

MHC UPDATE

mdhorsecouncil.org

A Message from the President (Jane Seigler)

MHC Candidate Questionnaire

I am so pleased and proud that the Horse Council keeps on growing in its strength and influence. During this past legislative session, we saw how much the Horse Council was recognized and respected in Annapolis. Now, for the first time, we have developed a candidate questionnaire/survey, which we have submitted to all candidates for state office. The questionnaire is designed both to educate the candidates about our issues, and to get them to state their positions on

those issues. You can see a copy of the questionnaire elsewhere in this report. Please contact the candidates in your legislative districts and make sure they respond!

Based in part on the responses, the MHC Executive Committee and the MHC Political Action Committee will recommend certain candidates for endorsement by MHC, and/or for political contributions from our PAC. The recommended endorsements will be voted on by the MHC Board of Directors at our Quarterly Meeting on Tuesday, August 26 at New Market Grange Hall in Newmarket. Don't miss that meeting! Details elsewhere in this report.

2014 Maryland Horse Forum

This is a watershed moment for Maryland's equine community and industry. Once every five years we get a chance to come together and let our voices be heard. That chance comes at the Maryland Horse Forum, jointly sponsored by MHC and the Maryland Horse Industry Board, which will be held on Thursday, August 7, 2014, at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro. The Horse Forum is a once-every-five-years assembly of industry leaders, local and state level officials and public policy makers who gather to discuss issues facing all sectors of the Maryland equine industry and to develop recommendations for action to strengthen and preserve our future.

There have only been two previous Forums. The first Horse Forum was convened in 2004, in response to then Governor Ehrlich's challenge to Maryland's agricultural industries to re-develop their strategic plans, through statewide commodity listening sessions. The 2004 Horse Forum was extremely successful, and in 2009 Governor O'Malley endorsed a second Forum, indicating his support for the

important role of horses in Maryland economics and lifestyle.

The 2004 and 2009 Forums provoked wide-ranging discussion of, and produced important consensus for needed action on issues such as agricultural land preservation, protecting the Bay and going green, zoning and land use, marketing and growing the industry and public participation, work force development, slot machines and racing revenue, overpopulation and unwanted horses, access to public land and resources, insurance availability and affordability, and international trade.

Ideas that were germinated at these Forums matured into a number of important initiatives that have since come to fruition, resulting in a stronger and more vibrant industry. We expect that this year's Forum will be equally productive. Although there will be world class speakers (Steve Day of Dover Saddlery, Staeline Tack and Equisearch.com; Todd Gralla, designer of international venues

including the London Olympics; and Patti Colbert, chair of the American Horse Council's marketing alliance), the main purpose of the Forum is to give all of us a chance to come together and discuss where we are and where we want to go. The success of the Forum, and therefore, the outlook for a bright future for us all, depends on YOUR participation.

Please join us on August 7 at the Prince George's Equestrian Center. Attendance is FREE. Continental breakfast and lunch provided. For more information, check <http://mda.maryland.gov/horseboard/Pages/MD-Horse-Forum-2014.aspx>, and <http://www.2014marylandhorseforum.com>. Then, make sure to attend the Horse Council's Quarterly Board meeting at the New Market Grange, Tuesday, August 26th. We will be discussing the outcome of the Forum, and steps the Horse Council

will take to follow up on the issues raised there.

MHC Annual BBQ

Finally, mark your calendars for our upcoming annual BBQ, to be held on Saturday, September 13 at the Capitol Polo Club in Poolesville. Each year it seems we can't top the incredible venues, food and fun of the last BBQ - but each year we do! Check the full page ad elsewhere in this issue of the Equiery, get your tickets and don't miss out on great food, music, polo, and fun!

Jane Seigler

President, Maryland Horse Council
seigler.jane@gmail.com

Maryland Horse Council Meeting Tuesday, August 26th, 2014

New Market Grange Hall

1 Eighth Alley | New Market, MD 21774

6 pm: Reception

(Refreshments provided by the Frederick County Equine Alliance & Damascus Equine Associates)

7 pm: Meeting - All Welcome!

