



# Spring 2018 Newsletter

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring ushers in the most exciting time of year on the racing calendar as we gear up for the Triple Crown and the season of highest visibility for our sport. As members of the TPA, our jobs consist of keeping racing on the forefront of our respective markets year-round, a task that has become increasingly challenging as traditional forms of media devote less and less space to cover our sport.

One of our goals as an organization is to provide support and assistance to its members in a variety of ways, especially when unexpected things happen. The devastating fire at San Luis Rey Downs last December was horrific in terms of equine loss, but also served as a shining example of how a community and industry from far and wide came together. Be sure to read TPA vice president Amy Zimmerman's account in this newsletter.

Amy, along with Jennifer Hoyt, are our two newly elected TPA officers and if you are not familiar with them, they each bring tremendous experience to our leadership group which also includes Joe Bacigalupo, Jennie Rees and Dave Zenner:

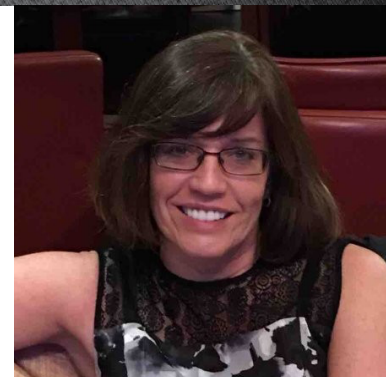
- Vice President Amy Zimmerman has been covering racing as a member of Santa Anita Park and NBC Sports since the mid-1980s, where she is currently the VP - Business Coordination & Director of Broadcasting and Senior Associate Producer, respectively. Amy has been a producer on 24 Eclipse Award-winning TV productions.
- Jennifer Hoyt is Media Relations Manager at Oaklawn Racing & Gaming and has held this position since 2011 when she and her family relocated to Hot Springs from Northern Kentucky

In addition, she is a member of the Kentucky Derby and Breeders' Cup Notes team. Hoyt has over 20 years of experience as a turf publicist and has also worked at Turfway Park, Gulfstream Park, Lone Star Park and Arlington Park.

The other articles in this newsletter recap some of our most important initiatives we do as an organization. We are also pleased to offer another opportunity for our Central Kentucky members to network and discuss topics of interest and ideas on how to better publicize horse racing. Our friends at Keeneland will again host the TPA for a regional meeting along with lunch and an afternoon of racing. We can't thank them enough for this opportunity – be sure to read the details in the newsletter and make plans to attend.

On behalf of myself and each officer of the TPA, we are here to help in any way possible and welcome your feedback anytime.

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## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

by Joe Bacigalupo

The digital world has taken over but if you are like me, printed materials still have their place on your desk or bookshelf. That is why the Turf Publicists of America (TPA) and National Turf Writers and Broadcasters (NTWB) continue to produce the handy Membership Directory each year. Its compact size also makes the Directory easy to take on the road or in the field when firing up your laptop is inconvenient.

The TPA/NTWB Membership Directory is loaded with contact information for individual members of both organizations. Arranged alphabetically by member name and in the case of the TPA also by association, the Directory provides member details such as email and physical addresses and office and cell phone numbers. It also includes a comprehensive online resource section that

includes websites for many industry organizations and a robust list of media outlets, complete with contact names and other details.

The TPA and NTWB create the Membership Directory with you in mind and hope that you find it useful in your role as an industry professional. Check your mailbox in early May for your copy. Additional copies will be available Kentucky Derby Week in the Churchill Downs Media Center.





## TPA REGIONAL MEETING & DAY AT THE RACES

Hosted by Keeneland

Join us on Thursday, April 19 for an opportunity to meet TPA members, enjoy a round table discussion and later experience lunch and an afternoon of racing at historic Keeneland Race Course!



We'll begin the day with a round table discussion on regional and national issues including social media and how to best use this platform to reach fans as traditional media outlets continue to decrease. We will have representatives from various aspects of racing to share their ideas and strategies they have found to fully leverage various digital platforms. We will then take a short walk from our meeting space in the Pavilion Bar to the track where we will enjoy an afternoon of delicious food in the Clubhouse and terrific racing. Don't miss this opportunity to network with other TPA and industry members, and enjoy an afternoon of racing, all of which is made possible by our friends at Keeneland!

Time: **10:00 a.m.**

Location: **Pavilion Bar**

Enter through either Gate 1 or 2.

The Pavilion Bar is part of Keeneland's Sale Pavilion located just outside of the track.

Parking available in the Media Lot, Row 23. Email Amy Gregory at [agregory@keeneland.com](mailto:agregory@keeneland.com) if you need media credentials.

