



Summer 2021 Newsletter

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well... wasn't that just a year to forget?

For too many it was the loss of friends and family members and the traditions that bring us all together. Our personal and professional lives turned upside down and I imagine that everyone's perspective of what is really important in life has been forever altered.

Many of the traditional events held by the TPA went on hiatus such as the awarding of the Big Sport of Turfdom and the RTIP Scholarship award at the Global Symposium on Racing - as with other large gatherings was not able to be held in 2020.

Racing showed its resiliency to such adverse situations and in many areas continued with almost no down time. The sport found the way to carry on in a safe manner when others were forced to the sidelines. We saw smaller racing revenue grab headlines as they became "the only game in town." For all of those on the backstretches of tracks across the country, there was no option to work from home, their horses needed them, so this incredible community carried on.

It finally seems that the Earth is back on its axis and a sense of normalcy is creeping back in. Your TPA officers are looking forward to getting back to business.

As of this writing, the annual TPA Directory is already in your hands. A tremendous thank you goes out to all who have participated as advertisers again this year and allowed this incredibly valuable resource to be produced and distributed as normal.

In lieu of the spring regional members meeting, the TPA board is planning a webinar to be held late summer. Details will be announced at a later date but think of this as the 2020 Mark Kaufman workshop that was postponed. Your TPA officers look forward to bringing you the 2021 Big Sport of Turfdom ceremony and the Mark Kaufman Workshop in their normal format in December.

A huge thank you goes to our vice presidents for taking time from their busy schedules to serve your organization. These hard-working individuals include:

- Tom LaMarra, Communications Director for the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Managing Editor of the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association website and Coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred Championships
- Amy Zimmerman, Senior Vice President and Executive Producer for Santa Anita
- Kevin Kerstein, Publicity Manager for Churchill Downs
- Claire Crawford, Director of Digital Media at Del Mar Thoroughbred Club
- Najja Thompson, Executive Director of the New York Thoroughbred Breeders
- Dave Zenner, freelance publicist, racing official and keeper of all institutional knowledge of the TPA

Wendy Davis

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.



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MEMORIES OF ARLINGTON PARK

by David Zenner

Arlington Park has been part of the Zenner family's life for three generations (four if you count my young cousins). My grandfather was at Arlington on its opening day in 1927; my father spent countless days at "the track" on his days off from the restaurant business and even more so in his retirement; and of course, Arlington has been a part of my adult working life on and off for the last 35 years. To bring our family cycle of life at Arlington full circle I will be the one to hang the "official" light on what may be its final race in September.

My siblings and I all spent time at "the track" with our father – save for my younger brother who I swear must be adopted. Growing up, much of the time I spent with my father was indeed at Arlington. I could read the Racing Form by the time I was eight years old which probably didn't sit well with my second-grade teacher.

In addition, my mother's side of the family had an affinity for Arlington as well though not to the same degree as my paternal side. Mom's side of the family had a "Cousins Club" that met monthly and nearly every year one of the "meetings" was an outing at Arlington complete with a named race and picture in the winner's circle with the winning jockey.

As I grew older and got my driver's license one of my first solo trips was to Arlington as I indoctrinated many of my high school friends to the sport. I started to become friends with many of the "Red Coats" (guest relations people) and it was only a matter of time before I found myself part of the Arlington team.

My father and I attended the races on July 30, 1985. The following morning my father told me in the morning there was a "small fire" at Arlington. While on a break at work I watched the news to see the flames and then the roof caving in. I drove out there a couple days later and got right to the gate to get a close-up view of what was left. I thought for sure I had seen the last race at Arlington.

Of course, three weeks later I was back for the Miracle Million. My employment began the following season as one of the

aforementioned Red Coats. I began to forge friendships and relationships and even got to travel with the Arlington team to Woodbine for the '88 Million.

By the time the magnificent grandstand opened at the end of June 1989 I had graduated to the press box and looked forward to renewing international acquaintances each summer for the Million.

Among the early Millions, I will always remember watching John Henry nip The Bart on the line in the inaugural 1981 Million and Teleprompter capturing the Miracle Million.

Once part of the team some of my favorite Million performances were Chester House (2000), Powerscourt getting revenge for his '04 DQ by winning the '05 edition; the elder statesman The Tin Man ('06); Gio Ponti ('09); Little Mike ('12); and longshot Hardest Core in '14.

