



Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

MARCH-APRIL 2000

VOL. 9 - NO. 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE . . .

First time out of the gate with a great start in the new millennium, Power By Far, 5-year-old Pennsylvania bred, boosted his career earnings to over half a million dollars by winning the Hoover Stake at Laurel on Feb. 5th, clocking 1:09 for the six furlongs.

He followed up by capturing the \$75,000 Endless Surprise Stake at Laurel on March 11 in a time of 1:10 1/5 on a sloppy track. And Power By Far usually doesn't like a sloppy track. How good is he?

Congratulations to Philadelphia Park home based trainer Anthony Correnti and owner-breeders Barbara and Bill Geraghty.

* * *

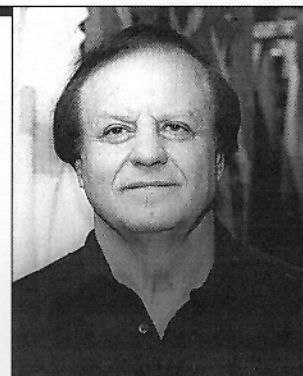
The Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association rejoined the

national HBPA on Feb. 1 at that organization's winter convention in New Orleans, LA.

The decision was made after considerable time, thought and deliberation and was especially difficult for me as one of the founders of the THA.

Thanks to Rick Hiles, President of the national HBPA, and Chairman of the Board Dr. Ed Hagan for the warm reception; also thanks to President Lloyd Romero of the Louisiana Division for being a wonderful host.

The national HBPA is the largest thoroughbred horsemen's association in North America, representing the interest of horsemen throughout much of the United States and Canada.



LARRY RIVIELLO
President

Point of interest: Joe Santanna, President of the Pennsylvania HBPA was very instrumental in our organization rejoining the national HBPA.

* * *

All the principals in Pennsylvania horse racing met
continued on pg. 8

A BREEDERS' CUP FOR CLAIMERS

If you can't run in the Breeders' Cup this year, PTHA Executive Director Mike Ballezzi has some advice.

"I'd recommend horsemen check out our Pennsylvania Claiming Crown Preview Day," said Ballezzi, "when we'll be running for over \$250,000 in purses and bonuses."

The concept originated last year at Canterbury Park in Minnesota with the Claiming Crown, seven races for claiming horses at distances of six furlongs to 1 1/8 miles, including two on the turf at 1 1/16 miles, with purses ranging from \$50,000 to \$125,000.

The day was such a huge success,

Canterbury Park is doing it again this year. Claiming Crown 2000 has seven races scheduled for Aug. 6, with purses totalling \$560,000.

Of even more interest to local horsemen, the same kind of event, the Pennsylvania Claiming Crown Preview Day, will be staged June 10 at Philadelphia Park, also with seven races.

Purses will be slightly more than 40 percent of the total amount to be offered at Canterbury Park, with prize money for each race starting at \$20,000 and climbing to \$50,000 for the final Preview race at Philadelphia Park, which will be for three year olds

and upwards that have started for a claiming price of \$25,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

In addition to the purse money, the winners of the Preview races become eligible for bonus money that will help to defer expenses if they are later entered in and travel to the Claiming Crown at Canterbury Park. These bonuses include \$2,500 in expense money and up to \$500 to cover nomination fees. If the winner doesn't go to Canterbury, the second place finisher in the race becomes eligible for the bonus. If that one doesn't go, the third

continued on pg. 5

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A THOROUGHBRED TRAINER

BY LARRY McMULLEN

Scott Lake wasn't born knowing what he wanted to do with his life.

It took him until he was 12 years old.

"My dad was a police officer," he was saying early one recent morning at the office in his barn at Philadelphia Park. "He claimed a horse and took me to the track. I knew right away that's what I wanted."

He's only held one other job in his entire 34 years.

That was in a grocery store.

"They wanted to teach me how to cut meat," he said. "I quit."

Total time invested was two months. In the horse racing business, it often seems like he puts in that much time in a single day.