### Lunch and Racing:

- Complimentary lunch in the Clubhouse and box seating for the races
- Cash Bar

### Clubhouse Dress Code:

- Suit/sports coat and tie required for men
- Attire of similar formality for women including dresses, pant suits or skirts
- No denim of any type or color or athletic clothing/shoes for men or women

### RSVP by April 12:

TPA Secretary/Treasurer Dave Zenner



## SAN LUIS REY FIRE - HOW A COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER AFTER TRAGEDY

by Amy Zimmerman

It is difficult to put the story of the San Luis Rey Fire into context. This was not just a story of apocalyptic loss. It was, and continues to be, a story of resurrection and recovery. Horse racing is all one family, a dysfunctional one for sure, but one family.

While the Lilac Fire that consumed most of San Luis Rey Downs on December 7, 2017, was completely devastating, rarely has it been more unifying. When the urgent plea went out – please help with the horses at Del Mar and help the people with donations to Santa Anita – the outpouring was overwhelming. From teenage girls from a Rancho Santa Fe tack shop who retired trainer Jenine Sahadi recruited in the first hours while picking up water buckets, to people from every alphabet organization – SAP, DMTC, TOC, CARMA, CTT, TVG, DRF, XBTB and their families, to people from the San Diego Zoo and Sea World, each and every person arrived with a single, cohesive statement: “I am here to help.”

At Santa Anita, hundreds and hundreds of people drove up to Association Gate in the days following the inferno with tears in their eyes, fresh from the store with new blankets, or bags of overflowing equipment. Their stories were all similar: “I haven't had horses in a while but I was keeping these for sentimental

value. These people need these (saddles, halters, shanks, fill-in-the-blank) much more than I do.”

Two days after the devastation, my son and I were unloading bags of donated clothing from a woman's car in Arcadia. She was well-dressed herself and her car was a newer luxury model. She asked simply “I grew up on a ranch in Texas. Do you think, maybe, I could pet a horse?” So we took her to the backside and into Matt Chew's barn. She stroked the horse's head, said a few soft words, thanked us and left. She just wanted to connect. It was a story repeated many times in the immediate aftermath.

After a few days, overwhelmed by the outpouring of generosity, the track stopped soliciting donations of goods. The volume was such that the task of trying to sort through what was sent to Del Mar and what was still needed was overwhelming.



As the last of the large U-Haul vans was loaded up for its drive to Del Mar, somewhere from the middle of the pile- buried deep among the bags of clothes, tack and blankets- there was the sound of a police siren from a child's toy. I knew that siren's cry, as it had caused me to pull over to the side of the freeway many times. My son had gone through his toys two days after the fire because "Mommy, the Dads have to have something to give their kids for Christmas." The guys who drove the van down Interstate 5 told me that silly police car was still wailing when they unloaded it at the stable gate.

From around the world, people donated not only their time and goods, but money. Nearly \$1-million in monetary donations came in, mostly through a Go Fund Me page that was set up in the immediate aftermath. Most of those funds already have been distributed, directly to those most affected. The limited funds that remain have been earmarked to help both the people and horses in the future. Some of those horses will never run again and they will need to be cared for too. What also still will be needed is psychological counselling for those who made sure that

the number of dead was limited to what it was. The reality of the tragedy is continuing to sink in and the backstretch workers who gave everything for these horses are still having trouble focusing on those who are living as they are haunted by the images of those who are not. For the Thoroughbred community, particularly in Southern California, December 7 will always be a day that will live in infamy.

When the fire started, approximately 425 horses were stabled at San Luis Rey Downs. Tragically, 46 of them perished. The number easily could have been higher if not for the efforts of so many who risked so much to protect the rest. The majority of those who were saved have been in training throughout the winter at Del Mar. As of March 18, at least 47 of them – more than the number of souls lost- have returned to the winner's circle.

The barns at San Luis Rey Downs are being rebuilt by The Stronach Group and the facility is slated to reopen on April 1, 2018.

## A RACING SYMPOSIUM EXPERIENCE

by Michael Adolphson

It is rare that you have a chance to be part of an event that gives you a vivid glimpse of where you are in your career, where you have been and where you wish to be — all simultaneously — but that is exactly what happened for me in December at the Global Symposium on Racing at the University of Arizona. Nestled in the stunning foothills outside Tucson, Arizona, such a setting created the perfect backdrop for gaining the ideal kind of serene clarity one needs when balancing between the processing of loads of new information and allowing the break from the daily grind to exfoliate the mind a bit.

As a proud member of the Turf Publicists of America, I was over the moon to be chosen to represent them when I would have otherwise been unable to do so. It is a testament to the TPA and its dedication to a family of writers and representatives who want what is best for the game ahead of personal gain and I felt a great deal of responsibility in making the most of the experience.

