

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

www.chrb.ca.gov

## CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD



Los Alamitos Race Course  
4961 E. Katella Avenue  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Contact: Mike Marten  
(714) 820-2748  
Cell: (714) 240-1870  
Fax (714) 821-6232

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

MARCH 15, 2012

### Rodney J. Blonien – 1946 - 2012

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Horse Racing Board and horse-racing industry mourn the loss of Rodney Blonien, a highly respected California lobbyist for more than three decades, who died Tuesday of an apparent heart attack at the age of 65.

“Rodney was my friend and colleague for over 35 years and he will be dearly missed by the horsemen and the gaming industry,” said CHRB Executive Director Kirk Breed, a former lobbyist who worked on some of the same legislative issues involving horse racing as Blonien. “His contributions have been made on behalf of the industry – both horse racing and card rooms – on every piece of meaningful legislation that has gone across every Governor’s desk from George Deukmejian to the present administration. He was instrumental in the formation of the satellite wagering network in California. He was a one man lobbying firm who believed strongly in personal relationships between his clients, legislators, and legislative staff.”

While Blonien represented such racing interests as Hollywood Park and the Thoroughbred Owners of California at various times, he was most closely associated with Los Alamitos Race Course, owned by Ed Allred, who said about his good friend, “Ron was our lobbyist for many, many years. I inherited him through Chris Bardis and Lloyd Arnold when they owned Los Alamitos in the late 1980s. He was much more than a lobbyist. He was a good friend and we had a lot of good time together. Los Alamitos and quarter-horse racing always relied on him. We’ll all miss him. I can’t say enough good things about my friend, Rod Blonien.”

Norm Towne, another lobbyist and close friend, said, “Rod was one of the hardest working guys in the Capitol. His friendly demeanor and good-natured quick wit will be missed by all who crossed his path. He was a consummate professional and a good friend.” Towne added, “Happy trails to you until we meet again” in tribute to Blonien, who over the years good-naturedly bid many racing commissioners and others farewell at their final CHRB meetings by singing the theme song from the old Roy Rogers radio and television programs.

Blonien is survived by his wife, Noreen, four children, and 11 grandchildren, as well as a brother and sister. A funeral mass will be held Friday at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento beginning at 10 a.m.