



# President's Update



By Dan Sullivan

## Purses, Nothing But Purses!

Illinois racing has fallen on hard times. The result is the foal count is down. The number of horses on the backstretch has fallen. Continued horse racing is in peril.

Why is that so? The answer is very simple.

This is because thoroughbred racing is simple. If there are adequate purses, there will be racing in Illinois. If there are inadequate purses, the extinction of Illinois racing is certain.

Who decides whether there will be Illinois racing? Owners. If owners won't buy horses to race in Illinois, there will be no racing in Illinois. If owners won't buy horses, there will be no breeding in Illinois. What other alternatives are there? The tracks aren't going to buy the horses. The trainers certainly aren't going to buy the horses. But, do the owners really have any say in the business of racing? Nothing, other than their investment. Again, for emphasis, what participation in the racing business model do owners have other than to decide if they will buy horses and race in Illinois; or to vote with their feet and leave Illinois? Absolutely none.

What is the solution for everyone that makes money off the owners' capital investment? There is a fascination with an Illinois gaming bill. But, if there is a structural weakness in the business model of horse racing, it won't matter if the gaming bill passes. Furthermore, in every state that passes a gaming bill, the legislature seems to inevitably raid the money generated from the

gaming and the purses go down. Meets shorten. Field size decreases. Tracks close.

Gaming is a short-term fix. Without fixing the present Illinois business model, horse racing will wither and die. If gaming is allowed, rest assured gaming will continue under the watchful eye of the legislature seeking tax dollars, but without the appropriate business model, gaming will not include horse racing.

What are the essential criteria to a successful business model? The tracks must attract people who bet. What is the most basic thing that can be done to get people who bet? Purses. With adequate purses, field size increases. The quality of horses increases. Breeding increases. And, the people who feed off this without the investment made by owners benefit by continuing to race in Illinois.

Without purses even more owners will walk right out of Illinois. Every dollar that accrues to the purse account should be used for purses to keep owners in Illinois, increase field size and horse quality. Anyone who claims differently or says a gaming bill is the answer is lying. Anyone who diverts money from the purse account is adversely affecting Illinois horse racing.

So, what is the secret to a successful business model for Illinois thoroughbred horse racing?

Purses, nothing but purses!



## Foal Arrivals

Foals are appearing on farms across the state.

Each month we will print foal arrivals. Information needed is farm and location, date of birth (optional), color, sex, sire, dam, owner, and breed-back (if known). Photos are also welcome.

Send Foal Arrivals to: Illinois Racing News, 111 Shore Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, Fax: (630) 887-0210 or email: [info@midwestoutdoors.com](mailto:info@midwestoutdoors.com) (mark for Illinois Racing News Foal Arrivals).



3/22/16, b.f. by Power Broker out of Mydesiredisthewire. Foaled at Tower Farm, Somonauk, Ill. Owner: Paul Kessel.

## WANTED

Illinois Thoroughbred Breeders

JOAN KAREL: \$924.60 • RALPH FOX: \$4,619.12  
GEOFF HERMES: \$283.59 • DAVID SIMPSON: \$187.27  
GARY SINDELAR: \$437.46 • PHILIP C. BLUM: \$667.37  
RICHARD W. PLETAN: \$1,528.35 • Tracy Carr: \$190.44  
Mary P. Ozanic & Randy Bond: \$86.94  
Paula Olson: \$1,615.23 • Cleveland Richardson: \$34.50  
Estate of John Robertson: \$539.03  
Estate of Harry Newman: \$605.49  
Tomas Garza: \$671.21 • Sandy Bank: \$96.60



WANTED! The I.T.B.O.F. is seeking contact with the above named persons in order to pay them Breeders' Awards. If you can supply a current name, address, and/or telephone number on any of these persons, you could be of service to a fellow horseman.