A work day that starts at 5:30 in the morning and sometimes, when

he has horses entered at tracks that race at night, doesn't end to close to midnight, can seem like an eternity.

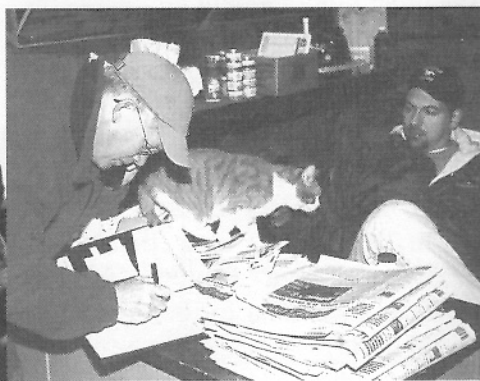
To Scott Lake, it's simply his life.

"If you're willing to work hard and be here every day," he said, "this business is what you make of it."

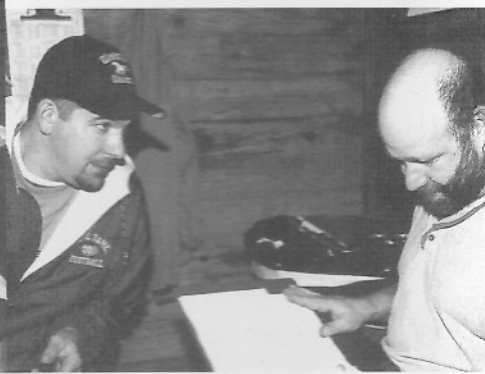
What he's made of it is a great
continued on next page



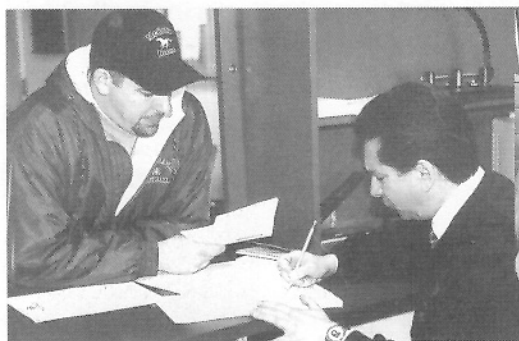
6:05 a.m.



8:15 a.m.



8:30 a.m.



9:15 a.m.



2:44 p.m.



2:53 p.m.



3:35 p.m.



5:00 p.m.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A THOROUGHBRED TRAINER

continued from previous page

success. Last year, he was fourth in the country in races won with 164 for a winning percentage of more than 28. He was also 19th in purses won despite racing mostly claimers with the biggest pot being \$35,000. Two years ago, he won 125 times and captured better than one out of every four races he entered.

You can get at least some idea how he does it by following him around for what turns out to be an average day, not the busiest, but not a day for laggards, either.

He was at the barn on the Philly Park backstretch at 5:30 in the morning. He marks up his training chart and a half an hour after arriving for work, he's trackside by the rail watching his horses working under a bright morning sun.

Actually, only one horse is working out hard. Thirty three of his other horses are merely galloping. As each of his animals enter the track, he recognizes who they are immediately, just as most people would recognize close friends or family members walking by, and he gives the riders brief instructions.

By around 8 o'clock, he is back in his barn office, where he reads the Racing Form to see if there are any horses he wants to claim.

At 8:15, his vet, Dr. Al Reed, comes in and they discuss what's wrong and what's right with the horses in his barn and what they should be doing to keep them at their best. Fifteen minutes later, his blacksmith, Joe Goodz, arrives to check with Lake on what has been done and needs to be done with shoeing his horses.

By 9:15, Lake is at the Racing Secretary's office entering horses for upcoming races. By 10 o'clock, he leaves the track for the short trip to the house he owns in Bensalem. He takes with him the bridles of all five horses he has entered in the afternoon's races at Philadelphia Park.

"I use white bridles and I scrub them at home," Lake said. "I want them to look good for the races."

