



Op/Ed

by Gary Biszantz

I urge every owner to get behind the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance. It takes money to operate these centers and the managers of these centers want to be successful as they love the horse.

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Once again, Rob Whiteley has written a great article on what to do to raise funds to save and rehabilitate, when possible and appropriate, the retired Thoroughbreds who have given us so many thrills and enjoyment ([Au Carrant](#), TDN Op/Ed, April 27, 2012).

Under the leadership of The Jockey Club and Jack Wolf of Starlight Racing, the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance gives us the vehicle to which all participants in racing may contribute and provide funds for the deserving retirement and rehabilitation farms that care for these great Thoroughbred horses when their careers in racing are over.

Thoroughbred owners should not get caught up in the "Unwanted Horse" arguments. We all should be responsible to see that proper care is available and another career is a viable option for the Thoroughbred horse.

For too long, the racing industry has just overlooked this problem or said we can't afford it. Arthur Hancock summed it up perfectly when he said, "We can't expect to be a major league product and gain the respect of the fans if we slaughter the athlete we come to cheer." We are better than that scenario and we have the ability to fix it. It doesn't take more committees, more discussions, and no results. It takes leadership and courage!

The accredited retirement and rehabilitation farms across America need funds to operate. I speak and write with knowledge on this subject. Twelve years ago, I recognized this problem and I purchased a 50-acre farm which I donated to California owners, and under the professional management of Priscilla Clark, Tranquility Farm has handled over one thousand horses and adopted out a high percentage of these animals for a second career. Tranquility Farm is a beacon of hope for the Thoroughbred in California. We have other fine retirement facilities in California and there are many others across America. Those of us who run these facilities appreciate the help we receive. Bob and Beverly Lewis, John Amerman, Marsha Naify, Madeline Auerbach, and many others have allowed Tranquility to function. We thank them, but all of us get tired of begging. The time for the industry to step up is now and the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance is the answer. The racetracks, the trainers, the vets, the organizations like The Jockey Club, Breeders' Cup, TOBA and the HBPA, need to unite and make it happen. Everyone can give something.

Slaughter is not the ultimate answer. Euthanasia is appropriate when conditions demand it, but the vast majority of Thoroughbreds deserve a better fate.