There were smiles in spades as I entered, registered and settled into my hotel room. I was lucky enough to run into an old friend, who introduced me to a new friend, and then a new friend, and so on, immediately, and all from aspects of racing that a publicist or journalist would rarely come into contact. It was exciting and worthwhile from the get-go at said cocktail reception. A few glasses of social lubrication later and my Riedel had runneth over with the connections made and I felt buzzed for the remainder of the trip.

Just prior to the Symposium, I found out I was taking on a new job as the Media Relations Manager at Meydan, so the natural concerns and red tape of moving across the world weighed heavily on my mind. I decided to cure it with, as I often do, "work," which meant intensely focusing on the tasks around me, making a to-do list and executing with precision. In this, at the Symposium I was luckily able to dive into panels I expected to enjoy, like "To TV or Not to TV" — where I learned a great deal about the idiosyncrasies

of broadcasting the Breeders' Cup (fresh on the mind, of course) from Peter Rotondo.

On the other hand, on Wednesday I was able to learn about the turbulent truths of sports betting and its possible effects on racing as we know it in "Is Racing Ready for Legalized Sports Betting?" It was equal parts fascinating and frightening, as one

can imagine anything that offers both opportunity and threat to the industry in which you have invested all your proverbial chips.

These opportunities and chances to sit down and pick the brains of people who were experts in fields novel to my grasp, but oh-so-related to my professional prosperity, gave me some insight into what I could do with such knowledge as my career advanced. How could I use the ideas and ambition behind expanded gaming to fuel my own coverage and promotion of racing and its many facets? How much is TV going to change, and like any other medium, will I learn to maximize its benefits in my own career and for my employer?

All in all, I left the final day of the Symposium knowing that I had worked very hard to get where I was, I was reveling in the moments around me that reminded me why I had done so, and I could pay these awesome instants forward into installations to fortify my future. It was the perfect work getaway, the ideal time to collect and expand concurrently and something that may not have happened any other way, and I am eternally thankful to the TPA.





## TPA BIG SPORT OF TURFDOM WINNER

by Rhonda Norby

The Big Sport of Turfdom award, which recognizes a person or group of people who enhance coverage of Thoroughbred racing through cooperation with media and racing publicists, was presented posthumously to Penny Chenery, the owner of 1973 Triple Crown hero Secretariat, philanthropist, and one of the industry's preeminent figures for five decades. Chenery, who passed away September 16, 2017, was recognized in December during the University of Arizona Racetrack Industry Program's Symposium on Racing and Gaming. On hand to accept the award was Chenery's daughter, Kate Tweedy.

"This honor is such an appropriate way to remember Mom's devotion to racing and to its fans," said Tweedy. "Like the TPA, she believed in sharing the excitement of racing. She would have been thrilled to be recognized once again in this way."

Chenery realized her ailing father's dream to win the Kentucky Derby in 1972 with homebred Riva Ridge. In 1973 Secretariat became a pop culture icon, and for the ensuing years Penny Chenery was a careful steward of the legacy of "Big Red." Always charming, engaging and quick-witted, she represented her equine champions with poise, elegance, eloquence, and excellence, and she also had a keen business sense.

Chenery was the first female president of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association and the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation. She became one of the first women admitted to The Jockey Club and helped found the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation. Chenery created the Secretariat Vox Populi award, annually honoring racing's most popular horse, as well as the Secretariat Foundation, which assists and supports various charities within the racing community. She received the

2006 Eclipse Award of Merit for lifetime contributions to the Thoroughbred industry, and in recent years, she advocated for laminitis research and care advancement.

The Big Sport of Turfdom has been presented annually since 1966 and Chenery is the fourth two-time winner, joining jockey Laffit Pincay Jr. and trainers Carl Nafzger and Bob Baffert, who won in 2015 as part of "Team American Pharoah."

"Mrs. Chenery was such an ambassador for our sport and was so incredibly generous in sharing of herself and the legacy of Secretariat all these many years to the media and fans alike," said TPA President Rhonda Norby. "It is most fitting that she was awarded the Big Sport of Turfdom a second time to bookend her incredible contributions to racing."

Last year's winner was Art Sherman, the trainer of 2014 and 2016 Horse of the Year California Chrome. Other previous winners include jockeys Mike Smith, Pat Day, Chris McCarron, Bill Shoemaker, Angel Cordero Jr., Eddie Arcaro and Gary Stevens; trainers D. Wayne Lukas and Jack Van Berg; as well as other individuals who have made significant contributions to the sport, such as announcer Tom Durkin, author Laura Hillenbrand, broadcaster Jim McKay, turf writer Joe Hirsch, and actors Tim Conway and Jack Klugman.

