

# MHC UPDATE

mdhorsecouncil.org

## The State of the Maryland Racing Industry

*Nothing right now is more important to us than the crisis in ownership of the Maryland Jockey Club. We are standing with the Maryland Thoroughbred Horseman's Association, the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, and the Maryland Racing Commission as a united front to save jobs, stabling, housing, and farms.*

*Please read our letter to Governor O'Malley. It explains the nature of this crisis, as well as the solution that has been called for by most of the leaders of Maryland racing. Governor O'Malley told MHC President Stuart Pittman at a holiday reception on December 16 that he had found the letter "very compelling," and encouraged the Maryland Horse Council to "keep the pressure on." Go to the Save Maryland Racing page of [mdhorsecouncil.org](http://mdhorsecouncil.org) for updates.*

Governor Martin O'Malley  
Office of the Governor  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

December 13, 2010

"We are excited about the development opportunities represented by the land owned by MJC."

Penn National refuses to sell its MJC assets only because they understand that a new owner would revitalize Maryland racing. Just as slots in Anne Arundel County costs PNG money at its Charlestown, WV casino, vibrant horse racing in Maryland draws horses and fans from its tracks in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Penn National will do whatever it can to delay or prevent our progress in Maryland. Their 49% ownership stake in MJC gives them the power to hurt us.

On May 4 our organization sent a survey to Racing Commission licenses asking whether your office should use the power of eminent domain to transfer track ownership if racing were threatened by MJC's owners. Ninety-three percent of 314 respondents answered "yes."

This scenario is exactly why the General Assembly passed, and you signed, the law to protect racing. Regardless of what happens in this week's negotiations and at the Racing Commission meeting on December 21, it is time to assure the Maryland voters who chose to revitalize horse racing that you will not allow these out-of-state companies to block our progress.

The Maryland Horse Council respectfully requests that you do the following.

- 1) Make a public statement that our tracks will not be bulldozed for redevelopment as long as you are Governor, and that you will use the 2009 law to block them if necessary.
- 2) Begin meetings with potential Maryland buyers to negotiate possible terms of purchase, and have a legal team begin work on a plan for ownership transfer that can be implemented quickly and efficiently.

We will also work hard in the coming weeks and months to remind lawmakers and the public why we all chose to revitalize this industry when we voted for slots. We look forward to working closely with your office on this effort.

It is your office, however, that has the power to send the message loud and clear. We hope you will use it.

Sincerely,

Stuart Pittman  
President, Maryland Horse Council  
[dodonfarm@verizon.net](mailto:dodonfarm@verizon.net)  
410-507-3351

Dear Governor O'Malley:

The Maryland Horse Council commends you for your quick action to convene representatives of the Maryland Thoroughbred Horseman's Association (MTHA), the Maryland Horse Breeders Association (MHBA), and representatives of MI Developments, Inc. (MID) and Penn National Gaming, Inc. (PNG). A commitment from the owners of the Maryland Jockey Club (MJC) to maintain at least 146 days of racing is essential if we are to preserve the jobs, the stabling, the housing, and the farms that Laurel, Bowie, and Pimlico support.

We also commend you for the work you have done to bring Maryland to the brink of a horse racing revitalization. Two years ago you stood up to the people who believed that it was OK for Maryland to lose the jobs and farms that racing supports, and the voters backed you by passing the constitutional amendment allowing slots.

We have one last hurdle, however, and that is the challenge of replacing the current MJC owners with a local partnership that understands the potential before us. You and the General Assembly were very wise to pass Title 11-521 of the Business Regulation in the 2009 session. The only question now is whether you have just cause to implement that law, and whether the resulting auction of MJC assets would result in a better outcome for the citizens of Maryland. We believe that the answer to both questions is yes.

The efforts by both MID and PNG to dismantle Maryland racing have been well documented. They want Preakness revenue without the racing that sustains the local industry. They say that "the model is broken" in our state, but want us to forget that multiple local partnerships had business plans in place for Maryland racing when they were prepared to buy MJC at auction only nine months ago.