Meeting Highlights:

- Report on 2014 Horse Forum and planned follow up actions
- Vote on MHC endorsements of statewide candidates

Very important meeting!

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

MHC Update

2014 Legislative Update *(by Steuart Pittman)*

It's election season. That means we now have a great opportunity to educate the people who will represent us in Annapolis, and to learn more about whether their positions on the issues will benefit horse people and the horse industry. The following questions have been sent to every candidate running in this Fall's general election for state office. The candidates will also be encouraged to attend the Maryland Horse Forum on August 7 to learn more about us and our issues and concerns, and their responses to these questions are due soon after that. The Horse Council's Political Action and Executive Committees will review the answers and make recommendations for endorsements that will be discussed and approved by the full MHC Board of Directors at the August 26th Quarterly Board Meeting (so make sure attend that meeting!). The Political Action Committee will then consider contributions based on the endorsement decisions and availability of funds.

Contact the candidates in your district. Encourage them to fill out these candidate surveys and return them. Use these questions at any candidate forums, rallies, fundraisers or meetings that you attend. This stuff really works! It gets the candidates' attention, educates them to our issues, and sensitizes them to our political power and our willingness and ability to use it. An electronic version of this questionnaire can be found at www.mdhorsecouncil.org.

QUESTIONS

1. *Briefly describe any involvement candidate has had with horses or the horse industry.*

2. Open Space

Maryland's 79,000 horses reside on over 16,000 farms that comprise 580,000 acres of open space, one quarter of all agricultural land and more horses per square mile than any other state. Preservation of open space is essential for survival and growth of our industry. *What will you do in office to maintain farmland and open space in Maryland?*

3. Nutrient Management and Manure

Well-managed horse pastures and hay fields are second only to forests as filters of the nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment that can damage the health of our waterways. Composted horse manure mixed with the straw and sawdust that is removed from barns is useful as a soil enhancement and is relatively low in nitrogen. Maryland Horse Council is working to educate farm owners about responsible pasture and manure management practices while protecting them from burdensome regulations that fail to recognize the environmental benefits of composted horse manure as a soil enhancement. *Would you work with Maryland Horse Council and its allies in the agricultural and environmental advocacy communities to establish affordable manure transport, composting, and end product distribution systems?*

4. Zoning and Permits

Local zoning and permitting laws that were written for suburban and urban communities have inadvertently discouraged landowners from constructing or maintaining horse farms. Some of those laws and regulations were established to comply with state laws on erosion and sediment control and stormwater management. *How would you use your elected office to make the permitting and land use practices in your district fair for farm owners?*

5. Liability

The Maryland Horse Council has long supported the retention of the contributory negligence liability standard in civil negligence cases. Under Maryland's present tort system the defenses of contributory negligence and assumption of the risk have served for centuries to prevent plaintiffs who contributed to their injuries through their own negligence or irresponsible behavior from recovering damages. Therefore, we oppose attempts to change the basis upon which Maryland courts assess liability from contributory negligence to comparative negligence (which would allow plaintiffs to recover damages even when they themselves were negligent). We also oppose any "reform" aimed at limiting defenses to negligence claims under existing statutory or common law. *Would you support the Maryland Horse Council in its efforts to resist changes to the contributory negligence standard and other existing defenses to negligence claims?*

6. Horse Park / Facilities

Maryland loses millions of dollars annually to Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia because it lacks adequate facilities to host major equestrian competitions. The Maryland Stadium Authority showed in a 2006 feasibility study that infrastructure investment for equestrian venues would pay off handsomely for the state in tax revenues and business growth. *Would you support a program to invest state dollars into existing publicly owned equestrian venues if economic projections showed a positive return to the state?*

