



November 2014

## President's Letter

Jane Seigler

I'm proud to say that the Maryland Horse Council is heading into 2015 stronger and better than ever before. Thanks to our supportive and growing membership base, our loyal and indispensable sponsors, our talented and energetic Executive Committee and other committee chairs, and our hardworking association administrator, we have some great accomplishments behind us, and many new and exciting challenges ahead.

With a new Governor and many new legislators, we will have our work cut out for us as the new legislative session opens in Annapolis this month. We are encouraged that the new Governor's office has expressed to us his commitment to make sure we have a seat at the table regarding all issues of importance to us. We were particularly happy that he sent his representative to our November meeting, where this commitment was reaffirmed - including a commitment to protect racing's share of slots money.

We have prepared a document that outlines all issues of importance to Maryland horse people, and MHC positions on each issue. This document will be distributed to all members of the General Assembly at the start of the session. In addition, we have invited all members to attend a tour of the Horse World Expo. In prior years, these tours have been well attended by the legislators, who are truly astounded by the breadth and depth of the industry as represented at the Expo, and the sheer numbers of people involved and in attendance. There is nothing quite like the "packed house" at the Expo to impress upon the legislators that the MD horse industry is alive and well, and comprises all ages and demographic groups.

2015 marks MHC's 30th Anniversary!  
Stay tuned for more information about

exciting plans for our big celebration. If you have any ideas for places and ways to commemorate this event, let us hear them!

Finally, since at this moment we have the opportunity to reach so many new people through inclusion in this issue of the Equiry, which will receive even wider than usual circulation through distribution at the Horse World Expo, I'd like to review who we are and what we do.

Established in 1985, MHC seeks to unify, inform, and represent Maryland's diverse horse community. As the industry's state legislative representative and trade association, MHC protects and promotes the horse industry by providing a united voice in the Maryland state legislature and state agencies, by interacting with the media and the general public, and by keeping its members informed on issues that affect them and their horses.

In 1998, MHC successfully advanced legislation that created the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) within the Department of Agriculture. The MHIB serves as a commodity board that promotes the horse industry and licenses stables in Maryland. MHC's and MHIB's roles are often confused, however they are actually quite distinct. MHIB's job is to market and promote the industry throughout the state, and to license stables. Because MHIB is part of the MD Department of Agriculture, it is prohibited by law from any type of lobbying activity. By contrast, one of MHC's main missions is lobbying, i.e., being the voice of Maryland's horse people in the State legislature as well as before the regulatory agencies. Over the years, MHC has had numerous lobbying successes, for example: enacting state law that recognizes equine facilities and equine

activities as part of "agriculture," thereby ensuring the many benefits and protections that follow from inclusion in that definition. In recent years, our voice in the legislature and the regulatory agencies on a wide range of issues has become more welcomed and respected. If you have an issue or concern that involves state law or regulation, please let us know about it!

### What We Are:

The Maryland Horse Council is a grassroots membership organization with one part-time administrator and annual dues and sponsorship revenue of about \$45,000. We have 40 Association members that represent some 30,000 people between them, plus Business members, Farm members, Charity/Foundation members, and Individual members. Our Board of Directors includes a representative from each of our associations, plus elected representatives from each of the other four membership categories. Our Executive Committee and officers are elected by the Board.

## Maryland Horse Council Meeting

Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

The Vista Room  
Maryland State Fairgrounds

6pm: Reception

7pm: Meeting - all are welcomed!

### Highlights for Meeting:

Updates on new Governor's administration and policies on horse industry issues, plus outlook for new legislative session and new regulations

Visit [www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org)  
for RSVP details!

**What We Do:**

The primary mission of MHC is to represent the interests of Maryland's horse community to state government, but we do more than that. We created a Save The Horse Farms campaign operating in many counties that worked to overcome unfair zoning and permitting laws, and culminated in the publication of a comprehensive guide to local zoning laws and regulations. We have online Forums for each county, where local ideas, events and actions can be shared. We have a Farm Stewardship committee working to promote and expand the role that horse farms play in protect-

ing the environment. We created an Unwanted Horse Project that was spun off into the Maryland Fund For Horses, a 501(c)(3) charity. We have a Political Action Committee to fund horse-friendly candidates for public office. We have a Committee to Support Racing; a Trails and Greenways Committee; an MHC Business Network. And, of course, we have a Legislative Committee that coordinates our grassroots lobbying of our elected representatives. MHC also participates in the Maryland Farm Bureau and the American Horse Council's Coalition of State Horse Councils.

**How to Get Involved:**

Like all primarily volunteer membership organizations, we constantly work to grow. Without dues-paying members, we would not exist. Without people willing to take on leadership roles, we would be silent. Can't wait to join up? Find out more details about membership elsewhere in this update.

