



Rambling Willie

# Keeping Christ Alive in Harness Racing!

Since 1983

In God We Trust



Christian Harness Horsemen's Association Newsletter

February 2020

Remember,  
I pray for all  
our members  
every day.



Chaplain Lee Alphen

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Wanted  
Praise Reports  
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Photo courtesy of Amy Bondon

## Lessons from Secretariat By Chaplain Lee Alphen

Secretariat bursts onto the movie screen, rounding the turn into the stretch. Excitement builds as he continues on top, moving away from the field all the way to the wire and winning by 31 lengths in 2:24 breaking all records over the dirt for a mile and a half. Of course, he won! Estimates say his heart weighed 22 pounds. Dr. Thomas Swerczek, who performed the autopsy on Secretariat, said his heart “was almost twice the average size, and a third larger than any equine heart I’d ever seen.” Secretariat also had an incredible conformation (<https://www.horseracingnation.com/news/The-Tremendous-Size-of-Secretariat-s-Heart-123/>).

In a horse race, anticipation always mounts as the field rounds the turn at the head of the stretch. Just imagine the anticipation as David faced off with the giant, Goliath, armed with only a slingshot and his faith in God (1 Samuel 17:1-51). The crowds were rooting for Secretariat, knowing he was a great horse. King Saul and the rest of David’s supporters likely saw David’s stand against Goliath as a last ditch effort. His brothers thought he was reckless and foolish. They could only hope. Daniel, thrown to the lions, emerged unharmed, astounding the king’s corrupt administrators as King Darius rejoiced and gave thanks to Daniel’s God (Daniel 6:1-27).

The movie opens with Penny Chenery, Secretariat’s owner, reciting God’s words to Job, “Do you give the horse its strength? [...] It paws fiercely, rejoicing in its strength. [...] It does not shy away from the sword” Job 39: 19,

21, 22).

Later, Penny talks about Secretariat “running the race of life well” (1 Corinthians 9:24). She believes in this son of Bold Ruler who they say won’t be able to go the distance as she and her team prepare him for the triple crown races. Almost everyone is against her, telling her she has to sell him, saying, “It can’t be done.”

Life often takes twists and turns. Where is our focus? Penny’s was on preparing Secretariat for the challenges he would face on the track.



We have challenges at work, with our horses, our relationships, our health, and in doing God’s will.

God reminds Job about horses running into battle (Job 39:25). What battles are we facing? With the dirt kicking up behind Secretariat as he gallops down the training track, we hear Penny say, “He knows what to do when the trumpet sounds” (Job 39:24). The angel will sound the seventh trumpet when Christ returns (Revelation 11:15).

Secretariat continued on Page 2

## Secretariat continued from page 1

With Penny's guidance and perseverance, Secretariat saved the family farm and taught her family and everyone in horse racing a mighty lesson. In the face of pressure and ridicule from all sides, Penny said, "I don't care how many times they say, 'No, you can't do it,' I'm not giving up. [...] We are going to live rejoicing." Secretariat's world record still stands.

We too can live rejoicing when we place our trust in God. Sure, there will be bumps in the road, but we know "the Lord is on our side" (Psalm 118:6). We can put our faith in God as, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

During the stretch run, the hymn "O Happy Day" plays. It draws from an 18<sup>th</sup> century hymn:

### O, happy day!

When Jesus washed my sins away!  
He taught me how to watch and pray,  
And live rejoicing every day.

Secretariat was ready when the bugle called him to the track. Let's be ready when the angel blows the trumpet to call us home.



Secretariat as an older stallion

## Focus continued from page 6

tion, peer pressure, loss of a loved one, a sinful habit?

Remember in Matthew 14 when Peter and the disciples were out on the Sea of Galilee in the middle of a raging storm? Jesus came walking on the water and Peter went to Him walking on the water to meet Him until he took his eye off the Lord and started to sink. "Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him" (Matthew 14:31). As long as we stay focused on Jesus, He is always near either to walk through with us or to help us overcome all the obstacles that attack us.

Hebrews 12 tells us in v.1 to "...throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and run with perseverance the race marked out before us." then in v.2. "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..." v.3. "Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men so you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:1-3).

