

Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association News



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
850 Michigan Ave., Suite 100 Columbus, OH 43215-1920
614-221-3650 1-800-353-6442 (f) 614-221-8726 www.ohha.com

December 2015

OHHA Annual Awards Banquet

Join us for the OHHA Annual Awards Banquet & USTA District 1 Meeting

OHHA Banquet Agenda:
January 23, 2016

Directions:

Saturday, January 23, 2016, at the Columbus Marriott Northwest Hotel

- The Stallion Auction will be held 10 am - 4:30 p.m. and the OHHA Banquet will begin at 6:00 p.m.
- Reservations and payment for tickets for the banquet must be at the OHHA office by Wednesday, January 20, 2016.
- Tickets are \$50 each and can be picked up at the Banquet Reservation Table. **No tickets will be sold at the door.**
- Table seating will not be assigned. There will be reserved tables available. If you would like to reserve a table please indicate that on your reservation form, below. Minimum reservation for a Reserved table is 8, Reserved tables seat up to 10.

- 1:00 p.m. USTA District 1 Meeting
- 2:30 p.m. OHHA Annual Membership Meeting
- 4:30 p.m. Cocktails and Cash Bar
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner Seating
- 6:00 p.m. OHHA Awards Banquet
- 9:00 p.m. Awards Banquet After Party. *Includes Entertainment and Cash Bar.*

From the North: Take I-71 South to I-270 West for 15 miles to Exit 15 (Tuttle Crossing Blvd.) and turn left. Travel two miles to Blazer Parkway and turn left.

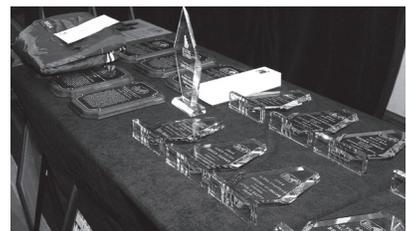
From the East: Take I-70 West to I-270 North to Exit 15 (Tuttle Crossing Blvd.) and turn right. Travel one mile to Blazer Parkway and turn left.

From the South: Take I-71 North to I-270 West for 15 miles to Exit 15 (Tuttle Crossing Blvd.) and turn right. Travel one mile to Blazer Parkway and turn left.

From the West: Take I-270 East to I-270 North for 5 miles to Exit 15 (Tuttle Crossing Blvd.) and turn right. Travel one mile to Blazer Parkway and turn left.

Location:
Columbus Marriott Northwest
5606 Blazer Parkway Dublin, OH 43017
Phone (614) 336-4705
www.columbusmarrittnorthwest.com

Room Reservations:
Columbus Marriott Northwest room reservations must be made by January 7, 2016, by calling (888) 801-7133 or via the reservation link found on the OHHA website. Ask for the OHHA rate (\$118.00) with group code Use group code HHAHHAA.
Rooms and rates are not guaranteed.



Conrad Photo Banquet 2015

OHHA Annual Awards Banquet Reservation Form

Columbus Marriott Northwest - Dublin, OH Saturday, January 23, 2016

Reserve tickets at \$50 each. Payment must be received by January 20, 2016, at the OHHA office. The main entree being served is Beef. Please note below if you prefer an Alternate Menu Selection.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Number of Tickets: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

Alternate Menu Selection: Chicken__ Fish__ Vegan__

The following information is only needed if you would like to reserve a table please fill out and submit the following (Minimum 8, Max 10 per reserved table.)

Name for Reservation _____ Number of People _____

OHHA Staff

Renée Mancino
Executive Director

Jerry Knappenberger
Special Advisor

Regina Mayhugh
Communications
Director

Cheri Johnson
Office Administrator

Linda Nance
Harness Horsemen's
Health & Retirement Plan
Administrator

OHHA Track Reps

Amy Hollar
Northfield Park
(614) 778-5905

Brett Merkle
Scioto Downs
Miami Valley
Gaming & Racing,
Hollywood at
Dayton Raceway,
(614) 354-1601

2016 Racing Dates

Northfield Park
Jan. 1 - Dec. 30
(221 Live Days)

Miami Valley Gaming
Jan. 9 - May 8
(86 live days)

Scioto Downs
May 10 - Sept. 10
(91 live days)

Hollywood at
Dayton Raceway
Sept. 12 - Dec. 30
(75 live days)

Important Dates

OHHA Quarterly
Board Meeting
January 22- 9:00 AM
Columbus Marriott NW
5606 Blazer Parkway
Dublin, OH 43017

OHHA Annual
Membership Meeting
January 23 - 2:30 PM
Columbus Marriott NW
5606 Blazer Parkway
Dublin, OH 43017

OSRC Monthly Meeting
January 26 - 10:00 AM
Rife Center
77 S. High St., 31st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

From Your Executive Director

Renée Mancino

Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Program

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association offers a wide variety of benefits to standardbred racing participants in the state of Ohio. In the August newsletter a synopsis of the insurance products available and in effect as of publication was provided. This month is information on the completely revised Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Plan (the "Plan").

