

MHC UPDATE

mdhorsecouncil.org

A Message from the President (Jane Seigler)



As we at long last emerge from the interminable snow, ice and mud of the last few months, this is the time when horse people in Maryland rejoice at the return of warmth, sunshine, long days that make after work hacks possible, and an abundance of opportunities for things to do with our horses, competitively and just for fun. While the long, harsh winter we have just experienced understandably made many of us want to hibernate (or head south), the Horse Council has taken no winter break. As you will read elsewhere

in this report, we fought a long and valiant battle to preserve Safe Sundays for riders and others to enjoy time in the outdoors on Sundays during hunting season without fear of accidental adverse encounters with hunters. We testified against a number of Sunday hunting bills, but testified in support of a bill that would train hunters in several south counties. We also testified in support of bills to extend the life of the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB), in support of harness racing organization funding, and in support of a bill that could potentially increase opportunities for composting horse manure. We submitted testimony in opposition to several bills relating to liability for dog bites. We also submitted comments on MD Department of the Environment's proposal regarding erosion and sediment control plans and stormwater management plans, and their proposed regulations governing composting facilities. And we opposed the diversion of funds from land conservation programs such as state or local Program Open Space (POS), Rural Legacy or MALPF to unrelated uses such as State Highway Watershed Implementation Plans.

Outside of the legislative and regulatory arenas, over the winter we continued to expand recognition for horse farms that are shining examples of great stewardship of the land, by facilitating their enrollment in the Farm Stewardship Certification and Assessment Program (FSCAP). We have begun our work as co-host of the 2014 Maryland Horse Forum, the once-every-five-years opportunity for people from all walks of Maryland horse life to get together and brainstorm on our problems, our achievements and our future. We began planning for our ever popular September BBQ, to be held this year at Capital Polo Club. We planned two really fun events in support

of our racing members: April 12th at Rosecroft Raceway, and June 1st at Pimlico.

This winter, the Horse Council was awarded grants from MHIB to partially fund a feasibility study of options for increasing manure composting facilities and opportunities, and to improve our network of county on-line forums.

As I think back over the past few months, my mind crowds with the faces of the fantastic people who have worked tirelessly to ensure MHC's success in having so many fingers in so many pies. There is, of course, our Executive Committee, who - together with our part time Administrator, Mythic Landing Enterprises - work year round to keep the Horse Council running as a well oiled machine. But we also have many other true volunteers, who offer their time, talent and energy in service to MHC and its goals. First up is Christy Clagett, who worked miracles in rustling up scores of folks to tread the halls of

Annapolis, and Joe Michael, who made the long wintry drive from western Maryland on several occasions to add his voice and credibility to oppose Sunday hunting. That fight had many warriors, including Royce Herman, Crystal Kimball, Jennifer Sponseller-Webster, our Legislative Committee Chair: Steuart Pittman and of course our incomparable and indefatigable professional lobbyist Frank Boston and his associate Andrew Nicklas. Christy also has honchoed the "Day" and "Evening at the Races" events that are so popular and so much fun. Our Farm Stewardship Committee Chair, Jane They has been working very hard on expanding horse farm participation in FSCAP and on getting our manure composting study (partially funded by MHIB) off the ground with input from Dr. Amy Burk. Vicki Carson represents us with the Coalition of State Horse Councils,

and continues to develop the exciting work of MHC's spinoff the Maryland Fund for Horses (more about that elsewhere in this report). Ron MacNab is a great interface with all the regulatory agencies and user groups that are involved with trail development and maintenance. Erica Lancaster makes sure we all have food and drink at the Quarterly meetings, and is the overall honcho for the county forums. Crystal Kimball works hard at coming up with fascinating topics and venues for the Business Network. Win Hayward and Steuart Pittman oversee our PAC. This is a long list, and it should be longer, because I have undoubtedly left someone out! But I hope it underscores how much even though the Horse Council is all about the horses, it's all about the people, too.

Happy Spring!

Maryland Horse Council Meeting Tuesday, May 13, 2014

Maryland Department of Agriculture

50 Harry S. Truman Pkwy.; Annapolis, MD 21401

6 pm: Reception

7 pm: Meeting - All Welcome!

(refreshments provided)

Meeting Highlights:

- *This Year's Legislative Session In Review*
- *Sunday Hunting: Where we are and where we are going in our fight for Safe Sundays*
- *2014 Maryland Horse Forum Planning (Coming up in August!)*
- *Maryland's New Manure Matching Service*

For more information, or to join MHC, please visit

www.mdhorsecouncil.org

MHC Update

2014 Legislative Update *(by Stuart Pittman)*

Hiring Frank Boston to lobby for Maryland Horse Council will go down in history as one of the wisest decisions your Executive Committee has ever made. We knew Frank was well respected and had an all-star client list, but we had no idea how much attention we would get from him and where that would take us as an organization. We also had no idea how much work we were getting ourselves into or how much fun it would be. Our legislative committee included Jane Seigler, Christy Clagett, Stuart Pittman, Jennifer Webster, Royce Herman, Crystal Kimball, Joe Michael, Pete Radue, and Kathleen Tabor.

