

Randy Funkhouser – CTHBPA President



Raymond J. Funkhouser II

Recently we published our newsletter *Beyond the Paddock* which is designed to share with you what the Charles Town Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association is doing to keep horse racing alive and well in Jefferson County.

So much is at stake. The state legislature recently passed a bill that reduces purses by 10 percent. This impacts all of us: not just the owners, breeders, jockeys, trainers, track employees and concession staff but the entire local community: banks, restaurants, small businesses, farmers and schools. Everyone is impacted; a smaller purse ultimately means fewer jobs and depressed earnings for those who do have jobs.

These are serious times; our way of life could vanish if we do nothing. We cannot let horse racing, the heart of our community, be ripped away from us. Do we really want Charles Town to become just another suburban outpost of Washington, D.C? That's why we need to take a stand, work together in a coordinated fashion to meet the economic and political challenges that lie ahead.

Beyond the Paddock is our rallying cry. In future newsletters, we will share with you the very real human stories behind the statistics: how individuals, families and businesses are coping with the current economic environment, what will happen if the downward trends continue, and what all of us can do to turn this situation around and start rebuilding our community.

We all *have a horse in this race* when it comes to saving Charles Town's future. I look forward to having a dialogue with you and I hope you will come forward with your feedback and ideas about the newsletter and about the direction the CTHBPA should take in ensuring our voice is heard.

Here are some things that you probably don't know about Randy.

With more than 80 years of family history in Jefferson County, Randy Funkhouser has seen the powerful and positive impact of racing on the community



As a 3rd generation Jefferson County horse breeder and farmer, Raymond “Randy” Joseph Funkhouser II feels a special kinship and responsibility to protecting and promoting Charles Town’s thoroughbred horse industry for future generations. Randy’s grandfather and his namesake, R.J. Funkhouser, a native West Virginian, was a successful industrialist who operated over 20 businesses throughout the east coast during the depression. In 1939 R. J. purchased O’Sullivan Rubber Company and moved to Jefferson County where he purchased five Washington estates. He farmed the land and raised thoroughbred horses and cows and later ran for governor.

Randy is president of the Charles Town Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association (CTHBPA) and has spent his entire adult life operating O’Sullivan Farms, the largest thoroughbred horse breeding farm in West Virginia, traditionally foaling 80 to 100 mares per year. He left home to attend Stanford University where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in creative writing.

His family has stayed close. His wife, Clissy, is a certified public accountant, and her clients include people connected to the horse industry and beyond. Until recently his daughter, Kate, owned a local wine store; his oldest son, John, runs the day to day operation of the farm and youngest son, Joe, is an attorney and is a Charles Town HBPA board member.

Horse breeding and racing is not only the lifeblood of my family says Randy, “it’s the heart and soul of Jefferson County and I will do everything in my power to make sure thoroughbred racing stays alive and thrives.”