Lake has five horses entered that afternoon, the first in the fifth race, so he's in the paddock around 2 p.m. to saddle April Mom, a maiden making her second start. She's racing on lasix the first time but it doesn't help. She finishes fifth out of six fillies entered.

Lake wins the sixth race with Sharon And Jerv who is dropping from allowances to a \$10,000 claimer and scores easily going 7 furlongs, paying \$4.60. It would be his only win for the day, giving him a 20 percent winning average, a few points less than what he normally does.

But he does get two second-place finishes, with Nine Iron in the 7th race and Poolman in the 9th, and a third-place with Syrian Sea in the 8th.

He has no races anywhere that night and Philadelphia Park will be dark the following day so he has planned a visit to a Harrisburg suburb to see his baby daughter, Emily Rose, who lives with her mother.

Before he climbs into his pickup to finish his working day, though, he stops back at the barn to make sure his horses who raced that day are okay.

He cares that much and if you need further clues to his formula for success, he cares enough to scrub bridles at home during his lunch time so they'll be shining white when his horses enter the track to do battle.

* * *



TROPHY WINNERS

JANUARY-MARCH



HORSE	OWNER	TRAINER
MELTSINTOTHESEA TOORALOORALORAL ONE OF ME MISS CRIMSON GOLD PRIVATE CONCOURSE ANOTHER BELLINE PUDDLE PRINCESS MERITAGE SALUTE THE QUEEN MISS COWTOWN BRISE D'HIVER EVONTI HIGH SPEED QUAD	PUTS AND CALLS VALLEY FORGE STABLE GEORGE S. NEMETT SMD, LTD WIND N' LEAVES FARM, INC. GARY KIRK EDITH M. LOMBARDI ROBERT ORFANELLI WIND N' LEAVES FARM, INC. HICKORY CORNER RACING STABLE EDITH M. LOMBARDI STEVE ERDELYI JAMES PANTANO	CAROL LYNN LE VINE ERNEST CRANFIELD GEORGE S. NEMETT DONALD S. REEDER JON J. SMYLLIE ANDREW BANKUTI JOHN S. McCASLIN SCOTT A. LAKE JON J. SMYLLIE RICHARD VEGA JOHN S. McCASLIN STEVE C. TIAM FOOK DONALD SAVILLE

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER. . .

The following is an anonymous letter from one of our own Philadelphia Park employees. It is a letter written to to an acquaintance upon whom the employee became almost totally dependent. It is a letter written to separate the unhealthy bond that existed between the two. Moreover, it is a letter of courage, strength, purpose, resolve and love for oneself. Of course, I have permission from the author, whose name will be kept anonymous, to share this letter with you.

* * *

To My Amber Lady,

Well like I said the first time you fooled me and my whole family. We figured you weren't as bad as Jack Daniels, Jim Beam or those foreign relations of yours, Marijuana and Coke. In the beginning you made it easy for me to make friends, especially lady friends. You gave me courage to do anything I wanted to do. Then one day, you changed. Not all at once but little by little you took everything away. You took the trust and love of my mother and father, my brother and sister, all my friends. But worse you took my sons, my wife and my home. You took everything that was fun and turned it into fights and hate and jail. In short, you became a real b - - - and turned my life into a living HELL. Well not anymore you b - - -. This time I am not doing this alone like I tried to do the last time.

Because now I have someone I can count on to help me kick your a - -. Someone I call as my HIGHER POWER. GOD!

So once more and for the last time as I bury you in the ground not just for me but for all my fellow addicts, may you burn in hell forever. Oh yeah, we're all going to beat you this time. Because we all have the help of a HIGHER POWER. Which I choose to call GOD!

Burn, you b - - -. Burn.