COUNT YOUR  
**BLESSINGS.**  
NAME THEM ONE BY ONE.  
COUNT YOUR  
**MANY BLESSINGS**  
SEE WHAT GOD HAS DONE.

*From Paul Russell...*

We prayed for Paul in January when his barn burned down and he lost seven horses. He asked me to thank the Prayer Partners for their prayers. He really appreciates them. He got a job and was able to rebuild the barn. However, he still has to build the stalls and bring in water and electricity. He asks that we continue to pray.

*From Kate Walker Williams...*

Matt Hess, Kate's grandson that won our John and Janet Klark scholarship for Farrier school three years ago, is finishing up his apprenticeship. He already has 40 or 50 clients and plans to work part time at Pinehurst under another blacksmith to learn more about shoeing Standardbreds.

*From Jake Huff...*

Sheryl Zdunic is doing much better with her depression.

*From Chaplain John Prescott...*

I was ready to pull out of the gas station this morning when the attendant came over to me and asked if I was a minister. He reminded me that we had prayed two years earlier and had accepted Christ as his savior. I asked him what God had been doing in his life, and he told me that he had quit drinking and hanging out with people who drink. This man was in his late 70's. Great to have a new life even in older age. I'm writing this to encourage all who are evangelizing for you never know what your efforts could mean to people... Praise the Lord!

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### Gifts for Family and Friends

- CHHA hat (pictured to the right)
- 10 Rambling Willie Note Cards (see picture)
- Horseshoe Nail Cross necklaces and key rings—see below

#### Books

- Daily Oats by Chaplain Sam Ed Spence
- Downloading God by Jack Levine
- Live A Life That Matters for God by Jack Levine
- My Addict Your Addict by Jack Levine
- Where the Rubber Meets the Road with God by Jack Levine
- Don't Blow It With God by Jack Levine
- Sound Mouth—Sound Horse, The Gager Method of Equine Dental Care by ER Gager and Bob "Dusty Rhodes"
- Still: A Story of the Black Doctor of the Jersey Pines by Edmund R Gager



CHHA Hat



Rambling Willie Remembers

These lovely 5 x 7 Rambling Willie cards are packaged in sets of 10 cards. They are blank inside.

### Horseshoe Nail Cross Necklaces and Keyrings

#### Horseshoe Nail Product Descriptions

**Key Ring:** Horseshoe nails are bent into a cross and tied together with colored wire. Key ring is attached with rawhide.  
**Necklace:** Key ring: Horseshoe nails are bent in to a cross and tied together with colored wire.

[Horseshoe Nail Item Order Form—Orders can also be placed at www.chha.net/products](#)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail with \$20 each + \$4 shipping to:

Roger Huston · 2249 Grey Oaks · Grove City, OH 43123

Necklace Qty: Red \_\_\_\_ Blue \_\_\_\_ Turquoise \_\_\_\_

Keyring Qty: Red \_\_\_\_ Blue \_\_\_\_ Turquoise \_\_\_\_ Silver \_\_\_\_

Other colors are available upon request.



## Obituaries continued from page 5

**Bruno Coccia**, 70, died Dec 14. Bruno was the owner of Genesee Printers Inc. and Microera Printers Inc. He was also a co-owner of the Rochester Flash Men's Soccer Team and the C.C.O. Harness Racing Stables. He raced several horses in western New York from the late 70's to the mid 80's.



**Larry Eugene Coleman**, 74, of Humboldt, IA, died Dec 23. Larry enjoyed a career as a Standardbred owner, trainer, and driver spanning 50 years. He operated a public stable in central Illinois with his former wife, Jeanne, before relocating to his native Iowa.



**Carol Jean Vietmeier Day**, 86, of Grand Junction, CO, died Dec 27. She taught 1st through 8th grades in a one room school house in Hyde County South Dakota. Later she worked as a substitute teacher and then a secretary. Carol was Hall of Fame jockey, Pat Day's, mother.



