



# Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Journal

Published for the members of the Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Inc.

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## Many changes for 2008...

*"All things must change to something new, to something strange."* Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Many horsemen have asked, "What do we have to look forward to this year?" It looks like my answer should be "change." As we move into a new racing season, so many things are changing; some things for the better, some for the worse. After considering the following changes at Delaware Park, you be the judge.

Many friends, familiar voices and faces will be missing this year from the racing office and test barn. Margie Stallings has moved into the position as Stall Superintendent and has proactively been working to get things organized. Several new trainers have been added to the stall list this year and many new locations have been assigned. Margie said that she is "very excited to work hand-in-hand with the horsemen and is looking forward to a new meet."

Scott Jones has moved into the position of Stake Coordinator. For many years Joe'Lyn Rigione has served as Horsemen's Liaison and entry clerk in the racing office, but this year she will be relocating to the Lasix / Test barn as supervisor and Kathleen Tobin-Grier will serve as her assistant. Two new racing officials have been hired, Glenn Reeder and Lynn Wagner. Lynn will also serve as Paddock Judge. At this writing, the position of Assistant Racing Secretary has not been filled.

This year two stakes, the Obeah and Robert G. Dick Memorial Breeders' Cup, were upgraded to Grade III status.

I would like to give you some insight to the steroid ban or regulation that will be starting here opening day April 19, but unfortunately it is a little difficult as it continues to change!

Can you believe that it was five years ago that Governor Minner passed the Clean Air Act, (smoking ban) in Delaware? Remember the resistance to that change? Although many people said they would take their business to Maryland or Pennsylvania initially, they now love the fact that Delaware is smoke free.

Donald Schmidt, DTHA board member and secretary, has resigned. Steven Bertrando has replaced Don as owner-director. The board will appoint a new secretary at our April board meeting to serve for the balance of Schmidt's term. Donald was an active and contributing director for several years and we wish him and his wife Myreen continued success in their future endeavors.

With all the personnel changes at Delaware Park I've been asked, "What's going to happen to you, is your job safe?" This

question really surprised me. We, the DTHA, are the voice of the horsemen and this Association works for you. Our Board of Directors is appointed by your votes and, in turn, they hire the staff that is employed here.

So with all the changes you've read about – the one thing that has not changed is that our office is open every day from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Kim Sprenger, Program Coordinator, and I are here to help you with all your horsemen's needs. Our office is located next to the Tack Shop across from the security gate. Feel free to stop in for overnights, condition books, sales catalogues, faxes, etc. or just to say hello and have a cup of coffee. We can be reached at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.

For those of you new to Delaware Park, I would like to say "welcome." For those of you returning, "welcome back."

*Bessie*

### 2008 Meet directors nominations needed

Nominations are needed for owners and/or trainers to serve on the DTHA board during the 2008 Delaware Park meet. Meet directors are elected by a vote of the membership stabled at Delaware Park. The new directors will attend the monthly board meetings as well as serve on various committees. They serve on the board from May to November and have the same voting rights and privileges as the three year board members.

Nominations to be placed on the ballot will be accepted until Thursday, May 1, 2008. Voting will take place by casting your ballot in the Horsemen's Office from Friday, May 2, 2008 until 2:00 p.m. Friday, May 16, 2008.

The FOUR new meet directors will be announced following the election and will begin their duties at the DTHA board meeting on Tuesday, May 20, 2008.

If you would like to be nominated or would like to nominate someone, please contact the Horsemen's Office at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284.



Bessie Gruwell  
Executive Director



## 2008-2009 renewal for DTHA workers' compensation

Welcome back! MOC is excited to provide you with even more great news on the Delaware's workers' compensation front! Here are a few of the highlights:

- Most rates per horse per day have **decreased**
- **12% average rate decrease** was implemented by the DTHA based on better than average year of projected losses
- Continuation of an all inclusive workers' comp, trainer's accident and health and general liability policy. The only one of its kind in the thoroughbred racing industry!

The success of this program relies upon communication on all levels; AIG, MOC, DTHA and **YOU!** Please feel free to call us if you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the workers' compensation program. The subject of workers' compensation can be confusing and frustrating by nature; pick up the phone and call MOC at 415-357-9234.

