

Thanks to each of you that have interest in the Racking Horse Breeders Association of America and bettering its future. As it relates to the Board of Directors' consideration of eliminating the use of the "chain", let me offer the following information. I can appreciate each and every opinion that our folks hold and can respect all people and their views as they share those views respectfully in an effort to help. Though they vary, and not all are founded in truth, it is refreshing to see a passionate interest in the issues that have faced us for the last many years. I am always encouraged when the membership wants to get involved, wants to offer ideas and thoughts, wants to volunteer to help, or even wants to show up to complain a bit. It lets me know folks are out there and weeding through the bashers, it generates better insight and good ideas. I will say that the 2 people that called me over the last couple of weeks in opposition of removing the chain, both were very respectful, and did a good job expressing their concerns. Those conversations, as well as the ones in favor of it, are taken very serious and factored in as we move forward.

Within our organization, it is easy for either side of the chain debate to tie it into the current environment with the PAST act and or the USDA and it is easy to theorize and fantasize in efforts of supporting ones opinions for either side. However the issue is some much more than either of those. Of course the PAST act is an overreach, unfair, lacking in any sort of common sense approach to assuring the welfare of horses and simply cannot pass or it will be devastating to the entire show horse industry and ultimately to the horse. Of course the show horse industry at large feels that the USDA has been heavy handed and unrealistic in their approach. Of course the industry would like to be out from under the thoughts of the PAST act and of course the industry would like some relief from the USDA in what it feels is unfairness and or targeting. With those things in mind, I get it, regardless of which side you land, it's easy to tie this issue of the chain to the aforementioned facts. Perhaps it needs to be a bigger part of that conversation around the USDA, considering that if the PAST doesn't pass we will still have to work with the USDA, but for me it goes well beyond the pressures that the show horse industry at large feels from them.

For the last 2 years, outside the Winter Meetings, we have not had more than 12 members in attendance at any of the general membership meetings. At a time when the industry is at a most volatile time, we had 7 members at this last membership meeting. However, it is important that you know that I don't fault anyone for not being at any of those meetings. I fully understand the sentiments of the membership, they want to be able to show up, work their horses, show their horses, and hang out with friends, not being bogged down in running or making

decisions for the organization. I don't criticize those that don't come, I sincerely envy their position. In large part that is the reason I chose to serve in the capacities that I have, so that some could make a living in this organization and others could enjoy it as a hobby, either without the weight and burden that comes from the conducting of business. I also understand that the majority of the members, just as I once did, understand the model of our organization and the role of the Board of Directors. The fact that not many show up simply shows that the model that the membership chose, as identified in the By Laws and ratified by non-participation over the last few years, had started to work. I have heard for years from the great majority that "what we need is a Joe Bright". Most everyone says they want a Joe Bright, and I think that most have enough foresight to really mean it, but the fact is a lot really don't. Many would not be satisfied with a single person or a small group running things like Joe Bright because at some point, in an effort of attempting to do what he thought was right, Joe Bright was going to step on your toes, mess up your plans, make decisions that were not popular, and have no back up once his mind was made (the most prevalent statement about him is "it was his way or the highway"). A lot of folks don't want a Joe Bright, but what we all really want is the "FRUIT" produced by a Joe Bright mentality. We all want the results that come from someone else that is willing to make tough decisions, from someone else sticking their neck on the line, we want the fruit from someone that will make decisions and be rigid in following through and take all the heat in the meanwhile. What we do not want are those decisions to affect us in any seemingly negative way or in a way that we don't understand while we wait on the positive results. Joe Bright's management caused the RHBAA to be on the right track in its day but more importantly for several years thereafter. However, at the time, he was not near as popular as he is today. It wasn't until years later that one could clearly see the "totality" of his decisions and style and know that the results produced by his management model was in fact the right results. The glory years of the RHBAA was, at least in part, on the coat tail of Joe Bright. Like a horse that is in a good trainers barn that gets moved to a different place, he looks good for a few weeks or a few shows as long as he is still acting off of previous training memory but soon starts to fall apart and often gets worse the longer it is away from that which made it operate so well until it just hovers around the bottom of its potential. As soon as the organization outlived the residual effects of Joe Bright's management, it started becoming more and more dysfunctional. In fact, until the last 4 years, all numbers in all categories have been in a consistent decline most every year since the mid 90's. In the 10 years previous to my becoming president, the RHBAA had gone through more than 7000 paying "households". There were approximately 750 paying members at the time of my becoming president but when we did a mail out to every household that had a paid membership at any time in the previous 10