**The Reverend Paul L. Hershey** died Jan 15. Paul was stationed at the Pentagon while serving in the US Army and volunteered in the youth department at the YMCA in Washington DC. After his discharge, he served as Executive Director of the YMCA. He was transferred to numerous states and eventually to the Republic of Panama where he ran the Armed Services YMCA. After retiring, Paul moved to Ohio, and assumed the role of Race Track Chaplain, serving three racetracks in Ohio. He also served as an interim pastor for several area churches.

**Dr Thomas Lazzaro**, 77, died Dec 8. Dr Lazzaro will be remembered for his dedication to the treatment of mental illness. He was passionate about the theater, even investing in several plays. His biggest passion was harness racing, and he never missed watching his horses race.



**Ruth Mattheus** died Nov 23. In her youth, Ruth traveled, did tent revivals and fasted 40 days every summer. She was named for Ruth in the Bible. She was Amy Bondon's beloved, Christ loving roommate while recuperating at Palm Garden. There was no family to visit her as she lay dying for several months, yet her faith was strong.

**John Pawlak**, 71, died Dec 27. John was a former Director of Publicity for the U.S. Trotting Association. He was hired by Raceway Park and did some odd jobs before taking over the announcer's job in March 1979. He also assisted the track's publicist with promotions, advertising and public relations. After about a year, he was named the publicist at Raceway Park and eventually traded in his announcer's microphone to focus on his publicity and marketing duties. John joined the USTA in 1985 as the director of publicity. He was responsible for compiling and editing *The Trotting & Pacing Guide* and the historical



USTA Directors book. With his television background, he was the face of the USTA, led the organization into the age of online video and served as the host of the USTA's popular "Eye on Harness Racing" series. He retired in 2013.

**Nicholas J. Saponara**, 80, died Dec 7. He was a member of the Harness Racing Communicators Hall of Fame and a past president of the US Harness Writers Association, an organization to which he belonged for 57 years. After college, Nicholas worked 25 years in the sports department of the Philadelphia Bulletin as the handicapper and morning line oddsmaker for the tracks covered by the Bulletin. He also made the official track morning line at Brandywine, Liberty Bell, Atlantic City Harness, and the Keystone thoroughbred track. Nicholas also owned harness horses with Marv Bachrad.



**Jonathan Blair Schuster**, 61, of Shelbyville, IN, died Dec 25. Jon was Vice President and General Manager of Racing at the Indiana Grand Racing & Casino for 17 years. His love of horse racing began on his 10th birthday when his parents took him to the track for the first time. He was so grateful to have been able to work in the industry he loved.



**William R "Bill" Stevens**, 68, of Washington CH, OH, died Dec 14. Bill was a horse trainer for most of his adult life and had been a long-time member of the United States Trotting Association. Bill had a love for his family, his friends, and horses.

**Dr. Paul Eppler Thorpe, DVM** of Edgewater, Florida died Nov 19. Paul served in Vietnam as a search and rescue helicopter pilot. He studied Veterinary medicine at UC Davis. In 1974, Paul moved to Lexington, Kentucky where he spent his career as an equine veterinarian. In his work, he was dedicated to his patients and most enjoyed the friendships, stories, and jokes shared during countless surgeries and farm calls.



**Bryce Norwood "Woody" Truitt**, 87, of Whaleyville, MD, died Nov 18. Bryce was a retired Standardbred trainer. His son, Randy, is an owner, trainer and driver.



There is nothing more important than  
**Your Eternal Salvation**

Kirk Cameron

## Obituaries

**Joseph "Joe" Beszczynski Jr.**, 89, of Darien Center, NY, died Nov 29. Joe worked in construction and was also a driver and trainer for more than 30 years competing at Batavia Downs and Vernon Downs. He wintered at Aurora Downs. His wife, Helen, bred his top trotter, Saint Joseph.



**Virginia Ruth Buxton**, 91, of Urbana, OH, died Nov 30. Virginia was the widow of Ohio horseman, Richard "Dick" Buxton, and mother of horseman, Brad Buxton. She was also devoted to her faith and was a member of Epiphany Episcopal Church.



