



# PTHA NEWS

Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association Newsletter

*We ARE Pennsylvania Racing*

Volume 1 2011

## New PTHA Board Takes Up the Reins

The PTHA announced Salvator DeBunda as its the new President after the former First Vice President ran unopposed in the recent 2011 Board of Directors election.

The final results were released after four hours of ballot counting at the Bucks County Chamber of Commerce on January 4. Ballots were to be postmarked by December 31 by PTHA members in order to be valid. Over 600 ballots were returned.

Newcomers to the board as Owner Directors were Lisa Allen and Randy Swisher,

### 2011 PTHA ELECTION RESULTS

#### President

Salvatore M. DeBunda

#### Owner Directors

Steven Appel  
Lisa Allen  
Michael P. Ballezzi  
Mary Kernan  
Randall Swisher

#### Trainer Directors

Philip Aristone  
Kathleen DeMasi  
John Servis  
Edward Lehman  
Robert "Butch" Reid



Pam Shavelson, Diane Day and Janis Gerace oversaw the ballot counting by members of the the Bucks County Chamber of Commerce.

while John Servis, Ed Lehman and Butch Reid were newly-elected as Trainer Directors.

Lisa Allen, managing partner of L A Thoroughbreds and a graduate of LSU, started in Thoroughbred racing as a hotwalker, working her way up with experience as a clocker, jockey agent and racing official. Having owned horses for 15 years, she formed L A Thoroughbreds in May 2010.

An owner for 30 years, Randy Swisher has a longtime

(continued on page 3)

## 2011 Brings Expanded Health Coverage for Horsemen

The PTHA is announcing expanded health care starting in 2011 for Parx trainers and their families, an enhancement of an already comprehensive program.

- As of January 1, for the first time, trainers' spouses and dependents will be completely covered, at no extra expense.
- A Gap plan, which decreases out-of-pocket expenses for co-pays, will be implemented as of the first of the year for doctor visits, xrays, surgery and hospital stays.
- Dental benefits will be increased to \$2,000 from \$1,200.

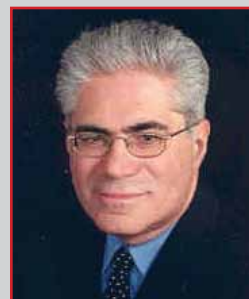
Under the new Gap plan, trainer (member) responsibility would be lowered to \$5 for primary care physicians and \$25 per specialist. A routine xray previously was \$40 to

trainers, and with the new plan only \$5. The decrease Gap plan payment will either be accepted by a patient's physician, or will be reimbursed to the payee after submission of a claim. **(See chart on page 7 for complete details).**

"The improved program is just another step as the PTHA continues to improve our horsemen's benefits," said Michael Ballezzi, Executive Director of the PTHA. "This is a plan that will enable our families to receive top care at an even lower out-of-pocket expense."

Health care for Parx horsemen has been a top priority for the PTHA, and with the passage of Act 71 three years ago, horsemen have benefitted from a percentage of the slot machine revenue which has been devoted to medical and pension plans.

## President's Message



Dear Members of the PTHA:

Although honored and enthused to be serving my first term as PTHA President, I'd like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of those who came before me. I have had the pleasure to serve on the board during the terms of the last two Presidents: Larry Riviello and Donnie Reeder. A sincere "thank you" to them for the hours they spent and their service to the organization. I look forward to building on that in the months and years to come.

I'd also like to congratulate the new board members: owners Lisa Allen and Randy Swisher; and trainers Ed Lehman, Butch Reid and John Servis. We welcome their views and extensive experience to the PTHA as horsemen at Parx. Many thanks to the former board members for their past efforts, and to those returning to serve another three-year term: Steve Appel, Phil Aristone, Michael Ballezzi, Kate DeMasi, and Mary Kernan.

We have a lot of work ahead of us.

Many of you may know me from the results of the hours I spent working alongside of Executive Director Michael Ballezzi and our lobbyists when we traveled to Harrisburg to secure our percentage of the slot machine revenue three years ago, and more recently, to retain our fair share. You are experiencing the results of the relationships we have established with legislators, but there is no guarantee for the future, and now is NOT the time to rest on our laurels.

One of our goals is to execute a legislative "blitz," a cooperative effort with the other PA horsemen's groups to educate the legislators on just how the allocation of the slot machine revenue has positively affected the Commonwealth and its racing industry. We plan to prove that support of PA's racing and breeding industry has saved farmland and people's livelihoods, as well as strengthened the economy.

