

THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION



November 2001

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Dear Friend,

In these uncertain and often painful times, it is particularly gratifying to bring you this message of encouragement and optimism surrounding the TRF's life-affirming mission.

Even as events may change and alter the priorities of our daily lives, TRF efforts to protect and preserve the welfare of imperiled Thoroughbreds have not been curtailed. Rather, they are increasing, with truly heartening results.

Consider, if you will, that in one weekend in September alone 22 Thoroughbreds whose racing days had come to an end were *saved* by the TRF. Moreover, our Safety Net initiative regularly seeks out such racehorses with nowhere else to go and no one else to protect them. Other horses come to us from owners who lack financial means, yet who are determined to insure their horses' futures. They recognize that the TRF is the safe retirement choice.

The TRF is the first and best option for racehorses with nowhere else to go.

TRF farms are home to hundreds of Thoroughbreds, almost all of them geldings, who never made it to the superstar ranks that might have insured their futures. Consider these three TRF retirees at Historic Long Branch in Virginia.

According to **Royale Derby's** former owner Adam Russo, the Florida-bred son of Classics winner Gate Dancer was "something special. You always knew if it was his day to win. He would intimidate the competitors beside him in the gate, turning his head left and then right to stare them down."

From 1991 until 1999, Derby finished on the board in 54 of his 103 starts, all but two of them at Philadelphia Park, and won 24 times. He had earned \$205,330.



PHOTO: ARVICOM PICTURES

Royale Derby held off Running Rock to win at Philadelphia Park on August 12, 1997. With jockey Rod Madrigal, Jr. in the irons, he covered the six furlongs in 1:12.1.

Like so many racing stalwarts, Derby ran most of his career as a claimer, for prices as high as \$75,000 and, in the end, as low as \$4,000.

Russo claimed Derby as a six-year-old in 1995. "He was my first horse, and it was a risk," said Russo. "He was coming off a long layoff. There were chips in his legs from when he was a youngster, and sometimes he ached with arthritis, but his heart was

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A copy of the foundation's latest annual report may be obtained, upon request, from the organization or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271

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PHOTO: CREATIVE ARTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Thanks to a caring owner and the TRF, Royale Derby is having a fine time at Historic Long Branch in Virginia.

pure gold.” Derby had ten trips to the winner’s circle with Russo before racing for the last time in 1999. He told Russo he was ready to quit with his uncharacteristic reluctance to enter the saddling area.

Royale Derby was 10 years old. He had more than “paid his dues,” and his owner secured a safe, loving, and lifetime home for him with the TRF.

Thank You Dinky is a 1992 son of Classics winner Risen Star, and his illustrious lineage includes grandsire Secretariat, Bold Ruler, Nasrullah, and Nearco. Despite his impeccable bloodlines, in 1996 his claiming tag plummeted from \$23,000 to \$4,000 and pretty much stayed there. He won only six of his 52 starts, the last in 1998, and earned a scant \$61,845. Apparently his connections gave up on him and sent him to auction not long after his last race in July 2000. In September the TRF rescued him from a slaughterhouse middleman.

Ebonizer fared better. This son of Tri Jet still holds the record for 6½ furlongs at Maryland’s Laurel Park. Nevertheless, his claiming price slipped downward from \$50,000 to \$11,500 and, at the end, \$4,000. Retired after six years on the track, he had finished on the board in 40 of his 59 starts for lifetime earnings of \$248,342. But

then Ebonizer’s owner, in financial straits, lost his farm, and with his horse suddenly homeless, he turned to the TRF.

Ebonizer came to us still hurting from fractured sesamoids, and his youthful caregivers at the TRF Charles Hickey School program set about nursing him back to health. After months of stall rest and a regular routine of hand walking, Ebonizer is galloping with ease in the spacious pastures of the TRF Historic Long Branch facility.

The TRF is a life preserver for racehorses—and people, too.

Hundreds more deserving Thoroughbreds have come to us suffering from neglect, abuse, or debilitating racing injuries. They are

restored to health, and many are made ready for productive second careers, at our principal farms. These safe havens are located at correctional facilities, where adult inmates and juvenile offenders in the TRF’s innovative educational programs learn to give the horses skilled and attentive care. The love and treats they lavish on them are a bonus, as are the men’s emerging respect for life and their new-found pride and self-esteem. Horses and caregivers alike are winners in the TRF’s groundbreaking rescue and rehabilitation operations.

In the beginning, nearly 20 years ago, our flagship farm at Wallkill (N.Y.) Correctional Facility accommodated 30 horses, with long waiting lists for future openings. Today, we have major farm programs in New York, Maryland, Kentucky and Florida, with plans to add significant acreage in New York and Kentucky. There are TRF satellite farms in these and seven other states. We have over 350 Thoroughbreds in our care. And, with your help, we will take in 150 more by the end of next year.

Add to their number hundreds who have been or will be rehabilitated and retrained before moving out to happy and secure homes through our carefully monitored private adoption program. With so many horses at our doorstep, adoptions have become increasingly important to our rescue operations. Whenever a horse is adopted, a place opens up for another horse.



PHOTO: CREATIVE ARTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Thank You Dinky was rescued by TRF from a slaughterhouse middleman; Ebonizer, with fractured sesamoids, was nursed back to health by his TRF caretakers.

TRF leads the way in horse rescue.

You can give to the TRF in complete confidence. We are this country's acknowledged leader in horse rescue.

While endorsements from the racing world and the nation's media have contributed to our growth, they do not pay for the rising costs of feed, hay, medications, veterinary care, farm maintenance and expansion, and farm managers to oversee the care of our ever-growing roster of horses. It is your faithful support that pays our way; your gift is vital to our life-affirming work.

At the same time, we must continue to fund expansion of our outreach program to inform horsemen at tracks nationwide of the TRF's proven alternative to the sad, unnecessary deaths for the Thoroughbreds who are innocents in the racing game. As sportswriter Heywood Hale Broun put it, "Racehorses do not chaffer over money, get into bar fights or endorse horse blankets and aluminum shoes..." They just run their hearts out for us.

Your gift will make a difference—it is a matter of life and death.

In these difficult times, we need your help more than ever. Think of the thrill when a favorite racehorse dug down deep to find that extra bit of heart that got him to the wire. Maybe he got there first, maybe he finished in spite of a painful injury, or maybe he simply finished. That is what we ask of you, right now, in this season of giving. Please reach down deep, and then dig a little deeper, to give the gift of life to horses in peril.

With heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Thoroughbreds you will save and with best wishes for all of our futures, I remain,



PHOTO: BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

Glowing with health, TRF's retired racehorses at Historic Long Branch greet visitors with exuberance, confidence, and curiosity. ("Did you bring carrots?")

Most sincerely,

Monique S. Koehler
Founder and Chairman

... horses are magnificent creatures, yes, but they are also individuals—flawed, determined, sometimes eccentric, and more than just the embodiment of athletic grace. They are pure and should be cherished.

~~ Joe Drape, racing columnist, *The New York Times*