



Executive Board Member's Update

By Gail Radke



ITBOF Welcomes New Board Member Shirley Ness

The ITBOF is fortunate to have a new volunteer to serve on our Board of Directors. Shirley Ness was appointed by the Board to fill a vacant position. Shirley is a longtime supporter of Illinois racing and breeding. Her well-rounded knowledge and racing experience, along with an exceptionally savvy business sense is a high caliber commodity much needed in our struggling industry. Let's get to know Shirley in her own words.

My entire family is from northern Minnesota. I am a second generation of Norwegian immigrants who passed through Ellis Island and ended up farming on 80 acres. When I was eight years old, my parents moved us to northern California. So, I grew up out in the country, north of San Francisco, which allowed me to have my first horse at the age of 12 years—a gentle, 16-year-old buckskin riding horse named Geronimo.

I attended the University of California at Berkley, receiving my bachelors in biophysics, and went on to the University of San Francisco to get an MS in Environmental Toxicology.

I worked in the field of Health, Safety and Environmental for the workers comp industry and then Boise Cascade, a Chicago consulting company, and finally Amoco Oil. I spent the last 12 years of my career working for the Illinois Poison Center managing poison providers, doing budgets, and fundraising. In the course of doing Health, Safety and Environmental I authored two technical books and taught several seminars and college courses. I traveled throughout the United States on Business for several years and, in the late '80s, chose to move to Chicago because I always liked it here when I traveled. I really appreciate the Midwest value system and I have stayed ever since.

In the late '90s, I had the opportunity to get involved with the horses once again at Three Way Horse Farm, a Thoroughbred breeding farm in Southern Illinois. A few years later, I became an owner. Three Way was developed from bare ground as a Thoroughbred breeding operation by trainer Enoch Rae in the '60s. It continues to this day.

In the '70s, the farm had several homebred Illinois Champions. Since I became involved, we have stood graded stallions such as Conte Di Savoya, Diazo, Irgun, Friendly Lover, and Roanoke, some of which I also owned. I bred a stakes placed horse, Brixtons Conte, out of a mare I claimed at Hawthorne and by one of the farm stallions. I love the pedigree research involved to work out breedings.

I have raced several horses, mostly in partnerships. Dearest to my heart was a horse named Four Jacks who won four out of five claiming races for me. Around 1999, Four Jacks won one of his races in Indiana. The screen showed a woman



owner, woman jockey and woman trainer, none of it planned. How often does that happen?

For a few years, when my time allowed, I was a hot walker at the track. I really enjoyed it and highly recommend everyone going to the track in the morning to watch the horses.

We primarily breed and sell horses and have taken several back after they were injured at the track, including the aforementioned Brixton's Conte.

I haven't given up on Illinois. In times like this we hunker down and look for ways to change things for the better.

P.S. I love my country (and I have seen most of it).

Regards, Shirley Ness

On behalf of the entire ITBOF Board and our members, I extend a big WELCOME to Shirley. We are proud to have you on the Board and look forward to working with you to make Illinois racing a rousing success.



ATTENTION 2016 ITBOF MEMBERS

Would you like to serve on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners Foundation?

Members whose dues have been paid by May 1, 2016 are eligible to be placed on the ballot for the annual election of five (5) directors.

For information: www.itbof.net or 847-253-3670

Those interested should notify our office in writing by Oct. 15, 2016 and include a short biography. Please mail to:

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