**Thomas F Carey**, 87, of IL, died Dec 17. Tom served as President and General Manager of Hawthorne Raceway for nearly 30 years. After an early morning fire destroyed the Hawthorne grandstand on November 19, 1978, Tom was instrumental



in the rebuild of Hawthorne with the facility reopening in the fall of 1980. He was inducted into the Chicago Sports Hall of Fame in 1998.

**Garrett Chellis**, 21, of Honesdale, Lebanon Township, PA, died Nov 28. Garrett was the son of well-known horseman, Drew Chellis, and his wife, Wendy. Garrett attended Millersville University and recently enlisted in the United States Navy and was scheduled to go to Basic Training on Dec 9. He loved adventure of all kinds and could be found trekking and hiking the local great outdoors.



**Obituaries continued on page 4**

**Sources for Obituary information include:**

www.harnessracing.com, www.ustrotting.com and  
www.standardbredcanada.ca

## Prayer Corner

**Please pray for all the people on our Prayer List who are battling cancer, especially:**

Lynn Antonelli, Lew Arsenault, Dan Ater, Emily Bier, Debbie Boardman, Amy Bondon, Jeanne Duso Boudot, Jana Brocco, Gary Bryant, Jack Burke, Lore Burke, Rick Carson, Barbara Carter, Karen Carter, Sam Castimore, Candice Coleman, Barbara Connors, Sharon Cromer, Joe Crothers, Mike Deeters, Ashley Dennon-Cohen, Barbara Dinning, Maryanne Doherty, Jerry Eby, Chaplain Tom Farley, Francine Federici, Tiffany Fisher, Lloyd Fortune, Dorothy Geer, Rodney Grady, Pastor Bill Grant, Margaret Groce, Remi Gunn, Marilyn Hankins, Warren Harp, Rose Hennessey, Morris Hoagland, Glenda Holloway, Jeff Hurst, Donna Ingram, Betty James, Rita Jacobs, Jennifer Jugg, AJ Keaton, Harold Kelly, Bob Kinsey, Jim Kolnick, Donnie Knight, David Kovach, Larry Lederman, Rox Liles, Anabelle Lisi, Kevin Mack, Ricky Macomber, Nelson Malin, Wilma Mattuci, Joyceann McClelland, Mrs Miller, Frank Mirahmadi, Lalya Mosley, Corey Murphy, Howard Nields, Pierre Noel, Jay O'Neil, John Panetta, Dee Parsons, Margie Polhamus, Valerie Prescott, Leigh Raymer, Robyn Rembleski, Emily Roper, Daren Richner, Del Smart, Doug Stringer, Jimmy Takter, Jack Taylor, Carrie Thompson, Gary Tyron, Fred Ward, Sr, Roland Wardel, Kate Williams, Marty Woebkenberg, Maddy Wright, Joyce Zeasapolowski.

**These friends are also in need of our ongoing prayers:**

Jason Apperti, Jordan Aracena, Ken Bartels, Pleasant Batson, Gary Bennett, Peter Blood, Marilyn Bondon, Stephanie Bouchard, Danny Breton, Charlie Brigham, Betsy Brown, Kevin Burns, Mary Burton, Bob Cain, Carol Ann Case, Thelma Chrisman, Mary Clements, Joan Collins, Anthony Coletta, Bev Crane, Chet Crane, Karen Crothers, Jim Ferguson, Scott Freck, Sylvain Gagnon, Greg

Gehman, Dr Howard Gill, Bob Goth, Barbara and Brent Graham, Debbie Gray, Jimmy Hart, Joyce Hart, Bob Hilliard, Vickie Howard, Bob Jones, Ruby Hensley, Miguel Hernandez, Paul and Mrs Hershey, Carol Heusinkveld, Trudy Hite, Jerry Hissam, John Hostler, Jason Hughes, Jesse Hughes, Donna Ingram, Don James, Kenny Kane, Dave Kelly, Barbara Kinsey, Michael Klark, Victor Kiss, Larry Lawter, Ray Levay, Sam Lilli, Katherine Lonager, Sharon Lowell, Faye Mackey, Terry Mahar, Joanne Maiorca, Pedro Martinez, Jr, Cheryl Mauran, Kaye McDonnell, Dean Miller, Raymond Miller, Nancy Miner, Mike Murphy, Doug Nash, Elaine Parlin, Ronnie Parker, Waverly Parsons, Susan Parks, Doc Parry, Louise Pelletier, Donna Phillips, Rita Polese, Noreen Paulen, Art Plant, Joanne Ranger, Donnie Richards, Ray Romanetti, Tori Scott, Jody Sexton, Delma Smart, Madisyn Smith, Brad Strawser, Lee Anne Taylor, Marsh Townley, Lorraine Truitt, Mel Turcott, Justin Vance, Barry Vicroy, Max Walton, Steve Warner, Greggie Welch, Jr, Alice Williams, Anne Winters.

