



**HOPA**

HORSE OWNERS'  
PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

December 20, 2007

### **HOPA is Expanding its Board of Directors and Broadening of its Focus and Mission**

In continuing its efforts to advance sales integrity and fairness in the horse industry, HOPA is now expanding both its Board of Directors as well as its focus. Joining Jess Jackson on HOPA's expanded Board of Directors are Frank Stronach of Adena Springs, Debora Hanson, James McIngvale and Billy Koch of Little Red Feather Racing.

The Horse Owners' Protective Association ("HOPA") was formed in January of 2006 to work towards improving both the public impression and the reality of integrity and fairness of the horse industry and to work to enforce the industry's code of ethics through better internal and public regulations and laws. HOPA will continue its mission to represent and protect the interests of horse buyers, owners, breeders, consigners, sales companies, racing organizations, the tracks and backstretch workers and others industry-wide and raise the handle, purses, dollar share of signals for all, including the racing owners, breeders and racetracks. HOPA is working to implement measures that will help bring new blood to the industry, confident that they can do business without fear of being cheated or harmed by some of the practices that presently exist and receive a higher rate of return for horse owners, breeders and the racetracks and their employees.

HOPA is now broadening its mission to address larger issues in the horse industry. From the commentary and dialog of the Sales Integrity Task Force, it has become apparent that larger, national-level solutions are needed to address some of the larger problems affecting the horse industry. A unified and cooperative national model for both the rules and production of the Thoroughbred racing product as well as sales and horse transactions is needed. Accordingly, HOPA will be specifically working towards the national standardization of medical regulation. Hopefully, all other horse organizations will join us in this effort. Change is badly needed to increase purses, improve public and governmental relations and have the entire horse industry, not just a few, prosper. In addition, HOPA hopes to take a leading role in uniting race tracks with state thoroughbred organizations to form a unified Thoroughbred racing league, implementing its marketing and lobbying efforts at the state and national level.

In the short time since its formation, HOPA and others have already achieved a great success in improving the integrity of the horse sales transactions, not just for thoroughbreds but for all horses. In the legislative arena, HOPA has authored three historic pieces of legislation in Kentucky related to horse sales integrity which have been passed into law. HOPA has substantially advanced the dialog and landscape of sales integrity and authored three sales integrity bills in Kentucky. HOPA authored and introduced legislation to mandate full disclosure of steroids, drugs, regulated surgeries and medications and transparency of true ownership of horses as well as a bill requiring licensure of bloodstock agents and consigners.

These bills were the impetus behind the reformation of TOBA's Sales Integrity Task Force and the Task Force effort of 2007. HOPA applauds the efforts of the 2007 Task Force and the initiative of the sales companies in implementing a screening program for steroids at sales and is encouraged that OBS, Barretts' and Goffs in Ireland have since announced they too will be regulating steroids in their respective sales arenas. HOPA will continue to work towards accomplishing even more in the sales integrity arena and implementing protections that reach into PRIVATE transactions and addressing issues as well as the non-thoroughbred sales industry. HOPA would like to see a policy of zero-tolerance, and full transparency, regarding drugging or medicating horses and disclosure of any treatment, condition or procedure that effects the performance or appearance of a horse.

HOPA has achieved its remarkable success to date due to the efforts and work of its founding directors: Jess Jackson of Stonestreet Farm, Robert Clay of Three Chimneys Farm and Bill Casner of Winstar Farm. Moving forward, Mr. Casner and Mr. Clay will be applying their wisdom and efforts outside HOPA and have decided to step down from the Board at this time. HOPA could not have achieved what it has to date without the efforts and diligence of Mr. Casner and Mr. Clay and wishes them success in their endeavors and our heartfelt thanks.

Contact – Kevin McGee, President. (707) 431-3261.

### **Director Biographies**

**Frank Stronach** is the proprietor of Adena Springs. He won the Eclipse Award as champion breeder in the U.S. for 2004, 2005, and 2006, to go along with his breeder's Eclipse in 2000, and thus became the first in history to be champion Breeder four times in seven years. He also won Eclipse Awards as leading Owner in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Frank has taken home nine Sovereign Awards in the past nine years, including 2006 honors, as Canada's top owner and/or breeder. Adena Springs is the only program to win the Eclipse Award and Sovereign Award as leading breeder in the same year (accomplished in 2005 and 2006). Frank is recognized as North America's top breeder for the past four years by stakes winners and earnings, and he is the first to breed a Breeders' Cup Classic-G1 winner who sired a Breeders' Cup Classic winner – Awesome Again (1998), sire of Ghostzapper (2004). That same year, Awesome Again also sired Breeders' Cup Juvenile-G1 winner Wilko, becoming the first stallion in the history of the event to register two winners on the prestigious race card. Adena Springs has expansive farms based in Lexington, Ocala and Toronto. Each of these beautiful nurseries serves as home to his extensive broodmare band, and the Kentucky and Florida facilities are stallion stations which house some of the industry's most sought-after progenitors.

**Debora Hanson** is a native Virginian who came in to the horse world 13 years ago by means of her daughter. Shortly after her daughter became involved in showing horses, two individuals running a brokerage/consignment business defrauded Ms. Hanson and stole her daughter's show pony. Ms. Hanson's response led to spearheading an extensive FBI investigation spanning several states, identified dozens of similar victims and resulted in federal felony convictions and prison sentences for the two individuals responsible for the fraud. Ms. Hanson has been actively advocating for sales reform in the horse industry for over a decade. Ms. Hanson is a Director of the Virginia Horse Council and has been appointed as an Ambassador of the Virginia Racing Commission.

**Jim McIngvale** is well known throughout Texas as both a successful businessman and a compassionate philanthropist. His renowned integrity and loyalty have made him a model for

business owners throughout the US and abroad. In 1981, he opened Gallery Furniture in Houston with \$5,000 and built it into a business that now reaches over \$200 million in annual sales mainly by making customer satisfaction his overarching priority. McIngvale entered the horseracing business at the top - starting his thoroughbred racing stable in 1996, and since that time has campaigned a number of successful horses. McIngvale was drawn to horse racing because of its beauty and tradition, but has also become a strong catalyst for reform in the industry. In 2006, he filed a lawsuit against his former bloodstock advisors (and others) alleging fraud, breach of fiduciary duties, and commercial bribery - which was settled in 2007. This lawsuit, and others like it, has helped to bring positive change to the time honored sport of horse racing. McIngvale has a reputation of telling it like it is; a characteristic that has helped this successful entrepreneur build an empire.

**Billy Koch** was first introduced to the world of horse racing when he was six years and his family claims he learned to read by reading the Racing Form. His grandfather, the late Hollywood legend Howard W. Koch (Airplane, Ghost), owned Telly's Pop with partner Telly Savalas (Kojak). Telly's Pop won the two-year-old California Triple Crown that year and once they wrapped the winner's circle flowers around Billy. Billy has been active in putting together ownership partnerships and started Little Red Feather in 2002 and has campaigned such notables as Singletary, winner of the 2004 Netjets Breeders' Cup Mile (G1). In February of 2007, Little Red Feather introduced its 27<sup>th</sup> horse and has expanded its operations to include Chicago and Florida. Billy is currently on the board of directors of the Thoroughbred Owners of California.