Ohio law requires that a portion of amounts wagered on Ohio pari-mutuel standardbred horse racing be paid to the Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement, Inc., an Ohio nonprofit corporation (the "Corporation") to provide retirement benefits for men and women working full-time in the Ohio Standardbred horse racing industry. Ohio Revised Code Section 3769.21 provides that a horseman for purposes of the Plan is, "any person involved in owning, breeding, training, grooming, or racing of horses which race in Ohio, except for the owners or managers of race tracks." The Plan was established in 1988. The Plan is made up of four separate non-elective plans of nonqualified deferred compensation attributable from the Corporation to the services of non-employees. (the "Trust").

The Corporation is managed by an Administrator, appointed in February 2015 the current Administrator is Linda Nance. The Corporation has three Trustees nominated and recommended by the Administrator for three-year staggered terms, ratified by the Ohio State Racing Commission. By law the Trustees are required to be an active harness horseman while serving their term and shall have been active as a harness horseman for at least five years immediately prior to the commencement of any term. Horseman has the same definition provided for above; any person involved in owning, breeding, training, grooming, or racing of horses which race in Ohio. The current Trustees are Carl Wick, Daryl J. Sherman, and Jerry Knappenberger. Fifth Third Institutional Services invests the funds of the Retirement

Plan in accordance with the terms of the Trust.

In February of this year the Trust underwent a major review and was revised to update, streamline operations, and simplify the Plan for the Administrator and Participants. In October the Second Amended and Restated Trust revisions were finalized and ratified by the Trustees.

Eligibility

Under the plan there are four categories of participants with eligibility derived for each class, Driver, Trainer, Groom or Farm Worker. For each category of participants there are two thresholds that must be met to qualify for receipt of a contribution. The first threshold is to qualify to be a plan participant, to be actively enrolled in the Plan. The second threshold is to qualify for a contribution on a yearly basis.

The first threshold is triggered by participant application. The participant must complete and submit an application form by December 31st of the year they are first seeking to enroll in the Plan. A participant only has to complete the application form once to become a participant.

Once a participant has applied they must qualify by category to become active, whether that be as a driver, trainer, groom, or farm worker. For all participants the first requirement is to be a permanent and current Ohio Resident. The second requirement is also the same for all participants in each category; the participant must derive at least seventy-five percent (75%) of their earned income from the Ohio Harness Racing Industry during the year. The third requirement for Drivers, Grooms, and Trainers is to hold a current license from the Ohio State Racing Commission as of the last day of the plan year.

The last requirement for each category is specific to that category. A Driver must be a full-time harness driver with at least 75 drives for that year. A Trainer must be a full-time harness trainer with at least 50 starts for that year. Starts

and drives at County Fairs and Pari-mutuel Racetracks both

count towards that total. Grooms must be full-time and complete six months as a groom for and be paid by an Ohio resident harness horse trainer. Farm workers must be full-time and complete six months of service with an Ohio standardbred-breeding farm.

Once an applicant has met the first threshold for application and fulfills the eligibility requirements they become active in the system. Their account will remain active unless a later event occurs making them inactive. All categories of participation require current and permanent Ohio residency. The simplest way to become inactive is to move to another state changing residency to that state.

Contributions

Once active, full-time Participants must then meet the second threshold to be eligible to receive a contribution into their active account on a yearly basis. The second threshold is based on minimum drives (for a Driver), minimum starts (for a Trainer) during that year, or length of time employed full-time during that year (for Farm Workers and Grooms).

For Plan years before 2015 Drivers and Trainers received one contribution from pari-mutuel handle breakage at the rate of \$1.50 per drive or start in Ohio with a minimum of 75 drives and a maximum of 400 drives. Farm Workers and Grooms received a flat contribution of \$200. The pari-mutuel breakage contribution is in the state code and will continue to be applied going forward unless the law changes, the formula applied for 2015 forward is set by the Trustees.

For Plan years 2014 and forward, the Trust has been modified and VLT Discretionary monies may be used to provide a second contribution as allocated by the OHHA Board of Directors. On October 20, 2015 the OHHA Board



of Directors approved a \$500,000 allocation from VLT Discretionary monies for the Plan. On November 6, 2015, the Plan Trustees approved a second contribution formula for that money to be applied to the 2014 Plan Year.

