

May 2011



# RENEWS

NEWS FROM THE THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION

Providing  
long-term  
care



Photo by Cody Wasial

May 2011

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your ongoing support and generosity. I am glad to report that the TRF remains strong, dedicated, and, as always, absolutely committed to giving the horses in our care the secure, happy retirement they deserve. Like us, our retired horses are aging. And, like us, with aging comes health issues and concerns about retirement needs. We are redoubling our efforts to secure necessary funding for long-term care and meaningful programs for the TRF horses of today and the future.

The TRF's Herd Intake and Management Committee (HIMC), which was recently reconstituted and includes board members John Moore and Dr. Patty Hogan, VMD, conducted an exhaustive and comprehensive evaluation of our entire herd and all of our facilities. Our herd is in good health and in good hands. As a member of the HIMC, I have been intimately involved in the very thorough fact finding effort that was necessary in order to meet our obligation to the thousands of donors and supporters who for so many years have believed in the TRF and its mission.

We are pleased to announce that Rob Hinkle was recently hired as our new CEO. He comes to the TRF after serving as Chief Operations Officer for the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, held at the Kentucky Horse Park last fall. Rob has a proven track record in the industry and we are excited to have him join our team!

Also, we are happy to announce that this year we will be returning to our original format of 12 years and hosting our own Saratoga Gala on Sunday August 7, 2011, the night before the Fasig-Tipton sale. The evening, as always, will feature delectable food, dancing, and an exciting live auction of stallion seasons and unique experiences. This is by far our most important fundraising event of the year and we hope that you will participate as a guest, sponsor, or donor.

The TRF needs your support going forward as we continue our life affirming mission of saving horses and saving lives.

I am available at any time if you have questions or concerns. The important work we do on behalf of our country's equine athletes wouldn't be possible without you. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Diana Pikulski  
Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation  
diana@trfinc.org



Are you receiving our monthly electronic newsletter?  
If not, please send us at email at [info@trfinc.org](mailto:info@trfinc.org)



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## On the Cover

Quick Call won over \$800,000 before being retired to the loving care of his former exercise rider, Chris Clayton. After nearly a decade with Chris, Quick Call joined the TRF herd at the Wallkill Correctional Facility in NY. At age 27, he still turns heads and is a favorite among the inmates.

# Carterista Goes to School

When Noel Markowitz, a third grade teacher at Sea Castle Elementary in Miramar, FL, was looking for a new and creative lesson plan that would teach humane treatment of animals and combine reading, science, social studies and math, she thought of horses.

a way we could work with the foundation,” Markowitz said. “After a few weeks of considering what we could do, I put a lesson plan together and contacted the TRF.”



Carterista during his racing days.

Friedrich's *Leah's Pony*, a passage called "The Pony Express" and to learn the concept of idioms. For math, students will become



Students show off some Thoroughbred-related learning materials. A framed photo of Carterista hangs behind them.

Then, she thought of the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation.

"I have a neighbor who speaks highly of the TRF and I started thinking about

The result is one of the TRF's most innovative and unique partnerships.

Markowitz supplied a 17-page lesson plan that has won over the third grade class at Sea Castle. The TRF supplied Markowitz and her 18 students with backpacks, stickers, hats and an "adopted" horse named Carterista, a Florida bred son of Dr. Carter who is living out his retirement at the TRF's state of the art retirement farm at the Lowell Women's Correctional Facility outside of Ocala. Carterista,

who ran 102 times to win

\$753,599 before retiring to the TRF makes a great mascot for the combined impact curriculum.

The lesson plan includes reading Elizabeth

familiar with the unit of measurement called "hands" and will learn a hand is equal to four inches. They'll also learn how to use a ruler. Markowitz's plan also includes 19 equine terms that children will learn the meaning of and will be able to speak in English and Spanish.

"The kids were very excited when I told them we'd be learning about horses and we might even sponsor one," Markowitz said. "Now that we have the pictures and the backpacks, everyone got very excited. Some of the after-care kids come in and now say, 'Can we see your horse?' The TRF has been very supportive and we can't thank them enough for that.