We understand that your main concern is about the rate you pay for the current year, and the DTHA workers' compensation's mission is to keep your current and future interests in mind as we develop this platform.

### Thoroughbred Horsemen's Group (THG)

In November 2007 this Board joined a newly formed group that officially became the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Group, LLC (THG) in December. This group is focused on parimutual pricing, essentially a change. THG president Bob Reeves said, "The business is changing, the marketplace is changing, and horsemen needed to form the equivalent. It's a way for the industry's horsemen's groups to share resources."

The initial members of the group are Florida HBPA, Kentucky HBPA, Louisiana HBPA, Ohio HBPA, Pennsylvania HBPA, Texas Horsemen's Partnership, Virginia HBPA and Delaware THA. The group now also includes Arkansas HBPA, Ontario HBPA, Mountaineer Park HBPA, Tampa Bay Downs HBPA, Oklahoma HBPA, Indiana HBPA, Minnesota HBPA, Maryland THA, Thoroughbred Owners of California and the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association. The Group now has eighteen horsemen's groups as members in fifteen states and Ontario, Canada representing horsemen at 47 tracks.

The THG was formed to improve the sport of Thoroughbred racing by offering a more efficient and centralized mechanism through which Thoroughbred Horsemen's Groups may facilitate agreements with TrackNet Media Group, LLC, and other entities operating multiple venues with respect to horsemen's rights approval under the federal law, wagering security, accounting and settlement services and other matters pertaining to simulcasting. The distribution channels for wagering on Thoroughbred simulcast races have changed, as have other industries, with the advent of the Internet and wagering on our races in foreign countries; horsemen need increased sophistication to exercise due diligence when exercising their authorization rights under the Interstate Horseracing Act. The THG will assist its individual Members in understanding and meeting these challenges.

### Important Changes for 2008-2009

\*\*\*A **NEW** application required. We will provide renewal quote upon receipt of completed application. \*\*\*

- Premium will be calculated based on "Horse Count" not "Stall Count". The DTHA will provide MOC Insurance Services with your individual horse count as of the last day of the month. This count will be used to invoice you in the following month. Example: April 30<sup>th</sup> count is used for the May installment.
- All payments are due to MOC Insurance Services by the 10<sup>th</sup> each month, if payment is received after the 15<sup>th</sup> you will be assessed a late fee of \$50.00.
- If payment is not received by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, a 10 day notice of cancellation will be issued. Once the cancellation notice goes out the following must happen to reinstate coverage without a lapse:
  - You must pay "all" outstanding premium due plus a reinstatement fee of \$250.00 prior to the cancellation date.
  - The Steward's and racing office will receive notice that your coverage is being cancelled.



### Defined Contribution Plan provides savings for retirement

This is a reminder that Delaware trainers and backstretch personnel should take the opportunity to sign up for the backstretch Defined Contribution Plan (retirement plan). This plan was established by the DTHA to help eligible backstretch personnel make a start on their retirement plan. The DTHA has contributed over a million dollars to the Defined Contribution Plan for the backstretch since the plan began in 2002.

A representative of the plan will be in the Horsemen's Office on **Tuesday, June 10 and Thursday, June 12**. These will be the **ONLY** two dates available; please make every effort to sign up. You must bring your current Delaware Park badge along with proof of working at Delaware Park in 2007. Your 2007 W-2 or 1099 from your employer will be sufficient.

#### Editor's Note

The Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Journal is published monthly. Members are invited to submit suggestions for future articles and letters to the editor. Contact Kim Sprenger at (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284; Fax (302) 994-3392.



## Delaware Certified Program continues to grow!



The Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program (DCTP) continues to grow, with an additional 334 thoroughbreds eligible this year for the 15% owner and 15% certifier purse enhancements at Delaware Park. There are now 1,292 Delaware Certified thoroughbreds and the program has paid owners and certifiers almost \$1.6 million.

With 70 farms participating, the DCTP is a significant contributor to Delaware's agricultural economy and fosters the preservation of farmland.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual DCTP Awards Banquet is scheduled for Friday, April 25 from 6 – 9 p.m. at Delaware Park's White Clay Creek Country Club. We will award the leading DCTP certifiers with the highest earnings in six different categories, the leading DCTP horse and the leading DCTP certifier whose horses accumulated the highest overall bonuses in the program. If you would like to attend, please call our office (302) 994-2521, ext. 7284. Tickets are \$25 per couple.

