



OHHA NEWS



**BREED, BUY &
RACE IN OHIO!
OHIO IS FOR
WINNERS!**

February 2019

Ohio Horsemen Approve Donation to Standardbred Transition Alliance

By Ohio Standardbred Transition Alliance

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association has approved a donation of \$150,000 to the newly formed Standardbred Transition Alliance.

The donation is the first by a horsemen's association. The STA, formed in 2018, will accredit and grant supplemental operating funds to groups that provide transition services for Standardbreds who are retiring from the sport and transitioning to a new role. The group expects to accredit and grant to 501(c)(3) organizations serving Standardbreds by the end of this year.

"Ohio has become a national leader in breeding and racing Standardbreds," said Kevin Greenfield, outgoing president of the OHHA and a founding board member of the STA. "The OHHA board recognizes that, as an industry leader, it needs to be at the forefront of spearheading support for a uniform effort with respect to equine aftercare."

"The entire STA board extends our thanks and appreciation to the OHHA for its financial commitment and confidence in our work," said STA President David Reid. "Ohio is an important part of our industry and we are grateful they have taken this leadership position. We are working to develop a broad-based platform of support for STA. Our accreditation process will ensure that groups exercise sound business practices and equine care to the benefit of our horses and horsemen."

Ohio Ladies Pace Gets New Name & Sponsorship

By Emily Hay

New for 2019, The Ohio Ladies Pace will now be named Spring Haven Farm Lady Driving Series. HUGE Thanks to Spring Haven Farm for sponsoring the event. The thought behind the rename will help with confusion at the Jug with the Ohio Lady Pace event, but the sponsorship is much more than a name change.

The first five ladies to enter races in the Spring Haven Farm Ladies Driving Series at Ohio Fairs this year will have their entry fees covered. By providing this incentive, we are hoping entires will be in sooner and more races will fill. In the past, there have been some races that we have a hard time filling and make several phone calls begging for horses. We hope this will eliminate some of that.

There is also a new condition in place. The horse entered could not have raced in a base claim of more than \$6,000.00 in its last 6 starts or a with a purse higher than \$5,000.00 in its last 6 starts AE 5 claimer. As always the hosting Fair has a right to make the race condition what ever they would like. This suggestion was brought up following the final race at Delaware and what we are suggesting to fairs.

Fairs may also have a Trot, Pace or both events if they choose. Ladies will only get points for highest scoring race if they race in 2 races at any Spring Haven Farm Ladies Driving Series at a single Fair. If a fair hosts both a Trot and Pace race any lady driver that races in both will only get points for whichever race they placed highest in.

The new condition will make races a more even field and hopefully make betting even better. Be sure to watch for more updates as we have more planned for the summer fair season.



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association

2237 Sonora Dr. | Grove City, OH 43123 | 614-221-3650 | www.ohha.com | Facebook: OhioHarnessHorsemensAssociation

2019 Racing Dates

Northfield Park
Jan. 1- Dec. 30

Miami Valley Gaming
Jan 4- May 6

Eldorado Scioto Downs
May 7- Sept. 7

Hollywood at Dayton
Raceway
Sept. 10- Dec. 28

Upcoming OHHA Board Meetings

April 25th

2nd Quarter OHHA Board Mtg
at OHHA Office.

July 11th

3rd Quarter OHHA Board Mtg
at OHHA Office.

Members are always welcome for lunch and to attend board meeting general session at noon. Please RSVP by calling the OHHA office at 614-221-3650

Dates to Remember

February 12-13

Blooded Horse Sale
Champions Center
Springfield, OH

February 27

Ohio Racing Commission Meeting
Riffe Center
77 S High St.
Columbus, OH 43215
www.racingohio.net

March 15

Ohio Nominations are due. Staking Guide will be mailed to all members & are on-line at ohha.com.

Sheila Napier Named Caretaker Of The Year

By Hard Rock Racino Northfield Park / USHWA

Sheila Napier, who works in the Chris Beaver Stable, has been named the recipient of the 2018 Caretaker of the Year Award sponsored by Hard Rock Racino Northfield Park (HRRNP) in conjunction with the U.S. Harness Writers Association (USHWA).

Napier, 37, has worked for Beaver for three years, and in 2018 her horses included the \$500,000-winning 3-year-old filly trotter Custom Cantab. She also had four horses that made the Ohio Sires Stakes championship card at Scioto Downs, including three in the 2-Year-Old Filly Trot. Prior to working for Beaver, Napier's 10-year stint with Ron Potter included being the caretaker of the 2011 Little Brown Jug winner Big Bad John.

"I've always read about this award and this is really great," said Napier, a native of Cincinnati whose first job working with horses came while in high school in 1995 at the Delaware (Ohio) Equine Lab. "I've been doing this for a long time and something I looked forward to as far as possibly getting, but maybe in Ohio and not this big."

