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From the Office of Secretary/Treasurer

Ed DeRosa
P.O. Box 8237
Lexington, KY 40533
(859)797-5530
EDeRosa@
ThoroughbredTimes.com

February 23, 2009

Good afternoon fellow members and a beyond belated Happy New Year to everyone.

The Triple Crown prep race season is in full swing and hopefully everyone is getting ready for the always hectic classic season. There are several items to cover in this newsletter, including Joe Hirsch, the Eclipse Awards and the voting process, Eclipse Award voting by NTWA members, membership dues, and an update on one of the NTWA/Youbet.com Journalism Scholarship winners.

JOE HIRSCH:

First and foremost, our organization and the entire journalism profession were dealt a loss with the passing of retired Daily Racing Form Executive Columnist Joe Hirsch at the age of 80 on January 9. As many of you know, Joe had battled Parkinson's disease for years, even while he was still on the beat at the Form, but it never conquered his great passions for racing, fellowship, mentoring, and so many other great qualities to numerous to list in this space.

Heartfelt tributes poured out for Joe as news of his passing circulated throughout the industry, including comments from nearly every major racing industry decision maker, prominent colleague, and the core of our business, the racing fans.

In addition to serving as the unofficial but undisputed "Dean of American Turf writers," Joe was a founder and original president of the National Turf Writers Association. He served as president from 1959 to '60.

I've received some feedback and some ideas on how the organization should honor Joe, and would love to hear any suggestions you might have. Please pass them along to me at tlaw@thoroughbredtimes.com or give me a ring at 859-260-9800 ext. 125.

ECLIPSE AWARDS:

The 38th annual Eclipse Awards ceremony returned to South Florida on January 26 and two former NTWA presidents, Billy Reed and Jennie

Rees, were among the recipients of the media awards. Reed, the NTWA president from 1988 to '90, won his third Eclipse Award in the news/commentary category for his story "A rose for Eight Belles" that appeared in the May 16, 2008 issue of *Thoroughbred Times*. Rees, NTWA president from 2002 to '03, was part of the Louisville *Courier-Journal's* team that won the Eclipse Award in the audio and multimedia Internet category for its three-part series on injuries to racehorses.

ECLIPSE AWARD VOTING: The most recent Eclipse Award vote was the first conducted electronically and despite some technological glitches that I will address in a moment, the process was relatively smooth and will return under a slightly different format for the 2009 racing season.

Of the 149 ballots sent to Regular NTWA members, 131 were submitted for an 88% rate of return. The NTWA percentage was not as good as *Daily Racing Form's* 90% rate of return (53 of 59 ballots submitted) but was better than the National Thoroughbred Racing Association's 78% return (58 of 74 submitted). The overall numbers showed that 86% of eligible voters submitted votes (242 of 282).

I'm still in the process of gathering information on those who did not cast ballots, so if you are one of the 18 you can either let me know or expect to hear from me.

Keeping with NTWA's longstanding tradition of complete transparency, please see the attachment to this newsletter to find how each eligible member voted.

Speaking of voting, a handful of members expressed disappointment in the way the voting process was handled online, specifically the drop-down menus for each category. The Eclipse Awards steering committee, which Vice President Tom Pedulla and I are both members of, discussed this issue and the committee agreed that there will be no drop-down choices in the future, other than a "No vote" choice. Essentially the online ballot will look very similar to the former paper ballots, with blanks to be filled in by the voter.

The supplement generously provided by *Daily Racing Form* to each Eclipse Award voter was also discussed by the steering committee and the group concluded that the document was in need of revision, particularly in the statistical section. The past performances of each of the main contenders for each division will continue to be provided, but we might make the statistical listings for owners, breeders, trainers, jockeys, and apprentice jockeys available online and updated, so they are not provided to the voters with a "as of November 30" stipulation.

MEMBERSHIP DUES MEMBER INFORMATION

Secretary/treasurer Ed DeRosa has begun accepting membership dues (\$50) for 2009. Thank you to those who have already paid. Those who have not can send payment to

Ed DeRosa
c/o Thoroughbred Times
P.O. Box 8237
Lexington, KY 40533

Also, our friends at Turf Publicists of America are updating the annual TPA/NTWA membership directory. If you would like to update your personal information, then please send information to Ed at EDeRosa@ThoroughbredTimes.com in this format (omit N/A fields)

Last name, first name --- affiliation, work address, home#, office#, cell#, home address, e-mail(s).

NTWA/YOUBET.COM JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP:

Elisabeth Jensen from the Race for Education passed along a note from Allison Pareis, winner of last year's NTWA/Youbet.com Journalism Scholarship. Currently working on a masters of arts degree in digital storytelling at Ball State University, Pareis was able to attend and speak at the NTWA's awards dinner last fall at Castle Green in Pasadena, California, prior to the Breeders' Cup World Championships. Her note is attached below.

