

**Minnesota Racing Commission  
Meeting**

**Thursday, January 16, 2025**

**PUBLIC COPY**

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**Full Commission Meeting  
Thursday, January 16, 2025 – 4:00 p.m.  
Nutrena Conference Center  
1801 Dudley Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108**

**AGENDA**

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Adoption of Agenda
- 4) Approval of Minutes –December 19, 2024
- 5) Committee Reports
  - a. Aftercare Committee Report
- 6) Action Items
  - a. Recommendation from Racehorse Aftercare Committee on 2025 Aftercare Grants
  - b. Approval of Industrial Laboratories as Official Medication Testing Laboratory for 2025 for Quarter Horses, Standardbreds and HIWU Chosen Laboratory
  - c. Approval of 2025 Appointment of Chief Veterinarian
- 7) Informational Items
  - a. Grant Recipient Presentations
    1. This Old Horse—Nancy Turner
    2. Bowman Second Chance Thoroughbred Adoption—Andrea Gustafson
- 8) Status Reports
  - a. Canterbury Park Entertainment, LLC
  - b. Running Aces Casino, Hotel, and Racetrack
- 9) Executive Director’s Report
  - a. Contract Approvals
  - b. Legislative Update
  - c. HISA/HIWU Update
  - d. Rulemaking Update
  - e. Personnel Update
  - f. ADW Report
  - g. Licensing Report
  - h. Other

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10) MQHRA/MHRI/MNHBPA Reports

11) Tribute to Minnesota Horsepersons

12) Future Meetings

Full Commission-Thursday, February 20, 2025 – Nutrena Conference  
Center

13) Adjourn

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Item 4 –  
Minutes from  
Commission Meeting  
December 19, 2024

## Full Commission Meeting

Thursday, December 19, 2024 – 4:00 p.m.

Nutrena Conference Center

1801 Dudley Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108

### MINUTES

#### Call to Order:

#### **Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order**

Vice-Chair Koob called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

#### Roll Call:

#### **Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call**

Present – Vice-Chair Koob, Via Teams Chair McArdle, Commissioners Benjamin, Goodman, Dean, Idelkope. A quorum was acknowledged.

Other participants – Kyle Gustafson (Executive Director, Minnesota Racing Commission), Penny Nelson, (Deputy Director, Minnesota Racing Commission), E. Joseph Newton (General Counsel, Minnesota Racing Commission), John Groen, (General Manager, Canterbury Park Entertainment), Amber Carlisle, (Senior Manager of Racing Operations, Canterbury Park Entertainment), Cathy Dessert (Vice President, Minnesota Harness Racing, Inc.) Mike Cronin (Minnesota Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association).

#### Adoption of Agenda:

#### **Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Agenda**

Vice Chair Koob amended the agenda to remove item 9 - Tribute to Minnesota Horsepersons and move it to the January 2025 meeting. Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve the amend and approve the agenda; Second by Commissioner Dehn; Motion passed.

#### Approval of Minutes:

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve the November 21, 2024, minutes; Second by Commissioner Dehn. Motion passed.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Action Items**

##### A. New Business

- a. Renewal of Class B License – Canterbury Park Entertainment, LLC
- b. Renewal of Class B License – North Metro Harness Initiative (d/b/a Running Aces Casino Hotel and Racetrack)

Mr. Newton presented the order he drafted for the chair to sign should these licenses be renewed and offered to answer questions, there were none. Commissioner Dehn motioned to approve the Renewal of the Class B License for both Canterbury Park Entertainment, LLC and North Metro Harness Initiative (d/b/a Running Aces Casino Hotel and Racetrack); Second by Commissioner Goodman. A roll call vote was called; Commissioners Goodman, Dehn, Benjamin, McArdle, Idelkope and Koob vote Aye; Motion passed.

- c. 2025 Live Racing Requests from North Metro Harness Initiative (d/b/a Running Aces Casino, Hotel and Racetrack).
  - i. Live Racing Days Application
  - ii. Televised Race Days Request
  - iii. Racing Officials

Mr. Groen presented the 51-day application starting 1 week later and ending 1 week earlier than 2024 with change going from Thursday night racing to Wednesday night racing. Will keep 6 Thursdays after July 4<sup>th</sup>. Have a drafted agreement with

HBPA and MQHRA in the final stages of being signed. Commissioner Dehn asked when anticipate contact being signed. Mr. Groen said fully anticipate before the end of the year. Ms. Carlisle presented the televised race days for 364 days and 4 returning individuals as racing officials. Commissioner Goodman motioned to approve the 2025 Live Racing Request; Second by Commissioner Dehn. Motion passed.

## **Agenda Item 6 – Status Reports**

### **A. Canterbury Park Entertainment**

Mr. Groen – Happy Holidays to all. Canterbury held its team member all shift celebration. Announced Live Nation named as the operating venue partner for the Amphitheater. Canterbury working with Live Nation on a shared parking agreement and look forward to them starting their concert series next year in the second half of the summer. Mystic Lake update, the now opened baccarat tables with betting limits that are different than what are allowed at Canterbury, have seen some impact on higher-level players. If the trends continue, do expect to have a tangible and negative impact on revenues as get into next summer.

### **B. Running Aces Casino, Hotel and Racetrack**

Mr. Bedessem was not able to attend but sent a brief summary to Mr. Gustafson. Renovation project is going well. Overall, they are in the middle of renovating the gaming floor. This is one of the more disruptive phases of the renovation. Hoping to finish by next Friday. Wanted to thank MRC staff for working through all the table moves so they were able to keep as many tables open as possible. Still about one week behind schedule from the earlier phase of the project. All of the big surprises should have been uncovered with the demolition that has already taking place. Construction will be good even during the holidays. Continuing to work on live racing featured nights, and have a lot of plans, but nothing has been confirmed yet for reopening and all the special events. Once we work through these promotions and solidify everything, we'll present them in the beginning of quarter 2.

## **Agenda Item 9 – Executive Director's Report**

### **A. Contract Approvals**

Running Aces 1 contract for playing cards involved a color change on cards. No dollar, no cost contract change.

### **B. HISA/HIWU Update**

Attended the Global Racing Symposium in Tucson, AZ last week. During that time had some good constructive conversations with HISA's Executive Directive, Lisa Lazarus, as well as other staff including Director of Stewards Marc Guilfoil, and Jennifer Durenberger Director of Equine Safety who some may know from her time with the commission. During these conversations had the opportunity to highlight some of the concerns that have been raised in our meetings and felt as HISA/HIWU was receptive to some of our concerns and think made good for future conversations with them. Next steps with HISA/HIWU Dr. Hovda, Investigators and I will be meeting to go through our Volunteer Implementation Agreements coming up for renewal this spring.

### **C. Personnel Update**

### **D. ADW Report**

### **E. Licensing Report**

Commissioner Dehn asked how the 2024 fines collected compared to the 2023 fines collected? Mr. Gustafson thought 2023 was about \$18,000 but will check to make sure. Commissioner Goodman also commented on the 2024 fines and reminded that there will be a Racehorse Aftercare Meeting January 6, 2024, where those funds/fines are eligible for redistribution and the committee will have a report on that for the next commission meeting.

### **F. Other**

Mr. Newton received word from the governor's office that we have secondary approval yesterday of the rules. We received the final revisors copy of the rules today. We will be shooting to publish the notice of intent to adopt a week from Monday and we'll move forward from there.

## **Item 10 – MQHRA/MTA/MHRI/MNHBPA Reports**

**MHRI** – Cathy Dessert – Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to everybody. Planning stages for Racing Season.

**MNHBPA** – Mike Cronin – Happy Holidays and Happy New Years. UWRP Showcase Auction Saturday had a good turnout.

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**Item 11 – Future Meetings – Proposed 2025 Meeting Dates at Nutrena Conference Center @ 4:00 pm**

**Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday, July 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Monday, August 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Item 12 – Adjournment**

Vice-Chair Koob adjourned the meeting on Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 4:28 p.m.

THESE MEETING MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED ON THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2025 BY A QUORUM OF THE MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION.

Item 5 –

Committee Reports

a. Racehorse Aftercare  
Committee Report



**Aftercare Support in 2024**

**MRC**

This Old Horse	\$128,010
Bowman	\$41,990

**Running Aces**

This Old Horse	\$70,000
Acres for Life	\$4,600

**Canterbury Park**

This Old Horse	\$68,000
Bowman	\$34,000

**MHBPA**

This Old Horse	\$26,000
Bowman	\$10,000
Reserve account	\$5,500

**MHRI\***

This Old Horse	\$1,800
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\*MHRI noted it also facilitates placement of horses retiring from racing.

# Item 6 – Action Items

- a. Recommendation from  
Racehorse Aftercare  
Committee on 2025  
Aftercare Grants

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## 2025 Aftercare Grants Recommendation

**Grant Distribution:** \$160,000 in grants, \$5,000 in emergency reserves

- \$135,000 from ADW Breeders Fund Account
- \$25,000 from Fines Account
- Additional \$5,000 be set aside from ADW Breeders Fund Account for emergency situations.