All caretakers in North America were eligible for the award, with nomination letters submitted detailing the skills and special qualities of the nominee. A seven-member USHWA panel

— all of whom were former caretakers themselves — selected Napier as the winner.

Beaver nominated Napier, and in his letter he noted, "Sheila takes unrivaled pride in the condition of her horses. I can rest at ease when she has a horse racing. I know it will get on the road on time and will be wearing all the right equipment, even if I can't make it.

"Her horses are never shorted on the care that I expect for them and that is required," added the Ohio-based Beaver, who also winter trains at Spring Garden Ranch in Florida. "She can't stay away from her horses. She truly loves them and takes incredible pride in their accomplishments. My life would be a lot easier if more grooms brought the passion into their work that Sheila has."

Napier said she usually has at least eight horses under her care in the Beaver barn, and it was Custom Cantab who was the star in 2018. Included among Custom Cantab's 13 wins were the Indiana Sires Stakes Super Final at Hoosier Park and the season-ending Matron at Dover Downs.

"Oh, that filly," said Napier, whose travels always include her 11-year-old daughter Jess. "Custom Cantab is one



of those special little fillies that wants to finish in the top three her whole life. She's quite sassy, amazing and full of heart. I absolutely love that filly; she is very special."

As winner of the HRRNP Caretaker of the Year Award, Napier will receive a cash prize of \$500, transportation, hotel accommodations and two tickets to USHWA's annual Dan Patch Awards banquet on Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort in Orlando, where she will be presented a trophy.

Napier, along with all the USHWA 2018 award winners, will be recognized during the Dan Patch Awards banquet. Information on accommodations at Rosen Shingle Creek and dinner tickets can be found at www.ushwa.net.

OHHA Advertising Opportunities

Stallion ads available for both the Spring and Winter issues as well as Stallion Directory. Holiday ads will also be available in the Winter issue. Reservation forms can be found on the OHHA website <https://ohha.com> under News & Publications.

2019 Publication Schedule and Advertising Deadlines:

Summer- June: Ads due April 30th

Fall- September: Ads due July 30th

Winter- December: Ads due October 30th

Stallion Directory: Ads due November 15th

OHHA Sends our condolences to friends and families of Dean & Steven Beachy, Esther Mae Crownover, Brad Haynes, Nancy Ratliff, Michael Senter & James Shipley.

OHHA Office Staff

Renée Mancino
Executive Director

Cheri Johnson
Office Administrator

Deborah Martinez-Morales
Senior Accountant

Regina Mayhugh
Communications Director

Linda Nance
Benefits Administrator

Susan Schroeder
Project Coordinator

Amy Hollar
Northfield Park
(614) 778-5905

OHHA Track Reps

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

Ohio Track News



Congratulations!

Miami Valley held its third annual \$25,000 North America Drivers Championship at Miami Valley Sunday, January 6 through Tuesday, January 8. The top ten drivers were (Top photo on left L-R) Jeremy Smith, Dan Noble, Drew Monti, Anthony Napolitano, Joe Bongiorno, Dexter Dunn, Travis Henry, Randy Tharps, Aaron Merriman, Brett Miller. Dan Noble won the Championship (Bottom photo on left L-R Helen Carlo, Dan Noble, Christi Noble and Gregg Keidel). Both photos by Conrad Photo.

Aaron Merriman drove Brooklynite to the winner's circle January 16th at Northfield Park, earning his 11,000th win putting his earnings at over \$72,000,000! (Bottom) Photo by JJ Zamaiko Photography, Inc.



Ohio Fair News

Hagemeyer Inducted Into the Ohio Fair Managers Association (OFMA) Hall Of Fame

from OFMA Press Release

The Ohio Fair Managers is proud to announce the induction of Mel Hagemeyer on January 6th at the 2019 OFMA Convention.

The Hagemeyer Family has contributed to the Fair community in Warren County for over 60 years. Mel Hagemeyer has been on the Warren County Agricultural Society Board since 2002, when his father, Maynard, retired from the Fair Board after 42 years of service.

Mel worked at the Lebanon Raceway 45 years, serving as Program Director, Mutual clerk, Paddock judge, Director of operations, and since 1992, general manager. This became a way of life," he said. "It was a 24 hours a day, seven days a week job." Lou Carlo, mutual manager at Lebanon Raceway, 79, called Hagemeyer "the greatest" and said without his tireless work the track would have closed years ago.

He took over the Fair racing program following Keith Nixon, Corwin Nixon's son, and served as the

Harness Racing superintendent for 12 years and owns several brood mares. Mel has also been the Open Class Superintendent of Antique Tractors, Competitive Arts, Baked Goods, and Horticulture.

