



Race Track Industry Program

**33rd ANNUAL
SYMPOSIUM ON RACING & GAMING**

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EQUINE CAREER COUNSELING

Moderator/Speaker:

Diana Pikulski, Executive Director, Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation

Speakers:

Rory Goree, President, Greyhound Pets of America

Richard Mandella, Trainer

MS. WENDY DAVIS: Welcome to our first panel back after lunch. A little bit of housekeeping. This panel is sponsored by the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. And the refreshment break is sponsored by AmTote. We really appreciate it. Without all their help we certainly could not put this Symposium together, bring you all these interesting panels.

Obviously you know what panel you are at, "Equine Career Counseling." This is certainly something near and dear to my heart, because if you ask my husband, I have way too many of these kinds of horses in the yard. And somehow they come to my house and they become lifers. I think that happens to Diana, too. I always tell my husband we're going to sell them for a lot of money one day, but then they become part of the family. So it's just how it happens.

Today we have a moderator/speaker role being played and that's Diana — and every time I do this wrong, but I'm going slowly — Pikulski. She's an attorney. She's also an appointee of the governor of New York's Task Force on Retired Racehorses. She's a board member of the North American Racing Academy. Newly formed, I think the first class started three months ago in September. So that's a wonderful outlet for some horses that need a job. She's also executive director of Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, and this is the oldest equine rescue and retirement association in the United States.

Diana, thank you so much for putting this together and serving not only as a speaker but as our master of ceremonies. When we start getting to talk horses it turns into an hour and two hours. I know she is very passionate about it.

We also have two people representing horses, and it says "Equine Career Counseling." If you look at the bios we also have a greyhound representative on the panel. I think he has a lot to share. The greyhounds face the same issues and have done some really good work.

Diana thanks again, and I'll turn it over to you.

MS. DIANA PIKULSKI: Is it okay, can I just stay down here? Can everybody hear us? But I need my tool — I hope this works right — left is forward.

I'll just tell you a little bit about the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation. We started in 1983 and took our first horse in 1983. That was a horse named Promised Road. And he just passed away a year ago, so we had him for a long time.

We now have close to 400 horses in our care, and Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation takes horses in any condition. They can be sound for retraining and adoption or they can be pasture sound, because we have other programs in which to use them. You can imagine with this many horses in our care and always having our finger on the pulse of how many horses need to come off the track and be placed and how many horses are in peril and need to be rescued, it's a constant discussion among us and between us and the racing industry as to how we deal with this issue. One thing I can tell you from our perspective, the issue is in many ways about racing and it's about how racing can close the stewardship, the circle of stewardship, for it's athletes.

And this relates to racing dogs as well. And I think they have done a particularly good job of marketing their program, and I'm looking forward to hearing about that and learning from that.

So much of our success with horses depends upon how they are treated and how they are raised. Before we get to sort of the nuts and bolts and funding types of issues, I'm happy to introduce Richard Mandella, who's a trainer and it's encouraging to me, given much thought and put much time and effort into possible ways that racing can help us and help the horses. Thank you, Richard.

MR. RICHARD MANDELLA: Thank you. I was invited to do this career counseling through my secretary, passed the message on, and I said, yes, sign me up. My encouragement was I thought it was career counseling for myself. I've kind of run this well dry.

(Laughter)

But, you know, all horses are not as lucky as Forego and John Henry that are retired in fancy parks and have visitors and people to come by and see them. A lot of them are just working, everyday horses that need a new home. And the work that she does, and TRF and all, any of the retirement homes are to be greatly respected.

There are a few things that racing needs to stand up and take better responsibility for, and I suggested it at a meeting at — the claiming game. Are you familiar with how claiming works? If you are claiming a horse in a race, you have to put the money up and sign for it 15 minutes before the race. You don't have any idea what shape the horse is in. Other than walking to the paddock and see that he can at least walk, you can't see him run and you don't have any idea what shape he comes out. Unfortunately, horses are dropped into claiming for the theory I use, the hot potato. The horse starts to get a real problem and the trainer realizes he has a horse that would be favorite for whatever price he plans to run him for and most likely to get claimed. And occasionally the horses don't finish the race, they are broken down.

Back to what I began to say. I suggested the change into that rule as to have a clause in it that says that when you claim a horse, if it does not finish the race, the claim can be void, which would turn the mentality out of having a horse that you think might have one race left in him but a \$50,000 price tag if somebody was to put a claim in. If you didn't think the horse would finish the race, you would not enter the horse and protect him. There's been a great positive response to that, and I think something will happen.

Along the same line, introducing some races that are called "auction races" where the person would watch the races run and see the cooling out process taking place. Obviously, you are not going to bid on a horse that did not run well and you're not going to bid on one that's limping. If we turn it from claim to auctions, which is a slow process — America grew up with claiming races right from the start — so it would be a slow process to change people over, but that would encourage people to, when they begin to get a problem of soundness, more than your everyday aches and pains, stop and fix it and come back another day rather than, again, the hot potato, inject them, get him to the next race and hope somebody claims him.