### Grantmaking Timeline:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| • RFP posted on the Minnesota Racing Commission web site                           | March 1, 2025  |
| • Deadline to notify Commission of intent to apply                                 | April 15, 2025 |
| • Applications due/staff reviews applications                                      | May 1, 2025    |
| • Committee reviews staff assessment/recommends awards<br>(meeting scheduling TBD) | June 2025      |
| • Full Commission approves grant awards<br>(regular July meeting)                  | July 21, 2025  |
| • Grant contracts approved and payments issued                                     | August 2025    |

b. Approval of Industrial  
Laboratories as Official  
Medication Testing  
Laboratory for 2025 for  
Quarter Horses,  
Standardbreds and HIWU  
Chosen Laboratory

c. Approval of 2025  
Appointment of Chief  
Veterinarian

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**Lynn Rolland Hovda, RPH, DVM, MS**  
**Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine**  
**The Flying J Veterinary Clinic, LLC**

### EDUCATION

June 1991	Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine
May 1989	MS, Veterinary Science University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
July 1989	Large Animal Internal Medicine Residency College of Veterinary Medicine University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
July 1986	Large Animal Internship School of Veterinary Medicine University of Georgia, Athens, GA
June 1985	DVM, College of Veterinary Medicine University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN
June 1983	BS, Veterinary Science University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN
May 1978	BS, Pharmacy North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND

### MS THESIS

Hovda, LR. Selected postprandial hormone responses, clinicopathologic changes, and growth parameters in normal calves and in chronically diarrheic calves fed traditionally or with partial parenteral nutrition. MS Thesis, Department of Veterinary Science, University of Wisconsin, 1989.

### POSITIONS HELD

April 1994 – Present	Chief Commission Veterinarian, Minnesota Racing Commission, Shakopee, MN
September 2004 – Present	Director, Veterinary Medicine and Science, SafetyCall International and Pet Poison Helpline, Bloomington, MN
March 2013 – September 2014	Veterinary Consultant, Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Suffolk Downs and Plainridge Racetrack, Boston, MA
January 2006 – Present	Adjunct Professor, University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, St. Paul, MN

July 1991 – Present	Flying J Veterinary Clinic, PLLC, Equine and Llama Private Practice, Loretto, MN
September 1997 – July 2004	Director, Veterinary Services, Prosar, St. Paul, MN
February 1992 – April 1997	Veterinarian and Pharmacist, Minnesota Regional Poison Control Center and Hazardous Information Services, Minneapolis, MN
April 1994 – September 1994	Assistant Racing Commission Veterinarian, Iowa Racing Gaming Commission, Prairie Meadows Racetrack, Des Moines, IA
July 1992 – April 1994	Assistant Commission Veterinarian, Minnesota Racing Commission, Shakopee, MN
July 1990 – July 1991	Veterinary Medicine Director, Equine Medicine, Equine Hospitals, Inc., Hastings, MN
July 1986 – July 1990	Large Animal Internal Medicine Resident, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI
July 1985 – July 1986	Large Animal Intern, University of Georgia, Athens, GA
July 1980 – July 1982	Staff Pharmacist, St. Paul Ramsey Medical Center and Regional Poison Control Center, St. Paul, MN
July 1978 – September 1981	Pharmacist, Minnesota Correctional Facility for Woman, Shakopee, MN
June 1978 – July 1979	Staff Pharmacist, University of Minnesota Hospitals, Minneapolis, MN

## **ACADEMICS**

- Course co-coordinator, CVM 6195 (Veterinary Toxicology), University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, St. Paul, MN; 2010 to present.
- Instructor, VPM 3101W (Animal Toxicology and the Environment), University of Minnesota, Veterinary Population Medicine, St. Paul, MN; 2013-2015.
- Lecturer, CVM 6753 (Advanced Equine Electives), University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, St. Paul, MN; 2012 to present.
- Externship Preceptor, University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, St. Paul, MN; 2010 to present

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- American Association of Equine Practitioners – Ethics Committee (2024 to present)
- American Association of Equine Practitioners - Racing Committee (2017 to 2019)
- American Association of Equine Practitioners - Task Force on Bisphosphonates 2018
- American Association of Equine Practitioners - Task Force on Equine Medications (2013 to 2016)

- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Ruminant Training Committee Chair (2012-2015)
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Examination Review Committee (2012 to 2015)
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Examination Preparation Committee (2017)
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Abstract Review Committee (2010-2012; 2013 to 2017; 2022 to 2023; 2024)
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Past Chair, Credentials Committee
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Past Chair, Large Animal Program Committee
- American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine - Past Chair, Resident Training Committee
- American Quarter Horse Association – Animal Welfare Commission (2019 –2024)
- Association of Racing Commissioners International - Drug Testing Standard Practices Committee (2012 to 2024)
- Association of Racing Commissioners International - Racing Regulatory Veterinarians Committee (2012 to 2023)
- Association of Racing Commissioners International - Standardbred Committee (2013 to 2023)
- Association of Regulatory Racetrack Veterinarians - ARCI Chair (2012 to 2019)
- Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority Anti-Doping and Medication Control (ADMC) Standing Committee (2023-2024)
- Horse Racing Integrity and Safety Committee – Equine Sudden Committee (2023, 2024, current)
- Journal of Bioequivalence & Bioavailability article reviewer (past)
- Journal of Veterinary Emergency Medicine and Clinical Care toxicology reviewer (current)
- Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine toxicology reviewer (current)
- Minnesota Equine Research Council - Grant Committee (2000-2004)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium - Communications Subcommittee (2015 to present)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium - Educational Committee (2019 to present)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium - External Quality Assessment Committee (2018 to present)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium – Quarter Horse Committee (2023 to present)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium - Scientific Advisory Committee (2012 to present)
- Racing Medication and Testing Consortium - Tactical Review Committee (2013 to present)
- University of Minnesota Equine Grants Council (2004 to 2016)
- Welfare and Safety of Horse - On Track Injury Reporting Committee (2006 to 2008)

## **SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS**

American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP)  
 American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM)  
 American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)  
 Association of Regulatory Racetrack Veterinarians (ARRV)  
 Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA)  
 Florida Association of Equine Practitioners (FAEP)  
 Minnesota Equine Practitioners Association (MEPA)

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Abstracts with Posters**



- Brutlag AG, Hovda LR, Della Ripa RM. Corneal Ulceration in a Dog Following Walking Stick Envenomation, North American Clinical Toxicology Annual Scientific Meeting, Toronto, Canada, September 2008.
- Wilson J, Hovda LR. An Observational Study of Racehorse Swimming, 5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy in Veterinary Medicine, Minneapolis, MN, August 2008.
- Martinson K, Hovda LR, Murphy M. Plants Poisonous or Harmful to Horses, North Central Weed Science Society Annual Meeting, Milwaukee, WI, December 2006.
- Hovda LR, Kingston RL. Cacao Bean Mulch Poisoning in Dogs, AAPC/AACT/CAPCC Annual Scientific Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, September 1994.
- Hovda LR, McManus AM. Yohimbine for Amitraz Poisoning in Dogs, AAPC/AACT/CAPCC Annual Scientific Meeting, New York City, NY, September 1993.
- Hovda LR, Rose ML. Hoary Alyssum (*Berteroa incana*) Toxicity in a Herd of Broodmares, AAPCC/AACT/CAPCC Annual Scientific Meeting, Tampa, FL, September 1992.
- Hovda LR, McGuirk SM. The Use of Parenteral Nutrition in Neonatal Llamas, Critical Care Nutritional Support in Large and Small Animal Patients: A Symposium, East Lansing, MI, October 1988.
- Hovda LR, McGuirk SM, Lunn DP. Total Parenteral Nutrition in the Neonatal Llama, Int Society of Veterinary Perinatologists' Biennial Meeting, Orlando, FL, January 1988.

### **Abstracts with Presentations**

- Peterson K, Lee JA, Hovda LR. Phenylpropanolamine toxicosis in dogs: 170 cases (2004-2009). Int Vet Emerg Crit Care Society. September 2010.
- Gray S, Lee JA, Hovda L, Brutlag AG. Zinc phosphide rodenticide toxicosis in dogs: 362 cases (2004-2009). Int Vet Emerg Crit Care Society. September 2010.
- Hovda LR, McGuirk SM. Enteral Support to Critically Ill Neonatal Ruminants. Proceedings Critical Care Nutritional Support in Large and Small Animal Patients, 1988.
- Sweeney RW, Hovda LR, Divers TJ, et al. A Comparison of Parenteral Nutrition and Traditional Therapy in Calves with Diarrhea, Proceedings, Am Col Vet Int Med 1988.

### **Continuing Education Presentations – Local**

- Equine Plant Toxicosis, DVM rounds, October 2018
- Holiday Toxins, U of M Small Animal Club, November 2016
- Equine Toxicosis, DVM rounds, April 2015
- Methionine, phenylpropanolamine, and other oldies but goodies, DVM rounds, November 2013.