**Please try to keep me updated about the people on our prayer list.**

**Please pray for those serving in the military, especially:**

John Beauregard, Joshua Hankins, Yann Lamiqu, Chris Petrullo, Sgt David Thomas, and Elizabeth Welch.

**Special Intentions for this month:**

Layla Hundertpfund, 8, has cancer for the second time.

Pastor Lloyd has congestive heart issues.

Braiden Reibeling broke both legs and his jaw.

Del Richards broke his hip.

Larry Smith has cancer.

Bobbi Tanner is having chemotherapy for ovarian cancer.

Kate Walker Williams has cancer of the stomach and esophagus.

Lynn Wood had a stroke.

Allen Wright has cancer.



157 North Main St  
Salem, NH 03079  
USA



Information at [www.chha.net](http://www.chha.net)

Please indicate  
Address corrections

## What is Your Focus

By Chaplain Ken Carter

I was reminded lately of a horse we raced many years ago. It was one we raised named Bosley. We broke him and trained him down at home. When it was almost time to qualify, I took him to Orangeville to get him used to the racetrack. Everything went well until I started his last mile. As I was going into the first turn, a coffee cup blew onto the track in front of him and he stepped on it. I thought he was going to jump right out of the hobbles. The next week I took him to train behind the starting gate. As I warmed up, I scored into the first turn right where he had stepped on the cup and sure enough, he jumped right over the exact spot. What would he do when I qualified him?



The next week I drew the rail in the qualifier. I left from the rail not knowing what to expect but he was focused on the starting gate and paced around the turn without missing a step. Every time I trained him, he would put a few steps in at the same point but never in a race. We raced that year around many Ontario tracks with a sire stake filly and took Bosley with us for an overnight race. At every track he would put in steps at the very same place warming up but in the race he would be perfect. Behind the gate, when he focused on the race and on the starting gate and nothing distracted him.

What can we learn from this about our life? If we stay focused on what the Lord has planned for us and stay focused on Jesus, we can overcome all the obstacles the world may throw at us. What is preventing you from serving the Lord to the best of your ability? Is it fear of failing, rejec-

Focus continued on page 2



*May the angels  
lead you into paradise*  
Memorials posted at [www.chha.net](http://www.chha.net)

### Memorial Contributions

In memory of **Dean and Steve Beachy** by: Sam and Ellen Lilly  
In memory of **Claudean Cone** by: Albert Adams  
In memory of **Beckie Davis** by: Dean Davis  
In memory of **Sherie Hankins** by: Kim Hankins  
In memory of **Terry Lee Kibler** by: Betsy Brown  
In memory of **John and Janet Klark** by: Craig Holterman  
In memory of **Ruth Mattheus** by: Amy Bondon  
In memory of **Sam McKee** by: Moira and Tom Fanning—Merry Christmas Sam  
In memory of **Don and Goldie McLennan** by: Rev Mark McLennan  
In memory of **Bill Stevens** by: Dr Bob and Lisa Schwartz  
In memory of **Weldon Stockwell** by: Robert Weyforth  
In memory of **Gib Travis** by: Joan Burns  
In memory of **Andy Wood** by: Longshot Stables



Kevin and Dorothy Reynold made a donation to the Christian Harness Horsemen's Association in honor of all their Loyal Harness Horse Customers.

**Thank You!**

### Smile Time

By Chaplain Sam Spence

A criminal said to the judge, "Your Honor, I'm not guilty. I know I can prove it if you'll just give me some time."

"Sure," replied the judge. "Ten years. Next!"