The most alarming evidence of MID's intention to kill Maryland racing came just a month ago when MJC President Tom Chuckas publicly responded to an offer to buy the tracks and expand racing with the statement, "Laurel Park will be developed, not sold, according to an existing development plan which includes mixed use commercial and residential." That statement was consistent with the March 23 press statement by MID upon acquiring MJC assets. That announcement promised that MID would not invest its resources in Maryland horse racing, but that,

**For more information about the Maryland Horse Council, visit [www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org)**

*Maryland Horse Council membership is open to all associations, farms, businesses and individuals. To join, please visit [mdhorsecouncil.org](http://mdhorsecouncil.org), contact [admin@mdhorsecouncil.org](mailto:admin@mdhorsecouncil.org), or call 301-502-8929. The Maryland Horse Council is sponsored by B & D Builders, The Equiery, Farm Credit and Southern States*



## MHC Unwanted Horse Project

The Board of Directors on November 16 approved an action plan that was presented by our Unwanted Horse Project. The plan includes

- creation of a web site to serve as a clearinghouse for rescues, information, and resources,
- Maryland Responsible Horse Ownership Week activities in May,

- exploration of humane euthanasia alternatives,
- castration clinics, and
- ongoing surveys of the problem.

The Board also asked the Executive Committee and the Unwanted Horse Project to proceed with creation of a new organization that would fund educational and welfare activities (as opposed to the lobbying done by Maryland Horse Council) on behalf of the horse industry in Maryland. This organization would seek IRS 501(c)3 designation, allowing contributions to be tax deductible for donors. These efforts are underway.

## Maryland Horse Council Political Action Committee

The Board of Directors also voted at its November meeting to establish a Political Action Committee, and approved appointment of former MHIB Director Rob Burk as chairman. This PAC will be formed in time for next fall's elections. MHC will approve guidelines for PAC activities, including candidate questionnaires, interviews, endorsements, and contributions.

MHC has discussed PAC formation for years. By doing so in 2011 we will elevate our issues in the minds of politicians throughout Maryland.

## Save The Horse Farms Campaign

This county by county effort is continuing to gain steam. Both Prince George's and Frederick counties reported at our November meeting that their county

governments either have or will soon rewrite the definition of agriculture to include equestrian activities on horse farms, and that virtually everything that our groups requested in the new legislation is being approved.

Valerie Ormond, a leader of the Prince George's County effort, has agreed to serve as our volunteer state coordinator for this campaign and is prepared to help your county get organized. Please go online and download our new "Guide to Organizing in Your County." It lays out for you how to get started and how to win the changes you need at the county level to make zoning more horse farm friendly.

## MHC Business Network

Over seventy farm and business members of MHC met December 6 at Pratt Street Ale House to hear a fascinating presentation from the top staff at New Bolton Center and Marion DuPont Scott clinic in Leesburg. It was sponsored by our generous vets at Damascus Equine and Unionville Equine. Afterward we all went across the street to the huge American Association of Equine Practitioners trade show.

The Business Network meets every other month for lunch, networking, and knowledge. Our next lunch will include a tour of the Cosequin plant some time in February. Did you know that Nutramax Labs, an international nutraceutical

company, is based in Maryland? You won't want to miss this tour! Watch [mdhorsecouncil.org](http://mdhorsecouncil.org) for more information – or better yet, make sure your farm or business membership is current and then get on the e-lists for the MHC Business Network. All lunches are restricted to MHC business and farm members – added value for your membership dollars!

## MHC Elections

The current officers were re-elected by the Board of Directors at our November meeting for a second two year term. Two years from now, *continued...*

**Maryland Horse Council  
Quarterly Meeting**

**Thursday, January 20, 2011  
at Horse World Expo**

6 p.m. Vista Room  
Maryland State Fairgrounds  
2200 York Road, Timonium, MD 21093

For more information, or to join MHC, please visit  
**[www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org)**

## MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Maryland Horse Council membership is open to all associations, farms, businesses and individuals. To join, please visit [www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org).  
The Maryland Horse Council is sponsored by B & D Builders, The Equiery, Farm Credit and Southern States.*

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however, our by-laws require that we “throw the bums out!” It’s never too early to be thinking about who our next group of officers should be.

The Board of Directors recently elected two new people to our Executive Committee. They are Ron MacNab, president of TROT and chair our our Trails and Greenways Committee, and Steve Fulton, who represents the Maryland Combined Training Association on our board and owns Full Moon Farm.

The following were elected to the Board of Directors by their respective categories of membership:

- **Individuals:** Amy Burk, Dale Clabaugh, Mike Erskine, Erica Lancaster and Amy Samman
- **Business:** Crystal Kimball and Keith Wills
- **Farm:** Stuart Pittman, Jane Seigler and Judy Smith

### Expo Shopping Discounts

Expo vendors are offering special discounts to Maryland Horse Council members. Pay your dues online, come to our booth when you arrive at Expo, slap your lapel sticker on, and head to the booths on our discount list!