Never Yours Again,
Anonymous Backstretch Employee

* * *

Spring Schedule

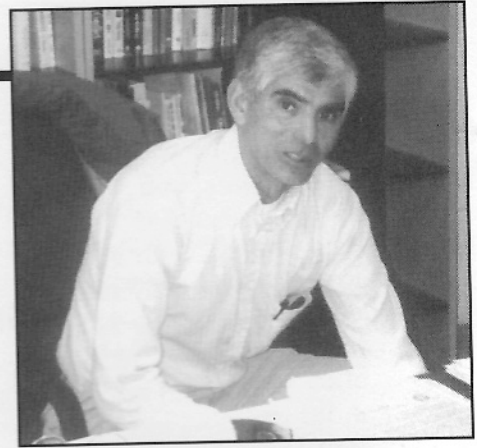
TUESDAYS — A health clinic continues to be held on the backstretch, 9 a.m.-12 noon, in the classroom adjacent to the track kitchen. It is without cost to Philadelphia Park employees. LaSalle nurses are on duty and available to assist you with your needs.

WEDNESDAYS — AA & NA meetings with the Chaplain continue in the classroom adjacent to the track kitchen. 12:30 p.m.

Chapel Services are held at 5:15 p.m. in the Recreation Hall for those remaining on the track.

THURSDAYS — English as a second language classes are offered 1-3 p.m. in the classroom adjacent to the track kitchen.

FRIDAY, APRIL 21 — Good Friday Service, 1 p.m. A special



Chaplain Charles Patane

service for those remaining on the track will be held in the Chapel in the Recreation Hall.

SUNDAY, April 23 — Easter Sunday Worship (time to be announced) in the Chapel.



* * *

SPRING HAS SPRUNG — AND SO HAS SOFTBALL! — Those wishing to sponsor a team may pick up a registration/roster form in the Chaplain's Office. Rules and regulations for playing are also available. Sponsor and team responsibilities include uniforms for players (shirt and cap) and paying the umpires each time the team plays. A starting date will be announced after registration is completed.

A BREEDERS' CUP FOR CLAIMERS

continued from page 1

place finisher becomes the recipient of the bonuses, and so on. In other words, the money will be awarded to the highest-placed finisher who decides to go to Canterbury.

In addition, trainers will receive guaranteed bonuses of \$1,000 for the winner of each of the Preview races, \$500 for the second-place finisher and \$250 for the third-place finisher.

The maximum number of horses that will be allowed to start in each race locally will be 14 with a point system to be used to determine preference.

The entire range of claiming horses will be represented in the Preview Day, beginning with a race at 1 1/16 miles for three year olds and upwards that have started for a claiming price of \$5,000 or less since July 31, 1999.

For one day, at least, said Executive Director Ballezzi, claimers will be kings and their trainers and owners will be rewarded royally.

* * *

The card of races for the Preview Day at Philadelphia Park and Penn National:

The Iron Horse Preview #1 Purse \$20,000

For three year olds and upwards which have started for a claiming price of \$5,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

One Mile and One-Sixteenth

The Express Preview #2 Purse \$20,000

For three year olds and upwards which have started for a claiming price of \$7,500 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

Six Furlongs

The Glass Slipper Preview #3 Purse \$25,000

For fillies and mares, three year olds and upwards, which have started for a claiming price of \$12,500 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

Six-and-One-Half Furlongs

The Rapid Transit Preview #4 Purse \$30,000

For three year olds and upwards which have started for a claiming price of \$16,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

Six-and-One-Half Furlongs

The Tiara Preview #5 Purse \$25,000

For fillies and mares, three year olds and upward which have started for a claiming price of \$20,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

**One Mile and One-Sixteenth
(Turf)**

The Emerald Preview #6 Purse \$25,000

For three year olds and upward which have started for a claiming price of \$20,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

**One Mile and One-Sixteenth
(Turf)**

The Jewel Preview #7 Purse \$50,000

For three year olds and upward which have started for a claiming price of \$25,000 or less twice since July 31, 1999.

One Mile and One-Eighth

* * *

In event more than 14 horses are entered in any one event on Preview Day, field selection will be based on a point system for every placing from Aug. 1, 1999, through June 10, 2000, inclusive, as follows:

Graded stakes — First place, 12 points, second place, 8 points and third place, 6 points.