And so those are things I'm working on and I think can improve the game.

MS. PIKULSKI: How this all relates to what the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation does, is currently the TRF has programs for unsound horses. And this is — I said the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation but I mean the entire retirement industry.

The TRF has found some unique programs for these ex-racehorses. We currently have five farms that are at correctional facilities where the inmates take care of the horses and learn a vocational training program. This provides an important second career for many horses, and the future of this is growing so fast. We can hardly keep up with the number of states that want us to put programs in similar to this.

Not only does it give the horses a second career, but it also gives the inmates a career. They learn how to take care of the horses, they learn self-esteem that they would not otherwise have, they learn how to overcome fear of the

horses, and they learn how to communicate rather than using aggression or fear. They learn to communicate using love and leadership. It makes a dramatic change in these people before they are released into the community.

Also, recently there's been an increase in the number of programs use hippotherapy, which is basically the horses have to be able to be calm and walk sound. And this has also been very good for retired racehorses.

Then another program where people who have farms and are looking for something to do with their farms or looking to have a way to pay farm taxes instead of regular real estate taxes are able to take horses from the TRF. We sign a contract with them that they maintain a certain level of care. The ownership of the horses is never out the hands of the TRF. We have control over the care those horses receive.

Those are just some careers for unsound retired racehorses. Of course, the sound racehorses — and this gets back to what racing needs to do — are the easiest to place. To this day we have far more people looking to adopt sound racehorses than we have sound racehorses for people to adopt.

These horses go on and do wonderfully in eventing, dressage, show jumping, just pleasure riding and trail riding, and even in western disciplines now. There's really — a few of them are hard to retrain, but for the most part there's no limit to what they can do.

Something that the TRF has done, and one of the topics really, is what have we learned as an industry and organization over the past 20-some years? We do our retraining of our horses internally. Rather than having somebody come and adopt the horse fresh off the track and retrain it themselves, the TRF, before we put our horses up for adoption, we go through the process of teaching them the basics of how to ride, if they are sound enough for that, just some basic jumping. We take them on trail rides, we get them used to being turned out with other horses, riding in a group but not having to be ahead of all the other horses. And this is — it's great.

You know, I put up here it improves our success for adoption rates. That result is through the roof. But it also lowers our liability issues when you know what the horse is about and how he is going to be.

We develop good relationships with trainers, racehorse trainers, so they start thinking about us and encouraging the owners to send the horses knowing there's a good success rate with the horses being adopted through us. And we make a point of sending the owners pictures of their horses with the cute kids that adopted them and that puts in their mind they want to retire the horse while it can still have a second career. Having good relationships with adopters, turns out they end up supporting us, adopting more horses from us, and making donations. The issue of funding is obviously the elephant in the room, as they say.

Right now the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation and the other organizations, except for the one in Canada, survive on voluntary donations from people; and our budget is close to \$3 million a year. And it's tough to get out and raise that money every single year, and it's get tougher as there are more horrible things in the world that need to be funded. You have Darfur, the hurricanes, and all of these things. More and more philanthropists are looking at me and saying, don't you think the racing industry should be taking care of its problem? And that's true.

There are some things happening, at Woodbine recently in September they passed a resolution and it became a law that the local organization called Long Run would get a quarter of one percent of the purse fund. And that gives them an operating steady flow of money they can rely upon.

I say, if Woodbine can do it, why can't we do it here in the United States? In New York the governor set up a task force on retired racehorses. And in the RFP for whoever is going to operate the New York tracks, they made it mandatory there be a percentage of the handle to go to retired racehorses. I'm on this committee, and they are looking at using the money to expand the prison programs we have in New York and retraining program. And, hopefully, with the new governor it's going to come to fruition and be a source of funding for us.

There have been attempts at volunteer funding sources and this really is not working. The Ferdinand Fund, which is something they tried in New York, has only raised about \$6,000 so far in the course of a year, which really only cares for a few horses.

Blue Horse Charities has been very helpful to us, and that's through the Fasig-Tipton sale company. And that is a check-off that people that buy or sell horses through Blue Horse Charities have a percentage of what they spend. Yes, it's a percentage of what they would get when they sell the horse, go into a fund, and that fund is distributed, depending on how many horses we adopt out to homes.

There's Thoroughbred Charities America, which has a big fund-raiser every year, and they distribute to many organizations. The money is spread to so many organizations it's not enough to make a significant difference.

And so the point is, while there are attempts to have voluntary funding mechanisms, it's something the industry needs to look at harder and put in some sort of mandatory funding in a way that is hopefully helpful in an industry where all people need money. That is really the solution we're going to need.

Just to kind of recap the whole thing, there's the other elephant in the room. How many horses? Thousands of horses, tens of thousands if you look at all of the ways of dealing with horses. One, that you educate people to retire their horse while it's still sound, because it's so easy for us to place. And if some of the things such as what Richard has spoken about are put into place so the horses are made the priority while they are racing, the horse's health and soundness is more of a

priority. Planning for that horse when it retires from racing is going to make a huge difference in what we do and how we can place horses. There definitely has to be and can be a huge extension in the prison programs and more retraining certificates and more exposure in the horse loving but non-racing population.

