

MHC UPDATE

mdhorsecouncil.org

Letter From the President



Those of us who are active in the Maryland Horse Council all have a vision. We believe that horses are a part of the fabric of this state, that most of the public is inspired by the the horse and what it represents, and that growing our industry is possible and worthwhile.

We work as volunteers, and elected officials listen to us. We speak of open space and they respond. We send out legislative alerts and you respond.

It's time to renew membership dues, and it's also time to sign up the people who haven't joined because nobody asked them to. Ask them!

Consider who we are. According to the 2010 Equine Census we are 28,340 people with 81,000 horses on 16,040 properties that comprise 587,000 acres. Our assets are \$5.6 billion, our direct operating expenses are \$363 million, and our economic impact has never been accurately measured, but is in the billions.

We are every breed and every discipline in the horse world, and we are the place where many of those disciplines began in this country.

We have problems in Maryland. Our county governments block progress on our farms with their zoning and permitting laws, we have no state-wide marketing program, our rescues are being swamped by demand for the care and placement of unwanted horses, we have no political action committee that represents the whole industry, our business owners too often feel isolated and uninformed, and our racing industry has been hammered by a combination of bad decisions by track owners and failure of our legislature to approve slots when our neighboring states were acting. Oh, and we still have no Maryland Horse Park to focus our efforts to market the horse.

The Maryland Horse Council is not an organization of whiners. Rather than talk about the content of the above paragraph, we have members working in committees on every one of these issues.

- The **Save The Horse Farms Campaign** is succeeding in amending county zoning and permitting laws wherever it is organizing.
- Our new **Horse Industry Marketing Advisory Group** is working with Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) Director Ross Peddicord and marketing strategist Ellie Trueman on a comprehensive plan to increase participation in equine activities from the

big competitions to the lesson barns, and from racing to trail rides and everything in between.

- Our **Unwanted Horse Project** is putting together the framework for our new nonprofit organization that will raise money and serve the needs of the animals who have been squeezed out of the bottom of the marketplace.
- Our own **Political Action Committee** is forming to raise money and support the candidates who support us.
- Our **MHC Business Network** meets to share information and provide education to owners of farms and other horse-related businesses.
- Our **Committee to Support Racing** has convened and led the grassroots effort to pass legislation to keep Thoroughbred and Standardbred tracks operating, as well as working on projects such as Decanter (the wine festival in the infield at Pimlico) to increase track attendance.
- Oh yes, and that **Horse Park**. That's the most exciting part of all. The MHIB is about to release a Request For Information, seeking to identify potential sites. There are some great proposals brewing but printing them publicly might jinx them.

We hope that you will renew your dues, lean on your friends to pay theirs, come to our upcoming Quarterly Meeting May 17 at the Prince George's Equestrian Center, and go to our website and figure out how to lend your talents to what we are doing. If you believe strongly in the value of our work, consider also making a contribution. With additional funds we can expand our reach and increase our strength.

Keep in mind that a Farm or a Business membership allows you to participate in the Business Network and puts your farm or business name in our online membership directory. Upgrading from an individual membership simply requires that you pay a little more money.

Also keep in mind that an association membership gives your organization a vote on our Board of Directors. Individual, farm, and business members each elect representatives to the Board from within their ranks.

Thanks for all that you do,
Steuart Pittman, President



Maryland Horse Council Quarterly Meeting

Open to EVERYONE

Tuesday, May 17, 2011
**6 p.m. reception and tour of
covered arena construction**
7-9 p.m. meeting

Prince George's Equestrian Center

14900 Pennsylvania Avenue
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

For more information, or to join MHC, please visit
www.mdhorsecouncil.org

Maryland Horse Council Membership

P.O. Box 233, Lisbon, MD 21765

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: Indi-
vidual (\$40), Farm (\$75), Business (\$100) or Associa-
tion (\$100).

Visit www.mdhorsecouncil.org for details on how to
join today!

MHC Update continued...

May 17 Quarterly Meeting: Why YOU Should Attend

1) Horse Industry Marketing Advisory Group Report and Plans, including

- Promotional ad presentation
- Bringing people back to the races
- Marketing assistance to organizers of all equestrian events
- War of 1812 celebrations and the role of the horse
- A Comprehensive Marketing Plan

2) Official Horse Park "Request For Information"

Now is the time to get proposals together. Some interesting ones are in the works.

3) Save The Horse Farm County Reports

Stories of crazy county laws and practices continue to come in, and MHC members continue to fight back.

4) Unwanted Horse Project

We will announce a major fund-raising plan to create the charitable arm of MHC that will support this project and others.

5) MHC Legislative Committee

What we did and learned this session, and how we will prepare for 2012.

6) Political Action Committee Planning Update

7) MHC Business Network Update and Plans

8) MHC Committee To Support Racing Update and Plans

9) Nutrient Trading and MHC Green Pastures = Clean Waters

This meeting takes place at the Prince George's Equestrian Center, the busiest venue in the state for horse shows. Prince George's County public officials have recognized the huge economic development potential that horses offer their county. We will hear highlights from their Equine Advisory Task Force's proposals and view the covered arena that is currently under construction. Take this story to your county officials!



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.
The Maryland Horse Council is sponsored by B & D Builders, The Equiery, Farm Credit and Southern States.*

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