Four DCTP stakes races are scheduled this year. Once again we will host the Delaware Certified and the Delaware Certified Distaff along with the inaugural running of the two-year-old 5/8 turf stakes, The Small Wonder and the First State Dash on Saturday, September 27, 2008. Each purse is \$75,000 guaranteed!

Visit our website, [www.dtha.com](http://www.dtha.com) and click on the DCTP link. From the website you can also see if your horse of racing age is Delaware Certified.

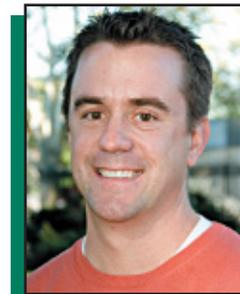
For further information regarding the Delaware Certified program, call our direct line at (302) 994-2398 or email [dctp@dtha.com](mailto:dctp@dtha.com).

## Counselor's Corner

### Backstretch Employee Assistance Program

*Welcome Back!*

Due to winter stabling at Delaware Park, this has been the second year the substance-free housing was open during the winter. This allowed the Backstretch Employee Assistance Program (BEAP) to continue services for those coming back from other race tracks and those who stayed for the winter.



G. Wesley Jones, LCSW

This spring we welcomed Lisette Alfaro, a bi-lingual drug and alcohol counselor from St. Paul's Church. She will work with me three hours per week and will be responsible for a recovery group starting in May.

If you or anyone you work with is going through a difficult time, you can contact me confidentially to discuss those matters. My office is located above the Horsemen's Office, with a private entrance located on the side of the building. My spring hours will be posted in the Horsemen's Office. You can reach me anytime on my cell phone (302) 383-7233.

*G. Wesley Jones, LCSW*

Backstretch Employee Assistance Program

## Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association starts Winner's Circle Political Action Committee

The Delaware Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (DTHA) has started a Political Action Committee called the DTHA Winner's Circle PAC Fund. Beginning with the 2008 race meet, each owner will be assessed a one-time donation of \$50 when they make their first start. This is a voluntary assessment. Non-participation in this fund has no impact on your membership as a DTHA member. All contributions to the PAC are not tax deductible for Federal or State income tax purposes. All PAC contributions will be utilized for individuals running for city, county and state elected office. The \$50 will be taken out of the owners account through the Horsemen's Bookkeeper's account.

**If you would like to opt out of the one-time donation, please fill in the information to the right and mail back to: DTHA – PAC Fund, 777 Delaware Park Blvd., Wilmington, DE 19804.**

Please opt me out of the  
DTHA WINNER'S CIRCLE PAC FUND.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature)

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



## Delaware Thoroughbred Racing Commission rule updates and changes

At the March 11, 2008 meeting, the Delaware Thoroughbred Racing Commission (DTRC) held a public hearing on Androgenic-Anabolic Steroids to amend rule 15.1.3.1.3, and add a new rule, 15.1.17. After lengthy discussion and testimony the commission moved to adopt the rules.

The DTRC will meet April 14, 2008 to discuss regional penalty review of anabolic and androgenic steroids. They will re-visit penalty guidelines in lieu of recent adoptions by Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Racing Secretary, Ismael Trejo proposed changes for Rule 13.1.1, 13.1.2, and 13.6.1 which pertain to claiming races. Under the new rule there will be two different "jail times" for owners who have horses stabled at Delaware Park or stabled elsewhere. Any licensed owner will be eligible to claim after they start a horse at the meet, but if an owner has horses stabled on the grounds the "jail time" will be 60 days, if they are NOT stabled at Delaware Park the "jail time" will be until the close of the meet.

The change in Rule 13.6.1 reads, "A horse claimed by an Owner that has started a horse at the current meet and by a Trainer that is currently stabled on the grounds of the Association, shall not be permitted to run in another racing jurisdiction for the period of sixty (60) days, beginning the day after the claim was made, or until the end of the meet, whichever comes first. A horse that is claimed by an Owner that has started a horse at the current meet by a Trainer that is not currently stabled on the grounds of the Association shall not be permitted to race elsewhere until the close of the meeting which it was claimed."