Until next time, all the best,

Tom Law
NTWA President
February 23, 2009

ALLISON PAREIS NOTE TO NTWA:

Looking back over the last semester, I think about what an amazing group of lessons and experiences I was able to be a part of, from August through December. I returned to the educational world after a few years of working by starting Graduate School at Ball State University. Beyond that, I had the honor of teaching three undergraduate classes in public communication ("speech" class). I learned a great deal from my own classmates, but also from the students. There were challenges and there were triumphs this past semester. Among the triumphs was headway made on my own personal career goals. I advanced especially during the few days that I call, "the best couple of days of my life!" I am referring to my amazing experiences in California at the 2008 Breeders Cup World Thoroughbred Championships made possible by the Race for Education, The National Turf Writers Association, and Youbet.com.

The first night of my trip was spent at the Annual Meeting for the National Turf Writers Association. It was awesome to walk around and meet people and be able to put faces to the names I have read for years. Once the dinner started, I quickly was reminded of how my public communication students probably feel in class. There's nothing like pre-speech jitters! I knew all I had to do was go up and give a brief, "thank you" speech, but my stomach certainly didn't think it was "just" a brief speech. After a bit, I actually started shaking from the nerves! Ridiculous, considering the fact that I teach speech class! I got one more reminder of how some of my students might feel just prior to my speech; I learned what it was like to present immediately after a GREAT speech! Tim Conway, a hilariously entertaining and well-known comedian, and Chris McCarron both gave wonderful

speeches before me. Youch! I will admit though, being a bit star struck did help my nerves. In the end, I did survive my speech and the night was quite an amazing experience.

The following days were full of work, relaxation, beauty, and the thrill of racing. I



started out each morning watching the works. There is absolutely no better way in my mind to start a day than to watch a colorful sunrise, breath in crisp, cool air, and hear the subtle “thumps” of horses galloping across the track. I was lucky enough to spend each of my three mornings in that way. I got a glimpse of most of the big horses as well as many of the big names of the human side of racing.



By 9 a.m., I had to report for work each day. For the duration of the Breeders Cup event, I worked in the Auxiliary Press Box. I made copies of press releases each morning and passed them out individually to members of the press as they would work on their morning reports for their respective publications. I worked with a great team for those few days and it was our job to help the press in whatever ways we could. Many times it was frantic, but exciting as well! It was fun not only to make friends with those that I was working with, but to also become familiar with several journalists.



I particularly took a liking towards the photographers. That should be no surprise if you know my love of racing photography. My co-workers figured out where my racing passions were and they fully supported my photography that weekend. For that, I will be forever grateful because it made that weekend the unforgettable experience that it was for me. A few of the photographers took me under their wings that weekend and eventually I was able to shoot trackside for each of the races. It literally was a dream come true for me to be able to shoot from the rail for a major racing event.



From Zenyatta's unbeaten streak continuation to Curlin's defeat, I was able to shoot it all. I even got to shoot next to one of my photography idols, Barbara Livingston, for part of the time. I thank the many photographers that impacted me



that weekend: Bud Morton who was a wonderful mentor and guide, Terence and Cindy Dulay (Terence who gave me the guts to go out there and shoot!), Ray Burr and the gang at Benoit Photography (THANK YOU!), Sarah Andrew, Barbara Livingston, Patty Yount, and a slew of others. Again, many, many thanks to them.

I started my weekend at the track watching the sunrise over the mountains at Santa Anita and fittingly, I was able to end my time there watching the sun set

behind those same mountains. As I left Santa Anita on Saturday, I made sure to take in the scenery of that track: the beautiful art deco on the grandstand, the Seabiscuit statue, the fountain, the Breeders Cup statue, and of course the backdrop of mountains and palm trees. Hopefully I can make it back next year. My horse racing semester didn't end at the Breeders Cup. Throughout the semester I worked on a short documentary on the Indiana Derby for a class project. I was able to land an amazing chance to interview Wayne Lukas as well as shoot some beautiful fall footage of champion Orientate at Gainesway for the doc with the help of the Race for Education. Look for the piece. You might just be able to catch a glimpse of it in the future! It will be appearing on PBS stations across Indiana as well as potentially hitting the web through various websites.



So the semester has been a positive, horse-filled time for me. I thank everyone involved in that amazing weekend in California as well as those involved in the other opportunities I was given during the semester. My biggest thank you's go out to the Race for Education, The National Turf Writers Association, and Youbet.com. With everyone's support, I have accomplished quite a bit, this last semester. Look out though, I've got MUCH more planned for the coming semesters!



-Allison Pareis

alpareis@bsu.edu

All photos shot by me during the weekend with the exception of the photo of me with Bud Morton and Barbara Livingston. I believe that was shot by Patty Yount.