A complete list of past Big Sport of Turfdom winners can be found online at <http://www.turfpblicists.com/awards.html>.



## JADE EISENZIMMER NAMED 2017 TPA SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

by Jennifer Hoyt

Jade Eisenzimmer, a student at the Race Track Industry Program at the University of Arizona, was selected among several other candidates as the 2017 recipient of the Turf Publicists of America sponsored \$2,000 scholarship. She was selected by TPA officers and RTIP faculty.

Eisenzimmer, who will graduate in December 2018, is already getting a wide range of experience working in racing ranging from writing articles for the Paulick Report to working in racing offices. Over the summer of 2017, she spent three months at Canterbury Park in Shakopee, Minnesota, delving into what makes a race track tick during an RTIP internship. In the morning she took entries, in the afternoon she could be found in the paddock working as the horse identifier or paddock judge and every Friday she was up in the booth as a placing judge.

During the 2018 Rillito Park meet, Jade was the social media director, and considering she previously earned an information technology degree, the position was practically second nature to her. She managed all facets of Rillito's social image from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and even Snapchat. She spent racing days

bouncing around the track, looking for the best angle to get the perfect shot and always had her ear to the ground to get a good story on any racing connection. "Working under General Manager, Mike Weiss, and Assistant Manager, Scott Little, was great. If I have an idea or problem, they were so willing to listen and help me out. I really feel like I was part of a team."

Jade's experience also includes a week working for Breeders' Cup at Del Mar where she and fellow students were assigned as horsemen's liaisons. "Mike Weiss assisted in setting that up for us, it was an amazing experience and I'm so thankful for that opportunity."



Jade grew up around horses in her home state of North Dakota, spending any time she could in the saddle. When she was 12 years old, a nearly black horse ran away with the Kentucky Derby and right into her heart. "War Emblem really gets the credit for getting me into horse racing. I fell in love and never looked back," she said. Jade finally got the chance to meet her equine love during the summer of 2017 when she visited Old Friends, and in turn,

War Emblem. "I cried," she laughed "it sounds silly, but that horse means so much to me."

Jade plans to head straight to Kentucky to completely immerse herself in the heart of the blue grass as soon as she graduates.

## MARK KAUFMAN WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY TURF PUBLICISTS OF AMERICA

by Jennifer Hoyt

Attendees of the Global Symposium on Racing and Gaming were treated to great insights into the world of handicapping contests and how they can be utilized to promote the sport at the TPA sponsored Mark Kaufman Workshop, named in honor of one of the industry's hardest working publicists who died in 1995.

Former TPA President Jim Mulvihill moderated the workshop "How to Leverage the Handicapping Tournament Landscape to Advance the Sport" with panelists NTRA COO Keith Chamblin, DRF Chairman & CEO John Hartig and eight-time NHC qualifier John Fisher.

During the hour-long session, highlights included hearing

about ways handicapping tournaments can be leveraged to create player loyalty and increase handle. Fisher talked about how handicapping is better than other forms of gaming because the competitiveness among horseplayers is "fun." Chamblin explained that unlike other sports and entertainment venues, horseplayers are very involved and invested in racing and racetracks are missing a big opportunity by not promoting the players. Hartig shared the new dynamic tools the Daily Racing Form is using to create players.



## MEMBERSHIP

Dear TPA Members:

Spring cleaning time means your TPA officers are busy putting the final touches on the 2018 edition of the TPA/NTWAB Membership Directory. If you have not done so already, please submit your dues for 2018 as they are past due. You can mail your dues to my attention at P.O. Box 547, Hallandale Beach, FL 33008.

Please join me in welcoming Amy Zimmerman from The Stronach Group to the TPA board as a vice-president, and welcoming Jennifer Hoyt from Oaklawn Park back to the fold as they were each elected to serve a two-year term this past November. At the same time, yours truly was re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer for two more years.

The TPA is also pleased to welcome a slew of new members to our organization: Alexa Ravit, the 2016 TPA Scholarship winner who now works for The Jockey Club; Michelle Yu from Santa Anita Park; Meredith Downey of TOBA; Jodie Vella-Gregory from Breeders' Cup Ltd.; Grace

Clark from Kentucky Downs; Brianna Vitt representing Ellis Park; Amanda Duckworth from International Horseracing Federation; Gwen Davis from Davis Innovation; and freelancer Michael Cusortelli.

If you know of any prospective members, please encourage them to reach out to me at [davezenner@gmail.com](mailto:davezenner@gmail.com) for a membership application.

Best,  
Dave Zenner  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Turf Publicists of America

