She said that when Montanez arrived at Parx she knew they would be successful.

"We ride for all the top barns and almost everybody. We treat them all the same whether they have five horses or 50. I'm a people person. I hate spinning people but I've had to do it, even to John a couple of times, But people understand. (With the apprentice allowance) we're on a time frame. I have to ride the best horse," she said.



Trainer and PTHA Board Member John Servis, leading apprentice Rosario Montanez, and his agent, Donna Servis, along with My Elusive Star.

Montanez' personality helps make his job and his agent's easier.

"Everybody is equal," Montanez said with assurance. "I was taught to respect everybody and treat them as you would want to be treated. At the end of the day everybody has a family. You should be humble, knowing that what goes up must come down. Then those same people will be there for you when you're coming down."

Donna Servis says the best thing about being an agent is the "thrill of winning." "The worst is seeing (Montanez) going down (in spills). That's when the mother in me starts to take over."

John Servis, a son of retired steward Joe Servis, was elected as a PTHA trainer director in January, having also served in a similar role nearly 20 years ago. He feels that name recognition with Smarty Jones can be helpful and influential pursuing horsemen's issues and credits the 2004 Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner for bringing slots to Pennsylvania, reviving the sport.

John Servis was recognized as the trainer of the local top three-year-old filly, Tommy Ligon's Come Sunday, at the March 17 awards banquet and has followed Montanez' career carefully.

"He's built to be a natural jockey. If you tell him something he's like a sponge, you don't have to tell him twice. He's improving and that's huge when you consider he'll have the bug (apprentice allowance) until August."

Craig Donnelly has been involved in horseracing for over 40 years, first as a handicapper for the Miami Beach Sun. He worked for the Philadelphia Inquirer for 37 years, and has also been handicapper and TV host at Atlantic City and The Meadowlands. His love of racing also includes owning and breeding a few of his own horses.

2010 PTHA HORSE

March



Leading rider Kendrick Carmouche (left) with Dr. Steve Appel, PTHA board member; (l to r) Blaine, Tyler and Sherri Servis, Butch Reid, Asst. Robert Velez, and John Servis for 3-Year-Old Filly Come Sunday; Parx Racing COO Joe Wilson presents trophy to Wild Geese's connections (below left); (below right) Sal DeBunda presents Richard Malouf's Wink at the Girls' Claiming Horse of the Year trophy to Jennifer Stisted, with Kim Dutrow.



The banquet crowd of over 325 enjoyed an evening of good food, good friends, and dancing!

2010 OUTSTANDING

Two-Year-Old
DER M

Owner: RJG Racing Mgmt.,

Two-Year-Old
DIXIE

Owner: Edward P. Evans

Three-Year-Old
ROAD

Owner: Ellendale Raci

Three-Year-Old
COME S

Owner: Tommy G. Ligo

HORSE OF
Four-Year-Old & U
Claiming Hor
Winningest Ho
WINK AT T

Owner: Richard Malouf

Four-Year-Old
JEM

Owner: William Hartwell

Outstanding C
WILD C

Owner: Jaime Guerrero T

2010 OUTSTANDING

Leading Trainer
PHILIP ARISTONE

Leading Owner
JACK ARMSTONG

Leading Jockey
KENDRICK CARMOUCHE

EMEN'S AWARDS

17, 2011

Photography by Anna Cascio

NDING HORSES

Colt or Gelding
EISTER

LLC Trainer: Murray Rojas

r-Old Filly
E CITY

Trainer: Anthony Dutrow

Colt or Gelding
DHOOG

ng Trainer: Ned Allard

ar-Old Filly
SUNDAY

n Trainer: John Servis

THE YEAR

Up, Colt or Gelding

se of the Year

orse of the Year

THE GIRLS

uf Trainer: Scott Lake

d Filly or Mare

ILYN

Trainer: Ramon Preciado

claim of the Year

GEESE

Trainer: Juan Carlos Guerrero

ING INDIVIDUALS

Leading Division "B" Trainer
ROBERT "BUTCH" REID

Leading "Division B" Owner
JAIME GUERRERO

Leading Apprentice Jockey
ROSARIO MONTANEZ



Jack and Michelle Armstrong



Director of Racing Sal Sinatra presents Leading Trainer award to Phil Aristone (above); Aristone presents Leading 4yo &Up, Filly or Mare award to Jemilyn's trainer, Ramon Preciado (right).