Another very important goal for us is to see that the PTHA board establishes communication and open dialogue with our membership. This means keeping the membership up-to-date on our efforts on its behalf, as well as continuing to listen to the horsemen's concerns.

Immediately, the PTHA Board will take up two challenges, the first of which is on every trainer's mind -- assuring that our backstretch improvements move ahead as planned and are implemented as soon as possible. The second involves a bigger picture, working with track management to enhance the marketing of Parx racing to increase handle and attendance.

At this time, I'd also like to announce that our long time financial consultant, Michael Colucci, has been hired as the PTHA's Comptroller, to supervise and enhance the organization's financial capabilities. We all welcome him to this new position.

Your PTHA President,

*In response to the recent rash of pending drug positives, PTHA Executive Director Mike Ballezzi, PTHA President Sal DeBunda, and members of the Pennsylvania HBPA met on January 20 with the PA Racing Commission. On page 9 is a letter sent to PA Horse Racing Commissioner Corinne Sweeney from DeBunda.*

**PTHA  
HORSEMEN'S AWARDS BANQUET  
March 17, 2011**

**HONORING  
LEADING OWNER,  
TRAINER &  
JOCKEYS  
HORSE OF THE YEAR  
OTHER TOP  
PARX HORSES**



**OPEN BAR  
DINNER  
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**CELEBRATIONS  
Galloway Road, Bensalem  
6 to 10 p.m.**

**Tickets can purchased through the PTHA Office**

**Nominations for all horse awards will be accepted until February 7.**

**Please visit the PTHA Office, or download  
the nomination form from our website: [www.patha.org](http://www.patha.org).**

**(PTHA Election results continued from page 1)**

involvement in investment banking. He was introduced to horse ownership through Mark Reid and Mark Fusco.

Michael Ballezzi, Executive Director of the PTHA, was re-elected as Owner Director, after having served on the Board for the past 15 years. His record in Harrisburg with state legislators is a primary reason that Act 71 has become so important to the racing and breeding industry.

The three new Trainer Directors all reside in Bensalem, PA and have compiled over 90 years of conditioning race-horses between them.

During the first PTHA Board meeting on January 21, Phil Aristone was voted as Treasurer, Dr. Steve Appel as First Vice-President, and Mary Kernan, Second Vice President.

**For more information on the new PTHA Board members,  
please check out the PTHA website: [www.patha.org](http://www.patha.org).**

## HORSEMEN'S PROFILES: TRAINER MICHELLE FORTEBUONO

### "Doing what I love to do"

By Craig Donnelly



Michelle Fortebuono outside of her barn at Parx Racing with Split Finger.

Most people would consider a job that involves labor seven days a week as a nightmare.

But for Michelle Fortebuono, a bright and energetic 33-year-old native of Easton, Pa., training racehorses is what she has dreamed of doing "from day one."

"When I was ten I'd come home from school and watch Jenny

Ornstein hosting (the Philadelphia Park Cable Show) and I was hooked. I'd send my mom to get me a Racing Form and I'd sneak peeks at it under my papers at school," she recalled.

What followed involved numerous trips to the library to peruse every possible book about horses.

"I started taking riding lessons around the age of 12 and memorized the Kentucky Derby winners," Fortebuono said while laughing about her obsession with thoroughbreds.

After high school Fortebuono got a job as a pharmacy technician.

"I loved the job but the horse bug bit me again," she said. "I started walking hots for Tamara Capanas and then worked for Bob Seeger and Corey Day. It starts as 'you can rub two, rub three-ok you can rub five.' I was Day's assistant for five or six years and we really did good. But it was always in the back of my mind to go out on my own."

Fate intervened when her father, Anthony, who worked for a paper mill, was involved in a car accident that fractured a bone in his neck.

"With the settlement money my parents moved to Buckingham, closer to me, and set aside money to buy a horse," she said.

Fortebuono's new career began in July when she purchased a colt named Split Finger for \$5,000 from Dave Carr. The Smart Strike colt finished third, followed by a pair of runner-up placings, then captured a \$10,000 claiming event on November 2.

During October another horse, Aintnooilpaintin, caught her eye.

"She was big, sound, correct, and a Pennsylvania-bred," Fortebuono noted of the gray daughter of Classic winner Real Quiet. "I did the pedigree research, looked at her races online, and was surprised when nobody else went in for her."

She admits to feeling anxious when one of her runners is scheduled to compete.