- Common Equine Toxins. DVM rounds, July 2013.
- Poisonous Plants in Your Garden, Animal Care Foundation of Minnesota, May 2013.
- Toxicology Calculations 101, DVM rounds, January 2013 and March 2013.
- Plant toxins, Hovda LR. Minnesota Arboretum, June 2012.
- “Antique” Poisons in Your Garage and Basement, PPH CE for area practitioners, July 2012.
- Zoological Drug Toxicities, Hovda LR. Minnesota Arboretum, March 2006.
- Large and Small Animal Pyrethrin Toxicities, Hovda LR. Central Minnesota Society of Veterinarians, June 1992.
- Foaling Season 1991 - Are You Ready? Hovda LR. Heart O’Lakes Veterinary Association Winter Meeting, February 1991.
- Equine Rehabilitation Using the Wet/Dry Treadmill, Hovda LR, Gordon BG. SW Minnesota Veterinary Association, November 1990.
- Fluid Therapy in Neonatal Calves, Hovda LR. Coulee Region Veterinary Association Spring Meeting, May 1989.
- Intravenous Fluid and Electrolyte Therapy, Hovda LR. University of Wisconsin-Madison Postgraduate Conference, June 1988.
- Utilization of Intravenous Catheters, Hovda LR. University of Wisconsin-Madison Postgraduate Conference, June 1988.
- Abdominocentesis and Abdominal Drains, Hovda LR. University of Wisconsin-Madison Postgraduate Conference, June 1987.

### **Lay Presentations**

- Plant Toxicities, Hovda LR. Minnesota Horse Expo, St. Paul, MN, April 2009.
- Pet Poisonings, Hovda LR. WCCO Radio Broadcast, Minneapolis, MN. August 2007.
- Therapy of Orphan Llamas, Hovda LR. Llamas of Minnesota Spring Meeting, Hastings, MN, March 1991.
- Your First Foal, Hovda LR. Minnesota Arabian Horse breeders’ Fall Meeting, St. Paul MN, November 1990.
- Equine Medicine, Hovda LR. On the Rail-Cable TV Broadcast, Minneapolis, MN, July 1990, August 1990, July 1991, September 1991, May 1992.
- You and Your Endurance Horse, Hovda LR. Midwest Horse Fair, Madison, WI, April 1987.
- A Foal’s First Year, Hovda LR. Student Chapter of AAEP - Annual Horsemen’s Conference, Madison, WI. May 1987.

### **Professional Presentations**

- Equine Sudden Death Panel Discussion, Durward-Akhurst S, Hovda LR, Kennedy L. Welfare and Safety of the Horse, Lexington, KY. June 27, 2024.
- Hovda LR. Review of Older Medications. RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education online presentation. May 2024.
- Equine Sudden Death Update, RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education Conference, Santa Anita Race Park. March 2024.
- Hovda LR, Bischoff K, Puschner B, and Magdesian KG. VET PD Veterinary Professional Development. Equine Toxicosis Part 2. February 2024.
- Hovda LR, Bischoff K, Puschner B, and Magdesian KG. VET PD Veterinary Professional Development. Equine Toxicosis Part 1. March 2023.
- Protecting the Welfare of Minnesota Racehorses. Minnesota State Bar Association, Animal Law Section, Minneapolis, MN, June 14, 2022.
- Equine Assessment in the Saddling Paddock. RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education Conference, Gulfstream Park, March 2022.
- Post-Race Assessment. RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education Conference, Santa Anita Racetrack, March 2-3, 2020.
- Equine Drug Testing, RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education Conference, Fort Lauderdale, FL, March 3-4, 2019.
- CBD Overview. ARCI Annual Meeting, Arcadia, CA, April 7, 2019.
- The Worst Things in Racing. RMTC Regulatory Continuing Education Conference, Lexington, KY, June 25, 2018.
- Paddock to the Starting Gate – Regulatory Veterinarian’s Role. Presentation and Panel Discussion. RMTC Regulatory Veterinarians Continuing Education Conference, Lexington, KY, June 25, 2018.
- Impacts of Weather – Equine Health and Business Decisions Panel Discussion, Arroyo E, Hovda LR, Johnston J, Sinatra S, Welfare and Safety of the Horse, Lexington, KY. June 27, 2018.
- Bisphosphonate Overview. ARCI annual meeting, Hot Springs, AR, April 4, 2018.
- Norefensine – Is It a Regulatory Problem. Association of Racing Regulatory Veterinarians, San Antonio, TX, November 16, 2017.
- Compounded Medications, Hovda LR, Stanley S, Benson D. Welfare and Safety Summit, Lexington, KY, July 2, 2016.
- AAEP Racetrack Injury Management. NTRA 16 annual Track Superintendents Conference, Canterbury Park, Shakopee, MN. June 13, 2017.
- Compounded Medications, Hovda LR. ARCI annual meeting, Tampa, FL, April 20, 2015.
- Illegal and Seized Medications, Hovda LR. AORC annual meeting, Tampa, FL, April 21, 2015.

- Prerace Testing Program, Hartmann P, Hovda LR. AORC annual meeting, Tampa, FL, April 21, 2015.
- Top 10 Canine Toxins, Top 10 Feline Toxins. Hovda LR. North Texas District Veterinarians Association, Waco TX, November 2013.
- Pharmacokinetics Made Easy. Hovda LR. American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine. San Antonio, TX, November 2011.
- Piroplasmosis, Where Are We? American Academy of Veterinary and Comparative Toxicology (AAVDL conference), Minneapolis, MN, November 2010.
- Topical Flea and Tick Control, Lebak J, Brutlag A, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Medicine Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2008.
- Rodenticides, Lebak J, Brutlag A, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Medicine Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2008.
- Racehorse Injuries, Wilson J, Hovda LR. 5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy in Veterinary Medicine, Minneapolis, MN, August 2008.
- Large Animal Toxicities, Hovda LR. Iowa Student Chapter of AAEP, Ames, IA, November 2006 and 2007.
- Around the Track at Canterbury, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Medicine Association Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2004.
- Heat Stroke, Hovda LR. Minnesota Student Chapter of AEPP, St. Paul, MN, September 2003.
- Equine Plant Toxicities, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Technicians Annual meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2003.
- Plant Toxicities – Common and Uncommon, Hovda LR. American College of Zoological Veterinarians Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, November 2003.
- Common Small Animal Household Toxicities, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Technicians Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2002.
- Small Animal Plant Toxicities, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Technicians Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2002.
- Don't Wait Until You're Old to Wear Purple, Hovda LR. Minnesota Veterinary Technicians Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, February 2002.
- Paraquat and Diquat Toxicity in Horses, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 14th Annual Meeting. San Antonio, TX, May 1996.
- Common Plant Toxicities in Horses, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 13th Annual Meeting. Orlando, FL, May 1995.

- Common Small Animal Plant Toxicities, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 13th Annual Meeting. Orlando, FL, May 1995.
- Toxicological Problems in Small Ruminants, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 12th Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA, June 1994.
- Toxicosis from Common Household Agents, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 10th Annual Meeting. Washington DC, May 1993.
- Immunodeficiency Diseases in Older Foals, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 10th Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA, May 1992.
- Cephalosporins-Old, New, Investigational, Hovda LR. Am Col Vet Int Med 9th Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA, May 1991.
- Current Concepts in Therapy of Orphan Llamas, Hovda LR. Am Vet Med Assoc Annual Meeting. Orlando, FL, July 1989.
- Equine Degenerative Myeloencephalopathy, Hovda LR. Am Vet Med Assoc Annual Meeting. Orlando, FL, July 1989.
- Diagnosis and Therapy of Foal Diarrhea, Hovda LR. Illinois Student Chapter of AAEP- Practitioners' Conference, Urbana IL, January 1988.
- Causes of Abdominal Distress in the Foal, Hovda LR, Am Vet Med Assoc Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL, July 1987.
- Foal Diarrhea, Hovda LR. Am Vet Med Assoc Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL, July 1987.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Non-Referred Publications**

- DiPietro R, Hovda LR. Exotic Animal Poisonings, RVTJ 42(2); 21-23, Winter 2018
- Hovda LR. Farm Animal Toxins, Part two, RVTJ 42(1); 17-23, Fall 2018.
- Hovda LR. Farm Animal Toxins, Part one: Plants and Mycotoxins, RVTJ 41 (4), 19-21, Summer 2018.
- Hovda LR. Xylitol Toxicosis in Small Animals, RVTJ, Winter 2017.
- Marijuana Toxicosis in Small Animals, RVTJ, Winter 2016.
- Hovda LR. Battery Toxicosis in Dogs. RVTJ, Fall, 2016.
- Hovda LR. Oleander Toxicity. DVM 360, April 2016.
- Hovda LR. Hoary Alyssum Toxicosis in Horses. DVM 360, January 2016.