Allowance races, ungraded stakes or in claiming/starter races with a price equal to or greater than the Preview race nominated — First place, 8 points, second place, 4 points and third place, 2 points.

In claiming/starter races with a price below that of the Preview race nominated — First place, 6 points, second place, 3 points and third place, 1 point.

In addition to the above points, all points earned by a horse in races that were run in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia Park or Penn National) will be doubled. Any horse that was unplaced in a Pennsylvania race will receive 1 point.

Tie Breakers — Preference will be given to horses with the highest point totals. In the event of a tie between two or more horses, the following preferences will be given:

1. Most points earned in Pennsylvania.
2. Highest weights on the scale.
3. Total points in the first two categories.

4. Highest win percentage in the first category.

Rankings — The Philadelphia Park office will compile, post and keep current the list of ranking points for the nominated horses.

Entry — Entries for Preview Day will be taken on Thursday, June 8, 2000. At the time of entry, maximum of 14 horses will be accepted for entry in each race based on ranking points established. No Preview Day race will be split.

Entry Fees — An entry fee of \$50 is due at the time of entry.

Starting Fees — None.

QUICK LEARNERS



Gregg and Eric Fral, Scott Lake



Jenny Ornsteen, Larry Riviello



**Sal Sinatra, John McCaslin, Edith Lombardi,
Frank Hille, Mike Ballezzi**

Brothers Eric Fral, 27, and Gregg, 25, have owned thoroughbred racehorses only three years so it's logical they'll get better at the game with more experience.

Considering their horses won almost \$600,000 in purses last year and were already approaching \$200,000 in winnings at this writing in the current year, it staggers the imagination to envision what might happen as they gain in maturity and knowledge.

The PTHA and Philadelphia Park recognized the strides the Frals have already made at the annual Pennsylvania Awards Dinner on March 1 by naming Nimble Outstanding Claim of the Year for 1991. The brothers, racing under the name E & G Stables, claimed Nimble, an 8-year-old gelding, for \$32,000 in February of last year. Under the guidance of trainer Scott Lake, the gelding captured 8 of 14 starts, bankrolling \$136,629 for the remainder of the year.

Right now, the brothers own a string of about 12 horses, including Cailoto, who was claimed for \$18,000 and immediately won five in a row, but the number in their barn fluctuates because of activity in the claiming box.

One other sign of how they've fared in the racing business besides the recognition by fellow horsemen is that the brothers owned a flourishing landscape and construction business locally, but they eventually felt they had to sell.

"We were doing good with the business," said Eric, who notes that the brothers' claims are based mainly on what they learn from reviewing past performances in the Racing Form, "but we're doing even better in racing."

Watch out when they get the hang of it.

* * *

Trainer of the Year, by the way, went to the Frals' conditioner Scott Lake, who won 109 of 409 races locally for a success rate just under 27 percent.



**Angelika
Barbara**

CAPTURE AWARD

Julio Cartagena, with an even more dazzling win percentage of slightly over 29 in capturing 33 of 113 races, was named Trainer of the Year for those who had 50 to 150 starts.

Lake and Cartagena were also awarded a cash bonus of \$2,500 each.

Horse of the Year honors for 1999 went to Edith Lombardi's Copelan's Number, trained by John McCaslin, who won eight of 16 starts and \$167,140 in purses while capturing stakes at both Philadelphia Park and Delaware Park. Copelan's Number also was named Best Older Colt or Gelding.

Best 3-Year-Old Colt or Gelding was Judge's View, who won the Garden State Stakes, and is owned by Lee Rogalski and trained by Luis Collazo.

Sunshine Teri, who won five of 17 races and \$146,039 in purses for Sunshine Hill Farm and trainer Jose Martinez was Best 3-Year-Old Filly.

April Girl, despite the name, was Best 2-Year-Old Colt. April Girl won the Count Turf Stakes at Delaware Park, after breaking his maiden impressively at Philadelphia Park, for owner-trainer Patricia Bosley and is currently owned by Tega Farm and trained by Tom Greene.