years, we mailed over 8000 mail outs. That's over 7000 "households", probably closer to 14,000 people represented in that group, that had paid for a membership at one time in the previous 10 years that had not returned for some reason. Four years ago there were 766 paying members, last year there were 956. Four years ago there were 158 horse registrations, last year there were 458. Four years ago the organization took in \$351,000 total and lost \$61,760.55. Last year the organization took in \$468,431 and profited \$22,142. I recently saw an old report from 1996 or 97 that the total income was over 1.7 million dollars. Something somewhere went off track to see the RHBAA blow through 7000 members in 10 years, something somewhere went off track to see the revenues go from what had to be 2 or 3 or 4 million dollars at some point to 1.7 million in the late 90's to just over 351,000 at its lowest point. It would be easy to try and take credit for those accomplishments of the last 4 years, however, though I greatly appreciate the improvements and all the efforts and sacrifices on the part of the many that it took to reach those better numbers, the fact is they are still way too low. An organization that is "right now" capable of doing over a million dollars is only doing a little over \$450,000. That is ridiculous! Does the hugely insane decline in numbers from 2 or 3 million to 350k to 450k alarm anyone? In spite of the growth over the last 4 years, does the fact that we continue to hover so low cause anyone else to recognize that there is something beneath the surface that is wrong, that we have a broken model? I know these numbers and thoughts do alarm many of you and that is why I, and this board, and so many of you, are still giving it our all. However the point is that there is something fundamentally wrong for us to have come from what had to be a 2, 3, or 4 million dollar revenue per year organization at its height to go to 1.7 in the late 90's to 351k at its bottom and still be hovering below 500k.

Let me offer some thoughts on the issues that I believe took us to the bottom and or that makes it so difficult to rise above, two issues specifically:

1. The first problem is that it is near impossible to have a group of folks from the membership that are actively engaged in the showing, training, owning, judging, or spectating of our horses that can keep tamped down the natural desire to represent one's own interest and or the interest of the clicks they run with. That is not a smack toward any one that is currently serving or that has previously served on the Board. It is nothing more than a stated fact. It is proven and well documented that the human mind will tend to see what they are looking for. With that, most folks will see in any issue what serves them or their friends the best or that is simply most popular. It is in that model that dysfunction and slow death is certain. When a small group operates in its own best interest, or are swayed by the pressures of the squeaky wheel, then dysfunction is perpetuated, frustration is sure, and failure or

mediocrity is the result. Good is the enemy of Great, however most will settle for “good” because it is comfortable, it is easy, and it is usually most popular. A “bad” board, one of self-interest will take things down. But a “good” board, one that tries to ease along, tries to just maintain, one that tries to go along with what is simply the most popular or one that greases the squeakiest wheel, can also take things downward, and at minimum will not cause things to move upward to any “great” places. But, when a Board starts to make tough decisions, starts to hold folks accountable-even their own friends or peers, starts to act in ways they truly believe will benefit the “whole” while simultaneously making it harder for themselves, it is rare, but when it does take place, hang on to them and never let go, good things can happen. Even if that Board makes the wrong decision from time to time, if they are willing to go to extreme unpopular places for what they feel is for the betterment of others, hang on to them as long as you can for they are winners and the results of the totality will eventually be desirable. The current Board of Directors have invested of themselves emotionally, physically, and financially over the last several years, each year getting more and more in tune with one another and more and more in tune with the right mindset. They have recognized the long term results that are needed, have looked at the facts of where we have been and where we are, have heard the ground swells of the membership as it relates to the desired end results of the big picture, have recognized the difficulty in getting from here to there, have recognized the pure hell that they and their families might go through from time to time, and yet have concluded that they are committed to doing whatever it is they feel is right for the betterment of the Breed and the organization. If the membership will allow for right management style to continue, it is my belief that “great” things can happen.