For the last five years, Hagemeyer was one of the driving forces behind getting video terminals legalized at Ohio's horse tracks. He said the electronic slot machines at the tracks will provide the revenue that will save the horse racing industry in the state. He said Lebanon had lost 10 percent of its revenue for the last several years and the track would have "gone under" in the next couple of years without the video terminals. The slots are "a big shot in the arm," he said.

When Mel was in 4-H, he was on the Junior Fair Board. He was also a "hog man." Back in the good ole' days, he said that he would park in a pickup truck with a cover next to the brick maintenance building for a week during the fair.

Mel is a member of the Optimist, Shrine, Masonic Lodge, and Scottish Rites Lodge. He will receive his 50-year pin next year for the Masonic Lodge. He is a past president and current member of the Ohio Valley Standard Bred Association, the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association, and the United States



Jon Overmyer, Ohio Fair Managers Past President and Hall of Fame member of the Ohio Fairs Participating Plan presents the Hall of Fame award to Mel Hagemeyer.

Trotting Association.

Mel is also a past Director for Harness Tracks of America. Mel is actively involved in the multi-generational operation of Hagemeyer Farms in Clarksville, OH. Mel has been married to Pam for 34 years. They have 4 children: Scott, Tiffany, Steven and Cheryl. They have 5 grandchildren, ages 1 year old – 27 years.

We are so grateful to Mel for his years of commitment to the people of Warren County, to the harness racing industry and to the Warren County Fair.

Ohio Horsemen Celebrate 2018

By Regina Mayhugh

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association and the USTA District 1 Meeting were both held Saturday, January 19th at the Marriott Inn University Area Columbus. Despite the cold and blustery weather, the hotel was full of excitement with the schedule of activities keeping horsemen busy the entire day.

The day time activities included H.H.H.R.P. Retirement Meeting, USTA Director's Luncheon, USTA District 1 meeting, OHHA Annual Membership, First Lady's Luncheon and the P.A.C.E.R. Stallion Service Auction.

The ladies who attended the **First Lady's Luncheon** were treated with a presentation by Lindsey Beggin of the Ronald McDonald House, sharing information and photos about the organization. Following lunch was a gift exchange, courtesy of the talented duo of Ann and Ray Lufkin. For the afternoon activity, the ladies made Welcome Blankets to be sent back to the house for families. Donations were also collected, such as toys for children and various supplies to help run the house. Did you know the Ronald McDonald House is run by volunteers and donated items? The ladies were thrilled to be a part of supporting a great organization.

The **P.A.C.E.R. Stallion Service Auction** was underway all day. The auction began January 5th online and closed January 19th. Bidding was also available by phone on January 19th. The auction generated over \$100,000 to be used toward legislative efforts throughout the year. Thank you to both the donors and bidders for making this a successful event!

Those who were not already enjoying the events throughout the day arrived for the cocktail hour to socialize and catch up with fellow horsemen, friends and other guests. Also, in attendance were guests from other industries and Ohio legislators. Guests who attended the cocktail

hour were in for a treat as appetizers were added to the event and enjoyed by all.

The guests filtered into the banquet room, beautifully designed in red and black and tables set with centerpieces designed by Ann and Ray Lufkin. Each guest also received a harness racing mug. Keith Gisser was the MC for the evening. Gisser welcomed everyone and made introductions.

Skip Hoovler introduced the **newly elected OHHA Directors- Breeders Section: Scott Hagemeyer, Randy Hutchinson and Jacob Mossbarger. Trainers/Drivers Section: Jim Arledge Jr., Chris Beaver and Roy Burns. Owners Section: Randy Leopard (District 3), Kent Saunders (District 9) and Mary Jo Bross (District 6). Steve Bateson is the new OHHA President and Randy Leopard the new Vice president.**

Skip Hoovler made remarks concerning the USTA and Kevin Greenfield thanked everyone for support during his years as President of OHHA. Kevin then introduced Steve Bateson who outlined some of his ideas for the future.

The **Jerry Kaltenbach Memorial Awards** were presented by Richard McClelland to trainer Brian Brown and driver Ronnie Wrenn. Brian Brown presented the Ohio Outstanding Groom Award to Dan Trent. The Terry Holton Youth Award was presented to Nathan Davis by Ohio Racing Commission Chairman Robert Schmitz, OHHA Board Member Mary Jo Bross and family members of Terry Holton family.

Three generations of the Hagemeyer Family (Mel, Scott and Lyndsay Hagemeyer) presented a new award, the **Maynard and Stella Hagemeyer Significant Contribution Award** to Jim Buchy.

The next OHHA award drew quite a surprise for Kevin Greenfield when OHHA Director Skip Hoovler called him to the stage to receive the **Dr. John P. Stevens Humanitarian Award**. Greenfield was joined by his wife Nancy and past recipients of the award.

