

# Shining Stars



*From The Executive Corner*

by DONALD VALPREDO

All of us here in California's Thoroughbred breeding and racing industry are excited and elated over the prospect of the three-year-old California-bred colt California Chrome. What runs deeper, though, are the connections of this fine racehorse. The owners, the Coburns and the Martins who race under DAP Racing, have hit lightning in a bottle, but the real rewards and what shines through is their belief in what they are doing and how they go about their business.

The owner of California Chrome's sire Lucky Pulpit is another tribute to the Golden State. Larry Williams started out in the lumber and cattle businesses and has parlayed those into a successful Thoroughbred operation. He had enough confidence in our local breeding program to retire this stallion to California where the Horse Division team at Harris Farms in Coalinga has since established him as one of California's leading sires.

California Chrome's jockey Victor Espinoza has been a leading rider in the Golden State for more than 20 years, and had success in Kentucky Derby with a victory on War Emblem in 2002. Through hard work, he has earned a fine

reputation with leading trainers and seems to be a comfortable fit for this magnificent animal.

Art Sherman, California Chrome's trainer, has been a friend and colleague of mine for way too many years. We go back to socializing days with Frank Costa and Jerry Lambert and our many friends included Dean Hall and Dale Long. Art is the classic California horseman, always attentive to his work, accepting the highs with the lows, but a believer in knowing he is doing it right.

The real reason for the success of California Chrome is the perseverance of all his connections by believing in the California program and utilizing the lucrative Golden State Series races for foundation and experience. With a dedicated work ethic, they now get to reap the rewards of those efforts.

All of us in California have a new enthusiasm, hoping we can do the same, and want to compliment and thank everyone connected with "Team Chrome" for the positive notoriety they have given our state. We wish you all the best and continued success, especially in the Kentucky Derby (grade I) at Churchill Downs in Louisville on May 3. 🏇



California Chrome—Grade I Santa Anita Derby—April 5, 2014