- Hovda LR. Common Drug Store Toxins, RVTJ, Spring 2016.
- Hovda TK, Hovda LR. Carbon Monoxide Poisoning, RVTJ 2015; 39(2):
- Hovda LR. Tremorgenic Mycotoxins, RVTJ 2015; 39(1): 32
- Hovda LR. Lilies and Kitties. RVTJ 2015; 38(4): 15
- Hovda LR. Blue Green Algae (*Cyanobacteria*). RVTJ 2014; 37(4): 30-31.
- Hovda TK, Hovda LR. Soaps, Detergents, and Fabric Softeners. RVTJ 2014; (38(1): 32-36.
- Hovda LR, Methionine Toxicosis in Dogs. RVTJ 2014; 37(3): 36-37.
- Hovda LR, Holiday Equine Toxins, Saddle and Stirrups, November 2013.
- Hovda LR, Five Plants Poisonous to Horses, Saddle and Stirrups, May 2013.
- Hovda LR, Five Trees Poisonous to Horses, Saddle and Stirrups, June 2013.
- Hovda TK, Hovda LR. Canine poisons in the tack trunk. Can Tech News, Dec 2013.
- Dee T, Hovda LR. Cholecalciferol toxicosis. Veterinary Technician 2012: E1-E4.
- Hovda LR. Protect horses from heat exhaustion and heat stroke. DVM 360, July 2011.
- Hovda LR. Top 5 poisonous plants to avoid in horses! Part I Sept 1, 2010.  
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**USDA APHIS ACCREDITATION LEVEL 2 (CURRENT)**

**PHARMACY LICENSES (CURRENT)**

Minnesota  
North Dakota

**VETERINARY LICENSES (CURRENT)**

Florida  
Iowa  
Massachusetts  
Minnesota  
North Dakota  
Wisconsin

# Item 7 – Informational Items

## a. Grant Recipient Presentations

1. This Old Horse – Nancy Turner
2. Bowman Second Chance  
Thoroughbred Adoption  
– Andrea Gustafson

# PAULICK REPORT

SHINING LIGHT ON THE HORSE INDUSTRY

## Rothfus: Here's How To Protect Retired Broodmares From The Slaughter Pipeline

The founder of Mareworthy Charities reviews figures from recent public sales showing that average prices drop significantly at age 16

Kyle Rothfus · Oct 24, 2024



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The Paddock

Thoroughbred Auctions

Retired Broodmares

As we approach the breeding stock sale season, we have an opportunity to reflect on our responsibilities to broodmares. These mares have given years to the sport, and they deserve a retirement that honors their contributions.

When I receive calls from breeders or former connections asking for help because their mare was found in the slaughter pipeline, I hear the panic in their voices. They never imagined a horse they once cared for would end up in such a dire situation, but once it happens, they realize it can happen to any of us if we become too lax about proactively protecting our horses and following up after they leave our barns.

The stories of mares who ended up in trouble after their breeding careers inspired me to analyze over 22,600 sales records from Keeneland's November and January sales between 2015 and 2024. By investigating the connections between age, sale price, produce record, and buyer characteristics, I hoped to identify factors that might increase the risk of these mares entering the slaughter pipeline.



The specific stories of Vee and Spanish Flower are personal to me since they were mares we pulled directly from the slaughter pipeline through Mareworthy Charities.

Vee, a mare sold at age 14 for \$2,000 at the January 2021 Keeneland sale, was in foal to Oscar Performance — a stallion with a \$20,000 stud fee — at the time of sale. This foal was her last registered Thoroughbred before she was found in a kill pen, now pregnant by a different breed. Many mares aged 14 and up who sell for less than \$3,000 frequently stop producing Thoroughbred foals, as buyers may prioritize the foal they carry over the mare's future.

Spanish Flower is another example. She sold in November 2016 for \$200,000 while in foal to **Tonalist**, and again in November 2018 for \$65,000, this time in foal to Distorted Humor. Tragically, both of those foals died, and her breeding career continued to be marred by complications, yielding only two registered foals over seven breeding seasons. Eventually, Spanish Flower ended up in a kill pen, her potential diminished by declining health and a spotty produce record.



## Data and Methodology

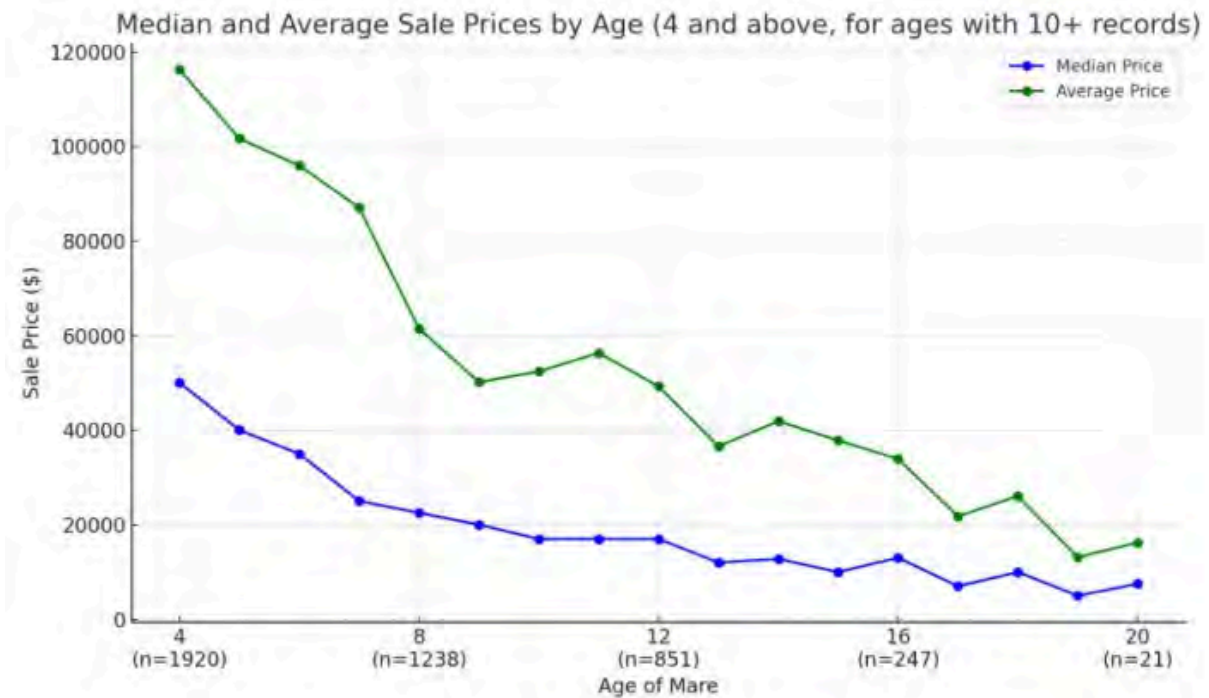
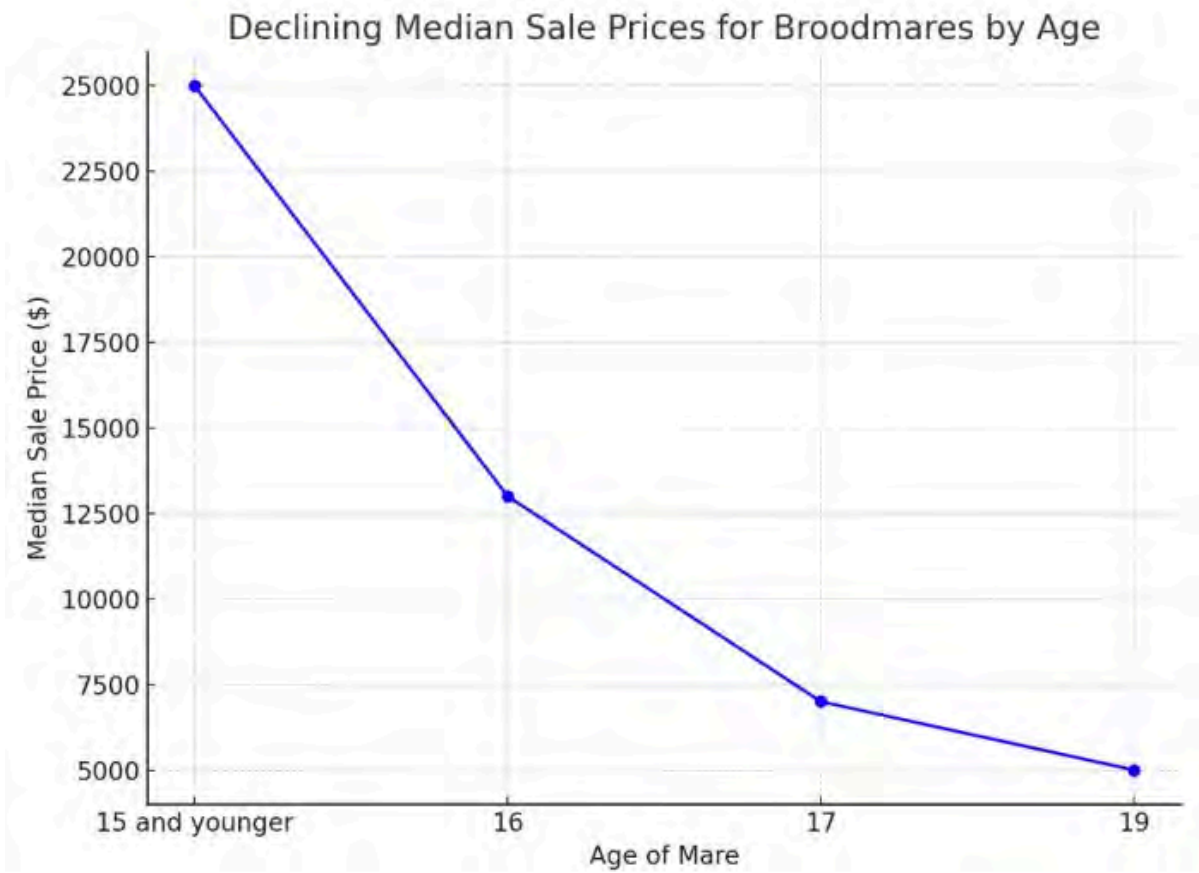
My analysis focused on 15,209 records, excluding “RNA” sales. The data shows that as mares age, their sale prices drop significantly – especially after age 16. Additionally, we identified 1,948 mares sold more than once, with an average sale price reduction of \$81,238.14 between transactions. This depreciation highlights the vulnerability of older mares as they lose market appeal.