Ayers Ratliff presented the United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA) awards next. **The Peter Haughton Memorial** was presented to Trevor Smith, **Winners Circle** to Aaron Merriman, **Rambling Willie** to Dave Bianconi, **Immortal of Ohio Harness Racing Hall of Fame** Pius Soehnen and the **Ohio Harness Racing Hall of Fame** Tom Brinkerhoff.

Tammy Hoovler provided the invocation



OHHA President Steve Bateson (L) and Past President Kevin Greenfield (R) present Horse of the Year to owners of Lather Up-Gary and Barbara Isles (middle).

then dinner was served.

Following dinner, the horse award presentations began. **The Harness Standardbred Hall of Fame** was presented by Ayers Ratliff to owners of First Breath (Hold Your Breath-Ellen's Jilly). First Breath was owned by Duane Lowe and bred by Duane and Mildred Lowe.

OHHA Board Members Senena Esty, John Mossbarger and Rick Martindale made their way to the stage to present the owners and breeders with the **OHHA Horse of the Year Divisional Winners awards:**

2-Year-Old Pacing Colt: High On Paydaze (Nob Hill High-Myell) owned by Scott Hagemeyer, Robert Mondillo and Donald Robinson. He was trained by Brian Brown and bred by Scott Hagemeyer.

2-Year-Old Pacing Filly: Queen Of The Pride (McArdle-Lionness Hanover), owned by Frank Chick. She was trained by Kevin Lare and bred by Brad Wallace.

2-Year-Old Trotting Colt: Lane Of Stone (Wishing Stone-Wisteria Lane), owned by Harry Horowitz. He was trained by Mark Winters, Sr. and bred by Harry and Iris Horowitz.

2-Year-Old Trotting Filly: Only Take Cash (Cash Hall-Armbro Affair), owned by Robert McIntosh Inc., Dave Boyle and Mardon Stables. She was trained by Robert McIntosh and bred by Robert McIntosh Stables and CSX Stables. Only Take Cash was also awarded with the Ohio Triple Crown award.

3-Year-Old Pacing Colt: Lather Up (I'm Gorgeous-Pocket Comb), owned and bred by Gary and Barbara Isles. He was trained by Clyde Francis.

3-Year-Old Pacing Filly: Baron Remy (Yankee Cruiser-Riley Character), owned by Burke Racing Stable LLC, Silva & Libby, Lawrence Karr and Weaver Brussemi LLC. She was trained by Ron Burke and bred by Baron Racing Stable.



Making Welcome Blankets for the Ronald McDonald House at the First Lady's Luncheon.

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3-Year-Old Trotting Colt: Two O B Wonkenobi (Dejarmbro-Shannon Hall), owned by Shara Weaver and Madeline Roche. He was trained by Earnest Gaskin and bred by Pond A Acres.

3-Year-Old Trotting Filly: Impinktoo (Manofmanymissions-Margie Seelster), owned by William Walters, Joe McLead and RTK Racing LLC. She was trained by Ron Burke and bred by Jay Mossbarger.

Aged Pacer: Dancin Yankee (Yankee Cruiser-Dancewiththebest), owned by Burke Racing Stable. He was trained by Ron Burke and bred by Elizabeth Yontz.

Aged Trotter: Lady's Dude (Victory Sam-Lady's Star), owned by Burke Racing Stable LLC, Weaver Brusceci and Johnny Yoder. He was trained by Ron Burke and bred by Duane Lowe.

Following the presentations of the divisional winners, was the reveal of the **2018 Ohio Horse of the Year** to the owners of Lather Up. They were presented with a painting from a Conrad Photo painted by equine artist Ann Lufkin as well as a cartoon of Lather Up in a barber shop chair created by OHHA's Thom Pye.

What an exciting night for Ohio Horsemen! The OHHA would like to thank everyone who took part in the weekend and wishes everyone the best in the upcoming 2019 racing season!

Watch for more photos and OHHA Banquet articles in the Spring issue of The Buckeye Harness Horseman next month!

Ohio Breeders Award Requirements

Mares registered in 2016 (Foals of 2017) mare registration date 12/31/16

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Bred 2016	Grace Period, No Membership Required
Foal Born 2017	No Membership Required
Yearling 2018	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2019, 2020	Membership Required

Mares registered in 2017 (Foals of 2018) mare registration date 12/31/17

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Bred 2017	Membership Required
Foal Born 2018	Membership Required
Yearling 2019	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2020, 2021	Membership Required

Mares registered in 2018 (Foals of 2019) mare registration date 11/30/18

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Bred 2018	No Membership Required
Foal Born 2019	Membership Required
Yearling 2020	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2021, 2022	No Membership Required

Mares registered in 2019 (Foals of 2020) mare registration date 11/30/19

Registrations received from 12-1-19 to 12-30-19 must be accompanied by a \$100 per-mare late fee in addition to the mare registration fee.