2. The second problem is from the dysfunction created by the issues with the management model described above, came an allowance for an entire culture change and the abandonment of the very basic principles that caused the RHBAA its original success. Times changed, there became more and more things in the world competing for people’s time. With that, the pool of people interested in the show horse industry shrunk. Additionally many decision made, or the lack of decisions in some cases, further pushed folks away. The diluting of the Breed, the removal of its identity, caused a blurred line making it easier and in some cases more profitable to switch either 100%, or at least in part, to Walking. With that allowance on the RHBAA’s part, a good number of folks left RHBAA and went Walking. Simultaneously, and maybe more detrimental, the image this organization allowed and or desired of its horse made it harder and harder for some to compete and or made it undesirable for some to compete. Thus, not only was the line blurred making the transition tempting and easier, thereby losing many, we

lost a great number simply because they couldn't or wouldn't compete with that image horse. There have been several racking organizations try to make it, some all chain and some not, but all have either gone away or are barely hanging on. The image that we started to allow in the ring and often held in esteem diluted the Brand to the point that it is not all that distinguishable, pulled everyone under one tent, and opened the door so that all organizations now compete for the same people. The reason so many organizations have struggled, is because after running so many out of the show horse industry altogether, and after placing ourselves were those that are left can now transition from organization to organization in a week's time and then back again, is there's simply not enough people to spread around and to support all the organizations that are competing for the same folks. There is no brand loyalty. Thus all will struggle and many will go out. For our specific organization, additional results of the blurred line created a constant debate between what is too much reach, too much head shake, too much "behind", etc. There has been for years the debate of what is "too walky" and what is not. You have folks that say a horse is allowed to reach as far as it can as long as you never see the bottom of its foot. For them, that fits into the "racking" definition. Then others say if there's not enough knee action, too straight legged, then it's out. There are some that want a horse crawling behind, and then others feel if its crawling then it don't fit the Racking Horse image. Though I don't think anyone wants a quick lick, straight up and down front end or one standing up behind, but outside of that you can't get a straight answer on what truly is and is not acceptable and or what is Racking. Ask 10 people where the lines are and get 10 different answers. Get 5 judges in center ring and get 5 varying results because all have a different line. Get 13 or 14 board members and get 13 or 14 different lines. Get 100 or 200 spectators, and based on what they see go around the ring and what gets tied from one class to the next, they have trouble understanding where the boundaries are and debate ensues. The line is so blurred that our own organization has no definitive answer to what is a Racking Horse. We don't know, we can't explain it, we can't agree on it, and with all that we cannot properly judge it. If you can't explain it you can't judge it, if you can't judge it then you can't explain it? What a vicious cycle we've spun. Confusion and frustration around the most basic and most important aspect of our organization plagues us. It started many many years ago and bottomed us out a few years ago and without significant change will keep us hovering low. I am no wizard or professor; I am just simply an observer that has the luxury of hindsight. Being able to study a 42 or 43 year history in this organization, combined with being a lifelong student of people, I have come to certain conclusions, of which I am not alone. Can I be wrong in my analysis? Absolutely!!! I have been wrong before, have failed before, have misplaced trust in people, have missed predictions of people and markets and trends and etc. I have

personally made mistakes, have had folks I depend on and or trust a great deal to make mistakes, but with all that stated, those things only make one better equipped. With all those things in mind, I simply ask myself what worked and what didn't work in the RHBAA. What worked is a management style that allowed decisions to be made quickly and or that wasn't based on short term results or popularity or swapping favors or squeaky wheels or the like. What worked was a definitive product that was explainable, easier to judge, easy and fun to watch. What worked was a differential product that you couldn't duplicate anywhere else. What worked was the pride, promotion, and "celebration" of the natural 4 beat non laboring head held high stand filling, crowd cheering, hair raising, breeze blowing, high stepping gaited horse we call The Racking Horse. Now that is easy to describe, easy for most of you to visualize, easy to reminisce, easy to envy. It is "easy" to look back and see what worked and what didn't in totality. I'm not talking of outdated products or methods, I'm talking about the reactions of human beings that have been constant since time began and will be constant until it all ends. I'm talking about the reaction of human beings to a product that excites them, that gives them a sense of pride to possess, that makes them feel good about themselves, that meets a need in their life, that is most importantly hard to get somewhere else. We know what the reaction to that kind of product was in 1700, 1800, 1900, and we know what it will be in 2015 and in 2020 and so on if time continues. I'm talking about the reaction of human beings as it relates to being a part of something that is tightly and easily defined, that offers some sense of fairness and opportunity to all, that offers defined boundary lines of expected behaviors of participants and the accountability of those that operate otherwise. We know what the reaction to confusion or the lack thereof was in 1700 and beyond and we know what it will be in 2015 and in 2020 and so on. George Santayana said, "When experiences are not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it". I'm not talking of going back in time, but I am talking of learning from the known experiences of "back in time" and not continuing in the things that didn't work. Why did we go to the bottom, why do we hover around the bottom as in an infant stage? Because we refuse to allow that which worked to be advanced and continue to push the part of the model that didn't work. We have a 42 or 43 year history to evaluate, dissect, study, and pull from. We have the luxury of hindsight, we see what worked, and we see the results of moving away from what worked. I'm not talking about just the chain issue, or the PAST act, or the USDA. I am talking about only two things, a differential product and a management style that would have kept us in better places all along and in all aspects. A differential product and a management style that if adopted anytime along the way would have perhaps put us in a better trajectory. Are these issues fixable for the RHBAA? Absolutely 100% YES (if