You'll see, I put some of our posters around where we tend to have a positive image all the time about what's good with these horses and not a bad message, but just — you should look at a retired racehorse. It can fill your needs.

And then there's the issue of putting horses down. In many instances the TRF gets a horse that comes to us, somebody retires the horse and says, he was injured or not sound for racing anymore. And we'll do our best to try to make the horse sound. There are many times where the horse is just never going to be comfortable unless he is constantly on pain medication, and that's not something we feel we should do. And those horses need to be euthanized. We see a lot of horses that leave the tracks and go to the auctions, and many of those horses should just be euthanized before they leave the track. That's really the humane thing to do and the right thing to do and not something we should be ashamed to talk about.

So now I'm going to turn our program over — and you have a presentation as well — and hopefully he will help us find some answers to our problems.

MR. RORY GOREE: Okay. The next presentation — there we go.

My name is Rory Goree, president of Greyhound Pets of America. We're a nonprofit organization that specializes in finding homes for retired racing greyhounds. And it's a privilege for me to be here to talk about our program, but it's also an honor to talk about the racing industry, which I've been working with in finding homes for the greyhounds. A lot of what I'm speaking about today we would not be able to do without the greyhound industry support, and it's a lot what they have done for us that got us to where we are today.

This piece of artwork hangs in my office. It's one of my own greyhounds. I have nine at home, and one foster, which makes 10. Marty is the old man of my pack, he will turn 13 years old. The piece of artwork was commissioned by one of our chapters for their 12th year anniversary and it just happened to be — the artist had a picture of him with a moo cow and she just tossed in a piece of cheese.

One of the things to think about on adoption. Marty has been in my house for a little over 12 years. He is not a retired racer. His parents were but Marty is not. Twelve years ago some people got two greyhounds, had a litter of puppies, and then we had more greyhounds to deal with and there was no need for that.

One of the important things to remember is sterilization. Over the 12 years, all the adoption programs have gotten really good about making sure sterilization is done before they are adopted. So we don't have more greyhounds to deal with.

Adoption roots. Greyhound Pets of America was formed in 1986 with seven chapters. Today we have roughly 60 chapters across the country with 20 satellites off those 60 chapters, and we have 11,000 members. We're adopting out 5,000 greyhounds a year now. That's what it's taken for us to pull that off.

Our founders of our organization, I like to call them adoption pioneers, there's a little secret that some people may not want everyone to know. Our organization was formed by racing people. Trainers, dog owners. These were people in the greyhound racing industry that saw there needed to be a national program for adoption, so they formed our organization.

Our organization was formed without any politics involved. Our only job was to find homes for greyhounds. And I think over the years it's been a really great program. No politics, just concentrating on the greyhounds. And this year we will be adopting our 75,000th greyhound. So we've removed the politics and we've been able to take care of the greyhounds.

One of the things that makes it easy for us to adopt out our greyhounds is another thing that the greyhound racing industry has done a good job with. They have given us the perfect pet: A greyhound is a healthy dog, does not have the type of issues that you normally see in some of the purebreds. The greyhound is very well socialized in the kennels, on the farms, they are with handlers. When they come to the track they get handled by three to six individuals. The greyhounds are also raised with their littermates and moms for several months.

Basically, I like to call it — they get the natural education. All other dogs in society, we rip them away at six weeks of age, eight weeks of age and toss them into the scary human world. The racing greyhound they are learning from their littermates and their mom.

Many people I talk to that specialize in training or obedience have said that the greyhound is pretty much what God or Mother Nature intended a dog to be. So they've basically made it very easy on us by giving us something very easy to adopt out.

The industry has done several things to help support adoption. They have grants they provide. These are where if an organization needs a little help with placing some dogs or things they need to do, they can always call the American Greyhound Council. As far as I know, every time someone has called for help, the industry has been there to help out. They assist with financial support to the local and national adoption efforts.

I don't know if many of you saw this on the news last summer. There was 126 greyhounds in Juarez, Mexico, that were from the United States that the track no longer could afford to keep down there. Thanks to the greyhound racing industry we were able to provide for those dogs and bring every one back home and they are all in homes, adopted out. We couldn't have done it without the greyhound racing industry.

The greyhound industry has also provided — they bought a trailer to help out with emergency hauls. There's times where tracks close or kennels shut down and we need to be able to move large numbers of dogs. Trailers cost a lot of money. A lot of us adoption folks don't have the money sitting around to buy a trailer or have the place to keep one. The industry provided a trailer used to move these dogs, and I know it's been used several times. And without that trailer I'm not sure what would happen. The industry stepped up to the plate on that.

They also funded us money to have an "800" adoption line. This number works all across the country, and we promote this number all over the place and constantly get calls on it. I live in Phoenix, Arizona. People are visiting. Snowbirds they see the 800-number, and when they get back to where they live they call the 800-number. They get the closest adoption program. Next thing you know they have a dog.