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2020	Membership Required

Registration Fee: \$20 per mare

Membership Requirements: All owners of the mare (including those in businesses or stables) are required to join as Active OHHA Members. All business entities or stables listed as owners are required to join as Associate Members.

Mare Residency: Mare must be resident, foal in Ohio and remain in Ohio for 187 consecutive days.

Horsemen Can Help Ohio Fairs by Regina Mayhugh

Have you attended a Fair Board meeting? Have you volunteered to help your fair plan the harness racing events or volunteered to help during race days? Do you know your speed superintendent?

Today there are less horsemen groups and more volunteers who do not know about or understand harness racing. You are a valuable resource! You know the business. You are passionate about it. You want to see the industry continue to get strong.

Harness racing needs more promotion. Starting at the fair level and within the communities is a great place to start! Do you like to write or know someone who does? Let your Fair Board know you would like to help them write articles about local horsemen. If you do not write, just share with them about the local horsemen or maybe something historic that they can share in publications. Share why harness racing is and has been important in your community.

Do you have ideas on how to include more fun on race days for the fans? Share these with those who put together the program. There are so many great ideas that various fairs have come up with to keep fans entertained and having fun. Many fairs offer drawings in between the races with donations from local businesses. Champaign County Fair has a Chamber Night where they give away televisions that were purchased by community donations. They have a packed grandstand.

Maybe you volunteer to do barn tours or offer some help with another event that would encourage fans to come race day. Mike Woebkenberg has been successful with involving fans just by offering starting gate rides. Many fairs hold events that involve the community like Pickaway County hosts Outhouse Races involving the 4-H clubs as well as a County Coaches Challenge race. Both events bring the community out and are great outreach programs. How can you help create excitement at your fair?

Does your fair know about OHHA's travel exhibit, Racing With The Stars? If not, let them know about the various activities this attraction has available and that it is free for any fair to use. They just need to contact the office and be added to the schedule.

Do you know youth either involved in harness racing or who would like to be? Or maybe you have children with friends. These are great prospects for volunteers during race days. There are so many jobs that need to be done to ensure a successful race program and there is always a need for extra hands on deck. This is also a great time to introduce the younger generation to the industry. I hear stories on how many horsemen joined the industry by going to the races with a relative or friends, why not continue that tradition?

Have you ever thought of starting a local harness horsemen association? There are many in the state, but sadly not nearly as many as there once were. Some of these help the fairs prepare for race day and volunteer as needed during fair time and the rest of the year they gather and enjoy socializing with others of a similar interest.

I challenge every horseman (and woman) who is involved in fair racing, to see how you can help a fair program that is local to you. Give them a call. Volunteer your time and ideas. See how you can help them put on an even better program!

Regularly Scheduled Racing Commission Meeting Recap

By Renée Mancino

Regularly scheduled Racing Commission Meeting recap from [November 29, 2018](#) at the Columbus Riffe Center.

In normal business for the Commission, the [Executive Director's Approval items were introduced](#), and the October 31, 2018 Minutes were offered for ratification. There were no documents disclosed or provided to those in attendance. The Racing Commission unanimously ratified the Executive Director's Approval items and October 31st Meeting Minutes.

The [Thoroughbred and Standardbred Race Fund Approvals](#) for 2019 were both unanimously ratified. The Thoroughbred Race Fund Purses for 2019 will be \$150,000 per Race with the Races being divided among the racetracks in operation at that time to have a highlighted day for racing at each track. It was noted that the Thoroughbred Race Fund has a negative balance at this time. The Ohio Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (OHBPA) provided a guarantee that any deficit amount for purse monies will be made up by the Association. The Racing Commission unanimously ratified all requests except Item 3, which was a condition change request which will be considered and ratified at a subsequent meeting.

The [Standardbred Race Fund](#) is carrying a \$1.3 million balance into 2019. Amendments included nine Standardbred Development Committee ratified changes. Including, (1) Registration of an eligible horse. [Horse shall be nominated and paid in full by the March 15th](#) Deadline Date by providing all USTA identifying information available at that time including, Year of Foaling, Sire, Dam, and Registration Number. Formal naming of a horse after that date will incur a penalty of \$250.00, which must be paid by May 1, 2019 to remain eligible to the 2019 Ohio Sires Stakes Program. (2) An increase in the ["Super Night Finals" purses to \\$300,000 guaranteed per Division at host location, Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park, Sunday, September 1, 2019.](#) (3) An increase in the [Divisional, "Consolation Finals" to \\$75,000 at host location, Eldorado Scioto Downs, Saturday September 7, 2019.](#) (4) An increase in the [Veteran's Championship 4-year old and up Pace and Trot to \\$75,000 with the Pacing Finals held Saturday, September 7, 2019 at Eldorado](#)