For the second 2014 Contribution the Drivers and Trainers formulas were based on a slightly different minimum than the breakage formula. Drivers must have a minimum of 75 drives and Trainers must have a minimum of 50 starts in 2014. For the 2014 Plan Year the flat contribution to Grooms and Farm Workers that meet the minimum six-month full-time employment threshold is \$500. For the 2015 Plan Year forward the OHHA Board of Directors will first meet to determine the amount to allocate from VLT Discretionary monies to the Plan and the Trustees will meet to approve the contribution formulas to be applied to eligible Participant Categories.

A full-time horseman can participate under one or more categories. For example, a Driver-Trainer is eligible to participate in both categories if they qualify to receive a contribution for both categories.

By way of illustration, a Driver-Trainer ("Joe Driver") applied in 2014 and met the first threshold for an active account. Joe Driver completed 100 drives and 100 starts as a trainer in 2014. The minimum to become active in 2014 when he applied was 75 drives and 75 starts. Joe Driver also met the second threshold (minimum 75 drives and 50 starts), for a contribution, and he will receive two contributions to his account for the 2014 Plan Year. The first contribution was the breakage contribution of \$1.50 a start for each, or \$150 for the drives and \$150 for the training starts. This was already applied to his account in the first quarter of 2015. He also met the second threshold for the second VLT discretionary contribution, which will be made by the end of the first quarter of 2016. That second contribution will be approximately \$800 attributable to the 100 drives and \$1,000 for the 100 training starts. So the total contributed for the 2014 Plan Year to Joe Driver's account was \$2,100. For the same

plan year Joe Driver's actively enrolled and qualified Grooms receive a 2014 contribution of \$200 from the breakage and \$500 from the VLT Discretionary distribution. Enrolled, qualified Farm Workers for 2014 would receive the same contribution as the Grooms.

For a 2014 eligible participant the minimum second contribution for an enrolled qualified Driver with 75 drives is approximately \$650, the minimum for an enrolled qualified Trainer with 50 starts is approximately \$600. Each category's contribution increases incrementally by total number of drives or starts and tops out at \$10,000. An enrolled, qualified Driver tops out at \$10,000 with over 1,300 starts and an enrolled, qualified Trainer tops out with \$10,000 at over 1,000 starts.

That briefly summarizes qualification and eligibility to receive a contribution and provides a summary of the amounts that are attributable to each category. The next section provides detail on withdrawal, or "distribution" to a Participant.

Distribution

Distribution from an account to a Participant can only occur in three ways, (1) Upon Death or Permanent Disability; (2) Hardship Withdrawal; or, (3) Reaching Full Retirement Age. Distributions are taxable, ordinary income in the year of payment. The Administrator will issue an IRS Form 1099 to report the amount of the taxable distributions. Distributions are not eligible to be rolled over into an Individual Retirement Account or any type of qualified retirement plan.

Distribution upon permanent disability to a Participant occurs after certification of the permanent disability, and is made in substantially equal annual installments of the Participant's Account Balance over a period of five (5) years. The certification process occurs in accordance with uniform principles consistently applied and is based upon the written opinion of a qualified physician selected by the Plan Administrator. For small account balances of less than \$50,000 the Administrator has the discretion to pay in a lump sum to the Participant

Distribution Upon Death occurs in a lump sum payment of the entire account balance as-of the date of death to the listed Beneficiary on file. If there is no Beneficiary on file then distribution occurs in the following order. (i) spouse; (ii) child(ren); (iii) parents; (iv) brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews; and (v) estate. If there is more than one relative where distribution will occur, the distribution will occur in equal shares.

Hardship Withdrawal. A Participant who has completed five (5) years of participation in the Plan and whose Account Balance has accumulated for at least two (2) years may apply for a Hardship Distribution. The hardship shall be made in specific and limited circumstances, due to an "immediate and heavy financial need". They are limited to, (1) unusual and unreimbursed medical expenses, incurred by the Participant or an immediate family member who is dependent upon the Participant; (2) substantial expenses incurred by the Participant for acquiring a primary residence in which the Participant will live; or (3) the need to prevent the eviction from or foreclosure on a Participant's principal residence. The amount withdrawn can't exceed the amount required to meet that need and cannot be met from other resources of the Participant. If a hardship withdrawal is taken the Participant's account will not receive contributions for two years from the date of the withdrawal and will resume if the Participant meets the eligibility requirements for a contribution in the year of eligibility. Hardship withdrawal requests are handled under a strict protocol and the substantiation required to verify the basis for the need is extensive.