**Happy New Year!**


## Highlights from the November 18, 2014 Maryland Horse Council (MHC) Annual Membership Meeting and Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting

**Valerie Ormond**

The Maryland Horse Council welcomed several distinguished guests including Mr. Adam Dubitsky from Governor-Elect Larry Hogan's office, Senator Norman Stone, and Delegate Steve Arentz to its Annual Membership Meeting at the Miller Senate Office Building in Annapolis on Tuesday, Nov. 18. Mr. Dubitsky thanked MHC for inviting him to the meeting and said he was there to listen and learn. He said there was a lot of work to do, including work on the budget. Governor-elect Hogan's goal is to bring people together who have not been talking very much or very well to each other. Mr. Dubitsky expressed the Governor-elect's commitment to make sure MHC has a seat at the table and to incorporate MHC ideas about issues ranging from slots revenues to the environment. The Hogan team wants to hear what's working and what's not, and looks forward to working with the Council.

During the MHC reception prior to the start of the official meeting, Ms. Barbara Smith was honored with the Maryland Horse Industry Board's (MHIB) "Touch of Class" award, presented by MHIB Chairman Jim Steele, MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord, and MHC President Jane Seigler, for her completion of the Mongolian Derby. Not only did Ms. Smith complete the grueling 640-mile ride across Mongolia, but she was one of the top 10 finishers...at the age of 60. Sen. Stone also presented a Maryland Senate citation, sponsored by Senator Raskin, to Ms. Smith for her achievement. Ms.

Smith then shared with us stories of her Mongolian adventure.

MHC President Jane Seigler discussed the 2014 Maryland Horse Forum held in August and directed members to the Executive Summary of the Maryland Horse Forum 2014 Final Report handed out to attendees. The document is also available online at <http://mda.maryland.gov/horseboard/Pages/MD-Horse-Forum-2014.aspx>. President Seigler said she would like the forum to continue as a "virtual forum," and encouraged people to bring ideas and issues to MHC at any time. MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord said the forum had 28 sponsors and attendance of almost 400 people. He summarized some of the major topics of discussion, and concluded that the Forum revealed a generally more upbeat outlook within the horse industry than was the case during the last Horse Forum in 2009.

MHC's lobbyist, Mr. Frank Boston, offered thoughts on the current legislative landscape in Maryland. In his opinion, the recent election outcomes were surprising, but not shocking. Governor-elect Hogan did a better job of getting out his message. The outlook – a Republican Governor with a Democratic Senate and House with two very powerful leaders (Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Mike Busch) – means there will have to be collaboration. The take home message could be that the Democratic legislature is going to have to work with Hogan because the voters have spoken.

So, according to Mr. Boston, what does that really mean? In 2015, no new taxes. Horse issues will include an attempt to repeal the managed hunt bill in Calvert & St. Mary's counties. MHC will have to work with local Senators and others for assistance. Mr. Boston thinks Maryland will see more Sunday hunting bills and action from gun groups and the National Rifle Association. MHC is working with Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) on initiatives to bring the deer population under control, and looking at ideas such as market sale of venison as a way to incentivize increased deer harvest. The new Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary will be important to MHC issues.

Mr. Boston said there was a lot of turnover in the legislature, and there will be a big learning curve for the new legislators. Additionally, with a Republican executive branch, there will be new appointments to important positions in the various state agencies. It will be an interesting session. He thinks more time will be spent on the budget because the Governor has stated he will cut spending vs. tax, and Maryland hasn't seen that since Governor Ehrlich.

Vice President Radue asked about set aside for racing money. President Seigler read from Governor-Elect Hogan's response to the MHC questionnaire where he stated he would support a return to the original 9.5% allocation of slots monies dedicated to horse racing interests.

## Highlights continued from page 2

Association Manager Margaret Rizzo McKelvy discussed the new features of the MHC website including the following:

- online registration for members
- member usernames and passwords to allow users to make the directory a better resource
- streamlined event registration
- MHC social media integrated
- more interactive county forums (vs. being blogs)
- page sponsorship opportunities

The goal is for the new website to be up at the end of 2014. Stay tuned!

Stuart Pittman, Chair of the Legislative Committee, solicited volunteers for the legislative committee. President Seigler said the legislative committee could really use someone to update the legislative blog during the session. If anyone is interested, please contact Stuart Pittman or MHC Association Manager Margaret McKelvy.

Chair of the Committee to Support Racing, Christy Clagett reported that more stallions are coming into the state due to the incentive program. It's going to take a long time for Maryland to work its way back up, but it is on the rise. She discussed breeder bonuses, and said there would be 149 days of racing in 2015, including 12 days in August. Hopefully, the first Sunday in June will be MHC's Day at the Races at Pimlico, and MHC plans another Night at the Races at Rosecroft. The big takeaway is

## Horse Council PAC Update Win Hayward

After a highly active 2014 political year that saw two contribution cycles – the pre- 2014 legislative session back in January, and the 2014 elections in November - the Horse Council PAC is currently focused on organization and strategic planning issues. The reality is that the PAC spent virtually all of its funds in 2014 and must raise new monies in order to be active prior to the 2016 legislative session. 'Rank and file' members of the MHC have to date been the primary PAC donors, either directly or by participating in MHC sponsored activities (e.g. BBQ raffles). While MHC members continue to contribute, if the PAC is to grow it must find new donors. In addition, the by-laws call for two At-Large members of the Board of Directors to 'roll-over' on 12/31/14, with new members being appointed by the Executive Committee of the Horse Council. While existing At-Large members may be re-appointed, people interested in serving on the PAC should express that desire to the MHC Executive Committee. Terms are 2 years.

that Maryland racing is not going away, and the horse industry needs to protect the racing portion of slots monies.