[Scioto Downs and Trotting Finals held Saturday October 12, 2019 at Hard Rock Rocksino Northfield Park.](#) (5) [Condition changes](#) included, Detention Barn restrictions when an OSS race (whether Consolation, Veteran, or otherwise) has a final purse of \$100,000 or more. (6) [Eligibility of starters](#) in each of the Veteran Championships are restricted to the eight (on a half-mile track) and nine (on a five-eighths mile track) leading money winners in races conducted at Ohio commercial tracks and Ohio fairs from January 1, 2019, calculated to the day before each respective race's draw date, and restricted to those who have raced a minimum of five times in Ohio in 2019. (7) [Amendment for New Stallion Registrations](#) to match the existing Renewal Stallion penalty if a New Stallion is not registered before breeding any Mare. Ohio Stallions not registered before breeding any mare must register, pay the \$100 Registration Fee, and a \$100 penalty fee per mare bred before the Registration date to obtain Stallion eligibility and for any resulting foals to be eligible for nomination to Ohio Sires Stakes or Ohio Fairs Fund races. (8) [Promotion and advertising budget increased](#) to \$200,000 to include \$50,000 for Super Night and \$25,000 for the Consolation Finals night. (9) Also ratified, a [\\$100,000 donation for equine-related research to The Ohio State University School of Veterinary Medicine.](#)

[The Racing Commission unanimously passed Resolution 2018-14, the Amendment of Rules 3769-5-27 and 3769-15-10.](#) Both rules provided updates to recognize microchipping or any other Breed Registry (Jockey Club, United States Trotting Association, etc.) adopted form for registration as an acceptable form of identification in Ohio.

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

[A recap on the horse racing fatalities to-date was provided by Racing Commission Veterinarian, Dr. James Robertson.](#) It was noted that the numbers reported are for training and racing related catastrophic breakdowns analogous to the Jockey Club's reporting requirements, sudden deaths that occur during or after a race. From last month's report to November 29th there were four Thoroughbred and no Standardbred fatalities. Year-to date totals were, forty Thoroughbred fatalities and four

Standardbred racing related fatalities statewide.

The [Monthly Racing Commission financial report](#) was provided with an improved position thanks to year-over-year casino revenue being up. Expenses are up overall by \$50,000 and attributable to higher costs in payroll, veterinary costs, medication and testing costs over the previous fiscal year. Medication and testing costs are up \$13,000. The overall prediction is break-even or a slight gain by Fiscal year-end.

In the [Chairman's comments](#), Chairman Schmitz introduced a distinguished panel of veterinarians to provide input and information on the [Out of Competition Testing initiative](#). Standardbred Veterinarians included Dr. Barry Carter principal veterinarian with Firethorn Equine Services in Lancaster servicing Southern Ohio horsemen for 31 years. Dr. Dan Wilson, racetrack veterinarian with Lake Equine Associates, full-time consummate practitioner primarily servicing Northfield Park from 1975 to date, and Dr. John Reichert, with Woodland Run, licensed in eleven states and one of the most prolific backstretch veterinarians on the southern circuit, his primary practice, includes Scioto Downs, Miami Valley, and Dayton Raceway. Two double-gaited Standardbred and Thoroughbred veterinarians added testimony. Dr. John Piehowicz an active private practitioner for 23 years with Cincinnati Equine, LLC, whose southern Ohio practice rotates among Belterra Park, Miami Valley Raceway, and Dayton Raceway and counts multiple Kentucky Derby and Breeder's Cup winning trainers among his clientele. Dr. Scott Shell, principal with Shell Equine Services in Chagrin Falls providing full veterinary services for 32 years from his private practice to Thistledown and Northfield Park.

Dr. Barry Carter provided input on imminent implementation analogous to what New Jersey, Ontario, and Indiana have in place. Dr. Carter commented on program mechanics and what to test for. His suggestions included fee-based licensing and regulation of off-track locations, including private training centers. Suggesting out-of-state licensees would agree to sign a waiver and consent to race in Ohio and consent to out-of-competition testing as part of that waiver. In addition to the mechanics the primary focus should be on, "Blood Doping, which are the same issues seen with Olympic Athletes and should be tested for 3-4 days before

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competition.”

Dr. Wilson provided a six page document incorporating his comments and input by the North American Association of Racetrack Veterinarians in discussing breed-specific issues with the Association of Racing Commissioners International’s (ARCI) Model Rule. The main focus was what and where to test. Primary concerns were with a veterinarian’s duty of confidentiality regarding medical history disclosure without owner’s consent and the substances being tested for. The fear being wide inclusion of therapeutic substances that, “have legitimate therapeutic uses out of competition and the strict restrictions [of the Model Rule] are inappropriately severe.” Dr. Wilson’s concerns were with Blood Doping Agents, Neurotoxins, Venoms, and Street Designer Drugs, which are often used by human athletes and bodybuilders.