Each week Frank and his assistant, Andrew Nicklas, did a conference call with our legislative committee in which we talked through a bill tracking sheet that included 70 or so bills that we were monitoring, supporting, or opposing. Of the bills that we took positions on we provided written testimony on some and both written and oral testimony on others. We also used the conference calls to strategize on our campaign to block expansion of Sunday hunting both statewide and in various counties.

We supported the bill to prevent sunset of the legislation that created our Maryland Horse Industry Board. We wrote testimony in support of a bill to allow harness racing purse funds to support the organizations representing the industry. We opposed legislation increasing liability for owners of loose dogs. We backed up our friends at Farm Bureau extending the range of farm-use licensed vehicles and requiring economic analysis of the impact of changes to nutrient management regulations. We testified alongside Chesapeake Bay Foundation in support of a bill that would encourage establishment of composting facilities. We wrote to oppose a budget proposal that would have redirected Program Open Space and Maryland Ag Land Preservation funds to other uses. Many of these letters of support or opposition strengthened important relationships between Maryland Horse Council and our allies in Annapolis.

It was our campaign against a plethora of Sunday hunting bills, however, that put the Maryland Horse Council on the map as a powerful legislative player. We killed all of the statewide Sunday hunting bills and three county bills: Anne Arundel, Calvert, and Harford. We unfortunately lost the battle in the western counties of Frederick, Washington, Allegany, and Garrett, but are still working through the Governor's office to prevent DNR from adding the Sundays in those counties that the law will authorize.

Our primary opponent in the campaign to preserve Safe Sundays was DNR itself. Despite the fact that its own 2009-2018 White-Tailed Deer Plan did not recommend Sunday hunting as a population control method, and even included a public opinion survey showing that both landowners and the public oppose it, DNR actively lobbied in support of Sunday hunting bills with very little backing from deer hunters themselves.

The key to our success was an extremely active grass roots campaign, particularly in Anne Arundel County, combined with strategically timed meetings with top leadership. The use of the MHC Online County Forums was key in both Anne Arundel and Frederick Counties where the moderators maintained them. Frank Boston was able to schedule individual meetings with at least twenty key legislators, including not only the chairs of the committees through which the bills passed, Del. Maggie Macintosh and Sen. Joan Conway, but also with Speaker Mike Busch and Senate President Mike Miller. We also got good press coverage in both the Annapolis Capital and Baltimore Sun.

Both Miller and Busch spent close to half an hour with our delegations of six MHC members from across the state. These meetings are hard to get during the middle of the session, but both men had been impressed by the visibility of our grass roots efforts and understood the size and scope of the Maryland Horse Council. They listened. They understood. And they used their influence in support of our cause.

Speaker Busch encouraged us to meet with incoming DNR Secretary Joe Gill and promised to speak to him that afternoon. On March 3 we met at DNR with Gill himself, his legislative director Rich Norling, Ashley Valis from the Governor's office, Frank Boston, and five of us. Out of that meeting came a commitment from DNR to conduct a study this year comparing the effectiveness of various deer herd reduction strategies, including Sunday hunting, and their effect on outdoor recreation activities.

As the year progresses we will monitor progress on that study, conduct our own research, build the Safe Sundays Coalition with other outdoor recreation groups, and plan to introduce a 2015 Safe Sundays bill that includes effective deer herd reduction strategies.

We never know what will happen during a legislative session in Annapolis. This year it was Sunday hunting. Next year it could be threats to horse racing. Another year it might be attempts to regulate what we do on our farms with our animals, or how easily we can be sued when something goes wrong. What we know for sure is that without a strong presence in Annapolis the horse industry is vulnerable. Your membership dues pay for this work, and your input and voice makes it successful. Please keep your membership current, come to meetings if you can, and when it's time to contact your legislators, do it. It works!

To stay up to date with the Legislative Committee, visit <http://mhc-legislative.blogspot.com>.

The Horse Council thanks the legislators who have consistently supported us, including:

Senator Mike Miller
 Senator Joan Carter Conway
 Senator Roy Dyson
 Senator J. B. Jennings
 Senator Joanne Benson
 Senator Verna Jones-Rodwell
 Senator Victor Ramirez

Delegate Mike Busch
 Delegate Maggie McIntosh
 Delegate Barbara Frush
 Delegate Charles Barkley
 Delegate Jon Cardin
 Del. Adrienne Jones
 Delegate Wade Kach
 Delegate Aruna Miller
 Delegate Dan Morhaim
 Delegate Peter Murphy
 Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk
 Delegate Shane Robinson

MHC Update

Maryland Fund For Horses Update *(by Vicki Carson)*

This spring, Maryland Fund For Horses continues its programs to educate Marylanders about responsible horse ownership with the third annual Responsible Horse Ownership Week, May 12-18, 2014. Sponsorships are available! Contact info@mdfundforhorses.org to request information about sponsoring a program.