Board member Ed Lehman presents trophy to Ellendale Racing and trainer Ned Allard for 3-Year-Old Gelding Roadhog



Bensalem Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo, Representative Gene DiGirolamo, and PTHA President Sal DeBunda



Antoinette Siegel and Kim Dutrow accept Leading Two-Year-Old Filly Dixie City's award from Randy Swisher (left); Lisa Allen with leading "B" Trainer Butch Reid, and his wife, assistant trainer, Ginny (right)

CAPITANO

Belong To Me x Heavenly Cat, Tacasco Cat

- Capitano won stakes events on both dirt and turf and on both coasts, earning \$576,894.
- Precocious as a 2 yr old, winning first time out at Hollywood Park and placing in two G2 stakes races.
- Proven durability, winning or placing in two stakes at 7 years old.

RUBIYAT

Rubiano x Blushing Madame, Blushing Groom

- Avg earnings per starter of \$31,499, total progeny earnings of \$1,070,956. Avg earnings of 2yr starters is \$12,838.
- Sire of multiple stakes placed Rubi Echo, stakes placed Khayyam and NYRA allowance winner One Tough Dude.
- "Perfectly conformed, perfectly balanced. Liked him, LOVED his foals" Casey Seaman, Ocala FL.



About Us...

Fox Tale Stud is conveniently located between Parx and Penn National racetracks. We are a full service breeding and boarding facility offering mare care, lay-ups, broodstock advice and foal-outs. We have several healthy, athletic and strong PA Bred racing prospects and broodmares for sale. Please call for an appointment to visit the stallions and our farm.



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Sire of 69% winners from starters with major stakes winners every year!

Lifetime progeny earnings over \$5.8-million

Fee: \$3,500*



Toccet

AWESOME AGAIN – COZZENE'S ANGEL, BY COZZENE

#2 Third-Crop Sire in Pennsylvania • TOP 20 in U.S.

Sire of 13 first-crop stakes horses, including 2010 Potrero Grande Breeders' Cup H (G2) winner **VENTANA**, British Columbia Derby (G3) winner **WINNING MACHINE** (multiple SW), G2-placed multiple stakes winner **AWESOME RHYTHM**, G3-placed multiple stakes winner **LA ROCCA** and multiple stakes winner **TOCCET TO ME**, etc.

More stakes wins than Birdstone, Chapel Royal, Smarty Jones, Peace Rules, etc.!

Fee: \$3,500*



JOY GILBERT PHOTO

Sir Shackleton

MISWAKI – NASKRA COLORS, BY STAR DE NASKRA

Multiple Graded-Winning Millionaire

Sire of **Enduring Star**, 3rd in Woodbine's \$250,000 Coronation Futurity, and msw winners Sir Fox and Knock Out Princess in his first crop.

Won from distances of 7f to 1 ¼ miles. Track Record Setter at Gulfstream Park going 7f in 1:21.64

First yearlings sold for up to 23x his stud fee!

Fee: \$2,500*



BILL DENVER PHOTO

Southern Success

DIXIELAND BAND – MY SUCCESS, BY A.P. INDY

Precocious SW by Dixieland Band

Debut winner to stakes winner – back-to-back!

Out of a half-sister to G1 **AFFIRMED SUCCESS** (\$2,285,314), from the immediate family of successful sires **EXBOURNE** (\$1,000,198) and **EXPELLED**.

His first 2-year-olds run in 2011!

Fee: \$2,000*



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Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain Rick Bunker

Even though temperatures are dipping into new lows for March, spring is around the corner. The crocuses are ready to announce themselves; the trees are whispering of new life. The seasonal underdog is looking like it again will triumph. With such optimistic signs abounding, it might be strange to admit I sometimes find the season of spring a sobering time of year. The once stoic world around me is about to be in full bloom; all traces of winter are about to fade. Like the thawing of a frozen Narnia, the promise of rebirth announces itself. And there is something about it that jars me into reflection, maybe even dismay, every time.