Dr. Piehowicz’s comments were very thoughtful and comprehensive. In polling his clientele, they were overwhelmingly in favor of out-of-competition testing which, “clean trainers welcome and dirty trainers do not”. Providing the same list of substances Dr. Wilson outlined as those to target, Dr. Piehowicz had questions on testing on private property and out-of-state participants to make it a fair, non-burdensome, and impartial for all participants. Dr. Piehowicz closed with comments that he doesn’t believe cheating is widespread, but punishment should be with, penalties, “that should be harsh, with minimum five-to-ten year or lifetime bans, which is the most humane way to protect a horse”.

Dr. John Reichert’s input inquired as-to the necessity of testing, accuracy of testing, and logistics of testing. On necessity Dr. Reichert opined that the majority operate within the rules and this should target the outliers. Testing for “agents given “X” days out, but clear the system by the time normal race testing is administered should be the focus, everything else is already being tested for with routine post-race testing.” On logistics the suggestion was the have the element of surprise with a 24 hour window potentially being too late and a need to go onto private property to facilitate the element of surprise. The concern with going onto private property is whether the costs will justify the results and if manpower is adequate to be effective.

Dr. Scott Shell’s well balanced and articulate comments went to the scope of testing.

Critical of the ARCI Model Rule as, “much too broad” he stressed, “the importance of testing for substances that are absolutely not supposed to be there and have no therapeutic use”. In Dr. Shell’s opinion, “a lot of the therapeutic drugs listed as prohibited in the ARCI Model Rule are used to rebuild horses that are being given time off, are run down, or need rebuilt”. The scope of what is tested for should include Erythropoietin Receptors and Erythropoietin, Snake Venoms, Dermorphin, things that increase athletic performance, dramatically improve an athlete’s aerobic capacity, and are harmful to the horse.

Closing out the discussion, the Racing Commission Chairman said the Rule they are considering implementing won’t include therapeutics. The Racing Commission wants to find those substances that are being used to circumvent the existing race testing system and any successor Commission can enforce. The list will be narrowly tailored to Blood and Gene Doping Agents, and Venoms. As-to locations, at public training centers the Commission can come in and inspect at any time, private training centers should be subject to entry even though private. In January’s meeting the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s lab will be present to provide information on testing protocols and detectable substances.

In the matter of the **settlement agreement** of Emily Szczepanski concerned Ms. Szczepanski (licensed as an owner, trainer, and exercise rider) claiming two horses. The first in the 7th Race at JACK Thistledown on June 12, 2018 for \$7,500, that claim was made in the name of Wendy Montoney. A second claim was made June 13, 2018 for \$5,000 in alleged monies transferred from Nabu Morales’ Wife to Ms. Szczepanski, who claimed the horse as an owner-trainer. After claiming both horses they were taken to leading trainer Nabu Morales’s barn where they were handled by Morales employees and

maintained using his equipment. At the time the horses were claimed and taken to Morales’ barn he was serving a 15-day suspension (June 3-17) for a clenbuterol positive (114 picograms per milliliter). By hearing August 11, 2018, the Racing Commission lodged Morales was participating in horse racing while under a suspension, and Szczepanski was claiming horses on behalf of the suspended trainer. Hearing recommendation was a 60-day suspension and \$1,000 fine for Szczepanski and 30-day suspension and \$1,000 fine for Morales. Morales appealed and later withdrew his appeal. Szczepanski’s settlement agreement recommended by the Racing Commission Staff was for 30-days, \$500 fine. The Racing Commission unanimously approved the terms of the Settlement Agreement for Ms. Szczepanski.

The Racing Commission adjourned into Executive Session to discuss a legal matter and pending court action. There was no further business to be conducted after the Executive Session 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.

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A special Thank You to those who donate!

Gene, Gene, The Pacin' Machine

By Thom Pye

He was born during the days of some of the toughest combat in World War II... before Operation Overlord, better known as D Day, the Invasion of Normandy began. Legend has it that he was foaled in the infield of Putnam Country Fairgrounds in Ottawa, Ohio and it was only natural that he become a great half-mile track horse.

Bred by Ottawa native Clinton Lighthill (born in 1888) the son of Bert Abbe-Rose Marie would pace free-legged and win 14 of his 16 two-year-old starts, campaign in New York under the guidance of Fred Parks from Canton, NY – who called the colt “the safest free-legged pacer” he had ever handled or seen for that matter” – raced until he was six with 49 wins, 46 seconds in 151 lifetime starts and go on to rewrite the record books as a sire.

His name was Gene Abbe.