This year's Responsible Horse Ownership Week will include a series of evening webinars about timely horse care topics, and will introduce MFFH's Youth Lessons in Responsible Horse Ownership series.

Webinar Schedule: All webinars run from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Monday, May 12, 2014: How to Buy a Horse, with Jane Seigler and Peter Radue, DVM

Tuesday, May 13, 2014: Equine Quality of Life Issues and Answers, with Justin Sobota, DVM

Wednesday, May 14, 2014: Healthy Horse, Happy Owner, with Amy Burk, PhD

Thursday, May 15, 2014: Legal Responsibilities of Horse Owners, with Kathleen Tabor, Esq.

Visit mdfundforhorses.org on May 1, 2014 for details and to sign up in advance.

MFFH will also launch its Youth Lessons in Responsible Horse Ownership during Responsible Horse Ownership Week. The first two fun-filled, interactive lessons, Amazing, Adaptable Equines and The Bond: Horse-Human Relationships are designed for young people aged 8-11 years old, and can be adapted for a wide range of audiences. Lesson plans, instructor's guide, student handouts and resources will be available to scout troops, 4-H, pony clubs, riding and horsemanship programs and summer camps. Visit mdfundforhorses.org for information about how to request materials for your organization or group.

Farm Stewardship Committee Meeting Report *(by Jane Thery)*

The Maryland Horse Council Farm Stewardship Committee's Winter Meeting was held on February 17, 2014 at the snow-covered

"pool house" of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Phillip Merrill Environmental Center in Annapolis, Maryland, overlooking the bay. About 30 stalwart people came from across Maryland to discuss environmental issues and horse farm management in this beautiful setting.

The committee has big plans for 2014, including:

- Adding at least 10 more horse farms to the Farm Stewardship Certification and Assessment Program (FSCAP)
- Completing a study of the state of horse manure management and composting funded by the Maryland Horse Industry Board
 - Disseminating information on environmental laws, regulations and assistance programs
 - Looking into options for naturalizing horse farms for flora and fauna preservation
 - Exploring new techniques for reducing the "carbon footprint" of stables through the use of natural light, ventilation and alternative energy

The committee's next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 11th at 6pm at Carolyn Krome's Persimmon Tree Farm in Westminster, Maryland.

To stay up to date with the Farm Stewardship Committee, visit <http://mhc-farmstewardship.blogspot.com>.

Help Recruit New Members through the MHC Membership Drive Redemption Program! *(by Margaret Rizzo McKelvy)*

All Association, Farm, Business, and Charity & Foundation members of the Maryland Horse Council are eligible for credit in the MHC Membership Drive. When you help recruit new MHC Members by encouraging the members of your group (association, business, farm, barn, team, club, charity, foundation, etc.) to join with their own memberships, and you submit those new memberships (forms and payments) with the redemption form, you will receive a check for the total credit.

You can receive up to \$50 for each new member you recruit! Please e-mail Margaret Rizzo McKelvy at admin@mdhorsecouncil.org for the rebate form, which includes complete details.

SAVE THE DATES!

Sunday, June 1st

Day at the Races
Pimlico Race Course (Baltimore)

Wednesday, June 11th

Farm Stewardship Meeting
Persimmon Tree Farm (Westminster)

Thursday, August 7th

Third Maryland Horse Forum
Prince George's Equestrian Center (Upper Marlboro)

Saturday, September 13th

Annual MHC Bar-B-Que
Pimlico Race Course (Baltimore)

Visit us online for event details!

www.mdhorsecouncil.org
www.facebook.com/marylandhorsecouncil

Stay Connected

Don't forget that there are several ways to stay up-to-date with the Maryland Horse Council. All events can be found on our website and Facebook page. And important news and topics are discussed on our blogs. Be sure to 'Like' or 'Follow' our social media outlets. And most importantly, be sure to participate! We welcome (and encourage) comments and discussions. If we don't see you at a coming event, we hope to see you online.



Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/marylandhorsecouncil>



Unwanted Horse Project Blog

<http://mhcuhp.wordpress.com/>



Legislative Blog

<http://mhc-legislative.blogspot.com/>



Horse Health Blog

<http://mhc-horsehealth.blogspot.com/>



Farm Stewardship Blog

<http://mhc-farmstewardship.blogspot.com/>

... and don't forget about our County Forums! To find your county, visit: www.mdhorsecouncil.org/county_issues.htm

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
P.O. Box 141
Damascus, MD 20872

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).

Maryland Horse Council membership is open to all associations, farms, businesses and individuals. To join, please visit 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.