## Declining Sale Prices and Rising Risks

Analysis reveals a sharp drop in value as broodmares age:

- Median Sale Prices: For mares aged 16, the median price is just \$13,000, declining to \$7,000 by age 17 and \$5,000 by age 19. In contrast, the average median price for mares aged 15 and younger is \$25,000.
- Sales Under \$10,000: 49.45% of mares aged 16 and older sell for under \$10,000, while only

27.63% of mares aged 15 and younger fall into this price range. This highlights the increased risk as mares grow older and move into low-cost market segments.



## Cases Illustrating Price Depreciation

Mares like Sharp Instinct and Gold Strike further illustrate the drastic loss in value over time. Sharp Instinct, who sold for \$175,000 at age 11, was purchased for only \$1,500 at age 16 in 2023. Similarly, Gold Strike, once valued at \$230,000 at age 13, sold for just \$1,700 four years later. These cases exemplify how older mares, once highly valued, can experience significant depreciation as they age.

## Impact of High-Volume, Low-Cost Buyers

The data also highlights the prevalence of high-volume, low-cost buyers who primarily purchase mares for under \$5,000. In the full data set, only six buyers accounted for 13.7% of all sales of mares aged 14 or older who sold for under \$5,000 and 20.2% of mares aged 14 or older who sold for under \$3,000. Focusing on the past three years (2021 - 2024), their role has become even more pronounced:

- Sales Under \$5,000 (2021 - 2024): 26.09%
- Sales Under \$3,000 (2021 - 2024): 46.15%
- Sales Under \$2,000 (2021 - 2024): 64.29%
- Sales Under \$1,500 (2021 - 2024): 88.89%

Between 2021 and 2024 this same group of buyers purchased 148 mares in total at an average price of \$2,853.06, and across all years in the dataset they account for 274 mares purchased at an average price of \$2,480.95.

It appears these buyers often prioritize the foal a mare carries over her long-term welfare. When examining the produce records for mares purchased by this group in the past three years, mares

bought for less than \$3,000 rarely produce additional Thoroughbred foals after delivering the foal they carried into the sale ring. More data is needed to understand what happens to these mares after they foal, but Mareworthy has directly impacted at least fifteen in the past two years who fit this scenario.

## Systemic Concerns in the Slaughter Pipeline

This troubling pattern of discarded horses mirrors the broader challenges within the slaughter pipeline. As Natalie Voss describes in her article, *The Kill Pen Economy: Why Is The Slaughter Pipeline So Hard to Shut Off?*, the economic system now encourages pen operators to acquire horses that they can sell at inflated prices to sympathetic buyers rather than directly to slaughter. This financial incentive puts Thoroughbreds at particular risk, as they command higher bail prices, luring kill pen operators to actively seek them out.

Similarly, Erin O'Keefe's *From Our Mims to Mims Eppi, How Long Can The Thoroughbred Industry Survive Itself?* calls out industry practices that allow vulnerable Thoroughbreds to be pushed through the cracks and sold to those who may not have their welfare in mind. O'Keefe's account of Mims Eppi, a mare who ended up in the slaughter pipeline after a long breeding career, exemplifies how the system can fail broodmares who, after years of service, deserve dignified retirements rather than precarious fates.

# Welfare Implications for Older Broodmares

By quantifying the risks, the data underscores several welfare implications for aging broodmares:

- **High Potential for Slaughter Pipeline Entry:** Among mares sold for under \$5,000, many go to buyers known for acquiring low-cost mares. The lack of robust tracking mechanisms means these mares often disappear from the industry without traceability to ensure their welfare. The concentration of these transactions among a few high-volume buyers is concerning, particularly for those who acquire mares in the lowest price ranges.
- **Reduced Demand, Fewer Placement Options:** For mares with advanced age, the median sale price falls below \$7,000 for over 70% of transactions. With diminishing demand, the likelihood of these mares finding responsible homes declines, increasing the odds of their ending up in markets where care standards are lax.
- **Limited Aftercare Resources:** Unlike retiring racehorses, older broodmares have significantly fewer options for aftercare programs. The need far exceeds the capacity of current resources. Dedicated aftercare facilities for broodmares are essential for ensuring safe retirements for these mares, many of whom have given years to the industry.
- **Consignor and Breeder Responsibility:** Consignors and breeders who regularly handle older mares should be proactive in advocating for these horses' welfare. The data reveal that mares aged 16 and older are frequently sold to buyers who focus on low-cost acquisitions. By educating buyers about retirement options and partnering with aftercare organizations, consignors and breeders can help prevent these mares from being discarded.
- **Industry-Wide Proactive Measures Needed:** Developing a reporting system to track mares who haven't produced foals for multiple consecutive years could help identify at-risk horses before they are sold at low prices or disappear from the industry. A broader initiative focusing on retired broodmare welfare would address this gap, mirroring programs that have proven successful for retired racehorses.

## Aging Mares and Reproductive Health

Older broodmares also face heightened reproductive risks that further limit their appeal in the market. Research shows that mares over 15 experience increased rates of pregnancy loss and complications during foaling, often due to compromised uterine health. Dr. Carlos Pinto notes that conditions like endometriosis, which impedes blood flow, currently lack effective treatments. These health challenges make it less likely for older mares to be selected for breeding, increasing their risk of neglect or inadequate aftercare. As Flietner (2023) highlights in *The Horse*, breeding older mares can pose a range of challenges related to age-related reproductive decline, reinforcing the importance of informed breeding decisions and proactive health monitoring throughout a mare's life cycle.

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## How Old Is 'Too Old' For A Broodmare?

[Read More](#)

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## Recommendations: Ensuring Safe Futures for Broodmares

To protect broodmares and prevent them from entering the slaughter pipeline, we can take a more proactive approach through:

- **Proactive Sales Planning:** For mares over 16, breeders and consignors should consider private placements or partnerships with aftercare organizations rather than relying on public auctions where mares face uncertain futures.
- **Collaboration with Aftercare Programs:** Partnering with organizations like Mareworthy Charities can create a safety net for older mares, helping place them in responsible homes when their breeding careers end.
- **Enhanced Tracking Systems:** Implementing tracking mechanisms for older mares can prevent them from disappearing into the pipeline. Monitoring low-priced sales ensures these mares are placed with buyers who prioritize their welfare.
- **Follow-Up for Low-Priced Sales:** If a mare sells for less than the stud fee of her foal or at a significantly reduced price, sales companies and consignors should follow up. Ensuring the buyer is aware of retirement options within the industry could help prevent these mares from leaving the Thoroughbred community unprotected.
- **Tracking and Reporting for At-Risk Mares:** Implementing mechanisms to track the welfare of older mares would prevent these horses from being overlooked. Improved tracking can help ensure they have access to responsible retirement options when needed. If a mare has more than two years without a registered foal, that should trigger follow-up.

The data makes it clear: to protect broodmares' welfare, we must emphasize retirement planning as much as we do for retiring racehorses. By adopting these measures, we can work together to ensure that mares who have given so much to the sport are afforded the care and protection they deserve.

By embracing these recommendations, the Thoroughbred industry can protect broodmares from the slaughter pipeline and uphold the integrity of the sport. Now is the time to act—to provide these mares, who have given so much to our industry, with the safety and dignity they deserve in retirement.

# PAULICK REPORT

SHINING LIGHT ON THE HORSE INDUSTRY

PAULICK REPORT INVESTIGATIONS

## What Does The Bail Pen ‘Spin’ Do To Horse Rescues?

Social media bail pens appear to be making huge profits, but how are they impacting non-profit horse rescues?





Mareworthy Photo

<a href="#">Horse Care</a>	<a href="#">Mareworthy Charities</a>	<a href="#">Bail Pens</a>	<a href="#">Heart Of Phoenix Horse Rescue</a>	<a href="#">C</a>
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*This is part two in our four-part series on bail pen horses. To understand more about how the system works, find [part one here](#).*

On January 25, Kyle Rothfus went to the barn outside his house and **started a live video** on Facebook. The tone was different than many of the videos he'd posted before.