However, I think the most special moment I witnessed at Arlington was seeing the Dick Duchossois-owned Éclair de Lune win the Beverly D., the race named in honor of his late wife.

Arlington Park is an indispensable part of American Thoroughbred racing history and it will be missed.



Little Mike in Million © Four Footed Fotos



© Franchesca Le Donne

NEW YORK MOVES FORWARD WITH A FOCUS ON SAFETY AND CAPITAL PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

by Najja Thompson

Following what was an extremely challenging year in New York and for the racing industry, with the stoppage of live racing for 3 months due to the coronavirus pandemic, the New York Racing Association Inc. (NYRA), which is the franchise operator of Aqueduct Racetrack, Belmont Park and Saratoga Race Course successfully chartered a course to bring the return of live racing in June of 2020 following enhanced health protocols. Notably, there were tangible safety enhancements to each of their facilities to improve and protect equine athletes and jockeys on track.

Ahead of the Saratoga Race Course 2021 meet which starts on Thursday, July 15, horsemen were greeted to vast improvements made to the Oklahoma training track. The training track which routinely sees over 100 horses a day, has been completely reconstructed with the implementation of a limestone base, renovated surface layer and drainage system. The track itself was also widened by 10-14 feet to facilitate the increasing number of horses that train in Saratoga annually from April to October.

Another key improvement that was added was the addition of a safety rail installed to help enhance safety for exercise riders and jockeys.

“The renovation of the Oklahoma training track is an investment in the future of Saratoga Race Course that reflects NYRA’s ongoing commitment to safety,” said Glen Kozack, NYRA Senior Vice President for Operations and Capital Projects. “The Oklahoma will now recover quickly from summer storms resulting in consistent and high-quality training surface for horses and riders.

Last year, similar improvements were made by NYRA to the Saratoga main track with a safety rail and improved draining system installed. The changes at Saratoga also echo major renovations that took place at Aqueduct Racetrack in 2017, which saw the implementation of a new main track, a safety rail and two turf courses.

At Belmont Park, during the height of the pandemic in New York, a new hockey arena was added to the property as the new home for the New York Islanders starting in 2022. During that construction performed by an outside firm, NYRA worked alongside the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association and organizations such as the New York Race Track Chaplaincy and Backstretch Employee Service Team to create a safe working environment for backstretch employees, jockeys, horsemen, and NYRA workers.

“Hopefully this is the start of a decade of development and modernization of the Belmont site,” said Martin Panza, NYRA’s Senior Vice President of Racing Operations. “I know that’s what we are working on. There’s a lot of potential for things we can do there”

To that extent, NYRA recently gained approval from the New York Racing Franchise Oversight Board which would lead to the construction of a tunnel to the Belmont Park infield and possibly the installation of an artificial surface. Estimated at the size of 45 acres of land in Belmont’s infield, the opportunities are endless for continued improvements made for horsemen, thoroughbreds, and workers. What is certain is safety remains paramount in New York.



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MARYLAND HORSEMEN'S HEALTH SYSTEM

by Tom LaMarra

The Maryland Horsemen's Health System, funded by Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association and Maryland Jockey Club and staffed by MedStar Health, is viewed as one of the most positive and important developments in the state's racing industry and beyond since its inception in September 2015.

MedStar sports medicine physicians, some of whom practice family medicine, offer medical services free of charge to anyone employed in the care of horses, as well as their spouses and families. Under the program, a MedStar physician is on hand on all live Thoroughbred racing days in Maryland at three tracks: Laurel Park, Pimlico Race Course and the Maryland State Fair at Timonium.

Doctors are available primarily by appointment but also on a walk-in basis on race days, one hour prior to first post time and until the last race is completed. The MTHA and MJC created office space specifically designed for the MedStar doctors.

MedStar Sports Medicine is the official medical team for the Baltimore Ravens, Washington Capitals, Washington Wizards, US Lacrosse, and many collegiate, high school and recreational teams. MedStar executives and the doctors have embraced their participation in the racing industry and, over more than five years, have been instrumental in not only improving health care for backstretch workers but developing a program for jockey concussion management.