Reaching Full Retirement Age. Effective January 1, 2016, a Participant that reaches 65 years of age is immediately eligible to receive a full Distribution. If the account value is over \$50,000 the Distribution to the Participant will be made in substantially equal annual installments of their Account Balance over a period of five (5) years. For small account balances of less than

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OHHA Board of Directors

President

Kevin Greenfield

Vice President

Steve Bateson

Breeders

Senena Etsy
Scott Hagemeyer
Randy Haines
Dr. Randall Hutchison
Joe McLead
John Poppe
Ayers Ratliff
Betty Shaw
Brad Wallace

Owners by District

(1) Sue Stockwell
(2) John Ryan Melsheimer
(3) Mary Jo Bross
(4) Suanne Kochilla
(5) Dayle Roof
(6) Randy Leopard
(7) Steve Bateson
(8) Emily Hay
(9) Carl Wick

Trainer / Driver

Jim Arledge Jr.
Dan Ater
Brian Brown
Roy Burns
Rick Martindale
Scott Morgan
Virgil Morgan Jr.
Kent Sherman
Mark Winters

Track Directors

Miami Valley- Dan Noble
Northfield Park- Scott Cox
Hollywood at Dayton- Mike Polhamus
Scioto Downs- Hugh Beatty Jr.

Advisory Committee- Active Past Presidents

Richard Brandt, Jr.
Dr. Al Gabel
Don "Skip" Hoover
John Konesky, III
Steve McCoy
Dr. John Mossbarger
Daryl Sherman
Robert Sidley

**Congratulations,
Chris Page on your
3,000th win at
Dayton Raceway!**

Health and Retirement from page 3

\$50,000 the Administrator has the discretion to pay in a lump sum to the Participant. In the case of reaching full retirement age, which triggers distribution, if the Member is still active and qualifies to receive a contribution, any yearly contributions will continue to be made on an "in and out", annuity type of basis. If the Par-

icipant is on installment payments, the yearly contributions will be added as a lump sum to the installment payment. If the Participant had a lump sum payout upon reaching full retirement age, any further Contribution will be made to the Participant yearly as a lump sum.

This information is a summary of the Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Plan Trust in

effect as of publication. For the complete Trust, individual qualifying criteria, costs, investment documentation or subsequent changes, visit the OHHA's website at www.ohha.com or give the Plan Administrator Linda Nance a call at 614-221-3650 or 800-353-6442.



From Your Vice-President

Steve Bateson

As we approach the holiday season I reflect on this past year. I think about all we have to be thankful for here in Ohio, as it pertains to harness racing.

We have more racing opportunities than any other state in the union. We have four pari-mutuel racetracks that continue to push for quality races and more feature events that showcase our sport. We have many quality fairs that are looking to expand racing days at their fairs to accommodate the many Ohio breders wanting to race. Our Ohio breeders continue to bring in quality stallions and mares poised to produce some of the highest quality yearlings available.

I am thankful for OHHA's new Executive Director, who has been able to continue to transition our organization into this new era of racing in Ohio. The challenges have been many but progress has been made to show more transparency with our organization. I hope our members have seen some of this progress.

I am thankful for our past President's patience and persistence in working through the remaining contracts we had with our pari-mutuel racetrack partners. I am thankful that we have a new President that is willing to make the sacrifices necessary to assume the role of President of OHHA. I am thankful for all the OHHA directors that voluntarily take time out of their schedule to attend and provide input at meetings for the members they represent.

Most of all I am thankful for our growing membership. Without you our organization would serve no purpose. As always your suggestions for the betterment are al-

ways welcomed and encouraged. I was given some good suggestions recently at the Blooded Horse Sale in Delaware. This member and fellow director said "Steve, you know there are some things I don't like about OHHA." I asked what those would be. He said "I think too few make many of the decisions within OHHA". I agreed that many times decisions are made by the Executive Board which consists of ten directors. With a voluntary board it can be difficult get full participation timely on all issues. OHHA has expanded regional meetings to try to give members more opportunities to hear what is going on within OHHA and around the state that affects racing. He agreed progress was being made but felt more needed to be done to make members feel empowered to voice those suggestions. As we parted he said, "there are still a lot more things I like that OHHA is doing to help horsemen and our industry than what I don't like." For that I am "Thankful".



Sincerely,
Steve Bateson
OHHA Vice President

Harness Horsemen's Retirement Plan

The trustees of the Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Plan (Daryl Sherman, Carl Wick, and Jerry Knappenberger) are pleased to announce a second 2014 Racing Year Distribution to all 2014 eligible Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement participants by the first quarter of 2016. The Board of the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association approved and Ohio State Racing Commission released a \$500,000.00 distribution from the Horsemen's VLT revenue for the H.H.H.R.P. program.