Perhaps it is simply that spring is somewhat shocking after the dead contrast of winter. It comes suddenly and almost scandalously, proclaiming the definitive end of a season that once seemed to have the final word. The vigor of spring will not be stopped, and we just might not feel ready for the new life. When all has seemed dead or dormant for so long, the possibility of new life is almost too much of a promise to let in, like beams of sunlight unleashed on exhausted eyelids. When one's spirit feels lifeless within them, the budding hope of a suddenly resurrected forest proclaims a story we may not be ready to hear.

This is one reason why I am grateful as a Christian for the season of Lent. The time leading up to the promise of Easter and the hope of resurrection is something like the early signs of spring. Indications of new life spring forth all around us, each with the shocking call that we must prepare ourselves for what is coming, reflect on the place of hope via the road of suffering, and face the forces and temptations that come at us along the way. It is not always easy to prepare one's

heart for the Cross of Christ, but the changing of seasons is upon us, and in it God beckons us forward. Henri Nouwen describes the tension eloquently: "The season of Lent, during which winter and spring struggle with each other for dominance, helps us in a special way to cry out for God's mercy." For forty contemplative days, the season of Lent

calls us to the wakeful awareness that we are human, we are dust, and we are falling short, but that there is a story reaching beyond our lifetimes, beyond our deaths, and our shortcomings, speaking new life where death stings and tears flow.

On the scene of a people who had lived with God's silence for 400 years, Jesus suddenly and scandalously appeared like a crocus in still-thawing ground. There had not been a word from God since the prophet Malachi. The heavens were cold and silent, and hope remained dormant within time's wintry grasp. But beneath the frozen ground of apathy, sin, and death, the Spirit of God was stirring. Spring was on its way. Lent reminds me to stay awake to the knowledge that this hope is still so: "Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him."

As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth" (Hosea 6:3).

The journey to the Cross takes the believer through bleak and despairing seasons that make sanctification seem an unending winter.

But we are being drawn to the very Cross that held the harbinger of spring and the hope of resurrection.

As surely as the sun rises he will appear again, for as the Easter angel declares, "He is risen!"



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The PTHA's TURNING FOR HOME PAGE

RACING NEEDS TO SUPPORT ITS OWN

As we go to press, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, one of the oldest and most successful Thoroughbred retirement programs in the country, is fighting for its life and warding off critical and often ignorant press and internet rumblings. While the TRF is no doubt carefully rethinking its business plan, it requires all of us in the rescue and retirement business to step back for a minute and scrupulously review our own "best practices." What happens in the next few months to the TRF will be carefully watched by every serious non-profit organization that cares for horses, in fear that it could next happen to them.

Young as we are, and looking forward to our three-year anniversary next month, we have experienced the growing pains that every new business weathers, with BUSINESS the key word. We have tweaked our program so that we 1) can afford the best aftercare for the 540 Thoroughbreds that have come to us; 2) hold the horsemen, track management and the breeders to their promises of financial support, so that we can truly take care of our own without total dependence on private donors; 3) maintain a reputation with adopters that relies on our honesty, future support and sharing of veterinary information; 4) maintain a viable, secure program that offers not a sanctuary for all horses, but a retirement program where rehabilitation and retraining will provide dignity and second careers for these wonderful horses.

We write this not to criticize the TRF, which was founded long before the term "unwanted horses" was coined by the AAEP and applied to our own Thoroughbreds, but to assure those of you who entrust Turning For Home with the future of your retired horses that we continue to gain the respect of the industry. We are well prepared to continue our good work. The racing industry needs to step up, stop subjecting private groups to the huge responsibility of picking up after it, and encourage and support tracks who use our model, so we all can prove that racing can truly take care of its own.



March 17 was a night of celebrating the absolute best about Thoroughbred horseracing at the PTHA Horsemen's Awards Banquet.