It is believed to be the only program of its kind in at a United States racetrack and is one of many services the MTHA provides to its membership.

Sal Sinatra, who served as president of the MJC from December 2014 through July 20 of this year and now is president of Equibase Co., was instrumental in the MedStar agreement. He said it "absolutely" is one of the most important developments in Maryland over the past six years.

"It's a model for the rest of the industry," Sinatra said. "MedStar has gone beyond what we expected. It started out with emphasis on the health and safety of riders but morphed into providing health care for backstretch workers. It was not in the original plan for them to have as much reach as they do, but we are very grateful for it. MedStar was invaluable during COVID-19—it was good to have their expertise on things to help guide us through it."

Mike Hopkins, executive director of the Maryland Racing Commission, said the Horsemen's Health System partnership "is the most productive and professionally run I've seen anywhere in the country." He cited individual record-keeping, availability of doctors to see patients on a regular basis, and access to the MedStar network for things that can't be dealt with at the racetrack.

Hopkins said most racetracks in the United States provide "what's required-minimum care." The Maryland program offers far more. Doctors perform pre-performance physicals for jockeys free of charge. And if one is injured, a MedStar doctor is on site to do an exam and the jockey isn't allowed back in the saddle until he or she has a clean bill of health.

A key to the program is an electronic medical records system MedStar uses monitor individual patients and their care. Diana Pinones, the racetrack office manager for the MTHA, works closely with MedStar, the patients and jockeys to ensure the system runs smoothly in a racetrack setting.

MedStar also helps organize annual health fairs—flu shots, bloodwork and other health screenings—on behalf of the MTHA, and earlier in 2021 worked with the MTHA and MJC to provide on-site COVID-19 vaccinations at Laurel, Pimlico and Timonium.

Dr. Frank Dawson, who oversees the program for MedStar and is an associate team physician for the Baltimore Ravens, said the relationship between MedStar and the racing industry in Maryland has been very productive. "I want to thank the racing community for really accepting us," he said. "As much as we are providing services to them, they have been willing to educate us about racing and the horsemen's community."

The other four doctors that regularly staff the Maryland racetracks are Drs. Jason Podhast, Kelly Ryan, Christian Glaser and Jeffrey Mayer. Ryan has been involved in national and international discussions on implementing concussion protocols for jockeys.

The MRC in 2019 approved a regulation that formalizes concussion protocol at the state's Thoroughbred racetracks. The concussion language states that a racing association shall adopt, have posted, and implement a protocol for education, evaluation, diagnosis, and management of concussion of jockeys which shall be approved by the regulatory authority; have available a medical professional trained in evaluating and administering the most current Sport Concussion Assessment Tool; and establish a return-to-ride guideline in order to clear a jockey who has been concussed, or is

believed to have been concussed, once the jockey is declared fit to ride by a medical professional authorized to do so.

MedStar Health and the MTHA in 2020 announced a new partnership with software company HeadCheck Health to launch an industry-specific electronic injury-tracking system with a focus on optimizing concussion safety and care at racetracks. HeadCheck Health created an electronic injury-tracking system focused on addressing the unique challenges of implementing and mandating concussion protocols at racetracks. A secure HIPAA-compliant system is designed to allow for clear and immediate communication of suspected injuries and rider status to help ensure that all riders receive appropriate care before returning to ride.

“This has been a very successful partnership,” Ryan said. “Those of us at MedStar who are part of the Horsemen’s Health System have been given an opportunity to learn quite a bit about the racing industry and we now realize how broad in scope it is. Interacting with the backstretch workers, many of whom work seven days a week, and establishing better practices for the health and safety of jockeys has been very rewarding. We like to focus on preventative health care and management—it’s very important.”

The HeadCheck system was later adopted by Delaware Park and Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course. Delaware Park also has an agreement with Premier Physical Therapists to have a member of the team at the track on live racing. Jockey-related safety protocols and data collection are part of the Mid-Atlantic Strategic Plan to Reduce Equine Fatalities.



AAEP ON CALL PROGRAM

by Amy Zimmerman

They are there for every major telecast, just off to the side, dressed up and prepared to answer when called upon. Except they hope they never get a chance to step onto the stage. For when they do, it means something bad has happened. And it then becomes the job of the American Association of Equine Practitioners' On Call Veterinarian to explain it to a national television audience.