"When John (jockey John Bisons) came to the paddock he shook my dad's hand and looked at me. I told him 'I'm washing out. Leave me alone'," she quipped.

Aintnooilpaintin, claimed for \$7,500, returned to capture a starter allowance test on October 23 by four lengths with her mother, Beverly, as the owner.

"I call my parents the Phipps (after the legendary New York racing family)," Fortebuono joked.

Her morning begins at 3 a.m. and she can't remember the last time she took a day off.

When questioned about her last vacation Fortebuono took several moments to recall that it had been over two years ago. But that's life in this business.

Her training philosophy follows the "If it ain't broke don't fix it" school of thought, Fortebuono laughed. "But you have to train them, they have to be fit. You can't baby them. As tough as it is around here now you have to bring a horse over that's ready."

She envisions the day when she will command a larger operation.

"Thirty would be my limit. Forty would be too much. I did that for years with Corey Day and it's a lot of work."

Her training record through mid-January listed 11 starts with two victories, five seconds, and one third place finish. With her attitude and determination those excellent numbers are sure to increase in the coming years and she, like her parents, is completely satisfied in her present vocation.

"They like seeing me do what I love to do."

*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.*



**Standing two Top 10 Pennsylvania Sires!**

# The Winning Choices in Pennsylvania ... Wiseman's Ferry

HENNESSY – EMMAUS, BY SILVER DEPUTY

#1 Pennsylvania Fourth-Crop Sire

Current runners include **WISE DAN**, early favorite for Breeders' Cup Sprint, winner of G3 PHOENIX S against older horses (after a five month layoff); broke his maiden by 15¼ lengths.

Sire of 2009 PA Champion 2YO filly **LISTEN IN**

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 **TOCCE 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 msu 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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## PTHA to Help Philly Mounted Patrol

Recently, the PTHA and Executive Director Mike Ballezzi were approached by James Binns, attorney and consultant, and representatives of the Philadelphia Police Department asking for help in resurrecting the Philadelphia Mounted Patrol Unit.

The unit dates back to 1889, but was disbanded in 2004 due to budget constraints.

Currently, the Patrol has four horses that are being boarded in Chester County until a barn can be set up near Fairmount Park in the city.

"We are proud to be able to help in the reformation of the Mounted Unit," said Ballezzi. "It is our hope to work with them, and eventually be able to place one of Turning For Home's retirees into their patrol."



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## It's a Better Time Than Ever to Own a PA-Bred!

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# Aristone Wins 2010 Trainer Title; Armstrong Top Owner

Trainer Phil Aristone scored his first Parx training title in 2010 with 113 wins, just one more than Juan Carlos Guerrero. Jack Armstrong, whose horses are split between Aristone and Bob Mosco, scored leading owner honors with 136 victories, Guerrero second as owner.

December has been a month of milestones for trainer Phil Aristone, who just a year ago scored his 1,000 career victory, and more recently clinched the Parx training title on December 20 with Bird's I D.

Aristone, who has been training for his family-owned Indian Mills Stock Farm in Tabernacle, NJ since 1980, currently operates a public stable at Parx and comes from a family of horsemen. His brother, is retired jockey Menotti, and another brother, Rland, oversees the farm's operation.

Recently re-elected for his second term as Trainer Director of the PTHA, Aristone accepted PTHA Horse of the Year honors in 2007 for the Indian Mills-owned Speechifying.



**Jack Armstrong**  
2010 Leading Owner  
Parx Racing

Armstrong, who was Leading Owner in 2004, lives in Bensalem, where his home backs up to the racetrack. He is a fulltime owner, spending almost everyday near the racing office or on the frontside watching races. Admitting that getting attached to his horses has been too easy for him, he tries to stay away from the barns, preferring to watch his runners from the frontside when they are racing.

"Quite a few years ago, I had a horse called Five Tango Charlie," said

Armstrong. "He was the second horse I ever owned, and when he got claimed, I went and found the new trainer, and paid him twice as much to buy him back privately. It's tough to run a business that way.

"And I really think that betting on your own horses influences the way you manage them, too," he said. "I have enough money invested in their care and training. I need to be able to pay their bills."

"I always enjoyed going to the races," said Armstrong. "I started out with one horse and a job managing a pizza restaurant about 12 years ago, and I now have 20 horses, and this has become my business fulltime."

Armstrong has been working with Mosco for about 11 years, and in 2009 started giving Aristone a few horses of his to train. With about 90% of his stable made up of claimers, he says favorite part of being an owner is planning the strategy for placing his horses in the most competitive spots, although he does defer to his two trainers for final decisions.