The industry has also put together some welfare initiatives. They urge all their members to work with adoption agencies. I know in the number of years I've been involved with them urging the members to work with us, the amount of support we get from the owners and trainers increased tremendously. It seems like now every time we get a dog from a trainer, an owner, there's typically a check attached to help us place the dog.

There were times that we get calls from people saying, If you don't come in two hours these dogs are going to be put down. Now the owners and trainers call and say, I've got these dogs, let me know when you can come to get them.

The ADC through the National Greyhound Association conducts farm inspections to make sure things are up to par there, the welfare of the dogs is taken care of. They've also funded the first edition and, I believe, the second edition will come out lately, *The Care of the Racing and Adopted Greyhound*. A good book for veterinarians and those that adopted the animal to help with the issues.

In 1992 the industry encouraged it's members to concentrate on quality and not quantity in breeding of the dogs. And I believe since then the number of dogs bred has gone down by 50 percent. From an adoption side, that's tremendous. That's fewer dogs I have to concentrate on. This was a very big step, getting the number of dogs bred down.

They regularly publish information regarding adoption, which helps out. Every time, their publication, they have *The Greyhound Review*, on that magazine, and it goes out to the industry people. There's a leader in the greyhound adoption community, Cynthia Brannigan. She is an author. She has an article in there about adoption, what we go through, so the industry folks can learn what we go through. So there's a little cross-learning there.

We now have open doors between the industry and the adoption community.

A number of years ago there was a lot of mistrust between the adoption community and the industry, and many of the tracks today now have adoption information available on the track. They have adoption volunteer's on-site promoting adoption during business hours.

If you were to drive down to Phoenix Greyhound Park tonight when they are open, you would see a couple of adopted greyhounds there and a couple of volunteers talking to people about what a great pet they make. Many of the tracks hold picnics on-site and other types of events, and this is a great time for people to come to the track and learn about the dog and also learn a little bit about the industry. It's also a great opportunity to help nip any rumors in the bud.

By the way, you remember Marty? Have any of you heard of the rumor about greyhounds having bad teeth because of the feed they are fed at the track? Next time you hear that give me a call and you can come to my house and I'll let Marty kiss you and you'll see it's not true. Marty, since he wasn't a racer — he's been in my house almost all of his life on quality food, and he's got the worst teeth of all of my dogs.

We have been working with a vision statement: To adopt as many greyhounds into loving homes while working together with all those involved with the lives and care of the racing greyhound to promote welfare and build bridges that promotes careers as loving pets when the race is over.

That meant the adoption community and racing community coming together to talk about issues. And we've been doing it for a number of years, and it's very successful. I can say for our organization, as soon as we started working closely with the industry that we started seeing our adoption rates go up. Building bridges is a tremendous thing, and will go a long way to help in the welfare of the greyhound.

Our goals and objectives: Promote welfare, promote participation in the adoption effort, and promote open doors. And all these efforts have been achieved with the adoption community and the racing community. By promoting welfare, working together, today's situation for the retired racing greyhound is better than it's ever been. Today's greyhound has a better chance of finding a home than it did in 1986. And probably in the next few years we're going to be on the brink of history where we have 100 percent of adoptable greyhounds finding a home.

How did we do it, face-to-face meetings. We've tackled difficult issues, haven't been shy about talking with each other about what we see, what they see. We bring them up and made welfare a priority at the meetings.

I know the greyhound racing industry. They have several meetings each year, one in Vegas and one here. And every time there was a meeting I participated in with them welfare is a topic, and not just a topic they talk about and forget about. They talk about it. And in the discussions they have during the meeting they start acting on it as soon as they get back home.

Comments, complaints, or jeers? Now is the time to pass them on to me.

MS. PIKULSKI: Thank you very much, Rory. That was informative for me. It brought up two things I'd like to say.

One, when I talked about donations to the TRF in order for us to exist and grow and survive, on a state-by-state basis and track and organization basis, the racing industry has kept us alive as well. Through donations and through similar types of programs where the TRF brings horses to the racetracks, and our information is available to people that come to the track. And in some states, for instance Florida, the TRF branch in Florida is pretty much funded entirely by the racing industry down there. The Florida thoroughbred breeders and owners oversee the fundraising for the program there through the industry, and that's been a wonderful model for us.

And also when you mentioned how welfare is a topic and a topic everybody addresses and deals with. In my 20-some years with the Retirement Foundation I've seen a dramatic change where we started off without anybody knowing or talking about in the racing industry what happened with the horses and what we could do to avoid that. And now as you probably know, the fact we're here today and it's a topic at the University of Arizona, it's come a long way as well. And there are open discussions on a regular basis now.

And just one other thing, the TRF is lucky enough to be endowed. We received an endowment from the estate of Paul Mellon. It was unsolicited by us, but partly because Mr. Mellon, like so many people in horse racing, was aware of what was going on and wanted to do something to help it. And so he saw that was a need, and that's something that definitely we need to continue to grow on.

