

1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
(916) 263-6000  
Fax (916) 263-6042

**CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD**

12235 Beach Blvd., Suite 7  
Stanton, CA 90680  
(714) 890-7001  
Fax (714) 890-7006  
Contact:  
Mike Marten  
(714) 890-7004  
Cell: (714) 240-1870

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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**ROY WOOD TO RETIRE AT END OF YEAR**

SACRAMENTO, CA – Executive Director Roy Wood has advised the commissioners and staff of the California Horse Racing Board that he intends to retire at the end of this year from the post he has held since January 1, 1994.

Wood, who will turn 61 in October, said he and his wife, Gennie, already have purchased a retirement home in her native Louisiana.

“California is a paradise for most of us, but it’s a different story for people with respiratory problems, including my wife Gennie,” explained Wood. “She has not been able to adapt to the air quality in the Sacramento area, and it is on the advice of her medical counselors that she should not remain a resident of this area. Whenever we’ve visited Louisiana in recent years, her health problems have cleared right up, but then she’s gone right back onto her respiratory medications when we’ve returned to California, and those medications have been only moderately effective.

“As much as I love California and as proud as I am to be part of the California horse-racing industry and an official with the California Horse Racing Board, my first priority is my family, so the decision to move back to Louisiana was easier for me to make.

“We will miss the colleagues and friends we’ve made over the last 11 years. I want to personally thank (CHRB Chairman) John Harris and (Vice Chairman) Roger Licht for their support, understanding, and patience for the last several months as I have gone through the decision process.

“I will do everything possible to ensure a smooth transition. The staff of the CHRB is competent to handle the matters of the Board during the transition period.”

Roy Minami, the assistant executive director who served as interim director in 1993 during the yearlong search for a replacement for then Executive Secretary Dennis Hutcheson, will be overseeing the daily operation of the CHRB until a permanent replacement is found for Wood.

“The Board appreciates the many years of devoted service that Roy has given to the people of California and to the racing industry,” said Chairman Harris upon being advised by Wood of his retirement plans. “And we appreciate that he will help us with a smooth transition as we look for a replacement.”

Immediately before joining the CHRB in 1994, Wood was director of racing for the Texas Racing Commission. Previously he was a Louisiana state steward and assistant executive director for the Louisiana State Racing Commission.

Prior to entering public service, Wood worked in various capacities in the thoroughbred racing industry, including owner, breeder, trainer, horse identifier, and farm manager. He hopes to put all of that experience to good use following his retirement. He is finalizing plans to assist in the management of Foxwood Plantation, which is Louisiana's leading thoroughbred breeding operation.

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