But our retirees and their new lives were not far from our minds as everyone delved into their pockets to support the Turning For Home Silent Auction. As PTHA Executive Director Mike Ballezzi introduced our new video (produced by Bruce Casella of Let's Go Racing, whose time, expertise and energy were donated!), he reminded horsemen from Parx that Turning For Home has become a model program for other racetracks, and has taken in over 540 horses in less than three years. The video can be seen on our website, or on Youtube under "Turning for Home presentation 2011." There were more than a few tears (of happiness) and many congratulations on this touching presentation,



What would we do without our volunteers and equine caregivers? Many thanks to:

(Above): the crew from After the Races; (bottom left) special volunteers Deb Ulmer and Joi Hollinger who put together our auction; (right) David and Doug Nunn, who see that our rehabbed retirees get off to a good, new start.

SPECIAL THANKS TO BENSLEM'S LOCAL BUSINESSES & OUR MANY GENEROUS SILENT AUCTION DONORS

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PTHA Supports Return of Philadelphia Mounted Police Unit

RICHBORO, PA – The Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (PTHA) recently joined Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey, Senator Larry Farnese and representatives of the Philadelphia Police Foundation to announce the return of the Philadelphia Police Department's Mounted Unit.



PTHA President Sal DeBunda joins City of Philadelphia's Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey as they meet at Parx. The PTHA is looking forward to helping the new Mounted Unit get started in the city, and even providing them with suitable retirees from the Turning For Home program.

The Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association -- a statewide organization representing owners and trainers at Parx Racetrack in Bensalem, Pa. -- is partnering with the Philadelphia Police Department and the Philadelphia Police Foundation in the effort. The PTHA will provide assistance in planning for the new stables and headquarters, providing tack and equipment, and placing additional horses to be adopted from their "Turning For Home" racehorse retirement program.

Turning for Home is a thoroughbred racehorse retirement program operated by the PTHA that places retired horses that have trained or raced at Parx Philadelphia Park Racetrack with rescue or adoption programs. Since 2008, Turning for Home has placed 540 retired racehorses in new homes after their racing careers.

"The Philadelphia Mounted Police have a long and proud tradition in the City and we are proud to be playing a role in supporting the unit's return," said Michael P. Ballezzi, Esquire, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association. "We are excited by the opportunity to place our retired racehorses with the Philadelphia Police Department, where they can begin new careers serving the public and helping to keep residents safe."

White Pine Farm in Richboro, Pa. has offered to stable the first five horses of the unit while new stables located within the City of Philadelphia are designed and constructed. The first five horses to the Mounted Unit -- Stephen, Santiago, Pat, Tiny Tim and Johnny -- were formally introduced to the public. The horses are named after the five officers who have fallen in the line of duty

since 2008: Sgt. Stephen Liczbinski, 05/03/08; Officer Isabel Nazario (maiden name Santiago), 09/05/08; Sgt. Patrick McDonald, 09/23/08.; Sgt. Timothy Simpson, 11/07/08; and Officer John Pawlowski, 02/13/09.

Members of the families of the fallen officers were on hand for the event.

The horses will begin their training alongside members of the Philadelphia Police Department Mounted Unit in April. Four of the five horses were trained for police work and served previously in the Newark (NJ) Police Department's Mounted Unit, which was recently disbanded.

The Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association will work with the Philadelphia Police Department to place future horses for the unit. The Philadelphia Police Department, with the support of the non-profit Philadelphia Police Foundation, expects to have a Mounted Unit with initially 10-12 horses and officers up and running later this year.

Jeffrey M. Kolansky, Esq., a Director of the Philadelphia Police Foundation, noted that the foundation is in the midst of a \$3 million fundraising campaign to raise money for the new stables and equipment. In addition to public contributions, corporate support thus far has come from Comcast, 7-Eleven and Verizon Wireless. Individuals can obtain more information and support the effort by donating online at www.phillypolicefoundation.org.



City of Philadelphia's Police Commissioner Charles H. Ramsey visits with one of Parx' horses while on tour of the new barns on the backstretch. The PTHA is looking forward to providing assistance towards the return of Philadelphia's Mounted Unit.

"The Philadelphia Mounted Police are a fantastic way to protect residents and provides people with a great opportunity to get to know our police officers," said Senator Larry Farnese, who has been a strong supporter of the effort and secured a \$100,000 state-funded grant specifically for the Police Department and the Mounted Unit.



LOOK AT THE SAVINGS PTHA MEMBERS HAVE RECEIVED!*



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