Best 2-Year-Old Filly was A-M-O Stables' Alma Mater, trained by Dennis Mills.

Edward Lane's Arty'svirginiagirl, trained by Uriah St. Lewis was Best Filly or Older Mare and Claiming Horse of the Year was Open Ice Hit, who won eight races, including seven in a row, for Rap-A-Tap Stables and trainer Richard Vega.

Top Owner was Bob Seeger's Plumstead Stables. Top Jockey was Anthony Black and Top Apprentice was Rolanda Simpson, who was a finalist nationally for an Eclipse Award.



**Jose Martinez, Ralph Riviezzo,
Edwin Nearing**



Rolanda Simpson



**Richard Vega,
Jack Armstrong**



**Lee Rogalski, Luis Collazo,
Ralph Delaney**

12 SEZ...



There are two glaring faults in racing which I would like to discuss. Being a semi-invalid and glued to my television, especially during racing hours, certainly improves my powers of observation. When you see 12 to 15 races an hour, you notice little things you might ordinarily overlook.

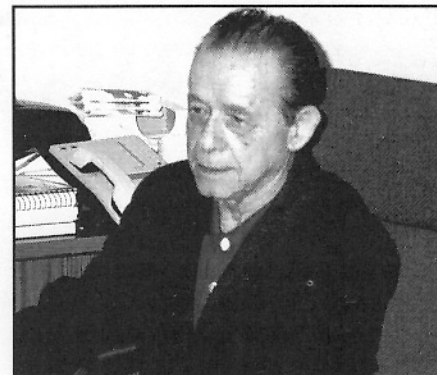
First and foremost is the start of almost every race, or even prior to the start. The trouble lies with the starting gate, which is anathema to man and beast. That is quite evident when two or three horses show decided reluctance to enter the gate and when forced and pushed into the gate, often trying to get out, and jumping in the gate, sometimes causing injuries to both horse and rider.

I've said this before and I'll say it again. In this great age of engineering marvels, with the great advances in science, there must be an engineer or inventor who could find a better way to start races and do away with the Iron Monster, the starting gate.

This is fault #1 and there is no easy solution to the problem. Now we come to fault #2 and this could need no more than the stroke of a pen to correct.

In reading about the life of the great jockey, Lafitt Pincay Jr., I was appalled at the regimen of dieting and the sweat box he endured to stay at the weights required in order to keep on riding. Soon, I realized the fault is with the scale of weights that is used in this country. Why we don't have weight scales commensurate with those in Europe has always been a puzzle to me. Some of our top riders escape to Ireland, England and France to avoid just what Pincay had to do — the regimen of dieting and the sweat box.

Prime examples of those riders who went abroad, of course, are Steve Cauthen and Cash Asmussen, both of



ISADORE SCHWARTZ

whom became champion riders in England and France

It would help racing considerably if the scale of weights in the U.S. were the same as used in other countries. You and I know the horses wouldn't mind the added weight but what a boon it would be to all our jockeys to not have to go through the torture of starving and the sweatbox and riding in a weakened condition.

As I said before. All that is needed is a little common sense. Let's get it done and help horse and rider.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

continued from pg. 1

with Secretary of Agriculture, the honorable Samuel Hayes Jr., March 7 in Harrisburg to consider legislative initiatives to economically assist the racing and breeding industries.

A race horse industry relief proposal will be released in the near future.

Note:

The horse racing industry is an important contributor to the Pennsylvania overall economy and a vital sector of the state's agricultural economy, annually providing more than 35,000 jobs and generating \$576 million in personal income — and still growing. Any threat to its well being should be of major concern to policy makers in the state.

* * *

Plans are underway for the Pennsylvania Claiming Crown Preview Day, which will be held June 10 at Philadelphia Park and will mirror the Claiming Crown 2000 to be

staged Aug. 6 at Canterbury Park in Minnesota.