Now in its 30th year, the AAEP On Call program provides a vital service to the Thoroughbred racing industry. In 2009, the program received a Special Eclipse Award for meritorious service to the sport. Best known for providing media trained spokespeople for the Triple Crown and Breeders' Cup, its impact for members of the Turf Publicists of America can extend beyond the broadcast industry.

“We are mostly known for providing someone physically there for the marque races,” said Sally Baker, Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the AAEP and the program’s coordinator, “but as broader topics on horse health arise, including crisis response and general statistics, the AAEP has the resources to help publicists put that information into perspective for the broader public.”

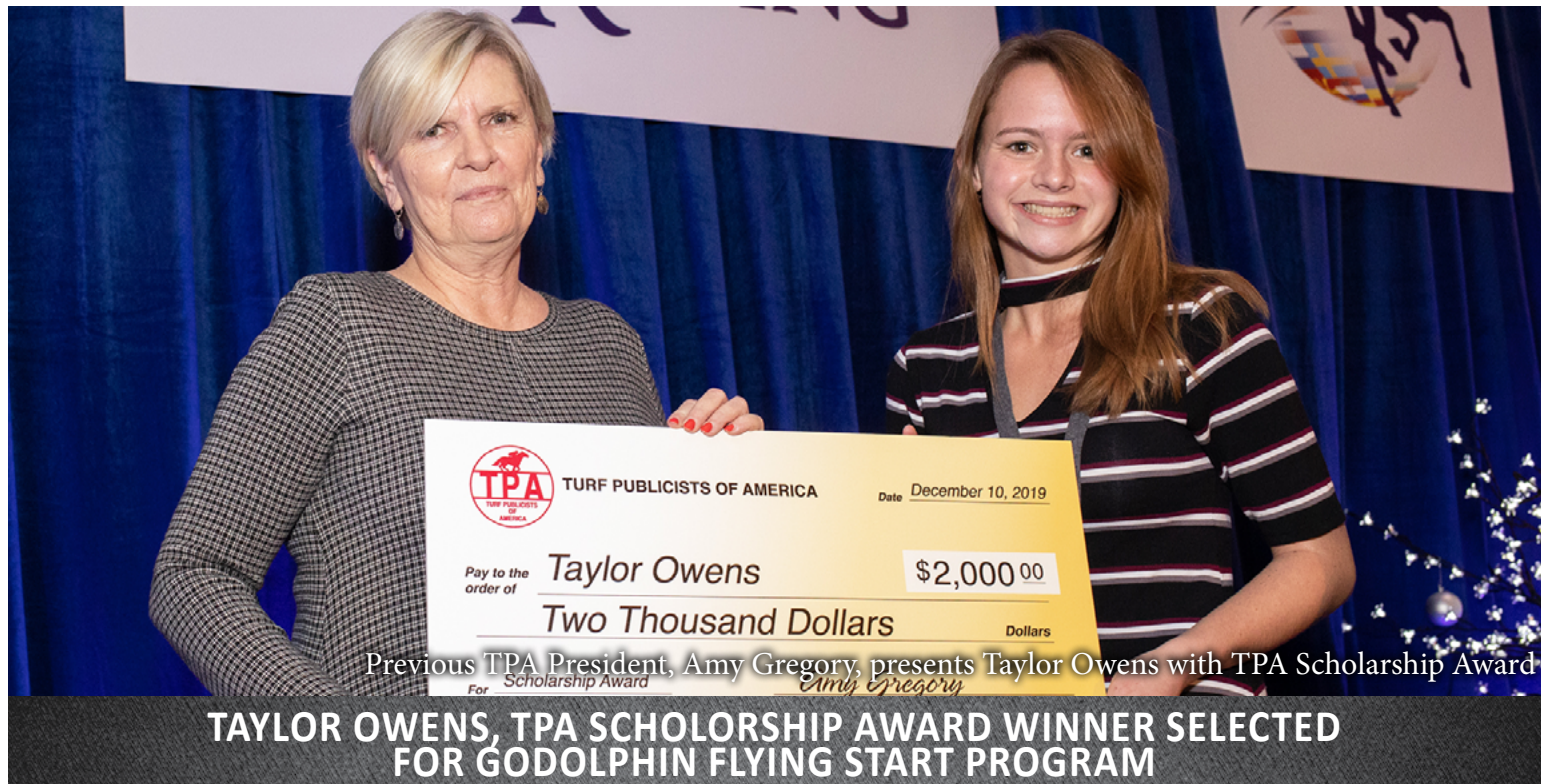
“Some tracks have a lot of assets, including state Equine Medical Directors, but many don’t,” said Baker. “We can help by providing a core group trained to answer questions, including when questions are traps. We have a prepared an FAQ on injuries in horse racing that has been distributed to our members. It was put together for our non-racing members to be able to proactively answer questions from their clients who don’t know anything about horse racing. It might be useful for TPA members to use that FAQ as a jumping off spot when crafting talking points for a wide audience and we are happy to help.”