I think now might be a good time — do you have any more comments? Let's open it up for questions. Yes?

MR. MANDELLA: I'd like to say something while we're waiting for her to get the mike there.

Diane mentioned the word "euthanasia." She said it quick, and I know that word makes you cringe when you think of it. When horses are dealt a lifetime of being crippled or bored to death, standing in somebody's backyard, nobody caring for them, mud up to their butt in the winter, you know, especially when those horses have been to the track and had grooms with them all day long and hot walkers and night watchmen, the care they get, they become family. That sentence of being a cripple or bored to death is not the glorious thing you think it is unless you know firsthand how it works.

When a horse is hurt badly and not going to be sound, not going to be of any treat to anybody, he is going to be neglected. And I'm only saying this to make sure she's not accused of being unthoughtful. That word is an important word, and

it has to be put into place at times.

A VOICE: I have a question about the funding model and the racing industry, and I take it you meant the racetracks themselves. With our claiming system in North America, it seems the smaller tracks are the collectors of these horses at the end of their careers. And so we have at these tracks, which have the lowest purses and the least ability to fund a retirement programs, the largest collection of racehorses. And I wonder if on the panel here, you can offer some insight into that?

MS. PIKULSKI: That is a huge issue, and I would like to see the entire industry come together and have a summit so to speak on how we deal with this. Because the horses that were owned by people with means and with the desire to donate and help those horses often, by the time the horses are retired they are running at places with very little money and the people who last owned them or trained them don't have the means to retire them.

You've stated the problem, which is why the entire racing industry needs to figure out a way to close this circle of stewardship. Because there's not. Because while those horses are coming off from racing at small tracks, they were bred very well, and one point they raced for a lot of money. It needs to be the entire racing industry's concern and not just me calling the people that run these small tracks that have no budget saying we just took 35 horses in the past four weeks and we need money. That is really the issue. The only solution is for the entire industry to come together and say this is a marketing issue for us, this is a horse welfare issue for us, and we need to deal with it on a whole racing level.

Any thoughts?

MR. GOREE: On the dog side we have somewhat the same situation. Where we are lower-end tracks — and I have a couple chapters at some of these — those chapters really benefit from the racing industry. They are able to go to them and get a grant to help take care of those dogs. And the money from those grants came from the whole, collective racing industry.

MR. MANDELLA: I understand what your point is. The smaller tracks, it's not always a case of a horse that had been good going down the ladder and ending up there. It's often of the case of a horse, well-bred or not well-bred, that just can't run enough and they end up at those places. I don't know.

I'm involved. I chair the study in California that studies all breakdowns, and I've seen several reports. I don't know that the numbers are any greater for those horses put under more pressure than the normal. Put yourself in the place. If you have an \$80,000 horse that just ran second or for \$80,000 claiming and he blows a tendon and you think to yourself, I can put him in for fifty or sixty thousand and maybe get one more race and somebody will claim him. That's a pretty big carrot to draw your attention. At the same time, when it's a \$2,500 horse, it might not be as important to that guy to go ahead and do that. I don't know that they are mistreated more than at a higher level is the point I'm trying to make.

One thing that Diane and I spoke about before this meeting, they have these farms with the prison help and correctional facilities working with the horses, which is great. I think in order to get greater funding I think you need to take — what I think needs doing is create schools for horsemanship and maybe the next farm, have a farm available for a school for young people around that would know if they sent in a request they can go there and learn horsemanship and learn and educate riders and grooms and things so they can go in the workforce.

The workforce is in desperate shape in most jurisdictions that I know about. There aren't a lot of people coming out of the communities that want to groom horses or have any idea how to ride one. The industry is in need of a place to learn, and I can see a great use of horses being donated before they are injured so badly that you can't ride them, going into these schools and being put to use as teaching these people how to learn horsemanship as well as riding. From there they can be adopted out and regrouped and get a new collection in. And I think when you close that wheel from start to finish, I think then you can maybe go to the government and racing industry and ask for some portion of handle that would go to supplying the facility for that kind of place.

A VOICE: There's a bill before Congress right now that makes it illegal — if it passes — illegal to slaughter any horses for human consumption. If that passes it will put 90,000 additional horses on the market annually. How will that affect your organization?

MS. PIKULSKI: Well, we've thought about that. We only deal with registered thoroughbreds and so we won't deal with a lot of those horses. And there are not great records and numbers kept about how many horses of what type are sent to slaughter each year. We estimate just from what we are able to glean from people being at the slaughterhouses or the auctions there might be between 5,000 and 8,000 thoroughbreds each year going off the track and headed in that direction. And that's why when we look at solving the problem. We look at all things.

Education. Because more people, if they know what's happening with their horse and keep track of their horses they are more likely to set up funding for retiring their own horses or retire them themselves, and also expansion to try to deal with the number of horses that would come to us.

