

Blair Burgess
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Nominated as ONTARIO ACTIVE DIRECTOR

I have been a lifelong participant in the standardbred horse racing industry. My family and I have been involved in almost every aspect of the business, including racing, breeding and the operation of a small business that is a racehorse stable. All members of my immediate family have been dependent upon horse racing at one time or another. I raced horses and helped foal mares at night right through high school and university (I have a BA from the University of Guelph). My own children when not in school themselves have all worked on the farm growing up. My two daughters both even took summer internships at Standardbred Canada. My father served as a director at the CSHS/CTA (the predecessor of Standardbred Canada) for over 20 years. I am only running as a director now because I felt some responsibility as I believe he did years ago, to give some of my time back to what has been my life, in a time of very new and evolving challenges.

My successes in the industry are hopefully representative of dedication to standardbred racing. I was elected to both the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame and the United States Hall of Fame of the Trotter in Goshen, NY. One of my two Hambletonian winners was one of only three Canadian sired horses to do so.

I have been vocal on social media and when speaking one on one with other industry participants about how horsepeople need to react as a group to drastically changing times. Hopefully, as a director I would be able to provide a more official platform for some of my opinions. Particular examples of this are: once again, as in the past, Standardbred Canada (and as an extension its members) should have a seat at the table when the Canadian Pari Mutuel Agency advisory committee meets to discuss such issues as drug classifications ensuring they coincide with industry standards and those of other jurisdictions. Also serious consideration should be given to the amalgamation of the record keeping systems across North America and between the USTA and Standardbred Canada. Amazing efficiencies could be achieved putting together all breeding and racing data bases.

More importantly, proper recognition of important revenue streams for SC is needed. Trot magazine is a money maker that should be given as much opportunity to maximize its potential. The information technology that SC is a proprietor of should be allowed to modernize and use its full earning capacity. One recent income loss for SC has been the

monies made in running horses sales. Immediate steps should be taken to recover this hit to the organization. There were five auctions a year at one time. One obvious way to rectify this is to expand the sale board and go to a live On Line Auction format similar to some others that already exist in North America. Standardbred Canada has a tremendous advantage in this area as it ALREADY has control and ability to produce the necessary data that is required when selling horses ie. chart lines, breeding histories, registration information etc.

These are just some examples I advocate to create a positive revenue stream for the organization to hopefully help alleviate the fees and penalties charges to members which I know first hand can at times be onerous. Also, increased revenues will aid in the viability of Standardbred Canada as a nationwide entity.

Respectfully submitted,
Blair Burgess.

Let's discuss !