

Newsletter from NTWA President Tom Law

December 4, 2006

Good afternoon fellow Turf writers. I hope this note finds you all well and recovered from the busy Breeders' Cup and ready for the seemingly even busier holiday season. There are several items of importance to tackle this month—some new, some old, and some that fit in between.

The 47th annual NTWA Awards Dinner on Wednesday, November 1 was an enjoyable and successful night. There were many highlights during the evening, including entertaining introductions and acceptances from our three major award winners, representatives of "Team Barbaro," including owners and breeders Roy and Gretchen Jackson and trainer Michael Matz; Dr. Dean Richardson and representatives from the New Bolton Center; and Daily Racing Form's Steve Crist. I'd like to personally thank Dr. Wayne McIlwraith, Bill Nack, and Bob Curran for their warm introductions.

Additional thanks for helping put on a successful show should be extended to NTWA board member Dave Johnson, who once again served as emcee; Ron Mitchell, who worked the door, handled the silent auction, and set up a brief Q&A with Dr. Richardson; former NTWA Secretary/Treasurer Dan Liebman, for lending his expertise and also facilitating the sponsors: Woodford Reserve during the cocktail hour and Wild Horse Winery for the wine served during dinner; Ed DeRosa, Tom Pedulla, Dick Downey, Jennie Rees, and so many others for their help with either securing items or donating items to the silent auction; and to Three Chimneys Farm's Anne Peters for facilitating artist Robert Clark's donations that included the Barbaro giclee and the live painting that sold at the end of the dinner.

Speaking of the silent and live auctions, a total of \$5,736 was raised, including \$3,000 for the live auction item. Stonerside's John Adger generously made the winning bid for the item and his continued generosity toward our organization is greatly appreciated. A further bit of thanks should be extended to Dogwood Stable's Cot Campbell, who entertained the crowd with his auctioneering skills, and to Three Chimney's Dan Rosenberg, who purchased the Barbaro giclee that was offered during the silent auction and donated the work to the New Bolton Center.

Another individual who deserves tremendous thanks and applause for all her hard work on the dinner is NTWA Secretary/Treasurer Jill Williams. From start to finish Jill's efforts were exemplary and the event would not have been as successful as it turned out to be without her dedication, hard work, patience, and persistence.

A few final notes on the dinner, as usual programs were mailed to each member of our organization. If you did not receive a copy of the program and want one please feel free to contact Jill Williams at jill@turfwriters.org.

We are also open to any recommendations and/or suggestions for next year's dinner, which will keep the same position on the calendar and will be on Wednesday, October 24 prior to the Breeders' Cup World Championships at Monmouth Park. Speaking of the 2007 Breeders' Cup, we are on the lookout for an awards dinner site and we welcome any and all suggestions.

The 2007 dinner was one of a handful of topics discussed during the semi-annual meetings by the board of directors and the general membership on November 2 at Churchill Downs. Major points of the meetings included:

- * Discussion to form committees to help make the 2007 awards dinner even more successful, with representatives from various regions around the country working to secure table sponsorships, other sponsorships, and silent auction items.

- * The board approved and welcomed five new Regular members—Shelby Downs (Texas Thoroughbred), Amanda Duckworth (The Blood-Horse), Mike Jensen (Philadelphia Inquirer), Esther Marr (The Blood-Horse), and Sandra McKee (Baltimore Sun).

- * Seven members were officially expelled for non-payment of dues. Repeated attempts were made by Jill Williams well in advance of the board meeting to collect dues from 12 members who had not paid, and in the end four paid in full and one other delivered a promise to pay to retain membership. If you have a question on your membership status, please contact Jill at jill@turfwriters.org.

- * Members need to know that the NTWA website is up and running at www.turfwriters.org. We are hoping to add each member's affiliation to the "Links to Racing Info" section, so if all members could send your affiliation link to jill@turfwriters.org that would be appreciated. Once again, any and all suggestions can be sent that way, too.

- * Members should also be informed that a \$100 donation was made by the NTWA to St. Michael's Catholic Church in Garden City, South Carolina in memory of Joan Lawrence's father, who passed away this fall. Joan Lawrence works for NTRA Communications and is not only a tremendous asset to the Thoroughbred industry and a friend to many Turf writers, but she is a genuine and wonderful person as well.

- * Jill Williams discussed the proposed bylaw changes during the board and general membership meetings, informing both groups that the changes did not

receive the required 2/3 majority to be enacted. Members are urged to consider the changes and cast their votes accordingly.

Looking ahead, Regular members in good standing will be mailed Eclipse Award ballots on Wednesday, December 6. Tom Pedulla and I participated in a conference call with representatives of the two other sponsors of the Eclipse Awards—the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (Jim Gluckson and Keith Chamblin) and Daily Racing Form (Steve Crist and Mandy Minger)—on November 30 to discuss several issues:

* Instructions will be included with the ballots and the deadline for submission will be 3 p.m. ET on Wednesday, December 27. An audit of the ballots will be conducted by Ernst & Young on December 28, the results will be tabulated on December 29, and finalists in each of the equine and human categories (not including Horse of the Year) will be announced on Wednesday, January 3. A website will be established and launched on December 21 (and running through December 27) so voters can see if their votes have been received and counted.

* Jim Gluckson reported that interest was once again strong in the writing and photography categories for the Media Eclipse Awards.

* The Special Award and Eclipse Award of Merit were also discussed and anyone with suggestions should direct them to either Tom Law at tlaw@thoroughbredtimes.com or to Tom Pedulla at tpedulla@usatoday.com.

* Representatives from the NTWA, NTRA, and DRF are scheduled to meet again in mid-December to discuss the Special Award and Eclipse Award of Merit, and possibly the addition of more equine divisions.

As always, please reach out to me with any additional questions or concerns at tlaw@thoroughbredtimes.com, my office at 859-260-9800 ext. 125, or on my cell phone at 859-396-9407. Thanks again, happy holidays, and best of luck at the races.

Thanks,
Tom Law
NTWA President