And then euthanasia. In our mind those horses are better off euthanized than going through the process that would get them to the slaughterhouse. And many of those horses need to be euthanized in any case. I think if the bill were to pass it's not as though you are suddenly faced with that many horses. The way the process seems to work now, at tracks across the country there's a middleman that goes around from track to track and offers cash for horses so he can build his or her load to go to the slaughterhouse and have enough horses. If that's not legal anymore and not happening anymore, at each track you're going to have trainers and owners who have horses that can't be sold to these buyers. And so we can deal with it on a track-by-track basis.

If it was — I'm not going to name any track in particular — some tracks in some states normally the guy comes around once a week. They can say to us, we have four horses here at the track and people don't know what to do with them and we're calling you. And I think at that point we can work together with the track. Say you put in some money, the horseman will put in money, and TRF will raise money and we'll deal with these horses at your track on a weekly or monthly basis. It gives us a little bit of leverage.

Now those horses will be at those tracks needing a place to go. I know it sounds optimistic, but I think that's the way we're going to have to go at it and say, okay, this is a problem, and we're going to solve it. Whatever happens on a case-by-case basis, we're going to do what's best for the horse, and that may mean euthanasia.

MR. MANDELLA: I'll speak to this, too. This man hit a subject that's going to become very important in the future. Doing a great thing and not having them go through that process is also going to make a back-up of horses that are going to be supplied.

There's 40,000 foals born each year in the United States. When you mix that with the introduction of synthetic surfaces to our racetracks — they've already proven there's a great reduction of catastrophic injury — and as a trainer, having trained over it for a while, I think all injuries are decreased. Consequently, you may not have the ratio of horses going through training and going out with injuries and not staying there.

The long-term problem is more horses around, more to be retired later. We can end up having horses in all of our backyards, and that needs to be thought of.

The gentlemen next to me mentioned neutering. And that's probably going to be a subject that becomes more prevalent in the future. Maybe some kind of reward for people not breeding mares. In the thoroughbred industry if you have a female, she's going to be a broodmare. Doesn't matter what her qualifications are. And that's maybe something that needs to be addressed and looked into. Something so we maybe end up with 30,000, not 40,000.

I don't know the answers to those problems. That statement he made was very good, and something everybody better take home and figure out. What do we do with all these horses in the future?

MS. PIKULSKI: Let me ask Rory a question.

Is there some law that protects the greyhounds from being killed in a certain way?

MR. GOREE: The industry does have some rules. If a greyhound is going to be put down, it has to be done humanely. States do not have rules about, you can't

do that.

MS. PIKULSKI: Okay.

MS. WENDY HOOGEVEEN: My name is Wendy, and I'm with the Ontario Racing Commission. We were involved in the effort in Ontario to fund Long Run. It was a joint meeting that initiated the discussion. To give you background on the funding side, there was a lot of discussion at the meeting as to which is the appropriate way to go.

We talked about should we ask the sales company to put in a little bit, ask the racetracks to put in more, take it from the improvement or incentive programs. It came down to — it goes to your point about responsibility for the horses where the owner has responsibility early in the career, receives a lot of money for that horse in purses, and it's the owner at the end of the career who has the responsibility of dealing with the horse or disposing of the horse when he is no longer useful for racing. The reason we went to the percentage on purses was — it's a percentage of purses paid — an owner that pays into that is paying all along, and it's almost like establishing a retirement fund. And that was the rationale for why we went down that road. That's a program for the whole province. They benefit from that. It's not just Woodbine.

MS. PIKULSKI: Okay. Thank you.

A VOICE: What's the life expectancy on a greyhound versus a horse? Looking at 25 to 30 years of age on these horses, our numbers will multiply very rapidly.

MR. GOREE: Greyhound is 12 to 13.

MS. PIKULSKI: We just lost Ball Game at 32.

A VOICE: I sort of have a follow-up on both of those questions. I'll go with the amount of horses, about 40,000 registered a year. The average age of a horse, figuring casualties, maybe 15, when you get rid of just natural causes and things like that. I'm trying to get a grasp of the actual number of thoroughbreds out there. Out of 40,000 maybe you have 25,000 of each crop after racing age that are unwanted, either older mares that can't produce or unable or haven't been able to produce anything decent. And all your geldings and that sort.

If you have 25 horses from each crop at the average age of 15, you're talking close to 400,000 horses. Even at \$1,500, which you guys say you can take care of them at, that's \$600 million a year to take care of the thoroughbreds. I think the pension fund is great. I agree the owners have the biggest responsibility, you can say, we're speculating on this, making money. It falls there first, but it has to go a lot more than that.

It seems to be more of a publicity thing, saying we're trying. I don't know what the real answer is other than euthanasia for a lot of these horses. And I guess to elaborate on my point about the ownership first, a great place would be

the auction houses and the 2-year-old in training sales. Token efforts, a quarter percent tax that the owners pay. Doesn't come out of the sales company. We would be fighting all day if we pit the buyers against — if we say, you're speculating. You can spend a million dollars on a Kentucky yearling. Twenty-five percent tax and \$25,000 goes to a foundation like this that's respected and well-run. I think the owners is the way to go first.

MS. PIKULSKI: Thank you.

