

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, March 16, 2020

Regular Meeting

Item Public Inp1

Council to receive an update and results of the Born to Rein Project.

Staff Contact: Starr Lehl, Economic Development Director



From the Producers of the Award-Winning Documentary Film



"I've waited 40 years for this!"

-audience attendee – Born to Rein National Screening
National Racing Museum & Hall of Fame,
Saratoga Springs, NY - August 20, 2019

Overview, Report and Results Pursuant of LB840 Economic Development Assistance Grant from the City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska; and American Doorstop Project Productions, LLC

Date of Grant Agreement: April 2018

Date of Submitted Report: March 2020

OVERVIEW:

Purpose of Grant to ADPP:

The Applicant is producing a documentary film that honors and commemorates the lives of Nebraska's Most Impactful National Hall of Fame Thoroughbred Horse Trainers and Breeders, including the life of John A. Nerud, who was born and raised in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, and whose story has not been told locally or regionally. The proceeds of the Grant will be used permitted expenses as outlined in the Application, to include the Nebraska Film Office Activity Registration Form.

Amount of Grant:

The Grant shall be in the maximum amount of **\$25,000** and shall be disbursed from the City's Economic Development Fund (the "Fund") to the Applicant as provided for below.

Grant Disbursement:

The Applicant shall be eligible for reimbursement of expenses as permitted under the City's Film Incentive Program Guidelines (the "Guidelines"). Reimbursement shall be subject to the following:

- a. The Applicant shall submit a list of **"Qualified Local Expenditures" that have been incurred by the Applicant with documentation and certification** as required by the Guidelines.
- b. For each list received, the **City Finance Director shall make a preliminary determination** as to whether the **requested reimbursement is in compliance** with the Guidelines.
- c. When a reimbursement is requested, **the amount shall be scheduled as a claim** at the next Council meeting for which the request may be reasonably scheduled. Disbursement of the approved amount shall be made within 10 business days after the Council has approved a claim.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

American Doorstop Project Productions, LLC/BORN TO REIN Documentary Film

Budget: The total overall project cost was originally estimated at **\$390,250.00**.

Funding strategies included **sponsorships, appropriations, donations and in-kind partnerships for research, filming, editing, and post production**. *Special events/screenings* and marketing materials were and are executed on the monies raised and not part of estimated budget.*

The **\$25,000.00*** in **LB840 funds** to ADPP from **City of Scottsbluff** were used to reimburse expenses for **local filming production/research; local hotel/food/travel within Scotts Bluff County and surrounding area**; **none of the funding was allocated for editing or marketing, which was spent outside the area.*

Film production came under original estimated budget.

Total sponsorships/appropriations/grant funds raised (cash) -- **\$155,500.00**

In-kind (office, marketing, consulting, advisement) -- **\$93,330.00**

Other cash donations/advertising sales -- **\$14,950.00**

Other in-kind (food, lodging) **\$3,750.00**

TOTAL Cash and In-Kind MATCH: \$267,530.00

The City of Scottsbluff LB840 funds equaled about 10% of overall production funding raised.

RESULTS and EVALUATION:

Please note: List includes locations where “City of Scottsbluff” logo has been seen, recognized and promoted to audiences to date. Each screening was publicized and promoted at least two weeks in advanced to local media, chambers of commerce, city and other local officials, community calendars, etc.

A sampling of national, state and local media results can be provided; or seen at

<https://www.borntorein.com/new-folder> and <https://www.borntorein.com/press-releases>

Audience:

Defined and targeted to include horse enthusiasts throughout the nation, with targeted markets in **NE, WY, MT, NY, KY, FL**; state, regional and national leisure tourism market, historic and heritage travelers, documentary film and movie goers; agriculture advocates and industry business professionals; trainers and thoroughbred owners.

Screening Strategies/Communication Techniques:

- **During Breeders’ Cup World Championship week in Nov. 2018**, a :30 –second commercial spot of BORN TO REIN was shown on the **JUMBOTRON at Churchill Downs, Louisville, Ky**. Later a 30-minute “Sneak Peek” of the film was shown to an audience of invited guests.
- **During the Triple Crown racing season (April – June)**, *Born to Rein* Documentary Film was screened in the Nebraska hometown areas of Nerud and Van Bergs.
 - **Grand Island, NE** (2 screenings)
 - **Lincoln, NE** (1 screening)
 - **Scottsbluff, NE** (2 screenings)
 - **Ord, NE** (2 Screenings)