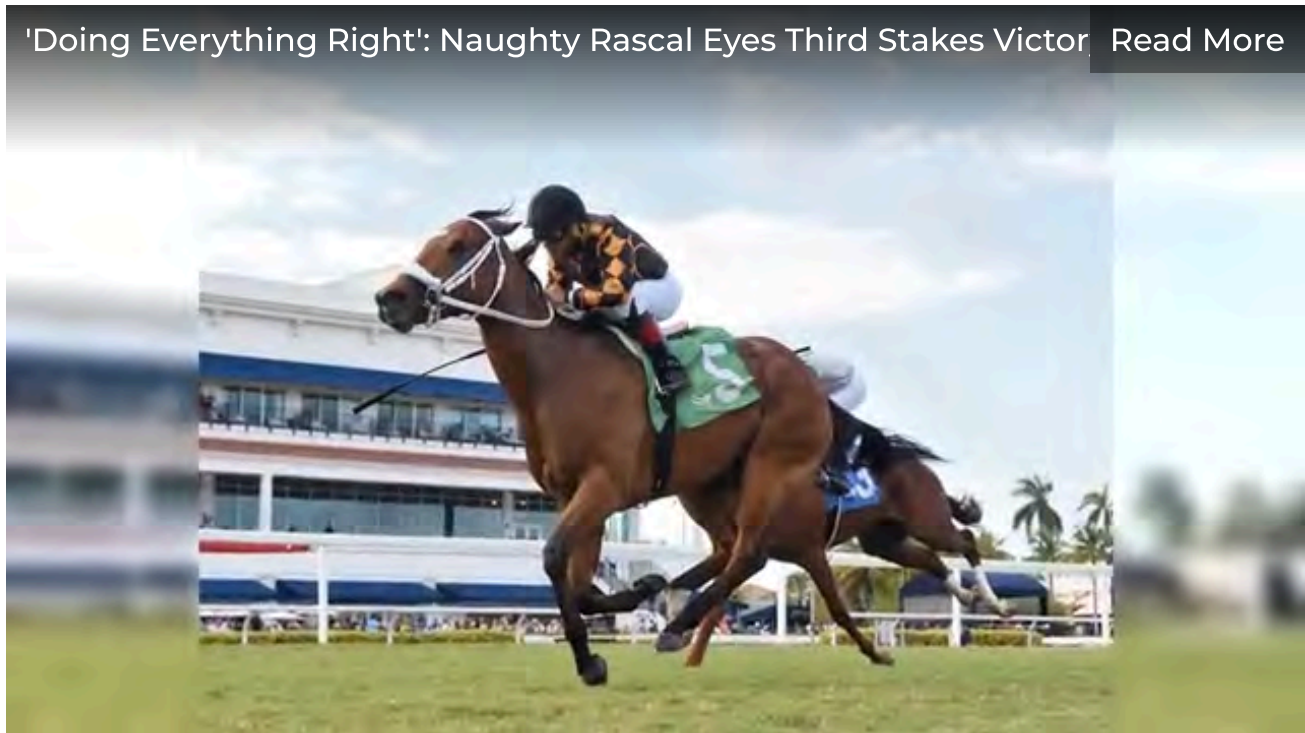
“I just got home from being in Detroit for work for the week, so I just drove five and a half hours, so I’ve had a lot of time to think and I will warn you I’m a bit emotional and a bit angry and a bit scared,” he started. “I know running a non-profit is not going to be easy. But I want to run some things past you.”



He gestured to a bay mare in the stall behind him.

“This is Furthermore. She has an ethmoid hematoma, which is basically a big growth up in her nostril. She has fractured feet which need support. And I can’t fundraise for her. I have 16,000 followers and I got \$135 in one week.”

Rothfus’ voice broke.



Rothfus is the co-founder of Mareworthy Charities, an organization in Georgetown, Ky., that specializes in rehoming of retired Thoroughbred broodmares. Eighteen months earlier, he and his husband had relocated from Ohio to Kentucky to a larger property to accommodate their private horses and more Mareworthy mares, but already they’d found themselves strained by the small number of mares who had come in.

Furthermore, an 11-year-old, unraced retired broodmare, had been donated to Mareworthy around the same time Rothfus had raised \$1,500 to bail another mare from a kill pen. That fundraiser had been an easy one, thanks to his thousands of Facebook followers. Addressing Furthermore’s needs had turned out to be a tougher sell to his dedicated base.

“I’m not trying to berate people, but it kills me than when we put up a kill pen horse I can raise thousands of dollars in hours, but a horse standing in my own barn I can’t fundraise for her because no one donates except the same people, over and over again ... this horse needs actual medical attention,” said Rothfus as Furthermore stood behind him, bright-eyed and toying with his baseball cap. “I have to make a tough decision at a certain point. If I don’t get the funds for her, I have to euthanize her to make room for a horse that needs help. And that’s not a decision I want to have to make.”

He started to cry.

Veterinarians had told him Furthermore would need \$600 to \$800 per month in therapeutic shoes for six months and \$500 treatments for her hematoma.

In the end, it would cost \$4,800 over five months to help her heal from the wing fractures in her coffin bones, treat the hematoma, and return to full health. Today, Furthermore is sound, barefoot, and available for adoption. Rothfus said his followers responded to his callout, but he still had to subsidize the costs of her daily care himself (as he does with all the Mareworthy mares). He says his first years of running the charity have taught him a tough lesson – the cheapest part of taking on a rescue horse, wherever they come from, is their acquisition price. He ran the figures on two mares – Baltimore Babe, an 8-year-old who he pulled from a kill pen, and 7-year-old Egoli, who was an owner donation. It took him 119 days to get Baltimore Babe adopted; because of her status as a bail pen horse, he was able to raise \$4,634.85 in donations to bail and care for her upfront, but she cost the organization \$7,692.25 to get her healthy and ready for adoption. Egoli, by contrast, generated \$1,500 in donations but came in with far fewer problems and left in 48 days at a total cost of \$1,375.60.

For what it cost to save Baltimore Babe from the pen, he knows he could have taken five more Egolis.

“One of the toughest decisions in horse rescue involves prioritizing which horses to help,” he said, months after his teary plea to his Facebook followers. “There are instances where limited resources lead to deliberations about whether to aid a horse in critical condition or to focus on preventing multiple horses from ending up in dire situations like kill pens. The ethical dilemma of using funds to save one horse or to support preventative measures for many others is a constant moral quandary.”

And old injuries or communicable diseases aren't the only possible issues he has to worry about – two of the mares he's pulled from kill pens turned out to be pregnant. He'd suspected one of them could be when he agreed to take her, but the other was a surprise. Mareworthy is now on the hook for upkeep expenses for four horses instead of two, for much longer than they'd originally hoped.

One mare he took from the pens around the same time Furthermore arrived had medical problems so profound she was ultimately euthanized – an all-too-common outcome for bail pen horses generally.

What frustrated Rothfus that night in January, and what continues to frustrate rescue operators in his position, is that if he'd instead been asking for \$4,800 to pull new mares from a kill pen instead of maintaining one he already had, he's confident he'd have had the money in hours.

### *The question of mass bails*

The exhausting reality for non-profits of all sorts is that there's always a cap to the amount of money the public is willing to donate. Social media has been a blessing to the organizations who have harnessed it, enabling them to reach people and solicit donations they never could have gotten otherwise. It also means potential donors have dozens of hands out, begging for cash, embedded in their home feeds each time they scroll through their phone.

Bail pens don't (usually) represent themselves to the public as non-profit rescue organizations, though the comments section on social media often reveals that casual followers may nonetheless be confused about whether they're giving to a charitable effort or to a for-profit business owner. Some people see the offer – get this horse out of this pen before the truck comes – and don't realize it's a horse trader or one of his associates, not a horse rescue, who's making the request. Or, they don't care – the digital payment, hurriedly-sent, is seen as a kindness no matter the destination.

As bail pens have grown, so too has the number of individuals who take to social media, claiming to

be “rescues” or “non-profits” without acquiring 501(c)3 status with the Internal Revenue Service or any accreditation from outside bodies like the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance or Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries. That lack of oversight means there’s no one looking over their shoulders to require that donations are used appropriately.



## Chicken Houses And Horse Rescue: A Complicated Tale

[Read More](#)

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**This publication covered one such case in 2018**, when a New Jersey woman began raising money to pull horses out of a bail pen, taking on dozens of horses who were stabled in Louisiana in the course of a few months. Fundraising focused primarily on generating the money needed for bail, transport, and one month’s quarantine, delivered to her personal PayPal. Roughly a year after ICareIHelp began, Hal Parker, the caretaker of the horses in Louisiana, was charged with multiple counts of animal cruelty after some of the “rescued” horses were found starved. Dina Alborano, the organization’s founder, was later hit with civil penalties by the New Jersey attorney general, who said she raised \$344,290 from donors and commingled that money with personal accounts belonging to her and a partner.

One of the earliest red flags in Alborano’s operation was the volume of horses she was fundraising for in a relatively short time – and the fact she wasn’t registered with the IRS as a 501(c)3. While Alborano wasn’t a 501(c)3 charity, recent years have seen a rise of actual non-profit rescue organizations who focus exclusively on bailing horses from kill pens, sometimes in huge numbers.

Rescues who specialize in mass bails are also, often, incredibly successful. All Seated In A Barn, which had its first year as a 501(c)3 rescue in 2022, raised \$3.2 million from donors that year. Border Horse Slaughter Rescue took in \$951,382 last year, almost doubling its donations from the year before.

One of the most meteoric rises to popularity is Colby's Crew Rescue near Charlottesville, Va. According to Guidestar, the group was first recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 in 2021. Its 2022 IRS Form 990 shows that it took in \$2.5 million in contributions that year alone. For context, the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance announced this month it will be able to distribute \$4.14 million in grants across all 86 organizations with its accreditation next year.