You know, the horses come off the track at so many different ages. There are some horses that break down in training — or it's obvious they are not going to make it before they get to the races — and then we get horses that come to us as 2-year-olds and horses who are not retired until they are 12 years old. Some of them stay in racing for a long time, and there's attrition along the way for so many various reasons.

I'm happy to say that the pressure that we're under now is not that great. It's not overwhelming that we don't feel like we can't continue doing what we're doing and making enough of an impact that the thoroughbred industry, if we have an overall funding mechanism and we grow at a rate based upon what the funding is, that the thoroughbred industry can't say, we're dealing with the problem the best we can. From my seat in the middle of it every day, getting the calls about the horses at the slaughterhouse, getting the calls about the horses at auctions and the calls from the trainers at the track saying, can you please take my horse? For whatever reason.

I can't explain why. I do know the numbers. It's not that kind of pressure. A lot of it is that the riding horse industry continues to grow and there's a lot of people that go to tracks and buy horses right off the track to be made riding horses.

There's other organizations like CANTER that goes and they enable trainers and helps trainers to sell horses right out of their barns. So they that don't have to come to us.

So that's just my comments on your very astute analysis.

Yes?

A VOICE: I'm a student in the Race Track Program and I've been an owner of two off-the-track thoroughbreds, both of whom are great horses. I've also been in the hunter-jumper industry for a long time. And I noticed that the trend is now towards warmbloods and Hanoverians and bigger horses. In general, calmer and easier to train.

You talked about reaching out to the riding world. How do you approach that? With greyhounds they have the perfect pet, but thoroughbreds have the reputation to be a little crazy. Some of them can take a lot of retraining. How do

you address the issue of reaching out to the other sector of the horse world and say, this is a good horse? Now, my horses are both great riding horses. How do you present that animal and that aspect to bring more people to get these sounder horses?

MS. PIKULSKI: I've been thinking about a campaign called "real riders ride ex-racehorses."

(Laughter)

You know, if you want to win a speed class, you find yourself a good sound ex-racehorse. That is an issue. I mean, that actually — I lived in Vermont for a long time. The thing was like Mad River Glen. "Ski it if you can," because it was the hardest mountain. And I thought that's what we should do with the ex-racehorses.

But we've started to do this in Virginia and Kentucky, having classes for ex-racehorses and having, finding sponsors and having money for those, prize money for the classes.

I see Phil Dutton took a horse off of Charlestown and he is getting that horse up for four-star eventing. Publicizing it, again, to make it more fashionable. I think there's some appeal to that speed and agility and responsiveness of the ex-racehorse. But you're right, it's an issue with many people wanting to ride warmbloods.

A VOICE: I wonder what other breeds do. Is there a model somewhere else? I assume you looked at that.

MS. PIKULSKI: Well, if there is I don't know it too well. We've started before anybody else. The Standardbred Retirement Foundation came after us and followed our model. And I don't know of a program that the quarter horse racing industry does. So I think we're sort of the pioneers here.

A VOICE: What's the mindset today of the racing organizations, the HBPA, towards funding and helping? Are they on board? Cooperative? Do they need a sales job?

MS. PIKULSKI: They are on board, believe in what we do, and they want to help. But it just appears from my view, everybody is having financial difficulty. We've gone to various states to try to do what they did at Woodbine. We tried it at a number of places. It's hard to get all the groups to the table. And have them willing to give up what percentage they have fought for. And so that's why I think the next step is really to find a way to get everybody to the table — which is what I think they did in Canada — and say, you're not leaving the room until we figure it out, because it's something we have to do. But people believe and they do what they can. But it still needs a more universal approach. And everybody is saying,

okay, we're going to chip in and help.

MR. MANDELLA: There's nobody in the industry that should not be involved in this program. And if you can make a solid enough platform such as we spoke about the retirement home, school for horsemanship, if you can tie that wheel together and make it a really useful project then I think you can go to legislatures and leaders in the industry and try to get the handle attached to where you have a small portion out of the handle. The handle, a person bets a dollar, the government takes a piece, horseman takes a piece, breeders get a piece. Maybe there needs to be a small piece going to retirement. But I think it's got to be really professional game plan before they approach that effort.

And along with that, the incentive for geldings, more geldings. Because you get all these horses together, you can't run them together as colts once they've grown up. When you get a bunch of geldings you can put them in with anybody. They are just happy, get along well, and that needs to be encouraged more than it's done today.

And then the uses of the mares. Every female becomes a broodmare. The best polo players prefer thoroughbred fillies and mares for their polo ponies. Maybe, I'm not sure what the process is to neuter mares, I know it can be done. Maybe, there needs to be incentives to cut down the size of the breed. Those things will have to be worked out in the future. Size is going to matter, the most important statement here, the backup is going to be great. We talked about 4,000 thoroughbreds. Think about the quarter horses, warmbloods, the trotters, and every kind of breed. It would be a great number.

MS. PIKULSKI: On the funding from organizations, I mean, generally the big organizations like Churchill Downs and Magna tracks and NYRA, before they got involved with the RFP, generally donated between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year. And state organizations are about \$5,000 a year.