Plan administrator, Linda Nance, will begin the 2014 additional distribution as soon as possible. The distribution will include \$500.00 for each 2014 eligible approved Breeding full-time farm worker and each 2014 eligible full-time groom. The driver and or trainer distribution will be per start for each 2014 eligible Ohio resident trainers who had 50 programmed starts at Ohio commercial race tracks or fairs and to eligible Ohio resident drivers who had 75 programmed starts at Ohio commercial race tracks or fairs. Any eligible Ohio resident trainer/driver who met the required number of starts in each category will receive a distribution from both categories. The dollar per start amount will vary each year, based on the total number of eligible driver and trainer starts each year and the H.H.H.R.P. funds available for distribution each year. If you have any questions please contact the Plan Administrator, Linda Nance, at 1-800-353-6442 or 614-221-3650.

2016 Harness Horse Youth Foundation Scholarship Applications Available

Updated applications are now available for three scholarships offered by the Harness Horse Youth Foundation.

Completed applications are due at the HHYF office by **April 30, but early submission is encouraged.** Log on to www.hhyf.org/hhyf-scholarships to access the applications and each scholarship's eligibility requirements and general information.

The scholarships, for students who are at least high school seniors, are awarded based on GPA, financial need, completeness of application and quality of essay (where applicable).

2016 P.A.C.E.R Stallion Service Auction

Make plans now to donate a stallion service to the OHHA Stallion Service Auction being held January 22 & 23, 2015 (during the OHHA General Membership - USTA meetings). Proceeds go to P.A.C.E.R., which supports the State Legislators campaign funds. To donate a breeding, contact OHHA office at 1-800-353-6442. Bidding is by phone on Friday, January 22, 2016, from noon to 4:00 PM at 1-800-353-6442 or 614-221-3650 and Saturday, January 23, 2016, from 10 AM - 4:30 PM at 614-336-4733 or 1-800-353-6442.

Ohio Racing Commission Meeting Recap

Regularly scheduled Racing Commission Meeting recap from Wednesday November 18, 2015 at the Columbus Riffe Center.

In normal business, the Executive Director's Report items included three and all concerned 2016 Racing Approvals. Hollywood Gaming at Mahoning Valley request by October 30, 2015 letter, Miami Valley Gaming and Racing by November 4, 2015 letter, and Northfield Park by letter November 9, 2015, submitted requests to (1) Waive their Surety Bond for 2016 race meets, (2) Approve listed Officials, (3) Approve the number of races and wagering format, (4) Approve Post Times, (5) Approve their Simulcasting Schedule, and (6) Approve their Letters to the Fire Marshall. There was no discussion on any submission after enumerating the list. The Racing Commission unanimously ratified all requests.

The Racing Commission also approved Resolution 2015-13 delegating to and permitting the Racing Commission's Executive Director to approve ministerial tasks without the Racing Commission needing to ratify. Those tasks included (A) Authorizing changes of racing officials, (B) Authorizing the uncoupling of entries, (C) Authorizing special event status, (D) Authorizing post time change, (E) Authorizing changes in wagering formats, (F) Authorizing simulcasting for specific programs prior to noon, (G) Authorizing approval of Host/Guest product lists and changes, (H) Authorizing extension of jockey apprentice weight, (I) Authorizing approval of fine money expenditures, (J) Authorizing change of a live race day, (K) Authorizing approval of payments to owners from purse pool for a cancelled live race day. All delegated tasks are to be summarized and submitted to the Commission at least monthly and the authority to delegate expires December 31, 2016.

In other business the Racing Commission considered the

appointment of the Simulcast Collection and Settlement Agent for 2016. The only applicant for this service was Northfield Park. There was discussion related to the fact that historically no one else has ever applied for or handled the settlement and collection except for Northfield Park. The Racing Commission had no other discussion and moved to approve Northfield Park's application as Settlement Agent. The Racing Commission unanimously approved Northfield Park's application.

In the Monthly financial report on the Racing Commission it was reported that revenues were down over 50%, this was due to expenses being up and revenue being static. The main expenses that were up included fingerprinting costs (up 63%) and medication and testing costs (\$80,000 up, year-to-date). There was discussion led by the Racing Commission Chairman to look at increasing the per-test cost currently being charged to Ohio Horsemen out of the pari-mutuel purse pools. The Assistant Attorney General and Executive Director pointed out that the costs per test were just increased July 1, 2016 to \$170 per Standardbred race and \$162 per thoroughbred race and typically that was evaluated and increased yearly. There was discussion on bypassing yearly increases and immediately increasing the amount charged. No motion or further discussion followed.

In the Financial Report the 3% tax on gross Casino Revenue was disclosed and discussed as applied to the purse pools. For Standardbred racetrack purse pools that included: Miami Valley Raceway \$75,711.11, Northfield Park \$326,934.34, Dayton Raceway \$75,878.98, and Scioto Downs \$117,878.98. Also included in the revenue disbursement were distributions to each of four permit holders for commercial operations of \$74,943.69 for costs or fees associated with racing, Miami Valley Gaming and Racing, Northfield Park, Belterra

Park and Scioto Downs.