- **On June 11, 2019, the City of Douglas, Wyoming** sponsored a special screening on the actual 100th anniversary of the day Sir Barton won the Belmont Stakes to achieve the Triple Crown.
 - City officials unveiled new upgrades in **Washington Park**, where Sir Barton is buried, to recognize the National Hall of Fame horse's accomplishments and notoriety.
 - City officials hosted a Free BBQ for the community.
 - City officials sponsored a FREE screening for the public to view BORN TO REIN.
- **On August 20, 2019** a National screening was held at the **National Racing Museum and Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.** as part of the 150th Anniversary week of the Travers Stakes.
- **Other 2019 state/city film screenings:**
 - **Ashland, NE** (*special event as part of annual Stir-Up Days*)
 - **Columbus, NE** (*sponsored by the Van Berg family*)
 - **Mitchell, NE** (*held during Scotts Bluff County Fair*)
 - **Gothenburg, NE** (*sponsored by local businesses*)
 - **Cody, WY**
 - **Elkhart, KS**
 - **Ogallala, NE**
 - **North Platte, NE** (*sponsored by Great Western Bank during NE State Tourism Convention*)
 - **Sidney, NE**
 - **Alliance, NE** (*sponsored by the Knight Museum*)
 - **Casper, WY**
- **Born to Rein** was selected for the following film festivals in 2019:
 - **Louisville International Film Festival** in Louisville, KY at the Muhammed Ali Center, Oct. 11.
 - **Prairie Lights Film Festival** in Grand Island, NE at the Grand Theatre, Oct. 13.
 - **EQUUS Film Festival** at the Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, Ky.; Dec. 5-8th. **BORN TO REIN** was the recipient of a **WINNIE AWARD** in the historic racing category.

2020 Screenings and Other Special Film Broadcasts to date:

- **Lexington, KY – BORN TO REIN** and the producers were invited to be the featured Lecture Series program in February at the **Keeneland Library, Lexington, KY.**
- **State of Wyoming – The BORN TO REIN** producers signed a Three-Year Broadcast Agreement with **WYOMING PBS** for a Spring 2020 launch through 2022. (announcement to be made in late March/early April)
- Other state premieres, special screenings, events and presentations are taking place throughout December 2020. It is estimated that **3,000+ audience members** have seen **BORN TO REIN** in theaters and other venues across the United States.
 - The producers continue to book and promote the film through public relations, direct email, Facebook ads and social media platforms, like Twitter.
 - **BORN TO REIN** is now one of the new featured topics of **Jody Lamp's Humanities Nebraska Speakers' Bureau**; programming content to share an overview of this untold and forgotten piece of Nebraska's history.

The BORN TO REIN DVD and Commemorative Guides were produced and released in December 2019 and January 2020, respectively.

- **DVDs and Guides** were shipped to “fans” outside of Nebraska in **Florida, North Carolina, South Dakota, New Mexico, Washington and more...** for Christmas gifts.
- DVD and Guide orders continue; and a new online store is now available at www.BornToRein.com
- Special screenings and programming continue with scheduled events thru Feb. 2021.

BORN TO REIN reviews from industry leaders:

Brien Bouyea, National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame and Communications Director:

“Born to Rein is a wonderfully crafted film that takes you to the heart of the stories behind legendary Nebraska horsemen Marion and Jack Van Berg and John Nerud. The depth of the historical research leaves no stone unturned and the filmmakers’ passion for the subject is evident through this realized vision of what it takes to rise from humble beginnings in America’s heartland to the pinnacle of thoroughbred racing. Born to Rein is essential viewing for any fan of horse racing and anyone who just loves a terrific story.”

Steve Haskin, Senior Correspondent for BloodHorse Publications:

“Born to Rein: is a film about three Nebraska-born icons of Thoroughbred racing. But it transcends the stories of John Nerud and Jack and Marion Van Berg, and the Sport of Kings as well. In many ways it is a story about pursuing the American dream and the toughness and determination of the American Pioneer, who settled in the vast desolate Plains of the Midwest.

“Many emerged to change the course of history, and in the case of Nerud, and Jack and Marion Van Berg, they changed the course of Thoroughbred racing. This film is an enlightening and informative slice of American history set against the backdrop of America’s oldest sport and going back to its first Triple Crown winner Sir Barton.

“These blue collar horsemen made a major impact on the blue blood of the Thoroughbred and stamped their place in history. I thoroughly enjoyed the film and the in-depth study of these three iconic figures who personified the American spirit.”

Edward L. Bowen, Thoroughbred racing author and administrator within the community of equine health research:

“Born to Rein is a masterful symphony, giving harmony to such motifs as The productivity of the American soul, Man’s special relationship to the horse, Devotion to family, and Destiny’s capricious appetite for interconnections.

“Do hard-working Nebraska families of horsemen relate to a champion Thoroughbred raised years earlier by a Pennsylvania rowdy with such a penchant for a deal that he named his farm after a bit of horse trading? Check.

“Do those Nebraskan roots give rise to repeating triumphs within the unique tapestry of toil and elegance which is the sport of Thoroughbred racing? Check.

“Does this pattern of upward striving of individuals branch out to buttress such a basic of American life as its military? Check. “Did the character and subtle artistry of the ladies in these men’s live nudge and nurture their success? Check.

American Doorstop Project Productions, LLC
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