"We are thrilled that our horses and our work at the TRF can help kids learn their basic lessons and some great life lessons in humane treatment of animals" said Diana Pikulski, head of development for the TRF. "This program should be replicated around the country to help more children in more ways."

## Meet the Trainer

Jess Bowen is the head trainer for the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation's Greener Pastures at the James River Correctional Facility in Virginia. Born into a family of serious equestrians, Jess found herself in a saddle before she could walk. And like many horse-crazy youngsters, she eventually realized that the only way she could afford solid competition horses was to purchase off-track Thoroughbreds and train them herself. Later, becoming a licensed exercise rider provided the income necessary to take her own horses foxhunting and to hunter/jumper shows.

Now managing her own growing business, Jess finds time to spend three days a week reschooling TRF horses at James River. "Working with former racehorses requires a balance between bravery and common sense," she explains. "It's a matter of instinct, not just remembering to sit up, keep your heels down, and look pretty."

Modeled after the successful adoption program at the TRF Maker's Mark Secretariat Center in Kentucky, the program at James River strives to give each Thoroughbred a broad base of training. The more skills they learn, the more "adoptable" they become. So Jess creates a personalized program that exposes each horse to dressage, show jumping, cross country, foxhunting, and trail rides.

She competes with them at local horse shows, which gives them valuable experience and also helps get the word out to the local community. Jess's enthusiasm is infectious, and her clients often compete on their privately owned horses using saddle pads



Jess, on Twitchy

"Working with former racehorses requires a balance between bravery and common sense."

monogrammed with "Adopt an Ex-Racehorse!"

Seeing a Thoroughbred make a successful transition from nervous racehorse to a confident riding horse is, in Jessica's words, "the most gratifying thing in the world."

Please visit [www.jamesriver.org](http://www.jamesriver.org) to learn more about the adoptable horses currently in Jessica's program.

# ADOPTION STORIES

## What a Mon and Not a Second Time



The two retirees graze under a blossoming wild plum tree.

When Erica Kulp needed a companion for her 20 year old Thoroughbred mare, she knew that she wanted to adopt an unwanted horse who was in need of a good home. After a bit of research, she found herself at a TRF correctional facility-based farm in Virginia. “I was a bit hesitant at first because

I’d never been to a prison before, but it quickly became obvious at the inmates really, truly cared about these horses.”

She remembers that her first impression of What A Mon was that he was pleasant to ride. “He was so willing to give himself with the lightest contact.” But after finishing her ride, Erica mentioned seeing a gray Thoroughbred in a nearby field. “I know that this sounds silly, but when I saw Not a Second Time, it’s almost as if there was a glow around him,” Erica explains. “I thought to myself, I need that horse, he’s just special.”

Not A Second Time raced at the New York tracks, earning \$35,191 in 18 starts. What a Mon started three times, placing last, seventh, and third, earning a whopping \$1,730. Erica couldn’t have cared less

Rather than deciding between What a Mon and Not a Second Time, Erica simply adopted them both. The horses now enjoy

a relaxed life on the Kulp’s 27 acre farm, including occasional rides around the rural neighborhood. The horses are always interested in whatever work Erica and her family are doing around the farm, and children often come to visit the horses, who seem to relish the youngsters’ attention. “Time is hands down the most personable horse I’ve ever had or worked with,” says Erica. “He simply loves people.”



What A Mon is gentle when greeting a young friend.

“Both are excellent ambassadors for ex-racehorses...we either lucked out with the calmest horses at the farm or they were just ready to be pets. Either way we are lucky to have each other.”

## Bien Blushing

Erin Konrad promised herself that when she received a promotion at work, she would buy her first horse. That dream came true this January in the form of Bien Blushing, a 1998 gelding who started 73 times over five years and earned close to \$100,000.

An equestrian since age 10, Erin had ridden her fair share of difficult horses and knew that she wanted her first equine partner to be easygoing and relaxed. Jess Bowen, who oversees the training program at James River, suggested that Erin come and meet one particular horse who fit that description perfectly. A few rides later, BB (as he’s now nicknamed) was heading home with Erin to start a new life.