There was no monthly status update on Permit Holder and Horsemen's Agreement Negotiations between Belterra Park and the Ohio Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (OHBPA).

An update on the horse racing fatalities was provided for October, the Thoroughbred fatalities were 3 at ThistleDowns, and 1 at Belterra, with no Standardbred fatalities. The year to date totals are, 26 thoroughbred fatalities and 7 standardbred fatalities, for a total of 33 fatalities statewide. Comparing from 2014, which was 47, the number is lower. In conjunction with discussion on the monthly totals the Racing Commission discussed a future Commission meeting that would be discussing nationwide trends for fatalities.

Dr. Robertson provided an update on the progress of the cobalt research announced at the April Racing Commission hearing being conducted in conjunction with Ohio State University and Analytical Toxicology Laboratory (ATL). The first portion of the research is a Phase I trial examining the Pharmacokinetics of cobalt using 5 research horses. Pharmacokinetics is the study of how a substance affects the body after administration through the mechanisms of absorption and distribution, as well as the chemical changes of the substance in the body. The Phase I trial research is geared to examine two specific points, whether there will be an increase in red blood cell production in equines or a clear performance enhancing effect in equine athletes. Now that the Phase I portion is complete the early research showed that the research horses had a rapid onset of clinical symptoms, hypertension, arrhythmia, and tachycardia. Transient effects included renal blood in the urine collected. For the next few months, data collation will occur to proceed to the next phase of research.

In the future the Racing Commission plans to have hearings

where they drill down on drug testing issues, have a Lasix primer, and there was discussion on the fact that the Racing Commission was asked by a U.S. Senator about Lasix use in Ohio and the Racing Commission formally responded to the Senator's request.

The final matter heard was a financial responsibility suspension brought to the Racing Commission by the Warren County Agricultural Society asking to enforce a \$4,760 Legal Judgment obtained against a trainer, Johnson Hill. The Executive Director recommended giving the trainer notice of a two-week timeframe to suspension to give the trainer time to pay the judgment. The Racing Commission moved to recommend that the licensee be sent a letter suspending his trainer's license if the judgment wasn't paid in full by December 1, 2015. The Racing Commission unanimously approved the Executive Director's recommendation.

The Racing Commission adjourned to an Executive Session. Upon the conclusion of the Executive Session there would be no further business so the Motion and Vote was taken to adjourn into Executive Session and conclude the meeting.

For a transcript of the meeting contact the State Racing Commission. The next scheduled Racing Commission meeting date was December 15, 2015, but there was discussion during the meeting that date may be cancelled with no meeting held until January. It was advised to check the Racing Commission website a week prior to the currently scheduled date for confirmation or cancellation. If a meeting is held it will be at the Riffe Center, 77 S. High St., Columbus, Ohio.



Horsemen Enjoy the Holidays

Regina Mayhugh

While it is true that horsemen are just as busy throughout the entire year, horsemen do find the time to enjoy the comfort of the holiday season with friends and family, even if they are not home for the holidays.

What are some favorite holiday traditions that Ohio horsemen enjoy taking part in or a favorite holiday memory? Many just enjoy the holiday season in general and the opportunity to spend time with loved ones as well as some time away from racing scene. Aarom Merriman, Northfield resident and driver enjoys the holiday for that reason. "I love the holidays. Just being with family and friends without having to rush off to race". Mary Jane Travis, from Columbus says, "I like Christmas time because I get to be around my family and friends." Mandy Jones of Greenville shares her tradition, "My parents own a restaurant so on Christmas Eve we give all the employees time off and just the three of us (mom, dad and myself) work. It's nice being together. Mom usually makes a cheese ball and we will have shrimp cocktail. On New Years day it's a must for pork and sauerkraut, which happens to be my most favorite meal ever."

Many travel for the holidays to be with their loved ones. Columbus woman Cindi Johnson shares her holiday tradition. "My favorite tradition is being home in Kentucky with my family. We keep it simple. We wait until Christmas morning to open presents. I have always handed out the gifts since I am the oldest. We've done this as far back as I can remember. Then mom fixes a big country breakfast and it's great," explains Johnson. Raymond Lance, Akron horseman, recalls family gift exchanges, "When I was little I always looked forward to it. You knew if grandma got your name you were getting pajamas or underwear and everyone always joked about it".

Some horsemen are unable to be with family and others go the extra mile to make sure that those around them get to feel that Christmas spirit and family connection even if they are away from loved ones. Jennifer Brown, Delaware resident who spends the winter months in sunny Florida, makes sure her employees and friends who are in Florida enjoy the holiday season. "For the past few years in Florida I have cooked Christmas Eve dinner for our family, employees and any friends not able to go back north. I also do a lot of baking and candy making for our employees", explains Brown. She also says the Christmas music starts on December 1st on every radio in her barn and house playing 24/7 "which really gets everyone in the mood, for about a day".