time allows). Is the fix probable? After 4 years I have started to see a small amount of day light. However the most vocal of this organization still demands in large part that it operate under the same business model that got it into trouble and started the downward spiral many many years ago, thus the time clock could very well run out if the model will not be allowed to change. With that prognosis in mind, I will continue to desire and to attempt to swing for the fences in spite of trying to be held to a bunt. I have a Board that, in my opinion, has made the great transition over the last 4 years and with all things considered are great and in a position to do great things. They, like me and most others, would have probably preferred to fall into the comfort of only having to look at next week and next month, what is easy and or popular, not ruffling any feathers, and let the next board worry with the long term. They have been ever increasing over the last couple of years looking at what is best 2 to 5 to 10 years down the road and have made several tough decisions over the last year. If allowed, that kind of thinking will do wonders and produce desired results. I applaud them for their positions, hard work, and sacrifices they have made.

Someone once said, “never attribute to malice what can be explained as incompetence”. I have learned that it is the undisciplined mind that quickly attributes to malice what can be explained as incompetence. The undisciplined mind and or the attention seeking mind, will go to “malice” or “ulterior motives” when something doesn’t go as they desire, will go to slanderous or disrespectful or hateful smart ellic comments. If allowed, frustration can get the better of us, exposing a true character or overriding what is normally good character. Besides malice, there can be incompetence and there can be two legitimate ideas or beliefs. But either of those reasons requires the accuser, that truly has a heart to help, to seek out the right and appropriate median and then to properly put forth good reasoning in sharing the other legitimate view point or in explaining the incompetence. Both requires thought, respect, but in so doing projects a true desire in trying to help and has a better chance of accomplishing results. One disclaimer here, I haven’t read the stuff on the social media forums, only hearing small bits and pieces here and there. Knowing precise details of how it will negatively affect all the good that most are desirous of, I choose to not be on them, to not give comments on them, to discourage any disrespectful dialog, all in hopes that a few will not cause irreversible consequences for the rest. Additionally not being on social forums allows me to think and say what needs to be thought and said without being swayed one way or the other by what was said or by who said it. I do greatly appreciate those on both sides of this issue, and or any other issue, that

might have been attempting to give good and respectful and helpful and factual information.

The consideration of the elimination of the chain was one of the toughest decisions the Board of Directors has faced in a long while. It wasn't tough so much over the fact of whether it was the right thing to do or not, it was tough simply because the Board knew that there is a large number of folks that would not understand and or agree. With the facts from all angles in front of us, with the sense of urgency felt on our part, the catch 22 was as plain as black and white and was terrible. Nonetheless, the Board, as it has done so many times over the last 4 years, looked beyond themselves, looked beyond this year or next, and did what they felt was right in their heart for the betterment of the Breed. Yes the feelings of the members were considered, in fact I am positive that there's been nothing mentioned from anyone yet that wasn't discussed, and or that didn't weigh extremely heavy on our minds. Some have ask about the timing, about having this mentioned at this last Winter meetings or discussed at next year's winter meetings, about announcing the topic for discussion for this last membership meeting at the Spring show. Though I have thought on the issue for many years, though I have talked on the topic to many over the last several years, though the number of folks that approach me wanting to offer that their view is that they now think we need to go away from it, though the ground swell and sentiments were being made known over the last year and more specifically over the last 6 or 8 months, there was no real "plan" to make any significant change immediately or to even "vote" on it anytime soon. There is no question that I have believed it the right thing to do for a long while, but that was 100% around the product and foreseeing an opportunity 4 or 5 years ago to position ourselves in much better places for today when considering all aspects. At that time, the membership wasn't ready for that change in spite of it being right or wrong. Today is very much different as it relates to the membership and it's understanding of a needed change. It has been and is my belief that our model was broken in many aspects and outside pressures have brought to the surface the conversation of many in that we need to return to our differential product and to promote the natural ability that our Racking horse possesses. As to overall timing of things, the trip to Washington came about quickly. The request on the board's part was made approximately 3 weeks prior to the meeting being set. However, I wasn't given an appointment time until 3 or 4 days prior to the meeting. Once I got home from that meeting, 8 or 9 days later I was in Decatur getting ready for the show. The Board did not meet until Thursday of that week to discuss the meeting and or any other topic that was on the agenda. There was no definitive conclusions made at that meeting relating to the chain other than the fact that we needed to get back together very soon to further discuss