The core of the AAEP On Call program, however, remains the television broadcasts. The unfortunate incidents at the 1990 Breeders' Cup precipitated its development and it became a network staple for every Triple Crown and Breeders' Cup race after a fatality in the 1993 Preakness.

For years, Dr. Larry Bramlage, perhaps the industry’s most respected equine surgeon, was the public face of the AAEP’s On Call program. Today, Dr. Bramlage has handed over the reins to several equine veterinarians nationwide, all of whom are media trained and all who volunteer their time to the On Call program. The time commitment includes not just the hours of the telecast but being available for production meetings to field questions from the show’s talent, producers and research staff on topics ranging from injury care protocols to medication issues.

These professionals provide a safety net for the production staff, with calming, expert opinions in sometimes chaotic and high-pressured circumstances. They are there for every big show, working hard to stay unknown. A show is deemed successful when the On Call veterinarian remains just out of view, never needed to make an appearance.





TAYLOR OWENS, TPA SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNER SELECTED FOR GODOLPHIN FLYING START PROGRAM

by Wendy Davis

Taylor Owens, TPA's 2019 Scholarship Award winner was selected as one of the 12 trainees from across the Globe to participate in the prestigious Godolphin Flying Start Program.

"I remember talking to Amy Gregory and promising to make TPA proud, cheesy as that probably sounds; but it meant a lot that they invested in my career as a student," said Owens. When asked about her selection to Flying start, "I still can't believe it, I don't think it will be real until I get on the plane for Ireland in mid-August."

It was just in 2015 when Owens became a fan of racing and subsequently joined the RTIP to prepare for a career in the industry. While in school, she participated in a number of internships and worked full-time while completing her degree during the COVID-mandated online only class requirements. Since graduation, she's been in Florida and Kentucky working for Jack Sisterson. "It's been great learning how a major racing stable operates; especially being a part of Channel Cat and Lexington's ramp up to the 2021 season," explained Owens.

The Godolphin Flying Start Program is a two-year management and leadership training program that specializes in the international Thoroughbred racing and breeding industry. The goal of the program is to recruit the most talented people worldwide and to

give them a professional training and experience unmatched by any other educational opportunity to produce leaders to work in existing and emerging markets thus contributing to the long-term success of the Thoroughbred industry.

Every aspect of the industry is presented during the course. Practical horse handling, as well as administration and management of racing and breeding operations, takes place at Godolphin properties in Ireland, England, Kentucky, Australia, and Dubai.

Management skills are presented in modules throughout the program including enterprise and business planning skills, marketing, finance, human resources, and technology. Public speaking skills are honed at conferences presented by the students and held in Ireland, USA, and Australia.

Visits in every country include stallion operations, training yards, sales complexes, racecourses, veterinary hospitals, and research facilities. Events students attend include the Goffs Orby Sale, Tattersalls Foal and Breeding Stock Sale, Kentucky Derby, Melbourne Cup, and Dubai World Cup.

In addition to the rigorous curriculum, the students also spend 12 weeks on externships between the USA, Australia, and Europe outside the Godolphin organization.

MEMBERSHIP

Dear TPA Members:

If you have not done so already, please submit your dues for 2021 as they are past due. You can mail your dues to my attention at P.O. Box 547, Hallandale Beach, FL 33008.

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

Best,
Dave Zenner
Secretary/Treasurer
Turf Publicists of America