Currently, Colby's Crew works exclusively with Bruce Rotz, a longtime trader who is reputed to have had an active contract with a Canadian slaughterhouse for many years. Rotz claims to ship a load of horses north each week, and allows the rescue onto his property every four to six weeks to photograph and video horses there and fundraise to buy them from him before they’re loaded up.

According to its website, Colby's Crew has access to four quarantine farms totaling 1,400 acres where horses go for quarantine, assessment, and rehabilitation before working with trainers and being cleared for adoption. According to the organization, the group has taken on more than 600 horses this year, with more than 400 adoptions so far, and over 200 horses in holding at any given time. The organization has also said its euthanasia rate is about 20 percent, and that the median age

of horses it finds in the pen is 25.

Olivia Smith, who co-founded the organization with her wife Allison, says the group structures its fundraising differently than others who deal with the pens. Besides dealing with Rotz exclusively, they use historical data to determine an average for what most horses will cost them from intake to adoption and build that into the initial fundraising request. Instead of just raising a horse's bail, the group assumes it needs bail plus \$4,500 to \$5,500 per horse to get it through the four to six months it will need for rehabilitation, training, and placement.

"There's two problems in horse rescue," Smith said. "One is that people only want to donate at the very beginning. It's very hard to fundraise after that. Anybody who tells you different is lying.

"The second is that people don't usually like to donate when a horse is 'safe.'"

Colby's Crew accepts donations via a range of platforms, and Smith says the group watches the running total, with that pre-built expense in mind. One group of horses can generate tens of thousands of dollars in hours.

And what's in it for Rotz?

Smith says that Colby's Crew doesn't pay the kill buyer inflated prices for horses that are characteristic of social media bail pens. Instead, she pays him the per-pound rate the slaughterhouse would, but says she releases the money to him immediately, while the meat processor may take weeks to pay him the same rate. Rotz quotes Smith a different per-pound rate based on what he says the slaughterhouse is paying that week, though his range (sometimes as high as a dollar a pound) was considerably higher than other sources we spoke to for this story.

For what it's worth, Smith says that her organization hadn't seen a Thoroughbred come through Rotz's facility in 2024 until this fall, and they saw none last year. The vast majority of the population she sees are geriatric draft and carriage horses she believes come from the Amish community at the end of their productive lives. The group often encounters miniature horses, maybe ponies. But racehorses? Not now.

"The aftercare, the Retired Racehorse Project, the rule changes, I mean, it's worked," said Smith. "People are not shipping their horses to slaughter that are Thoroughbreds. Not on the East Coast, anyway."

And still Smith, like so many others, sees them on Facebook pages claiming their deaths are imminent. But she's not seeing them in Rotz's lot, or on his trucks. Because the price for them is better on social media than it is at the border.

*Should we pay the pens?*

The world of horse rescue is one guided by philosophy as much as anything else. Organizations have very different policies on the bail pen pipeline, depending on who they are and what their staff or board feels is morally right. Some refuse to deal with horses coming from the pens at all, wanting to totally disassociate from the system and hope to intersect horses upstream of the pens. Others will take a horse whose bail has been paid by someone else, not wanting to ask donors to line the pockets of horse traders. Still others will fundraise to bail horses sometimes, but with certain limits on volume so they can remain open to taking owner surrenders. Some go to auctions to try to pick up the cheaper horses before traders and pen operators can get their hands on them. And some focus exclusively on horses who are already in pens.

For many, the question of what's right is integrally tied in with what constitutes "rescue." Those who refuse to work with the pens aren't hard-hearted to the plight of horses inside, but are determined that they will only be contributing to the endless churn of the bail pen economy if they pay up. Those who do work with the pens say they cannot forgo the welfare of the horse looking up at them with baleful eyes from a photo or from the other side of a corral fence over the greater principle that doing so will stop the wheels from turning. For some, it doesn't even matter whether the pen is telling the truth when its operator claims there's a truck coming in 48 hours to haul the horse to their death – the fact that it could be kept in the pens with limited food and veterinary attention and sent back to auction, or traded to another pen in a few weeks, is reason enough to want to help the horse get out.

Tinia Creamer, founder and executive director of Heart of Phoenix outside of Huntington, W. Va., has just about had it with the bail pen cycle. Heart of Phoenix fundamentally refuses to pay pens, but that doesn't mean Creamer isn't impacted by the auction/bail pen economy. Creamer grew up going to the stockyards in rural Kentucky with her grandfather, who was a horse trader, back in the days when the slaughter industry was bigger, with more agents filling more trucks each week. The auctions were sometimes run by someone who bought for the meat plants, and Creamer said that agent wasn't in the business of selling the horses he had set aside to fill out his contract – it didn't matter what she offered him for one of the big, sad draft horses he preferred. To keep his contract, he had to satisfy the deadline. He had no time for her bleeding heart.

But when social media came along, traders like him saw an opportunity. And rescues like hers saw a new problem.

"Horse traders are slick," she said. "I mean, they're slick. They're going to make it. This is their business and they're going to twist it to make things work for them."

Creamer is convinced that most horses advertised for bail were never at risk of going over the border, but well-meaning people who might normally donate to a rescue like hers get financially in over their head trying to "save" one, and then she's left cleaning up the mess.

"Every week somebody is begging us to take a horse they failed to save from slaughter that's not what it was represented to be, that has deteriorated from the time it went through that system," Creamer said. "Every week.

"[The pen] buys a horse for \$100 or \$200 and says it's going to take \$1,700 to bail the horse, and then there's the quarantine and that's a massive fee, and then their transporter buddies are going to haul it for you and that's another massive fee. Here, you have \$4,000 in a horse that's never been vetted, and they have a chronic condition or are going to be lame forever. Euthanasia should be on the table. And someone in Pennsylvania in a trailer park with a chain link fence says, 'Oh I'll give it a home. I'll love it forever.' I've literally gone into these situations. They get the horse delivered and the horse is in much, much, much worse shape than it was to begin with. They sell it on Craigslist for \$100; they give it to another horse trader; it goes to another low-end sale. Or, if the horse is lucky, they reach out to a rescue ... and they want us to come take it."

And by then the crowd or the individual who paid the pen \$4,000 for that horse? They're gone.

*Tinia Creamer*

*Photo courtesy Heart of Phoenix Horse Rescue*

Creamer (and other rescues who were hesitant to speak in detail on the record about their concerns) worry that organizations who specialize in “mass bails” could place horses at risk by siphoning donated funds from smaller groups while failing to make a dent in the total number of horses actually exported – and that buying directly from the pens isn’t going to make a dent, either.

“It’s a supply and demand business. They don’t buy and slaughter less horses because you buy from a scammy kill pen,” said Creamer **in a podcast earlier this year**. “We’ve never shipped one less horse because of ‘rescuing them’ from kill pens. You may have moved a horse as a placeholder, but a lot of the time those horses are never shipping anyway.”

Creamer has watched with dismay as the kill pen economy has grown in the past decade and invests what seems like a nutty amount of time trying to communicate to the public that paying into this system doesn’t change outcomes for the horses trapped inside. But as often as not, she encounters

pushback from people who don't want to hear it.

"The high they get from throwing money at saving a horse from slaughter, you can't do anything that recreates that for them," said Creamer. "These donors become addicted to that. It's truly a psychological addiction."

### *The psychology*

So, whether a fundraising post comes from a bail pen or a mass bail rescue, why is the call to action for a time-sensitive, sometimes poorly-defined goal so compelling?

In part, it comes down to psychology.

Aakash Thottam is a PhD candidate at The University of Queensland who has studied donor behavior and donor motivations, both through the lens of marketing and psychology. What motivates someone to give to a charity (or to an effort they believe is charitable, like a crowdsource campaign to pay a pen to bail a horse) is complex and impossible to distill into one or two factors, he says. But we do know that it can say as much about the donor as the cause.

People give to charitable efforts as much for how it makes them feel as much for what it actually does; if hitting the "Send Funds" button makes them feel like they're a good person, they may keep hitting it regardless of much else. Thottam said there's some degree of social credit that can come from giving money to a cause on social media, where someone's friends may think better of them for seemingly "helping" the animal.

Then there's the possibility the "sunk cost fallacy" comes into play for people who have pitched in to bail horses multiple times – the psychological principle that people become reluctant to abandon something they've invested time or money into, even when it's not in their best interests to keep going.

It's also true, Thottam says, that many people don't look too hard at the greater implications of a donation, especially if it's a small one. They may be willing to send \$50 to a horse trader's Zelle, but untangling the welfare mess that is complex enough to fill a lengthy series of feature articles may be too much to expect. So is checking to see whether a fundraiser is for-profit, non-profit, legitimate, illegitimate, etc.

"This is me speculating, but maybe they expect organizations or authorities to look into it," Thottam said. "Perhaps they think that, 'Ok, I'm doing something good, but it's not for me, it's like an external authority or a government or bigger organization to make sure they are legitimate. This is not my moral obligation to do. My concern is giving, making myself useful and doing some sort of good.'"

In academic terms, the phrase "misanthropic sentiment" is used to describe a generalized hatred of human nature, or mistrust of humanity. Those who feel chewed up and spit out by their fellow man will, often, respond to an animal completely differently. Their vulnerability, their muteness, their perceived emotional intelligence combine to inspire love, loyalty, and a strong sense of protectiveness. Anything for the sacred creatures who love us back purely, anything for the helpless four-leggeds who need us, we think.