7. Marketing and Promotion

Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) is the commodity group within the MD Department of Agriculture that works closely with both MD Department of Business and Economic Development and MD Department of Tourism to ensure that the industry is promoted effectively to benefit the state economically. Through its Horse Pals Program, Horse History Trails, Guide to Licensed Stables, Equine Census, Experience Centers, Touch of Class Awards and work to promote international trade, MHIB's work is being recognized nationally and internationally as a model. MHIB is funded by the horse industry itself through an assessment on the purchase of horse feed and stable licensing fees. *Will you support programs in which MHIB works with other state agencies to expand marketing and promotion of the horse industry?*

8. Horse Racing

Maryland's Thoroughbred and Standardbred racing industries are beginning to recover from the devastation caused by the establishment of casinos in neighboring states years before they were allowed in Maryland. The jobs, the revenues to the state, and the open space maintained by the farms all depend, however, on the commitment of our state legislators to keep the promise made to Maryland voters that slots revenues would be used to revitalize Maryland horse racing. *Will you pledge to oppose bills that seek to shift slots revenue away from the horse industry?*

9. Sunday Hunting

The state of Maryland allows deer hunting from October into January on Mondays through Saturdays during daylight hours. MD Department of Natural Resources paid to have an opinion survey done as part of its White Tailed Deer Plan 2009-2018. It found that a majority of landowners and a majority of the general

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public oppose Sunday hunting. Outdoor recreation users such as bird-watchers, hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders are particularly committed to maintaining Maryland's longstanding ban on Sunday hunting. The Maryland General Assembly has passed county bills that allow hunting on certain Sundays, and no evidence exists that the overall deer harvest during those weeks is significantly higher. Maryland Horse Council supports policies to reduce the deer herd and thereby reduce crop damage through means other than Sunday hunting, including extending the season and expansion of managed hunt and crop damage permit programs. *Would you support Maryland Horse Council and its allies in its effort to stop the expansion of Sunday hunting?*

Executive Committee Elections Results (by Valerie Ormond)

The results are in! Thank you to all the Maryland Horse Council (MHC) directors who voted in the recent Executive Committee elections. The Executive Committee meets monthly to conduct the regular business of the Council, and is comprised of four officers, five directors, and advisory members. Congratulations to Kathleen Tabor and Judy Smith, who begin new two-year terms effective July 1, 2014, and to Royce Herman, who will be serving on the Executive Committee as an Advisory Member.

Kathleen Tabor is a Director-at-Large for Individuals, and is a solo practitioner at the Law Office of Kathleen J.P. Tabor, LLC, a general civil practice focusing on agricultural and equine business, activities, and ownership. She is a lifetime-member of MHC, serves on the Equine Committee of the Maryland Farm Bureau, and represents the Trade and Support Industries on the Maryland Horse Industry Board. Tabor authored MHC's "Guide to County Zoning and Horses," and co-authored the book "Maryland Equine Law - A Legal Guide to Horse Ownership and Activities." She is a pleasure rider and has had a life-long passion for horses. This is Kathleen's first term on the Executive Committee.

Judy Smith is a Director-at-Large for Farms (Good Friday Farm) and Frederick County Equine Alliance's MHC representative. Judy has been involved in the Maryland horse industry for most of her life and has participated in disciplines including fox chasing, driving, dressage, eventing, and riding sidesaddle. She also worked as a vet technician and operated a successful business breeding, foaling, and starting young thoroughbreds for racing. Judy and her husband have a boarding and driving training operation in Ijamsville, and have set up and run the Ultimate Equestrian schoolings and competitions. She also owns and manages her retail store, Friday's Horse Giftware. This is Judy's second two-year term on the Executive Committee.

Additionally, the Executive Committee appointed Royce Herman to serve as an advisory member to the committee representing the Eastern shore. Royce is a Director-at-Large for Individuals and serves on the MHC Board of Directors as the representative for Tuckahoe Equestrian Center. Royce is a trail rider, competitor in Mounted Cowboy Shooting and mounted Wild West Shows, and master gunsmith, owning and operating Centreville Gunsmith. He is a member of MHC's Legislative Committee, Political Action Committee, and has been the driving force behind MHC's Safe Sunday's initiative to block the expansion of Sunday hunting in Maryland. This next term marks Royce's thirteenth year as a member of the Executive Committee.