Regardless of what your holiday traditions are, we at the Ohio Harness Horseman's Association wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



OFRC Celebrates at the Second Annual Banquet



Many horsemen saw their first snowfall as they traveled to the Ridgeville Corners, Ohio to celebrate at the Ohio Fair Racing Conference's (OFRC) second annual awards banquet on Saturday, November 21, 2015. The American Legion Post #454 prepared an enjoyable meal. Bill Peters, OFRC Regional Coordinator and MC for the evening welcomed guests and invocation was given by Claren Osmun. Executive Director Renée Mancino spoke to those in attendance and awards were presented to Champion and Runner-Up two and three year olds in the conference as well as leading driver and trainer.

The champion in the 2-Year Old Colt Pace was awarded to **Haydensmoothmove**, owned by Rebecca Nichols and Curtis Shoup and runner-up was **Dashing Dubby**, owned by John Fitzgerald.

The 2-Year Old Colt Trot champion was **Fortunate Star**, owned by Brian Clark and runner-up was **Andi's Unreal**, owned by Norman Robbins.

Catscratchfever was the 3-Year Old Colt Pace champion, owned by Bill Webb and D&K

Stables, LLC. Runner-up was tied with **Final Retrieve**, owned by William Eltzroth & David Defilippo and **The Cone Ranger**, owned by Daniel Corfman.

Cooter Dunn, owned by Renee Bauslaugh, took the honors for champion in the 3-Year Old Colt Trot with **Crowned With Glory** taking home the runner-up award for owners EG Trot LLC, John Arnold, Mike Mallett and James Paul.

The 2-Year Old Filly Pace champion was **CC C Her Bibi**, owned by Greg Davis and runner-up was **Raiders Lastchance**, owned by Arthur Felton.

Sweet Adeline, owned by Michael Patalan and Delores Rinke was the champion 2-Year Old Filly Trot with **Lovin Jessies Girl**, owned by Toni Langhann as the runner up.

Juanita L took home the 3-Year Old Filly Pace award, owned by Melissa LeVan and runner-up was **Suite Feelin**, owned by VIP Internet Stable, LLC.

The 3-Year Old Filly Trot champion was **Defiant Victory**, owned by Michael Medors and Tina Sutermeister with the **Sunrise Misty**, owned by Darren Henry, as the runner up.

The Leading Driver award was presented to

Mark Headworth and Leading Trainer to **Ron Steck**.

OFRC would like to thank the following who donated a door prize for the evening's event: Big Dee's, Bill Serna, Williams County Harness Horsemen's Association, Hawthorne Products, Defiance County Area Horsemen Association, Phyllis Osmun, Hubbard Feeds, Jack's Manufacturing, Harness Horse Youth Foundation, Northfield Park, Protecto Horse Equipment, Silvi Rose Bears, Milan Center Feed and Grain, Black Magic Flexitite, David Swaney and Kevin Roche.

Special Thank You to those who sponsored an award for the banquet: Buckeye Classic Yearling Sale, J & B Feed Co., Kermit Peter Memorial, Silvie Rose Bears, Williams Co. Harness Horsemen's Association, Hickory Lane Horse Farm, Shiery Animal Clinic, Sean McGhee Financial Services, Molitor-Williamson Stable and Dr. Jason Kessen.

The OFRC Directors would like to also thank all the horsemen who raced in the OFRC Conference fairs and all of the fairs who host harness racing for continuing a viable tradition to the sport of harness racing. Looking forward to the 2016 racing season!

Miami Valley Raceway and Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association Announce 30% Plus Purse Increase and New Wagering Options

Gregg Keidel



As a new race season rapidly approaches, Miami Valley Gaming & Racing and the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association jointly announce a 30% plus purse increase from the prior year, which will surely attract an abundance of quality racing interests to the upcoming meet beginning January 9th. "It is a pleasure to see the loyalties of our Ohio based horsemen rewarded." OHHA representative Brett Merkle remarks, "It is refreshing to know our purses go up more than 30% as soon as Miami Valley's meet opens. It really gives the horsemen a serious race program to train towards." Helen Carlo, MVG's Racing Operations Manager reports, "our third consecutive year of higher purses is driven by the continued success of our property's VLT revenues. It is a pleasure to see our Ohio-based horsemen rewarded."

For the third year in a row, Miami Valley will be offering very aggressive purses and late closing series races. Race Secretary Gregg Keidel reiterates, "The infusion of VLT purse support has turned Miami Valley into one of the premier Standardbred racing opportunities in North America. A 30% plus purse increase over the prior year is a great mechanism to attract quality.

