

# Board Exam

By Madeline Auerbach

It has been almost one year since I decided to run for the Board of Directors of the Thoroughbred Owners of California. I was flattered that some of my fellow horse owners thought that I could make a difference. We spent a lot of time discussing the issues that face us as owners, and there was genuine concern among many that the TOC was not in the forefront of resolving issues vital to our survival. I started my term with many preconceived ideas about the TOC and how we can provide the leadership needed to keep horseracing viable. Let me just say that it has been an eye opening experience!

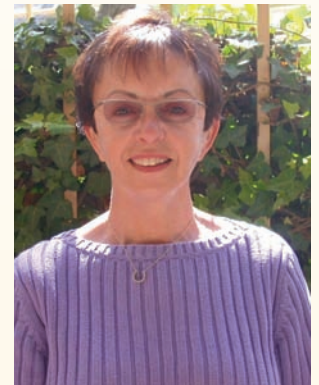
I am very active in my Board duties. I serve on every committee that interests me, including the Executive, Racing Affairs, and Owner Relations/Marketing. I also attend any industry meeting where it is essential to show support for the owners' point of view. The most striking revelation has been the commitment of my fellow board members. This is a full time job. The pay stinks – there is none! Every board member is dedicated to racing. I may not, and do not always, agree with them; but I know that we all have the same ultimate goal.

I am among the newest members of the Board. In the last couple of years, our “new blood” includes such diverse people as Jess Jackson, B. Wayne Hughes, Billy Koch, Marsha Naify, David Hofmans, and Bob Baffert. Any organization needs fresh ideas to keep it moving. I believe that we provide that new perspective.

Each year, several board positions become available as directors' staggered terms expire. It is a wonderful opportunity for those of you who would like to see us progress. Throw your hat into the ring! It's a lot of work, hours of reading and attending many meetings (some of them pretty boring, too), but it's worth it.

The Board faces many complex and diverse situations. The face of racing is in a state of constant flux. To navigate our way around the issues, we have experienced voices and enthusiastic professionals whose dedication is quite inspirational. Many of the issues that I felt strongly about – the safety of the horses and jockeys, medication, honesty, transparency in our dealings – are things that we deal with every day. There are a myriad of government agencies, regulations, legislation, etc., that our average member is not aware of. I was shocked at how much energy and time are spent on these issues. We operate under and with these rules; we had better be an integral part of refining and learning to coexist with all parties to racing.

I have not changed my mind about the core issues that face us. We need to be united. We need to provide a voice for the horse and for our industry. I urge you... become involved, and vote for the people you believe will help us. The future of our organization, and our sport, is up to you.



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