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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

MAY 22, 2012

STEVE BENETO WELL PREPARED FOR RACING COMMISSION

SACRAMENTO, CA – Steve Beneto brings an entrepreneurial, can-do spirit to his new role as a racing commissioner following his appointment to the California Horse Racing Board by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

Back in 1973 when he owned an A&W Root Beer business and an adjacent gas station, things got tough when his suppliers cut him off during the gas crisis. But Beneto solved the problem by purchasing an old truck at auction and hauling gas himself, which he purchased from smaller distributors.

He didn't stop there. Next he bought a new truck-trailer tanker, then another, and before long he and his drivers were hauling for some of the major oil companies. Beneto Tank Lines eventually grew into a \$72 million business with 250 trucks based at 18 terminals in three states before selling in 2003 to Kenan Advantage Group.

There's more.

Beneto was traveling so much from terminal to terminal while running the trucking business that he decided to buy his own airplane. He later made a profit when he sold that plane for an upgrade. Another bell went off. He bought more planes and developed a highly profitable business selling and leasing them out. Beneto Inc. Jet Sales and Leasing is now his main business.

"I usually get straight to the point real fast and solve the problem," Beneto explained. "You've got to work through the issues and stay on top of things until you get what you want."

His thoroughbred acquisitions have worked out fairly well, too. He was vanning horses for a living in 1966 when he purchased his first horse. It won. "That got me hooked," he said. "I had the bug." Since then, he has typically owned about a dozen horses at any one time, claiming some and purchasing others at auction. His two current stable stars are Longview Drive, a two-time stakes winner, and Via Villaggio, which won The Railbird Stakes at Hollywood Park on May 19, both trained by Jerry Hollendorfer.

Beneto is no stranger to public service. He served 11 years on the California Exposition and State Fair Board, chairman in 2001-02. He was chairman of the racing committee for seven of those years. And now he serves on the regulatory agency that oversees all of horse racing in California. He replaces Jerry Moss, whose second term expired January 1, 2012. Beneto's term runs through January 1, 2016. He will be attending his first CHRB meeting this Thursday at Hollywood Park.

After owning racehorses for more than four decades and being heavily involved in racing matters at Cal Expo, Beneto is very familiar with all of the major issues in horse racing as well as many of the small ones. However, he declined to discuss any of his views in detail, preferring to remain as neutral as possible and open to the opinions of others.

“I know what’s going on in the backside and I know what’s going on at the front side, too. Everyone has problems,” he said. “My attitude is we all need to pull together and make racing better.”

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