A VOICE: I wanted to go back to the soundness issue of horses. I worked at a rescue operation in Pennsylvania for a while. Our biggest issue was keeping the horses sound. Those were always very adoptable. Those that were not stayed around the rescue for a while.

You mentioned a few practices that help keep horses sound. Not just educating the owners, but like softening the track surface, getting rid of toe grabs, things that reduce injury in the horse. Do you take any positions on that? Are there any other rule changes besides the claiming? Like limiting the frequency you can race the horse, not using toe grabs, anything like that that the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation takes a position on? Or do you feel it's not the foundation's place.

MS. PIKULSKI: I'm going to turn this over to Richard. Our mission and mandate is to provide homes for horses; but, obviously, there's another part of us that works to enable us to do that. We need more sound horses and have the industry work

on those things. And, again, I'd like to see the entire industry come together to make the decision; and certainly spending time with Richard and his efforts in that, because he is in the industry and prominent, that's the way it's going to happen most effectively. We will support all of those endeavors.

MR. MANDELLA: You've done your homework. Makes it harder to answer.

But you obviously read about the contribution of toe grabs to the catastrophic injury, but that's become a great concern, and the leaders of this industry would like to enforce that. But there's a lot of my colleagues, a little hard-headed, old-fashioned, and truly believe the toe grabs make them better. But I don't understand it myself. If they all have the same shoes nobody has an advantage. When you lengthen the toe and drop the heel and insult it by enlarging the size of the toe grab, you put great pressure on the fetlock joint, the major cause of catastrophic injury. That's where the toe grabs affect. It weakens that area and puts too much pressure.

That's in the process of being corrected. It's just slow because of the hard-headedness of my colleagues. The industry is trying to address that.

A VOICE: I was wondering what the effects of the problem are worldwide? I think other, more densely populated countries would be having similar problems. Obviously, racing is a worldwide sport in the greyhound industry and thoroughbred.

MS. PIKULSKI: Well, I'm going to let Richard speak to that as well. A lot of the practices that help add to the problem are endemic here to the United States.

MR. MANDELLA: I never — we have enough trouble. I never got out of our jurisdiction. You could be right. I just don't know the answer.

MS. PIKULSKI: In the U.K. they race straight sometimes. You think that has an effect? Also, the effect that they don't have a standard claiming system like we do.

MR. MANDELLA: I never heard any discussion about back-up of horses. But in Europe, I think the horse is used more than America. There's a lot of riding events. I really don't know, to be honest.

A VOICE: Why don't we send them some of ours?

(Laughter)

MS. PIKULSKI: I think they come off the track sounder.

MR. MANDELLA: Some of the countries have been buying some of ours by the pound, that's the problem.

MR. GOREE: I'm more familiar with the United States of America. In the greyhound racing world we have the World Greyhound Racing Federation. People

from the various countries that have their own associations, they come together and at those meetings they have the same type of discussions. Last year I participated with them in Miami. The other countries see some of the same issues.

MS. PIKULSKI: Could it be — do you think your industry was affected by things this industry, the horse racing industry, never had to face? Referendums in states to abolish greyhound racing. Do you think that may have helped it to bring the industry together to deal with the problem?

MR. GOREE: It helped. And with the numbers of horses I'm hearing, I think you're going to probably start getting — if you are starting to have loads of horses put down, you're going to start having some people in the public that are just going to be having a field day and going to be ripping the industry left and right. If you don't start doing something you are going to be in trouble in the future. The greyhound racing industry, they saw they needed to do something so they took action. By having the meeting today, you guys are starting to work towards it.

MS. PIKULSKI: To go back to the international issue, I've been a part of an effort in the U.K., again, through funding from the estate of Paul Mellon, to set up farms similar to ours. There's a small retraining farm that we helped to set up and they recently, people from the U.K. came over and visited our correctional facility farms. I think they are going to do that in the U.K. to help with their retired racehorses. It hasn't hit the point we have here.

A VOICE: I work for the commission in Pennsylvania and we tend to see, at the track I'm at, our speed horses are the horses that break down greater than the distance horses. Anything over a mile there's probably a three to one breakdown difference. Is this the same in California, or do you know?

MR. MANDELLA: I don't know the answer to that statistic, but speed does hurt them. And, again, I'm going back to synthetic surfaces and the difference they make. They are finding getting that first quarter in 21 and change doesn't get you home free like it does on the dirt. People are starting to ride the synthetic tracks a little like the turf. That in itself will create a safer atmosphere.

A VOICE: What's the time difference on the normal dirt track and the new Polytracks?

MR. MANDELLA: In general, the synthetic tracks, I'd say they are slower; but ours at Hollywood Park has become very fast in the last couple weeks. There's a learning curve of how to deal with those things; and in the future the kinks will get ironed out, and it will get better and better.

MS. PIKULSKI: Any other questions?

How are we on time? We've gone over. Okay. Thank you very much.

(Applause)