Veteran race maker Keidel, wasted no time in drawing the framework for Miami Valley's racing program. A total of 30 late-closing events for a wide variety of horses are scheduled throughout the season which will contribute to the competitive overnight racing that Miami Valley fans are already accustomed to over the lightning fast five-eighths mile oval. Other highlights include the \$35,000 finals of the James K. Hackett Memorials for Ohio-sired sophomore pacing colts and fillies, multiple \$40,000 divisions of first leg Ohio Sire Stakes races for three-year-old pacers and trotters, and a pair of \$100,000 plus Grand Circuit races for the continent's best pacing trotting mares on closing day and more. In addition to closer series and stakes action, day in and day out overnights will strike a balance between Ohio restricted and Open opportunities.

Trackman, Jimmy Shelton joins the MVG team supported by Jeff King. Jimmy comments, "people from the region are genuinely excited about the start of MVG's meet and I am thrilled to be a part of it." Shelton, a proven driver and trainer himself is a credible addition to the MVG racing team. Helen Carlo comments, "it is unique to have a trackman who speaks the language and relates first hand to feedback from drivers, trainers and horses. Jimmy brings horse sense to the position and our horsemen will appreciate his character in addition to the level of seriousness which Jimmy and Jeff take their responsibilities." The track has undergone recent preventive maintenance under Jimmy's supervision. Two inches of top dressing has been removed six inches above base and top dressed with a more pervious grade of stone. Shelton remarks, "this material offers more versatility in freeze/thaw environments and will prove itself at the timer." Trainers and drivers can look forward to a safe and lively raceway throughout the meet.

New wagering opportunities await including the addition of rolling daily doubles on races one through seven, a 50-cent Lucky Pick 5 (with an industry low 12% takeout) beginning on race eight and a 10-cent Buckeye Hi-5 on the twelfth. The latter two new wagers have carry over provisions until a winning ticket is sold which potentially creates rewarding jackpot pools which attract new interests. The Lucky Pick 5 cascades into Pick 4 and Pick 3 opportunities as well.

A dress rehearsal session including non-betting qualifying races will prime the action on Wednesday, January 6th with a 2:05 post time. The track will be open for training hours from January 4th to January 8th from 7:30am—11:30am.

HOLLYWOOD DAYTON TO PRESENT "BUCKEYES VS. HOOSIERS SHOWDOWN"

Gregg Keidel



Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway will present its first-ever drivers contest on Tuesday night, December 15, when the top dash-winning drivers from Hoosier Park will square off against the top dash-winners at the current Hollywood Dayton meet. Representing Hoosier will be Trace Tetrick, Tyler Smith, Lawayne Miller and John DeLong, who were the top four in the standings at the recently-concluded 2015 Hoosier Park meet, and who all plan to make Dayton their winter homes. The top four Dayton drivers as of December 9, will form the home team. Currently those spots are held by Kayne Kauffman, Josh Sutton, Chris Page and Dan Noble. A fifth driver will be added to each squad, but only compete in half of the six races contemplated for the contest, making full nine-horse fields possible.

A point system will be announced soon to determine how the winning team, which will divide \$2000 in bonus driver's fees, will be determined. The losing team will divide \$500 for their efforts.

Six races will be designated on the condition sheet as "Hoosiers vs Buckeyes" events. Each team will have either odd or even numbered post positions in half of the six races, with the horses randomly drawn into post positions with pre-assigned drivers. None of the driver contestants will be permitted to enter horses from their own training stable in the challenge events.

The December 15 program is the first of three added Tuesday cards during the closing weeks of the 2015 Hollywood Dayton live racing season. Post time is 6:35 p.m.

Regional OHHA Meetings

The five 2015 regional OHHA meetings concluded December 8, at the Warren County Fairgrounds. These meetings served as a review of Ohio's harness racing industry issues as well as an opportunity to discuss fair racing with Ohio fair boards and horsemen. We hope these meetings were educational for you and provided some ideas on how we can continue to improve the Ohio's racing industry. If at any time throughout the year you have questions and/or have ideas on how we can better promote the harness racing industry, please be sure to contact your regional OHHA director or the OHHA office. Thank you to everyone who participated! We are looking forward to the new year!



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
 850 Michigan Avenue, Suite 100
 Columbus, Ohio 43215-1920



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as of Dec. 1, 2015

P.A.C.E.R.: Ohio horse racing received great support from Governor Kasich and Ohio legislators with the enactment of House Bill #386 (HB386). We must support those legislators who support us.

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**P.A.C.E.R 850 Michigan Ave
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All P.A.C.E.R. donations go to a candidate's campaign funds.

The OHHA offices receive calls every week from state legislators asking for campaign donations as they attempt to raise campaign financing throughout the year.

A special Thank You to those who donate!