This is the second year Canterbury hosts the event, which is intended to be the claiming horse's Breeders' Cup and features seven races with purses totalling \$560,000. The Philadelphia Park races will have purses worth 40 percent of the total offered for each event at Canterbury and the local winners will have the opportunity to compete in Claiming Crown 2000.

Board of Director Steve Appel is chairing a committee that is making preparations for the Preview Day and consists of Executive Director Mike Ballezzi, Board of Directors Steve Rowan and Ralph Riviezzo and trainer Scott Lake.

Thanks to Philadelphia Park management, and especially to Director of Racing Sal Sinatra, for all the hard work and support, both financial and in helping to develop the concept for Preview Day locally. (See bottom of page 1 for further details on this story).

* * *

The Pennsylvania Awards Dinner was held March 1 at Celebrations in Bensalem. It was a wonderful evening, with a cocktail hour, hot and cold hors d'ouvers and a hot food station. A trio provided background music.

Presentations were made to the 1999 award winners following the dinner. The winners were seen in action on tapes from races last year played on TV monitors throughout the room. Keith Jones, the m.c., was at his golden-voiced best. (Award winners are listed in the story that begins on page 2).

Thanks to our office staff — Connie Youmans, Vanessa Froelich and Leslie Saunders — for their outstanding work in helping to make the dinner a huge success.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

*You can't slice the bread
until you bake it.*

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† † † OBITUARIES † † †



CATHERINE "GRANNY"
YOUMANS

The entire racetrack community mourns the passing of Catherine "Granny" Youmans, 84, mother of PTHA Secretary Connie Youmans.

Granny, who was often seen on the backside in the PTHA office, at Chaplain's services and softball games and at social events such as the awards dinners, picnics and pig roasts, was respected and beloved by everyone who knew her.

She is sadly missed by her two daughters, Emma Kunker and Connie, her son-in-law, Murray Scott, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Mrs. Youmans' name can be made to a scholarship fund that has been established in her name. The fund, primarily for stable employees who wish to further their education, is being administered by Chaplain Charles Patane through

the Race Track Chaplaincy from his office in the Recreation Building and has already grown to almost \$2,000.



CHARLES B. LYMAN JR.

Condolences are extended to the family and friends of Charles B. Lyman Jr., who died Jan. 23 after a long illness.

Mr. Lyman owned and raced thoroughbreds under the stable name of Maui Meadow Farm. His son, Charles B. Lyman III, continues as an owner in the racing industry.

Donations in lieu of flowers can be made in Mr. Lyman's name to the American Cancer Society.



STANLEY PANCO

Sympathy to the family, friends and associates of Stanley Panco, for many years head of the New Jersey Breeders Association and a member of the Vineland Zoning Board for 20 years, who passed away recently.

Mr. Panco, who bred and raced horses, "knew every law that had anything to do with racing," according to his cousin, PTHA Board of Director Bill Hartwell.

He was also so well versed in zoning laws, according to

Hartwell, that lawyers often called him for assistance on such matters. He was well connected politically and was on a first-name basis with Gov. Christie Whitman.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Dorothy Volunteer Fire & Rescue, P.O. Box 227, Dorothy, NJ 08317.



DANIEL R. CAMAC

Heartfelt condolences are offered to family and friends on the recent passing of Daniel R. Camac, father of well-known area trainer Bob Camac.

The elder Mr. Camac served as a paratrooper during World War II and was for a period of time a personal bodyguard for the Supreme Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

He became active in racing later and owned thoroughbreds with his son.



TYRONE GOODING

Sorrow on the backstretch at the passing March 17 of Tyrone Gooding, a stable employee for trainer Jon Smylie, who worked at Philadelphia Park for the life of the racetrack.

ONE MAN'S HEART SURGERY SOUNDS ALARM FOR OTHERS

By Larry McMullen

Ralph Riviezzo was taken by ambulance to the hospital to have a cardiac catheter inserted in a first step by doctors in a process intended to save his life. Enroute, the lights were flashing, the siren was wailing.