The full Executive Committee includes Jane Seigler (President); Peter Radue (Vice President); Dale Clabaugh

(Treasurer); Valerie Ormond (Secretary); Stephen Fulton (Director-at-Large, Farms - Full Moon Farm); Crystal Kimball (Director-at-Large, Businesses - The Equiery); Steuart Pittman (Director-at-Large, Farms - Dodon Farm); Kathleen Tabor (Director-at-Large, Individuals), Judy Smith (Director at Large, Farms - Good Friday Farm); and Royce Herman (Director-at-Large, Individuals). Elections will be held in 2015 for three new two-year Executive Committee positions, so please consider who you may want to nominate to represent you and your interests in the future.

Point of contact: Valerie Ormond, Secretary, Maryland Horse Council: valerieormond@aol.com or (443)994-5651

Farm Stewardship Committee Meeting Report (by Jane Thery)

The evening sky was threatening rain but about 35 people came to beautiful Persimmon Tree Farm for the meeting on "How Your Horse Farm Can Be a Home for Healthy Horses AND Natural Flora and Fauna."

Farm owner and host Carolyn Krome gave the group a tour of the native grasses planted to provide wildlife habitat and to hold the soil. She explained the practice of controlled burns to burn down the dry grasses on a regular schedule to avoid invasive plants and to minimize thatch. She said that the grasses have attracted many birds, small animals, coyotes and even a bobcat. Carolyn also showed the group the section of her farm planted to attract "pollinators" such as bees and butterflies. This project was supported by the Maryland Soil Conservation Districts Pollinator Habitat Project.

Jane Thery, Committee Chair, welcomed the group to the meeting. Samantha Spencer, Carroll County Soil Conservation District specialist, presented the plan she had prepared to develop a section of wetlands on Persimmon Tree Farm. She explained the process of wetland planning and the assistance available from the Soil Conservation District office.

James Remuzzi, President of Sustainable Solutions, described his company's process for controlled burns. He noted that they will handle all of the needed permits, review the weather for an appropriate burning day and assure that the burn is contained. He recommended that any native grass plantings that were to be burned are surrounded by a mown grass buffer zone of at least 15 feet to effectively contain the burn area.

Gerald Talbert, Program Director of the Soil Conservation District Farm Certification and Assessment Program (FSCAP) spoke about the on-going process for bringing more horse farms into the program and announced that we now have 17 horse farms who have received full certification.

Jane Seigler, president of the Maryland Horse Council, gave an update on legislative issues from the session of the Maryland Assembly that ended in April. She noted that our new lobbyist, Frank Boston, was very helpful in our legislative efforts. One bill which passed and is important for the Farm Stewardship composting promotion is the requirement to include organic material under new fertilizer regulations.

Informal networking over refreshments sponsored by the Piedmont Group and R.D. Bowmen rounded out the evening as the rain began to fall.

The next Farm Stewardship meeting will focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources for your horse farm and will be held sometime in August or September.

Maryland Horse Council Membership

Maryland Horse Council membership is open to all associations, farms, businesses, charities, foundations and individuals. To join, please visit www.mdhorsecouncil.org, contact admin@mdhorsecouncil.org, or call 301.502.8929. The Maryland Horse Council is sponsored by B& D Builders, The Equiery and Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit.



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	Date of Birth:			\$

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

Maryland Horse Council
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301.502.8929

The Maryland Horse Council is a 501(c)(6) organization. Membership dues, payments and gifts to the Maryland Horse Council and its Political Action Committee are not deductible contributions for federal income tax purposes. Such payments may be deductible under the Internal Revenue Code as ordinary and necessary business expenses. The Maryland Fund for Horses is a 501(c)(3) organization (status pending).

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