in more detail the opinions and beliefs around the subject matter. From there many sought out and retrieved feedback from a variety of members. From that outreach, many folks started coming to me making their thoughts known. We the board believed that time was of the essence, not by some phony agreement between us and the USDA, but rather we made the decision to further the conversations based upon knowing that the RHBAA has been reactive for years and it has killed us, knowing that this membership has beseeched us to move quicker on important issues, knowing that the membership has beckoned us to help fix the issues of the world as it relates to the RHBAA, knowing that the membership dictated as per the rule book that the organization be a board ran organization, and knowing that the membership depended upon this board to be proactive and to do all it can in spite of the heat that it might take. The board took its responsibility very serious but grieved over the fact that it had such a responsibility to act upon its analysis of known information even if all the membership wouldn't fully understand or agree. Wanting the board to do the right thing for the whole is easy to say but when the rubber meets the road it is not always as welcomed or properly received and from this Board's perspective it sure as heck ain't as easy to employ as it is to say. But I have watched a Board go from being ones that would "say" that they wanted to do what they believed was best for the long term, to actually "doing" what they really believe is best in spite of the hell that a few will choose to distribute. Martin Luther King said, "a leader is not a searcher of consensus but a molder of consensus". I stated several times that 75% of all those upset by the consideration of eliminating the chain would come out in force but less than 10% of those that are for eliminating the chain and or those that fully understand the need would speak out. I haven't seen or heard enough to "prove" my prediction, but I bet money that is and or will be the case. Though the majority always in every issue will remain at or near silent, I am confident that the majority will understand, will not envy our positions, will know that we had the best interest at heart, will know that we acted upon an analysis of known information as well as conjured up inspiration and direction on the unknowns.

When I was first ask to consider being President of the RHBAA, I didn't consider it under the guise that I might become popular. Actually the thought process was around the fact that if the right decisions were made, I would lose many folks that I once considered friends, I would lose the opportunity to socialize in a lot of circles, I would lose all ability to go to the shows and relax, I would lose the ability to show horses, I would lose the ability to criticize and Monday morning quarter back and commiserate with others all of which I enjoyed and was good at. Knowing ahead of time that this was a horrible position to take, I took it knowing that hard times for me, for my family, and for the industry lay ahead. I accepted the

position, not because I thought I would become popular, not to win friends. I did so because I loved this Breed, because I wanted the best for it, because I knew that certain issues needed rigidity with little or no back up, because I knew that really tough decisions had to be made, and ultimately I did it because I knew that I knew that it was the right thing to do. I also knew that I had a lot of ground to make up and I knew ahead of time that I would make many mistakes along the way. I took the position knowing the saying that I had adopted, "leadership is not easy nor popular, but it is necessary". Good leadership is not about one being right every time, but succeed or fail, leadership will not let you get away with doing nothing! My friend, consider the last 40 something years and study its great times and consider the not so good times and you decide if leadership is needed, you answer if it is better to continue doing nothing, you answer if what others are doing is working, you answer if you are pleased with the way things are going for the RHBAA and or the show horse industry in totality. If you don't like the trajectory of the last 10 or 15 years, if you are not happy with the results produced by all others, then applaud your Board for leading, for doing something. Give them your support, get behind them in their efforts of making it better for all, communicate with them uplifting words as they have the best interest at heart, and most importantly get on the same page as it is the only hope for our beloved Breed.