There will be a public hearing on these rules at the April 30<sup>th</sup> commission meeting and if passed, will take effect June 10<sup>th</sup>.

## International Personnel Resources – Delaware H2-B visa program

Many of you are wondering what is happening with our H2-B Visa employees and whether they will be available to work at Delaware Park this year. I hope I can provide some clarity to a complex issue that requires dealing with four government agencies: State and Federal Department of Labor, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and finally the U. S. State Department.



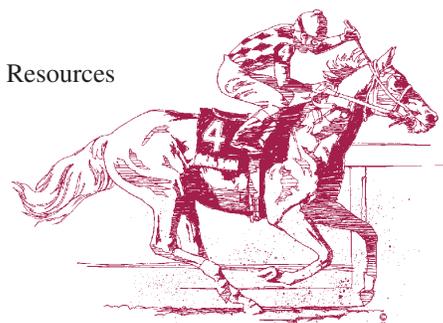
Pete Lizarzaburu (IPR)

The federal government caps the H2-B Visa program at 66,000 visas annually. In the past three years returning workers were not counted toward this cap. Congress did not extend the so called "returning worker exclusion" for 2008. This significantly reduced the number of H2-B visas for 2008 by more than half of the previous year.

All participating DTHA trainer/employers were approved by the State and Federal Department of Labor to petition USCIS for seasonal workers. However, due to the great demand for the limited supply of H2-B visas, they ran out before the DTHA was permitted to petition USCIS. Employers are not allowed to start the process any sooner than 120 days before the work begins. Therefore, we were put at a great disadvantage, since other employers with earlier start dates were allowed to apply before us while visas were still available.

More than 90 members of Congress from both parties, including our Delaware legislators, wrote President Bush this year to ask that he raise the visa quota with an executive order. Business owners lobbied congress at the Capitol on March 12th to urge them to pass legislation extending the returning worker exclusion. The issue may finally be resolved when legislators return to Washington on March 31st to resume the debate. So there is still a chance that if the issue is resolved in April we may see workers arriving in June. In the meantime please make an effort to call your legislators and express your support of legislation to allow returning H2-B workers to return to their jobs. For more information please call me at International Personnel Resources (IPR) (302) 250-8313.

Submitted by  
Pete Lizarzaburu  
International Personnel Resources



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<b>Opening Day</b>	<b>April 19</b>
<b>DCTP Banquet</b>	<b>April 25</b>
<b>Meet Director Nominations</b>	<b>May 1</b>
<b>Open House</b>	<b>May 3</b>
<b>Backstretch Retirement Sign Up</b>	<b>June 10 and June 12</b>
<b>Paddock Party</b>	<b>August 1</b>
<b>DTHA Horsemen's Golf Classic</b>	<b>September 5</b>
<b>Owners Day</b>	<b>September 6</b>

DTHA Board meetings are held monthly on the third Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Horsemen's Office. All owners and trainers are encouraged to attend.