"What I am most proud of, though, is still being here in 2010 and winning a second title," said Armstrong. "Philadelphia Park was a different racetrack back in 2004. It is much harder to win races here now due to the increase in money that is being given away and the tougher competition. Back in 2004, I thought it was pretty great for a guy like me to do that after just five years in the game. Now, I am just glad to win some races, pay the bills, and still be a part of it."

Both Aristone and Armstrong will be honored along with the top horsemen and horses at Parx on March 17 at the PTHA Awards Banquet at Celebrations in Bensalem.



**Phil Aristone**  
2010 Leading Trainer  
Parx Racing

## Health Care (continued from page 1)

### SYMETRA GAP PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Office visit	\$20	\$15	\$5
Specialist	40	15	25
Xray	40	35	5
MRI, CAT Scan	80	75	5
Emergency room	100	100	0
Inpatient hospital	250	200	50
Intensive care	250	400	0
Substance abuse inpatient	250	200	50
Mental health inpatient	250	100	150
Outpatient surgery	125	250	0
Skilled nursing facility	125	100	25
Vision exam		50	In addition to
Vision - glasses		100	VSP Vision Plan
Vision - contacts		75	coverage



# 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 2yo 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



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**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO PA STATE HORSE RACING COMMISSION**

January 21, 2011

Dr. Corinne Sweeney  
Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission  
2301 N. Cameron St. #304  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9405

Dear Madam Commissioner:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association and Pennsylvania Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association, we thank you for the time you spent with us on Wednesday. We believe the candid discussion with you, Mr. Tufano, Mr. Mushalko and Dr. Soma was valuable, and we hope it will not only lead to the resolution of the current situation, but also to a stronger working relationship between the Association and the Commission.

We would also like to recap the specific items the Associations have asked the Commission to consider in the interest of fundamental justice. We request that the pending positives for methylprednisolone, DMSO, TCO2, methocarbamol and carisoprodol be converted to warnings. This would apply to those positives which raise a legitimate question, for the reasons we discussed with you, that these horsemen did nothing other than use therapeutic substances consistent with the Commission's guidelines, veterinary recommendations and common and accepted practice.

We also request that the Commission establish a committee or working group, which would include representatives of the horsemen and private veterinary practitioners like Dr. Anderson, to regularly meet to review the real world impact of new policies and testing procedures. We believe this to be essential to educate the horsemen and avoid these types of issues in a world where rapid scientific advancements are increasingly clashing with accepted therapeutic substances, and leaving innocent horsemen in the middle.

We look forward to hearing from the Commission on these matters, and we very much hope to avoid the need to resort to litigation to protect the dozens of innocent horsemen who wait in the balance.

Very truly yours,

Salvatore M. Debunda  
President

***Thank you!***  
***To our loyal patrons for a great 2010.***

**In 2010, Webb Carroll graduates:**

- Won **261** races total, with **14** stakes wins, **5** graded
- **32** two-year-old winners won **38** races, **12** first time out
- **1** two-year-old graded stakes winner, **3** stakes-placed



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# Chaplain's Corner

**Chaplain Rick Bunker**

In one of the climactic scenes of *The Lord of the Rings*, the young hobbit Frodo laments the world he sees around him with all the tragedy and darkness that has befallen him. Looking at the difficulty in continuing on the path laid out before him, Frodo mourns, "I wish it need not have happened in my time." Gandalf the Grey, ever his wise mentor, consoles him with these words:

"So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. There are other forces at work in this world, Frodo, besides the will of evil. Bilbo was meant to find the Ring, in which case you were also meant to have it. And that is an encouraging thought."

All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us. I have often thought of this scene and these words as I look out onto our world. There are always crises of one sort or another that might make even the strongest among us pine for different times, crises that make us wish our journey would be a different and far more pleasant trip. The recent shootings in Arizona give us one such contemporary example. The randomness of violence upends any sense of security in a world that is far beyond our control. And this is simply one example of what seems to be an increasingly violent world. We long for peace and stability. But such is not the time that is given to us.

Given the instability of the world and the fear that instability engenders, how does one make the best of times like these? For many, flights of fantasy, wishful thinking, or simply burying their head in the sand offers a strategy for coping. Yet, even the desire to escape, through pleasure, distraction, or nostalgia belies a longing for something more, something different, and something better. These longings speak to us of what should be and can motivate action for good here and now with the time that is given to us. As Gandalf rightly counseled, "[T]here are other forces at work in this world... beside the will of evil."