Then a post comes up in our Facebook feeds from a bail pen. And it's that all-powerful, overwhelming instinct to see horses as friends in need which may compel people to fund an

economic cycle that exploits them.

“I can’t be definitive here, but people may be associating their values with the misanthropic sentiments that they have, like they lost trust in humanity,” said Thottam.

“They don't really care about the legitimacy anymore.”

*Knowing all this, what should you do if you get a call that a horse you once loved has landed in a bail pen? We'll examine that question **in part three**.*



Item 8-

Status Reports

a. Canterbury Park  
Entertainment, LLC

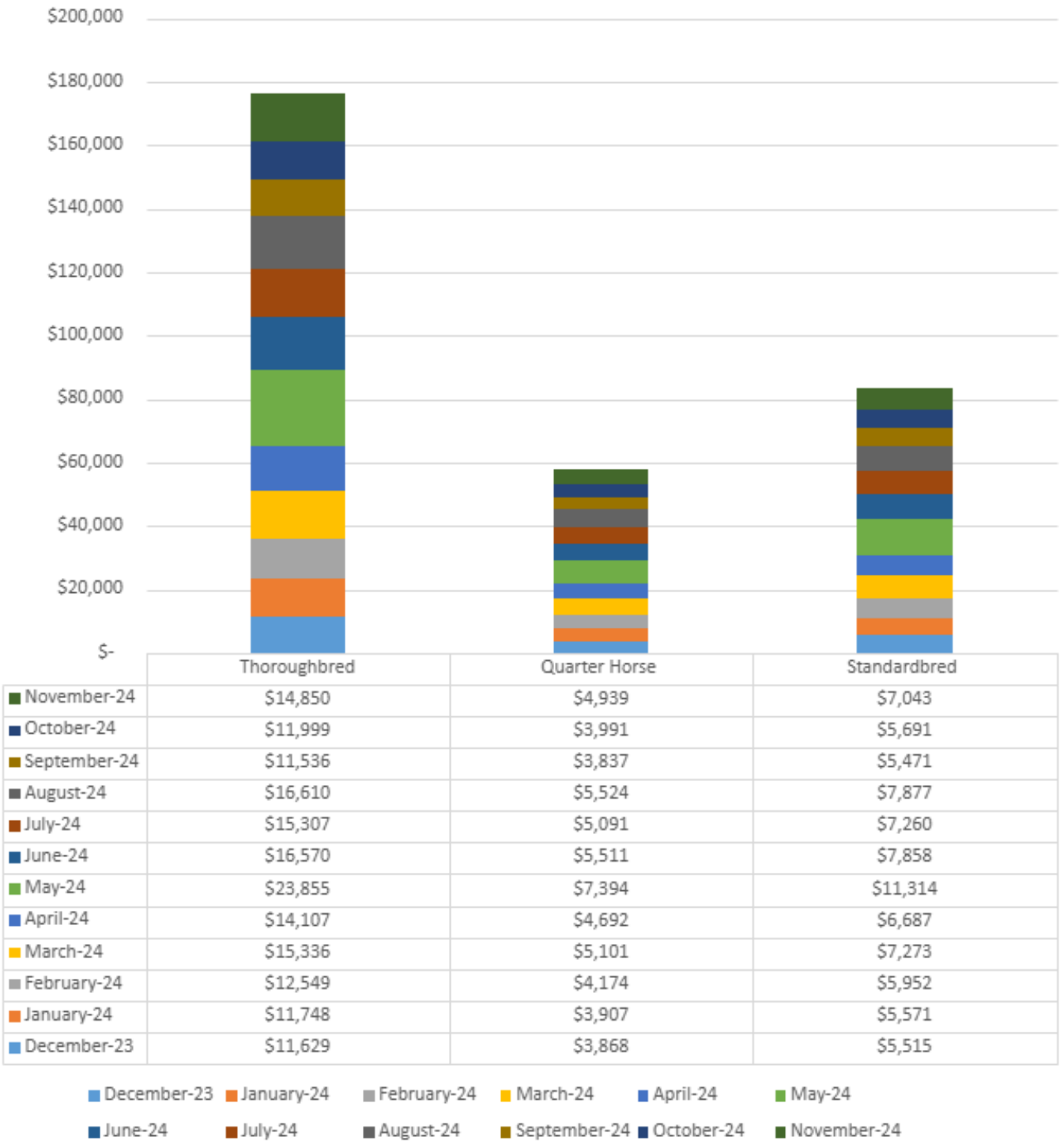
Item 8 –  
Status Reports  
b. Running Aces  
Casino, Hotel and  
Racetrack

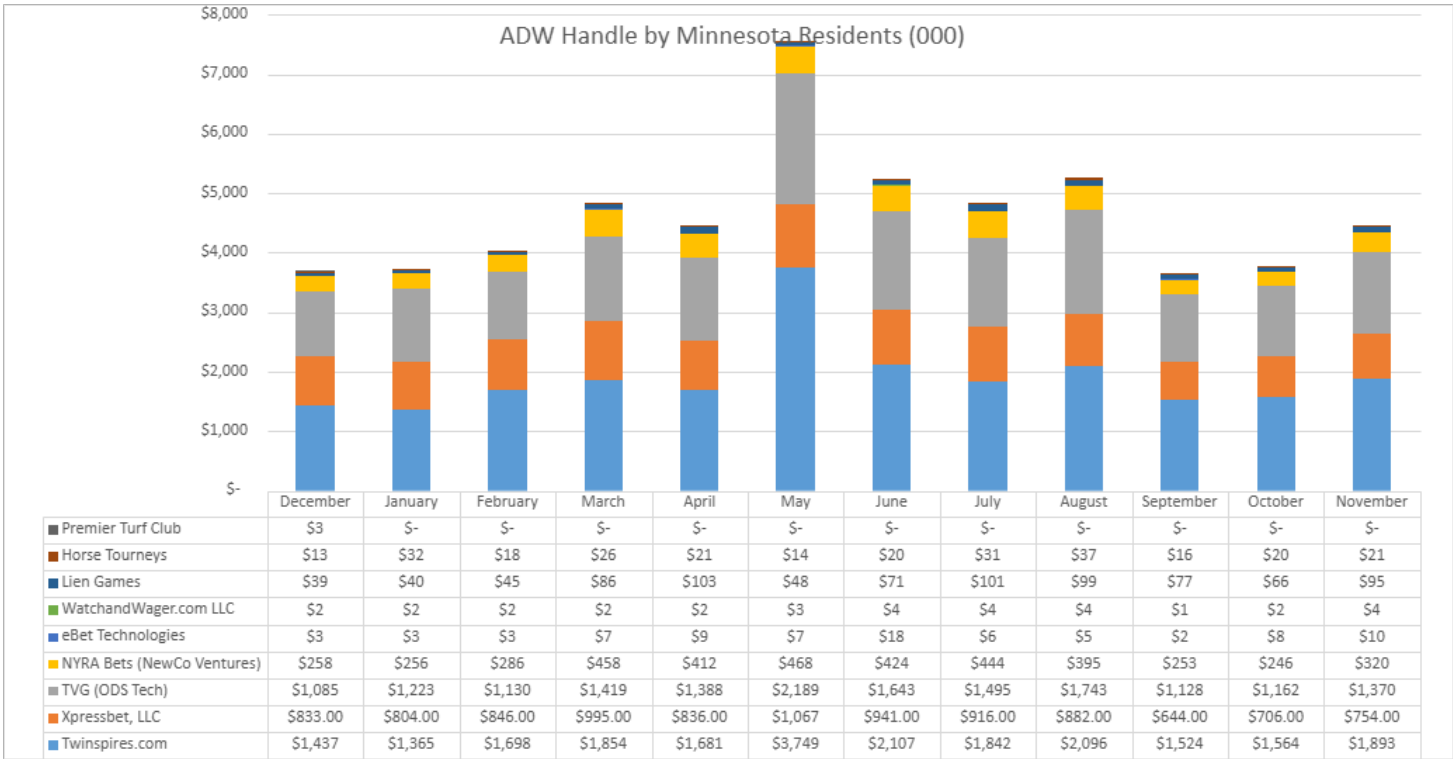
# Item 9 – Executive Directors Report

- a. Contract Approvals
- b. Legislative Update
- c. HISA/HIWU Update
- d. Rulemaking Update
- e. Personnel Update
- f. ADW Report
- g. Licensing Report
- h. Other

Item 9-  
f. ADW Report

## Incremental Breeders Awards via ADW





Item 9–

g. Licensing Report

## Minnesota Racing Commission

### December 2024 Licensing Report

Class C Applications Processed at Canterbury Park: **524**

Class C Applications Processed at Running Aces: **301**

Class C Large Racing/Gaming Vendors: **6**

Class C Small Racing/Gaming Vendors: **3**

Class C Non-racing/Gaming Vendors: **9**

Class C Licensing Fees for December 2024: **\$34,035**

Fingerprint Fees for December 2024: **\$2,600**

(Fingerprint fees are forwarded to Public Safety for processing reports)

Fines Collected during 2024 Racing Season: **\$22,850**



# Item 12-

Future Meeting - 4:00 pm

Thursday, February 20, 2025

Nutrena Conference Center