He and Erin regularly take lessons and are looking forward to competing together. They balance work with play, often meeting up with friends (and other TRF horses)



### Bien Blushing Adopted by Erin Konrad

“BB just loves to be loved on. He’s a bit dopey – in a good way! – and likes to nap with his lower lip drooping down.”

to enjoy leisurely trail rides through the local hills. When asked to describe his personality, Erin responds with a laugh. “BB just loves to be loved on. He’s a bit

dopey – in a good way! – and likes to nap with his lower lip drooping down. He clips, ties, trailers, even dozes on his feet when I’m pulling his mane.”

BB recently proved his worth when Erin’s mom, who is not a rider and has limited mobility due to hip replacement surgery, decided that she’d like to try riding him. “She had a lot of trouble mounting, and ended up having to get on from the right side instead of the left,” Erin explained. “I’d never done that before but BB didn’t budge. My mom got halfway up before becoming momentarily stuck with her upper body on his neck and her left foot on his rump. She and I were both breathless with laughter but he didn’t move a muscle until she was safely settled in the saddle. I was so proud of him!”

Erin and BB are looking forward to competing in their first combined test, which will take place as this newsletter goes to print. “No matter what happens,” Erin says, “he has a home with me forever.”

# TRF Inspires Novel for Teen Readers

An interview with Heather Henson, author of *Dream of Night*

How did you become aware of the TRF?

“Here in Kentucky, I have a neighbor who is involved in rescuing and rehabilitating former racehorses. It was a shock to learn that underlying the glitzy world of racing, there is a major problem with unwanted Thoroughbreds. I decided that I wanted to get involved with horses again and began taking riding lessons from Susanna Thomas. She taught me a lot about learning from horses and communicating with them. Then Susanna became the Director at the TRF Maker’s Mark Secretariat Center in Lexington, and my real interest in the TRF began.”



The story of Shiloh, a hardened foster child, and Dream of Night, an abused former champion, just came together over the course of a couple of years.”

What sort of research went into *Dream of Night*?

“It was fairly easy to research the horse-related side of the book. There are now lots of newspaper articles and publications dealing with the issue of unwanted Thoroughbreds, and of course I had my neighbors with the horses, so I could go over and hang out with them and talk about the process of rescuing and rehabilitating. Sadly, I could witness what many of those horses had obviously been through -- starvation and mistreatment -- for myself. Also at the time there were a lot of cases being reported in the local newspapers about horses being found in terrible situations because there had been a drought that year and hay was so expensive, and so the horses had simply been abandoned.”

“In terms of the human side of the book, I’ve had friends and family members who’ve been foster parents, and so I talked to them, and I also did a lot of reading about what some kids go through in the foster care

system. I also was really inspired by the stories and photographs in TRF’s *Saving Leslie Jones*, by Jon Kral and Dave Joseph. I found it in a local bookstore before I knew about TRF, and was just blown away by the power of the images and the moving tales of the bonding that happens between horses in need and humans in need. I kept the book on my desk while I was writing *Dream of Night*, and often referred to it.”

Jessalyn’s characters seems to share some characteristics with a certain TRF employee. Is that a coincidence?

\*laughs\* “It’s true. I have so much respect for Susanna that I wanted to model an important character after her. She inspires me with her wisdom and spirit, and she’s an incredible horsewoman. I didn’t tell Susanna until after the story was done and thankfully she was fine with it. In fact, she offered a lot of input to help make the situations in the story realistic.”

So, what’s next for you?

“*Dream of Night* has just been picked up by Scholastic, so it’s being featured at school book fairs around the world. My novel was just on the front cover of the Scholastic catalog in Japan. I love visiting schools and talking to children and would like to do it more. In fact, the TRF recently heard from a young reader who read my book and now wants to volunteer.”

[www.heatherhensonbooks.com](http://www.heatherhensonbooks.com)

## Jockey Club

The Jockey Club has renewed the retirement checkoff program that enables owners and breeders to support Thoroughbred aftercare programs at the time they register their foals in 2011, and will once again donate \$100,000 to each of the program’s two beneficiaries, it was announced today by James L. Gagliano, the president of The Jockey Club.

