

Horse Racing and Campaign Financing in New York  
2004 – 2005

We've noted in the past the connection between political contributions and the horse racing industry. (See <http://www2.als.edu/glc/wagering/nyracontrib.pdf> from 2003) With major State-wide elections coming up this year, we are revisiting this area to focus on the trends that may be evolving this year. We are relying on material that the State Board of Elections has posted on its website. There are, at times, errors in these materials and errors in our own calculations. We would welcome any corrections.

These are the main trends we are finding. It is followed by a review of horse racing contributions to the Statewide candidates in 2006 plus a listing of other significant contributions.

1. NYRA – NYRA's political contributions – basically from its trustees – are considerably down over the past two years. While during the four years between 1999-2003, NYRA trustees contributed more than \$1.1 million to political candidates and committees in New York State, that number has fallen significantly. While NYRA trustees are continuing individually to supply significant campaign contributions, the potent NYRA fund raising force that existed under former NYRA Chairmen Kenny Noe is not what it once was.

For example, NYRA's PAC – the New York Thoroughbred Racing Industry PAC - received over \$130,000 in contributions between 1999 and 2003. For 2004 –2005, the PAC received a total of \$3,000. \$1,000 came from trustee Al Fried's company – Albert Fried and Co. The other \$2,000 was from John Oxley, a major thoroughbred owner.

Many people who served as NYRA trustees during the time period from 2003 – 2004 made no political contributions. This group included NYRA Chairman Steven Duncker, Robert Flynn, Lucy Young Boutin Hamilton, James Heffernan, Stuart Janney, Mike Jarvis, Eugene Melnyk, John Meriwether, Charles Palombini, Michael Rankowitz, and Daniel Tully.

Other trustees during this period made only minor contributions to legislative candidates and racing industry PACs. These trustees included Robert Evans, Peter Schiff, and Dolph Rotfeld. Four trustees - Wayne Barr, Ogden Mills Phipps, Richard Santulli, and Peter Karches only made contributions to the Republican majority in the State Senate.

The largest NYRA trustee contribution was a \$25,000 contribution from Joseph Shields to John Faso.

Both Barry Schwartz and current NYRA president Charles Hayward made contributions to Assemblyman Richard Brodsky, currently a candidate for Attorney

General. Schwartz contributed \$6,000, and Hayward contributed \$2,000. These were Hayward's only political contribution. Hayward's only other contributions were \$700 to the Republicans in the Senate and \$250 to the Democrats in the Assembly represent the total of Hayward's contributions.

2. Magna Entertainment and Churchill Downs – Magna still has not made its presence felt in New York State The contributions that can be attributed to Magna entities are a \$2,500 from MEC Pennsylvania (which appears to be the Meadows) to Elliot Spitzer and a \$5,000 donation from Paul Cellucci to William Weld. The Cellucci contribution appears to be part of a fund raising effort obtaining contributions from Massachusetts officer holders who worked with Weld. Cellucci was the lieutenant governor under Governor Weld and succeeded to the governorship when Weld resigned in 1997.

The only evidence of Churchill Downs in New York is a \$1,000 contribution from Churchill CEO Tom Meeker to the Senate Republican Committee.

3. Jeff Gural – Jeff Gural – who is seeking to own both Vernon Downs and Tioga Downs – is now clearly the main political contributor in the racing world. Under his own name and Newmark Realty, he contributed more than \$90,000 in this time period. Gural was widely credited with persuading the State to increase the revenue to racetracks from operating video lottery terminals. Gural spread his contributions throughout the political spectrum, but \$13,000 was given to Attorney General candidate Mark Green.

4. The Harness Tracks – With the advent of VLT's the harness tracks have become major contributors to political candidates. Saratoga Harness contributed \$25,000 to Governor Pataki's Virginia PAC. Yonkers Raceway under its own name, through its affiliated companies, and the Rooney family made a large series of political contributions in 2005. Over the years, Yonkers Raceway has not been overly active in political campaign fund raising. That changed in 2005. For example on March 11, 2005, six individuals named Rooney made contributions of \$2,500 each to Senator Bruno. Yonkers related contributions to Governor Pataki totaled \$31,700.

5. Mary Lou Whitney gave a total of \$3,500 during this two year period. \$2,000 went to Senator Bruno, \$800 to Assemblyman Jim Tedisco, and \$700 to the Senate Republican majority.

6. Delaware North – Delaware North owns Finger Lakes and manages the video lottery operations at Finger Lakes, Saratoga Harness, and Buffalo Raceways. Delaware North is an enormous company, and it is difficult to attribute any of its contributions directly to racing and gaming. The contributions come from Delaware North, its associated companies, and the family of Jeremy Jacobs. They were major contributors during the past two years. For example, Jeremy Jacobs donated \$15,400, the Finger Lakes Racing Association \$13,775, Finger Lakes Food Service, \$7,950, and Delaware North \$6,150.

7. Friends of New York Racing contributed approximately \$37,000 to candidates in New York State.

8. NYRA monitor Neil Getnick contributed \$5,000 through his law firm to Mark Green and \$1,000 to Eliot Spitzer. He had previously given \$600 to Spitzer in 2002.