#### A tid bit more information

The USDA Meeting: The meeting with Dr Gipson and Dr Cezar was an hour and half and went well. There were several reasons for the meeting but one of which was that we understand that if the PAST act does not pass, we will continue to be under the jurisdiction of the USDA. With that being a fact, then it only made sense that we try to understand their thinking and their perspective, to attempt to have a meeting of the minds and attempt to develop a mutual understanding of one another. I won't go into detail herein, but I will touch on a couple of items. As it relates to topics of discussion, if measured in minutes, we spent more time talking about the scar rule than any other subject. As it relates to a "theme", the two things that I came away with is "welfare of the horse" and "credibility". It also became apparent that they are charged with the oversight of care for animals, they are not charged with making sure that there is a show horse industry that remains intact. As it relates to the USDA, the show horse industry remaining intact is in our hands. The image of the horse in the show ring, and or what the industry allows and sometimes rewards, was a topic that was discussed and highlighted. The PAST act was discussed a bit, the likely hood of its passage, and what things might look like

going forward either way. We discussed the pad and the chain, trying to understand their perspective. They made it clear that they would not dictate to us what we used on our horses as it relates to the chain or any other equipment or training method as long as it met the requirements within the HPA but was only concerned with the welfare of the horse and enforcing current law to assure welfare. I came away from the meeting knowing certain things, some of which were that we must focus on the overall image of the horse in the show ring and otherwise, that we must focus on and rely upon the "natural ability" of the Racking Horse, that we must move forward with the continuation of the welfare of the horse as being top priority, and above all else that time is of the essence. We have handed to us in the form of the Racking Horse a "differential product" and it cost us nothing to access it. We might suffer a downturn for a period of time, but with the current environment in mind, the eventual return will likely be worth the investment. However, with all these things said, the "differential product" does not entirely hinge on the chain or lack thereof. It does hinge on the image of horse that we call our own as we go forward. What we allow in the ring as it relates to image, even without a chain, is key. Removing the chain is not as much about the debate of whether a chain is good or bad for the horse, but is more about the fact that we must promote the natural ability of our Breed. The fact that our horse can do what it does without a chain makes it very unique. Promoting and relying upon the natural ability of the horse is good for creating a differential product, is good in the eyes of the public, is good in the eyes of governing bodies, and is good for the horse. These things in totality contribute to better days ahead.

The PAST act: None of this has anything to do with the PAST act. If it passes, almost all of what we have done will have no effect. I and three others met with Congressman Mo Brooks concerning the PAST act about four weeks before the Spring Show. We have encouraged all to call senators and specifically relative committee members. I and those around me have made several calls. We have got internal eyes and ears giving us feedback as things move along. We have local politicians working from their perspectives. Etc etc. With all that said, the efforts with the USDA, our deciding to keep or remove the chain, all will have no effect on the results of passage of the PAST act. The efforts in reference to the meeting with the USDA is a measure that we should have taken quite some time ago and if the PAST act doesn't pass, they will be efforts that in my opinion were worthwhile.

Last item, the perceived success of the chain: The addition of the chain being a success is an easy argument made when looking on the surface only. First, most don't make any consideration for retention if the chain is eliminated when they run their numbers, which is the most crucial single item when doing an evaluation of the numbers. Additionally no consideration is given for the likely hood of

unfolding events moving forward. Secondly and most importantly, the only analysis done by any opposition to the removal of the chain only compare the times after the chain to the days just prior to the chain being implemented. In other words, the numbers of the chain are only compared to the RHBAA's worst days. Yes, if compared to our worst day, if compared to a time when one could argue that we were only months away from a shut down, then perhaps one could claim that it was a success. However, "what if" the things that I have mentioned herein had been addressed before we got to such a place that we had to solidify the abandonment of our identity in order to just survive? What if we took the success of the chain, which by all accounts has allowed us to hover at or just above the bottom for years (in fact even with its passage we were still hemorrhaging money and people for years, until only 3 years ago), and compared it to a management style that was without prejudice and showed no favoritism? What if we could compare it to a paralleling RHBAA that wouldn't have purchased the property or would have sold it well before circumstances forced it? What if we compared the success of the chain to a RHBAA that had never lost its identity to begin with? If those ideas, or the many others like them, could have us at or well above a million dollar organization today with lots more members, in better places in the public perception and in governing oversight, then the chain is a horrific failure. No doubt the chain has its claims. However, the overall view is that it keeps us at "good", and very likely at worse going forward, while we do nothing to be at "great". I would argue that if the business model of the past had not allowed for a loss of identity to begin with, there would have never been a discussion or need for the chain, there would have never been a need for a rescue. In comparison to "what could have been", we should not be at all satisfied. My hope is that we move in a direction that we need no rescue by anything, that we return to relying upon the Racking Horse that caused us all to fall in love to begin with.

Thank you,  
Chris Walker

President RHBAA