Go to expo on Thursday when the crowds are small, check out what’s there, head up the hill to the Vista room at 6pm for free food, beer, and wine, and then participate in what is sure to be an important and informative meeting covering all the topics in this

Update. Everyone is welcome.

### Horses, Community, and Politics Session at Expo

MHC President Stuart Pittman will lead a discussion on Sunday at 11 am in the University Seminar Hall at Expo on organizing horse people. He will reflect on his ten years experience as a community and political organizer, and describe what he sees as the potential of the horse community to create “equestrian meccas.” In addition to describing the current activities of the Maryland Horse Council, he may also introduce the incoming director of the Maryland Horse Industry Board.

### - Maryland Horse Council Membership -

P.O. Box 6603, Annapolis, MD 21401

If you are not an MHC member JOIN NOW to stand with us in support of horses and horse people throughout Maryland.

We have a membership category for everyone: Individual (\$40), Farm (\$75), Business (\$100) or Association (\$100).

Visit [www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org) for details on how to join today!

### The Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors

Open to All Members and Guests

November 16, 2010 • Miller Senate Office Building, Annapolis

*Every member association is entitled to a seat on the MHC Board of Directors. Please review this list to make sure your association is a member and to ensure active representation for your association on the MHC Board of Directors. The MHC Board of Directors, on behalf of the horse industry, make important legislative and policy decisions, and so your associations participation is critical. Farm, business and individual members elect at-large directors to represent their interests on the Board.*

**Officers Present: Stuart Pittman, President; Jane Seigler, Vice-President; Chris Bricker, Secretary; Royce Herman, Treasurer; Margaret Rizzo, MHC Administrator.**

#### Directors Present:

- Amy Burk
- Rob Burk
- Beverly A. Raymond
- Karen Fulton
- Stuart Pittman
- Jane Seigler
- Crystal Kimball
- Keith Wills
- Judy Smith
- Christy Claggett
- Patty Sasscer
- Steve Fulton
- Dorothy Troutman
- Carrie Everly
- Crystal Kimball
- Guillermo Warley
- Director-at-Large Individuals
- Director-at-Large Individuals
- Director-at-Large Individuals
- Director-at-Large Farms
- Director-at-Large Farms
- Director-at-Large Farms
- Director-at-Large - Businesses
- Director-at-Large -Businesses
- Frederick County Equine Alliance
- Marlborough Hunt Club
- Maryland Association for Wildlife Conservation
- Maryland Combined Training Association
- Maryland Equestrian Foundation/ Rosaryville Conservancy
- Maryland Jockey Club
- Maryland Steeplechase Association
- New Market Middleton Valley Hounds

- Charlie Mess
- Elizabeth Yewell
- Ron MacNab
- Royce Herman
- Potomac Hunt Club
- Prince George’s Equestrian Center, Show Place Arena
- Trail Riders of Today – TROT
- Tuckahoe Equestrian Center

#### Directors Absent:

- Mike Erskine
- Fred Lewis
- Darryll Ann Buschling
- Joseph Zentgraf
- Jacquelyn Cowan
- Sharon Roberts
- Kathleen Howe
- Deborah Rollins Frank
- Trish Gilbert
- Jim McDonald
- Mary Anne Steele
- Nicky Ratliff
- Carrie Reed
- Kristin Wilson
- Mike Erskine
- Margaret Wilterdink
- Doug Anderson
- Cricket Goodall
- Alan Lohman
- Felicia Hilleary
- Eileen Simpson
- David Turner
- Allison Asti
- (Vacant)
- Carolyn Del Grosso
- Barbara Kraft
- (Vacant)
- Jane Rhoades
- Director-at-Large Individuals
- Director-at-Large Individuals
- Director-at-Large Youth
- Carroll County Equestrian Council
- Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horses
- Cloverleaf Standardbred Owners Association
- Days End Farm Rescue, Inc.
- Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation, Inc.
- Fair Hill International, Inc.
- Graham Equestrian Center, Inc.
- Howard County Horse Show Association
- Humane Society of Carroll County
- League of Maryland Horseman
- Maryland 4-H Foundation
- Maryland Association of Equine Practitioners
- Maryland Dressage Association
- Maryland Farriers Association
- Maryland Horse Breeders Association
- Maryland Horse Shows Assoc. Rep
- Maryland Standardbred Breeders Assn.
- Maryland State Quarter Horse Association
- Mid-Atlantic Saddlebred Association
- Pasadena Horse and Pony Association
- Plantation Walking Horses of MD
- Potomac Valley Dressage Association
- Ranger Foundation, Inc.
- Washington International Horse Show
- Wicomico Hunt Club

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