Vicki Carson, Director of the Maryland Fund for Horses (MFFH) said the MFFH will celebrate its 3-year anniversary this year. Ms. Carson spoke about the highlights of the past year including Maryland Responsible Horse Ownership Week, webinars (now on line at [MDFUNDFORHORSES.org](http://MDFUNDFORHORSES.org)), education plans including Youth Lessons in Responsible Horse Ownership, Safe and Sound brochure (horse resources) – second edition (distributed 5000 of first), and an equine welfare effort to survey rescues to get additional information. Kristy Alvarez, Executive Director of Freedom Hill Horse Rescue, is the Chair of the newly-formed MFFH Rescues Committee. The information gathered on the survey includes number of employees, capacity, and more. MFFH is putting together a directory of hay banks to help people and horses in need, and a tack and blanket bank, for licensed rescues.

For the MHC Political Action Committee (PAC), Win Hayward, Treasurer, said this has been PAC's biggest year. The idea for a PAC started from the 2009 Horse Forum, and the PAC began in 2011. The PAC distributed \$5000 to candidates this year, and the contributions mostly came



Full Moon Farm's Grace Fulton sat in on a mock senate hearing.

from MHC members. The PAC is a good strategic companion to the legislative committee. It has grown organizationally, with Win Hayward as the Treasurer; Stuart Pittman as the Chair; and Christy Clagett, Crystal Kimball, Jane Seigler and Royce Herman as members. Mr. Hayward said that the legislators understand that when people give money, it means they are serious and that they are involved. Two current PAC challenges are that coffers are now empty after election year distributions, and the PAC wants to expand the contribution base outside of MHC members .

President Seigler asked for people to bring issues to MHC; and explained that the Horse Council is here to represent the Maryland horse industry and needs everyone's input. The next Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting will be held during the World Horse Expo, Friday, Jan. 16, Timonium Fairgrounds, Timonium, Md., at 7:00 p.m.



MHC's Lobbyist Frank Boston explains how a bill is made a law with two MHC members looking on.

## Save the Date: Business Network Lunch

Tuesday, February 10th, 2015 • 10 am – 1pm (includes lunch!)

Maryland Farm Bureau | 3358 Davidsonville Rd | Davidsonville, MD

### Topics to include:

- Finding, managing and keeping great employees.
- Workers' Compensation—It's killing my business! Tips for saving money.
- When is a contract worker not a contract worker—and you could be fined?
- Fair labor standards act and agriculture exemptions
- MHC Business Network meetings are open to all Business, Farm and Charity & Foundation members. Each member may send a maximum of two representatives.

Visit [www.mdhorsecouncil.org](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org) for RSVP details!



One common bond ... the Horse. One common voice ... Maryland Horse Council.

# Maryland Horse Council Membership Form

**Membership Type:** *(check your membership type/amount)*

	Annual	3-Year	5-Year	Lifetime	Total
ASSOCIATION:	_____ \$100	_____ \$300	_____ \$500	_____ \$1,000	_____ \$
BUSINESS:	_____ \$100	_____ \$285	_____ \$475	_____ \$1,000	_____ \$
FARM:	_____ \$75	_____ \$215	_____ \$355	_____ \$750	_____ \$
CHARITY & FOUNDATION:	_____ \$75	_____ \$215	_____ \$355	_____ \$750	_____ \$
INDIVIDUAL:	_____ \$40	_____ \$105	_____ \$175	_____ \$400	_____ \$
YOUTH:	_____ \$5	<i>Date of Birth:</i> _____			_____ \$

**Donations:** *(if you would like to make a donation to one of our funds, please write in amount(s) below)*

Political Action Committee:	\$ _____	. . . . .	\$ _____
Maryland Fund for Horses:	\$ _____	. . . . .	\$ _____
MHC General Fund:	\$ _____	. . . . .	\$ _____

**TOTAL Amount** *(Dues plus Donations):* \$ \_\_\_\_\_**MEMBER INFORMATION:** *(please fill in completely)*

Assn./Bus./Farm/Charity or Foundation: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact or Individual's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

 Check if you **DO NOT** want your membership to automatically renew each year. Renewals take place each July.**PAYMENT:** *Can be paid Online, by Mail, or by Phone***CREDIT CARD info:** *(NOTE: If credit card billing address differs from the address above, please complete below)*CC # *(please print clearly)* \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name of card holder as it appears on card *(please print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pay ON-LINE at:****MAIL Payments to:****Pay by PHONE:**[www.mdhorsecouncil.org/join.htm](http://www.mdhorsecouncil.org/join.htm)

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