The Jockey Club donations and the checkoff proceeds benefit the retirement, retraining and adoption efforts of Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA) and the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF). With its donations in 2011, The Jockey Club, through its four commercial subsidiaries, will have contributed

\$300,000 to both TCA and TRF since the inception of the retirement checkoff program in 2009. The commercial subsidiaries are The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., The Jockey Club Technology Services Inc., InCompass Solutions Inc. and The Jockey Club Racing Services Inc.

“Many Thoroughbreds can be retired to a supportive home or transitioned into a productive post-racing career, and we encourage all owners and breeders to consider making a contribution through our retirement checkoff program when they register their foals this year,” Gagliano said.

# SAVE THE DATE

## TRF Saratoga Gala

► **SUNDAY**  
August 7, 2011  
Saratoga City Center  
Saratoga Springs, NY

Save the Date for the annual TRF Saratoga Gala as we celebrate the Thoroughbred and honor several individuals who have advocated in extraordinary ways for the safety and welfare of horses.

Please join us for dinner, dancing and an exciting auction of unique experiences and stallion seasons.

For more information and sponsorship opportunities, please contact us at 518-226-0028 or [info@trfinc.org](mailto:info@trfinc.org) or Donna Pressman at: [donna.pressman@gmail.com](mailto:donna.pressman@gmail.com).

## Theycallmetater's Story

**"I had become so attached to this horse and was filled with respect and admiration for his heart and his fight."**

Theycallmetater had 11 starts, stood in the winners circle five times and earned a respectable \$132,000. Despite running mostly in claiming races, his spunk and determination caught the eye of trainer Paul McClelland, who convinced a client to buy him.

"He was a war horse," remembers McClelland. "A total ham in the stall but all intensity and energy once he left the barn." With four straight trips to the winner's circle, nobody guessed that September 2, 2009 would be the last time Tater set foot on a racetrack. McClelland remembers that Tater ran the race of his life that day, "He ran his eyeballs out and although he ended up 3 ½ lengths back, he fought the whole way."

Tater was in his usual exuberant mood on the way back to the barn, but McClelland knew that something was amiss. Tater's fate was soon confirmed: he had two leg fractures and would never race again. While the owners and insurance

company discussed the situation, Tater enjoyed a plethora of visitors and a constant supply of peppermints.

"When the decision was made to put Tater down, I felt sick," he explained. "I had become so attached to this horse and was filled with respect and admiration for his heart and his fight. Tater did everything he was supposed to do as a racehorse and was now being punished for it."

The veterinarian agreed with McClelland and called the insurance company, who made a rare decision to pay the owners as long as they sold the horse and he never raced again. There was no question what would be done: \$1 later, Paul McClelland had a new horse.

A year and a half later, Tater was healthy and happy when Paul wrote an emotional letter to the TRF. It concluded



with the following: "I have fallen on bad financial times and am no longer able to pay for Tater. I've tried to find him a home through various organizations but it seems there are too many unwanted horse, and I refuse to see this horse go to a home where he won't be cared for. The TRF is my last hope. Please consider taking Tater into your program. He deserves another chance."

Theycallmetater now enjoys 250 acres of rolling pasture at the TRF's Montpelier facility in Virginia. Thanks to a determined trainer and the TRF, a horse who once received a death sentence has now found a lifelong safe haven.

# At the TRF, long-term care can begin as early as age 3.

Consider this our  
membership card.



At the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, the long-term care program for our horses can begin as early as age three and continue beyond 30.

With your help, since 1983, the TRF has been funding long-term care for thousands of Thoroughbreds because they have no pensions or retirement plans. The TRF has rescued over 3,000 Thoroughbreds and we currently care for 1,100 horses around the country at a total cost of \$2.6 million per year.

During this exciting Triple Crown season, please remember those Thoroughbreds who have left the racetrack, but who have never left our hearts. Show them you still care by making a tax-deductible donation today.

We are always here to answer questions and welcome your call or email.



**THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION**

*Responsible for Life.*

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Photo@Jon Kral

THE GOOD NEWS IN RACING