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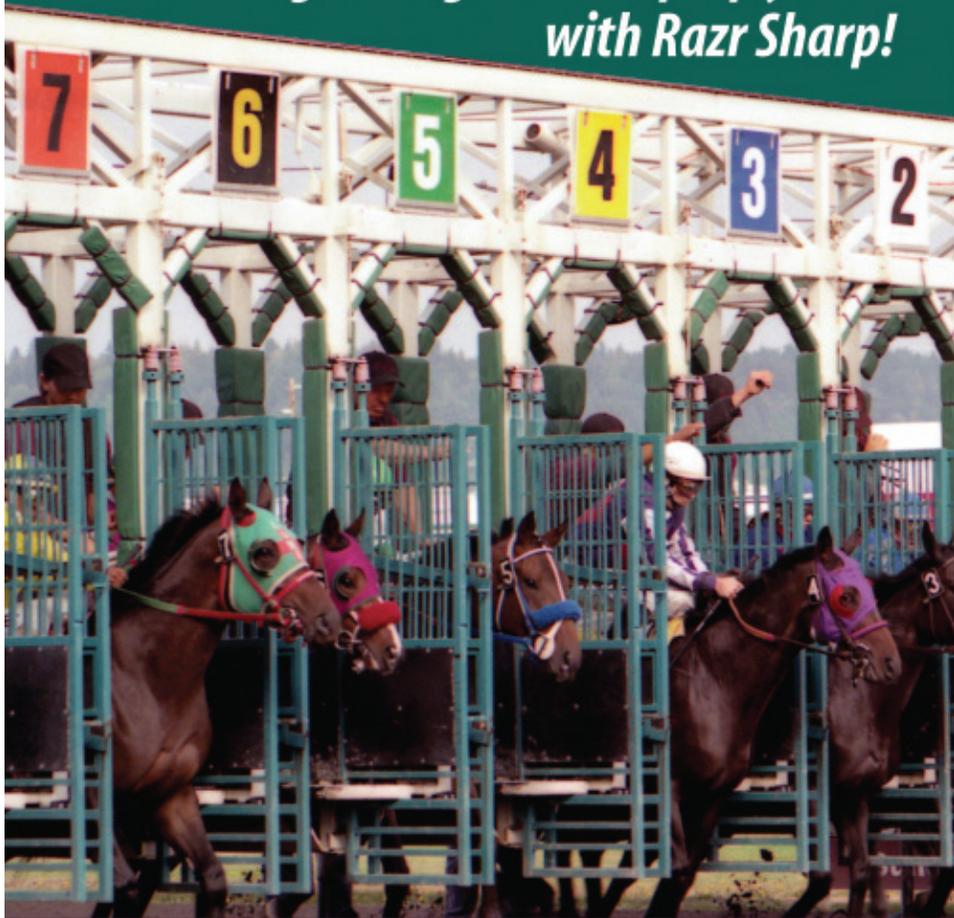
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# Welcome Back!

*SEE YOU IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE!*



## Delaware Horsemen's Assistance Fund services and staff are ready to serve backstretch employees

The 2008 race meet is about to begin, and the Delaware Horsemen's Assistance Fund (DHAF) is ready to serve the needs of backstretch employees. The Horsemen's Wellness Clinic will be resuming its spring/summer schedule, adding days as needed. The schedule is posted outside the Day Room building, and offers free medical care to licensed workers and their families. Prescriptions are offered through the Wellness Clinic, and we have increased the prescription benefit limit this year to \$900 per employee/per year.

Other benefits offered can be scheduled through Lynda Furlong (office in Dayroom building). Included for eligible employees are: dental care, routine eye care and eyeglasses, and a reimbursement program for children enrolled in a licensed daycare program. Armando Gonzalez's office is next door, and Armando runs the "Backstretch Boutique," along with other backstretch activities. The Boutique offers free clothing and accessories to workers. We are always accepting clothing donations, and work with the Clothing Bank of Delaware to provide items suitable for our workers. A limited amount of mattresses are also available this year; see Armando or Lynda for details. English as a second language classes will be offered again this year; please see Armando to sign up.

Wesley Jones, our backstretch counselor, is available for any counseling needs. He supervises our substance free bunkhouse along with offering counseling for drug, alcohol, depression, marital, and family issues. His office is located above the DTHA office. We would like to announce the addition of a part time bilingual counse-

lor, Lissette Alfaro, beginning this year.

Brother Christopher Posch will be starting his 11<sup>th</sup> year offering a weekly Catholic service in the Day Room on Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m. He also offers many trips and activities conducted throughout the year. For the past 2 years "TC" Megahan has been conducting a Christian worship service in the DTHA office on Thursday evenings.

Other activities and services offered throughout the meet by the DTHA and DHAF include: backstretch barbeques, annual Paddock Party, a free weekly shopping shuttle bus for workers, free computers available with internet access located upstairs in the DTHA office, video games and pool tables in the track kitchen, a basketball court, volleyball court, horseshoes pits, and a picnic area with a barbeque pit. Soccer games are offered with the soccer field located near the turf gallop area on the backside. Free holiday dinners for any licensed backstretch workers are held in the track kitchen on Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Two TV's with satellite are available in the Day Room lounge, and next door is an on site laundromat.

Other trips and outings will be announced throughout the year. Please check with Armando for details or let him know if you have any ideas or suggestions. In the past, these have included day trips to amusement parks, baseball games, a fishing trip, etc.

On behalf of the DHAF, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2008 season.



Lynda Furlong

**Note: your newsletter is online at [www.dtha.com](http://www.dtha.com)**