9. Hands down, the most interesting contribution was the \$1,000 contribution from trainer Dale Romans to Attorney General candidate Andrew Cuomo. Second place went to contributions from the NYRA CEO's to Richard Brodsky.

Here are the Statewide candidates and their contributions from the racing industry.

George Pataki

New York committee

Chester Broman – NYRA trustee	5,000
Friends of New York Racing	10,000
Bill Crowell - NYRA lobbyist	250
Jeremy Jacobs – Delaware North	1,000
Solar Sports systems - Delaware North	2,500
June Rooney – Yonkers Raceway	10,000
Finger Lakes Food Service - Delaware North	5,000
Thoropac – the thoroughbred breeders	6,500
West Point Thoroughbreds	1,000
Jeff Gural	1,000
Albert Fried and Co. – NYRA Trustee	2,500
Fredric Newman - Ad Hoc Committee Member	1,000

George Pataki – Virginia

21<sup>st</sup> Century Freedom State PAC

Joe Cornacchia- NYRA trustee	750
June Rooney – Yonkers	10,000
Brian Boru – Yonkers	5,850
Westchester Fair – Yonkers	3,000
Saratoga Harness	25,000
NTRA	5,000
Yonkers	2,850

Alan Hevesi

Stuart Subotnick – NYRA trustee	10,000
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Saratoga Harness	1,000
Jeff Gural	250
Jayne Keys - spouse of NYRA trustee Del Giudice	1,000

Eliot Spitzer

Neil Getnick – NYRA Monitor	1,000
Michael Del Giudice – NYRA trustee	2,000
George Steinbrenner – NYRA Trustee	15,000
Blue Chip Farms – major harness breeders	5,000
Bill Crowell – NYRA lobbyist	400
Jeremy Jacobs	2,500
Cordish family of Baltimore	16,818.75
Jeff Gural	3,000
Bill Eimicke – spouse of equine atty. Karen Murphy	1,000
MEC Pennsylvania-Magna	2,500
Melbourne Greyhound Park Florida to Senator Nozzolio	1,000 They also gave \$2,000

John Faso

Doug Barclay – former NYRA trustee	5,000
John Tesiero -chair State Racing Commission	3,950
Cranesville – Tesiero companies	3,900
Tim McGinn - NYRA trustee	1,000
Charles Wait – NYRA trustee	6,000
Joe Neglia – former Racing Board member	1,000
Carol Mack –spouse of former trustee Earle Mack	2,000
Fredric Newman – Ad Hoc Committee member	5,000
Joseph Shields – NYRA Trustee	25,000

William Weld

Paul Orrefice – former NYRA trustee	1,000
Jeremy Jacobs	1,000
Jared Abbruzzese – t’bred owner	2,000
Paul Cellucci – Magna exec	5,000

Richard Brodsky

Barry Schwartz – former NYRA CEO	6,000
June Rooney – Yonkers	5,000
Charles Hayward – NYRA CEO	2,000

Bill Crowell – NYRA lobbyist	350
Janynne Keys - spouse of NYRA trustee Del Giudice	1,000

Mark Green

Jeff Gural	13,000
Getnick and Getnick	5,000

Andrew Cuomo

Jack Dreyfus – former NYRA trustee	1,000
Jeff Gural	1,000
Dale Romans- trainer	1,000
Karen Murphy – equine attorney	3,000
Kim Bonstrom – partner of Karen Murphy	2,000
Bill Eimicke – spouse of Karen Murphy	1,000

Randy Daniels

Delaware North	1,000
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Denise O'Donnell

Sportsystems –Del North	1,000
Jeremy Jacobs	900

Other contributions of note:

Kenny Noe - \$1,000 to Senator Bruno \$200 to Senate Republican Committee  
 Saratoga Harness - \$4,500 to Senator Bruno \$1,000 to Senate Republican Committee,  
 \$300 Jim Tedisco  
 John Nigro - \$50,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Ed Swyer - \$25,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Blue Chip - \$10,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Ogden Mills Phipps - \$6,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Stuart Subotnick - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Joseph Shields - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Peter Karches - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
 Chester Broman - \$6,000 Senate Republican Committee

Wayne Barr - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Jeremy Jacobs - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Yonkers Raceway Market - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Friends of New York Racing - \$5,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Richard Santulli - \$3,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Thoroughbred Breeders - \$2,500 Senate Republican Committee  
Finger Lakes - \$2,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Sportsystems - \$2,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Jerry Bailey - \$1,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Tom Meeker - \$1,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Tim Smith - \$1,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Jack Knowlton - \$1,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Sportsservice - \$1,000 Senate Republican Committee  
Charles Hayward - \$700 Senate Republican Committee  
Barry Schwartz - \$2,949.38 Democratic Assembly Housekeeping  
Robert Berman – Monticello - \$25,000 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Friends of New York Racing - \$20,000 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Thoroughbred Breeders - \$7,500 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Jeff Gural - \$5,000 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Chester Broman - \$2,500 Democratic Assembly Committee  
John Oxley - \$2,000 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Jeremy Jacobs - \$2,000 Democratic Assembly Committee  
NY Horsemen - \$500 Democratic Assembly Committee  
Barry Schwartz - \$1,000 Paul Tonko