When Jesus prayed what would be one of his last prayers prior to his crucifixion, he prayed for his disciples as he knew he would leave them to a task far greater and more difficult than they could possibly imagine. Did he pray that God would rescue them from the times they would face? Peter and others in this fellowship would soon be martyred as a result of their mission. Yet, Jesus doesn't pray that they would be saved from the world in which they were living. Jesus prayed, "I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to keep them from evil.... As you did send me into the world, I also have sent them into the world" (John 17:15-18).

Jesus does not pray for escape, but for purposeful engagement in the very world he also entered. In his life and through his example of purposeful engagement, he promises peace. Not a peace from escape, but a peace that came from his very life. "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Jesus tasks those who would follow in his way to mission, knowing that tribulation would find them there. He called them to purposeful action in desperate times through proclamation and action. "Let your light so shine...that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Like Frodo and the other members of the Fellowship of the Ring, it is easy to look around and see the peril of the journey in this world, or to think that the force of evil will triumph. The natural desire to avoid difficulty and pain and the longing for another kind of world distract the doing of good work in God's world. Yet, the longing for what is good, beautiful, and right for our world ought not lead to flights of fantasy or to wishful thinking. Rather, the longing for what should be can compel action for good into the same world Jesus came to long ago. Like his earliest disciples, with God's help, we can make the best of the times we've been given.



# The PTHA's TURNING FOR HOME PAGE

## We are "Pumped" to Take Our 500th Parx Horse!

On December 24, Victory Thoroughbred LLC's *Pumped* became Turning For Home's 500th horse entering the PTHA's retirement program since it opened its doors in 2008. It hardly seems that close to three years have passed since we took in our first retiree. Thanks to the efforts of the PTHA and the cooperation of the horsemen, the generosity of our veterinarians and PA Breeders, 425 horses are now in new, loving homes. Pumped, who is a 7yo by Petionville, retired with severe arthritis in her ankle. Seen above, the kind folks at New England Thoroughbred Retirement Center (who have nicknamed her 'Noel' for her Christmas arrival), fitted her with new shoes to elevate her heel during rehab. She is already a barn favorite!



## WHERE THEY ARE NOW...



**Henry R., PA-bred by Disco Rico**  
Adopted by SJTR to  
Shelley Heckles



**Moon Jam, PA-bred by Duckhorn**  
Rehabbing at Copper Kettle  
Farm, Pottstown, PA



**Razzledazzlerazcal**  
PA-bred by Victory Gallop  
Adored by adopter Maddy  
December 2010

## PHILADELPHIA'S WORK TO RIDE PROGRAM

Two of Turning For Home's retirees have made their new home at Chamounix Equestrian Center with the Work to Ride Program. Started in 1994 by Lezlie Hiner, the program offers equine activities to Philadelphia's disadvantaged youth ages 9 to 17. Polo has become a favorite activity for many of the teens, with the team being featured on HBO and in Sports Illustrated.

### JAYNE'S COMMANDO (l) with Sheree

Harris and  
**LOOKIE  
COOKIE (r)**  
with Shariah  
Harris, two  
fillies that had  
been placed  
into the pro-  
gram.



## SILENT AUCTION MARCH 17

In the past two years, Turning For Home has presented a Silent Auction at the PTHA's Annual Awards Banquet. The Auction has become one of our biggest fundraisers. Please help us by making tax deductible donations of items or services for the auction, or by attending the Banquet on March 17 and bidding on the many exciting baskets, paintings, pieces of racing equipment offered.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

**Uncle Mo and Repole Stable • Eileen Jumikis and friends of Charlie Burrows • The Zankel Fund • Dr. Tom Lurito • Dr. Jaime Arias • Dr. Steve McBride • Dr. Art Sitzer • Dr. Patty Hogan/Hogan Equine • Dr. Mark Ketner and the many owners who donated towards the care of their retirees**

TURNING FOR HOME, INC. IS A 501 c 3 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WHOSE MISSION IS TO PREVENT PHILADELPHIA PARK'S RETIRED THOROUGHBREDS FROM ENDING UP AT SLAUGHTER. Call 215-272-6716 FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A DONATION. WWW.PATHA.ORG



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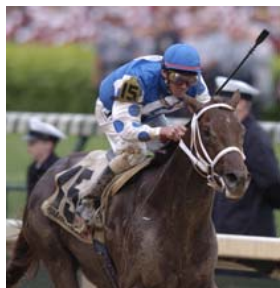
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