Inside the ambulance, Riviezzo was smoking . . . a cigarette.

He might have been too deeply in denial to realize he had to change a few old habits.

"I thought I was in really good physical condition," Riviezzo was saying recently at the Mount Holly Farm he manages in New Jersey. "Then all of a sudden, I found I couldn't walk from the barn to the house without getting out of breath. I had pains in my chest but I kept telling myself it was a pulled muscle."

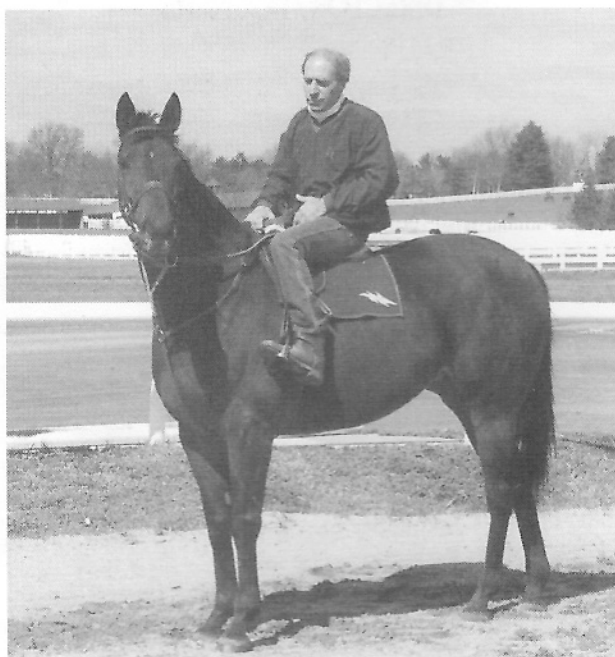
Riviezzo was 53 and outwardly, the former police officer turned thoroughbred horse owner and trainer appeared so fit, he could have been mistaken for a man years younger. His heart, though, obviously needed some help.

He would wind up having quadruple coronary bypass surgery this past September, a procedure that required removing veins from his arms and one leg to create new paths for cardiac blood flow, not to mention the need for surgeons to break his sternum in order to gain access to his heart.

A few short weeks after being

released from the hospital, he was doing light training at the magnificent farm in Mount Holly, a facility that includes a training track and pool for horses to swim and is reminiscent of the rich, rolling green Kentucky farms owned by racing's bluebloods.

"It's hard to take it easy when you're used to doing your own ponying and shoeing," Riviezzo said.



BACK IN THE SADDLE

Three months after his surgery, he was shoeing again. Getting up on horses presented a problem for a while, especially because of the still healing incision in his leg that came in contact with the animals.

But as proven in the accompanying photo, showing Riviezzo at the farm last month on the training track astride the thoroughbred filly Cherry Tree, he's overcome that obstacle, too.

Riviezzo, who is a dedicated golfer, stayed away from the game for only two months following surgery.

It all proves he was probably the physical specimen he thought he was — with the exception of the heart problem, of course.

His attitude isn't bad, either.

He quit smoking. He changed his diet to what the doctors recommended. He gets regular checkups, including tests for blood pressure and cholesterol.

"I have an obligation to my family to take care of myself," he said.

With all of this, he has managed to find a bright side to his recent difficulties.

"Some of my friends stopped smoking because of what happened to me," he said. "People close to me have changed their eating habits and started getting checkups."

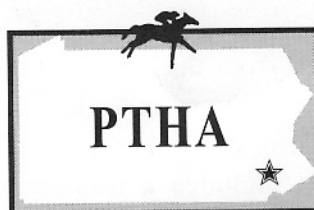
He said horsemen at Philadelphia Park especially, because of the free health clinic on the backstretch that's staffed by nurses from LaSalle University, have no excuses.

"If my surgery set off alarms," said Riviezzo, "it was worth it."

Luckily, the alarm sounded in time for Riviezzo, too.

* * *

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