In 1952 he went to stud at Toledo Doctor Roy Knisley's Eventime Farm in Washington Court House, Ohio (later to be bought in 1959 by their trainer Eddie Cobb of W.C.H. and Adolph Golden of Coshocton and renamed Fair Chance Farm) but Gene Abbe would service his best years at Hall-of-Famer and Northfield Park founder Walter Michael's Pickwick Farms in Bucyrus, Ohio. Under the supervision and management of Hall-of-Famer Hal Jones, Gene Abbe would be the first to incorporate artificial insemination and become the first stallion of any breed to register more than 100 foals in a breeding season eventually standing from 1951 through 1977 and siring 1,073 foals. Ironically Gene Abbe was only five generations removed from another prolific sire by the name of Hambletonian.

His sons and daughters made headlines as well such as Rex Pick p 4, 2:00.2h, a foal of 1960 who earned \$277,918 and raced against harness racing's first millionaire Cardigan Bay; the often-remembered full brothers 1956's Stephan Smith p, 1:58.4h (\$335,527) and Irvin Paul p, 1:58.3f (\$548,518), a foal of 1957; Blaze Pick (one of them “Pick” horses) who took a mark of 1:59h in 1969 as a five-year-old and earned \$297,677. His unraced 1970 daughter JR Amy would be bred to the Meadow Skipper line stallion No Nukes in 1980 and produce World Champion and another excellent sire in Jate Lobell p3, 1:51.2m who would earn \$2,231,402 in his two years of racing.

While I've researched Gene Abbe and his progeny (especially these past few days) my own experience with them date from the early '70s when I began paddocking on my own at Foxboro's defunct Bay State Raceway and an 11-year-old gelding by the name of Skipper Gene. He was in a cheap “claim-ah” by then, with a tag of \$2,500, and I was scurrying around to make sure I was doing everything all right. As he stood calmly on the cross-ties and I took his gear off and I remarked to the trainer's wife that he “looks like an old mule.”

Did she ever get hot.

“This is a GOOD horse,” she barked as she glared at me. “He raced in the Little Brown Jug!

He holds the track record at Rockingham! And he doesn't look like any MULE!”

I quickly went back a few steps and agreed with her 100%. Particularly when I found out that he had raced in the 1965 Little Brown Jug... against Bret Hanover.

And held the half-mile record at Rockingham with a mile in 2:00.2h in 1967.

And earned \$136,587 – back then – the hard way.

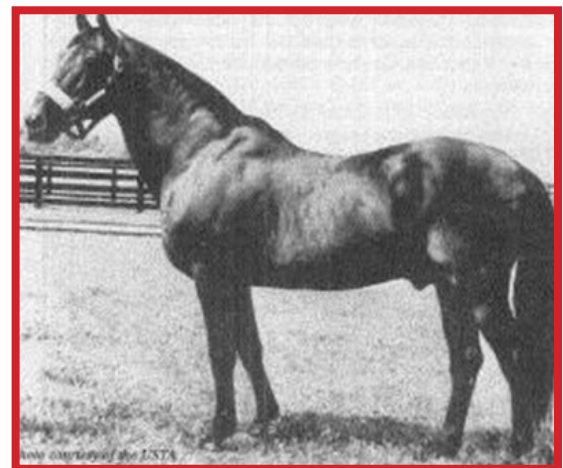
While Skipper Gene's momma, Karen O. was a non-descript mare by Shamrock Joe, her bottom line traced back to Butternut King who was by Billy Direct.

Gene Abbe was bred to so many different lines of mares (according to Hal Jones “Mr. Michaels wanted quantity”) but his best and just about his last was a foal of 1974 from a Shadow Wave mare that competed on the New York half-milers by the name of Big Towner.

He won the \$277,000 OTB Classic as a three-year-old in 1:58.3h after being parked the entire mile and always put the fear into Governor Skipper whenever they met at Roosevelt or Yonkers and would go on to be a dominant broodmare sire too.

While this might seem like ancient history there is another nice colt that traces back to Gene Abbe on both sides of his pedigree that you might have heard of this past month. He was named Ohio's Horse of the Year: Gary and Barbara Iles' Lather Up, p3, 1:48.1s (\$967,612)

Because a good horse, and a good horse story, never goes out of style.



Do you know???

Who owned and trained Jerry The First?

Watch for the answer in the Spring Issue of The Buckeye Harness Horseman!



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FUN IN THE SNOW



Sir Lord Hall,
Submitted by Amanda Webb- Stevens



Cl Something, Submitted by Kathy Prickett



Cherokee Dancer,
Submitted by Courtney Pitts



Barnboygotmotion, Submitted by Courtney Pitts



Southwind Marilyn, Submitted by Courtney Pitts



Amish near Kenton, OH
Submitted by Pamela Kinsey Staley



Yearling Fillies, Submitted by Kelsey Grose



Whiskey Friskie, Submitted by Nikki Kosciolk



Babies in the snow, Submitted by Hagemeyer Farms



Rock Out, Submitted by Eileen Brown