

NTWA NEWSLETTER FROM TOM LAW:

Good afternoon fellow Turf writers, I hope this note finds everyone doing well with the major summer race meetings in the books and all eyes pointed toward the upcoming Breeders Cup World Championships at Santa Anita Park. As this newsletter is being written the Breeders Cup is only six weeks away and closing fast.

Plans continue to take shape quickly for the National Turf Writers Associations 49th annual Awards Dinner on Wednesday, October 22 at Castle Green in Pasadena, California. With our trio of award winners already set (Chris McCarron, Maryjean Wall, and the late Luke Kruytbosch), we are hopeful the event will be both entertaining and memorable for all our members, guests, and industry leaders who attend.

NTWA Secretary/Treasurer Ed DeRosa tells me the invitations are, as they say, in the mail so be on the lookout and get your RSVP in as soon as possible to secure your spot at the event. If you do not receive your invitation by next week please don't hesitate to float me (tlaw@thoroughbredtimes.com) and I'll make sure we get one in the mail ASAP. The day after the awards dinner, the NTWA will conduct its semi-annual meeting at Santa Anita Park at a time and place to be determined. A complete agenda for the meeting will be sent to the membership as we get a little closer, but topics for the meeting include a quick look back at the awards dinner, the organizations financial status, nomination and considering for new members, future charitable contributions, and guest speakers.

Several items of business related to and not related to upcoming events are listed below.

BREEDERS' CUP:

Speaking of the Breeders' Cup, Jim Gluckson reminds everyone that all credentialed media must sign the conditions form. While the impact is not as great as with the photographers who will be covering the event, the credential rules are a check that all media are working solely for their assigned publications at the event.

Breeders' Cup pre-entries will be announced on Thursday, October 16 and a national media teleconference will be conducted at 1 p.m. ET. Post positions for all Breeders' Cup races will be drawn on Tuesday, October 21 at Santa Anita Park.

BELMONT CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION:

Along with several members and their guests, I attended the Belmont Child Care Associations 11th annual Western Round Up benefit for the children of Anna House on August 20 in Saratoga Springs, New York. As mentioned in previous newsletters to the organization, the NTWA made a contribution to the BCCA for an advertisement in the events program and a table for ten. I was joined at the event by NTWA Vice President Tom Pedulla, former NTWA Presidents Mike Kane and Jenny Kellner, and NTWA member Ron Correll and our guests.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE:

While any organization loses and gains members through the course of time due to a myriad of reasons, our profession seems to be losing positions at a rapid rate in recent years. A note below on the retirement of Craig Donnelly is a prime example. Even though professional Turf writers are in decline, there are several individuals out there who regularly cover Thoroughbred racing who are not members of our organization. If you are a member and know any of these individuals you should encourage them to not only join but participate in the NTWA. With our regular semi-annual meeting coming up it is prime time for our organization to add members.

DONNELLY RETIRES:

Regular member Craig Donnelly, veteran Turf writer and handicapper at the Philadelphia Inquirer, recently retired. A note on Craig's retirement appeared in the Inquirer and is below:

Handicapper Donnelly retires from The Inquirer

Inquirer staff report

Craig Donnelly, who has been handicapping Thoroughbred races in The Inquirer since 1971, when he was a senior at Radnor High School, has retired from the newspaper and will no longer be making selections.

Over the years, Donnelly has picked the races at Garden State Park, Philadelphia Park, Atlantic City, Meadowlands, Liberty Bell Park, and Keystone.

He once picked all eight races correctly at Delaware, and the most impressive horses he saw run in person were Spectacular Bid in 1979 and Afleet Alex in 2005.

Donnelly's most lasting impression was when Damascus got a standing ovation from the crowd at Saratoga by winning the Travers by 22 lengths in 1967.

His first impression of horse racing came in the 1960s, when his father, former Inquirer handicapper Russ Harris, took him to Hialeah Racetrack in Florida. Amid the bougainvillea and hibiscus, he asked: You get paid to do this every day?

Not long after, he did, too. For 37 years.

FROM JOCKEY CLUB:

Bob Curran from the Jockey Club sent along a note to NTWA members regarding the annual Round Table Conference. It is below:

A transcript of The Jockey Club's 56th Annual Round Table Conference, held in Saratoga Springs, New York, on Sunday, August 17, is now available on the Jockey Club's website at http://www.jockeyclub.com/roundtable_08.asp. The conference was devoted almost exclusively to equine health and safety, medication and Thoroughbred breeding, and included updates and additional recommendations from The Jockey Club's Thoroughbred Safety Committee.

ECLIPSE AWARDS:

Although a final date and site have not been determined for the Eclipse Awards ceremony in early 2009, the target date for 2008 Media Eclipse Award submissions is Friday, November 7. A target date for the release of the Media Eclipse Award rules is Friday, October 10. Stay tuned for more details.

FINAL NOTE:

As always, please reach out to me with any questions, concerns, problems, etc., at tlaw@thoroughbredtimes.com, my office at 859-260-9800 ext. 125, or on my cell phone at 859-396-9407. Thanks for your time, and enjoy the races,

Tom Law

NTWA President

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