



# The Horsemen's Newsletter

October 2007

Volume 17 • Number 10

## Governor calls special session

Governor Martin O'Malley has called the Maryland General Assembly into a special session that will begin October 29.

Legalized slots will undoubtedly be a major focus, as lawmakers consider various proposals aimed at resolving the state's \$1.7 billion budget shortfall.

Gov. O'Malley has put forth a wide-ranging plan that would alter Maryland's tax structure and legalize slots as a means of raising additional revenue for the state and preserving the racing industry.

However, many uncertainties surround the Governor's slots proposal, and it is possible that the issue may be put to a statewide referendum.

"Obviously, we are monitoring the situation very closely," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "As always, MTHA representatives are working diligently to secure the best possible outcome for horsemen."

## Magna now sole owner of MJC

Maryland racing entered a new era on September 24, when Magna Entertainment Corp. announced that it has acquired full ownership of Laurel and Pimlico.

Magna bought a controlling interest in the tracks in November 2002, and at that time secured an option to buy the remaining shares within the next five years. The deal called for De Francis Entities to be paid \$18.3 million, plus interest, for the remaining equity.

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED  
TO THE 21ST ANNUAL**

**MTHA Christmas Party**

*Featuring Our Annual Awards Presentations*

**December 2 ~ 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Carriage Room at Laurel Park**

**Buffet • Open Bar • Dancing**



**2007 MTHA Awards Will Be Presented to**  
***Outstanding Maryland Owner: ZWP STABLE***  
***Outstanding Maryland Trainer: CHRISTOPHER W. GROVE***  
***Outstanding Backstretch Employees from Bowie, Laurel and Pimlico will also be honored.***

Tickets are \$30 if payment is received in advance, or \$40 at the door. To purchase tickets, clip the ticket request form and mail it to the address that appears on the form, drop it by the MTHA office at Laurel or call (410) 265-6842.

Cut on the dotted line

I would like to attend the MTHA Christmas Party. I have enclosed

\$30.00 for each ticket requested.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets \_\_\_\_\_ x \$30.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed.

Please make checks payable to MTHA. Mail before Nov. 22 to MTHA, 6314 Windsor Mill Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207.



## Board actions

Meeting held October 17 at Laurel. *Members present: Richard J. Hoffberger, President; Dale Capuano, Phillip L. Capuano, William T. Fitzgibbons, Sr., Linda S. Gaudet, H. Neil Glasser, Arnold A. Heft, Timothy L. Keefe, Lawrence E. Murray, Valora A. Testerman, Katharine M. Voss*

*Members absent: John V. Alecci, Howard M. Bender, Richard J. Meyer, John J. Robb*

### Jockey fees

The board authorized the jockeys' losing mount bonus program for 2007.

Checks representing \$10 for each mount that finished fourth through last will be sent to all jockeys who rode the majority of their mounts in Maryland in 2007, while competing in at least 50 races at Laurel, Pimlico or Timonium and earning less than \$100,000 at the Maryland tracks.

Distributing the funds in this manner provides meaningful support for Maryland jockeys, and serves to strengthen the racing program.

### MTHA's continuing programs

**Backstretch pension**—MTHA directors approved the allocation of

\$300,000 from the Purse Account toward the funding of the Pension Plan for backstretch workers for 2008. This is the same amount that has been set aside in each of the last 20 years.

**Benevolence funding**—Following established procedure, the board agreed to appropriate up to \$60,000 in 2008 to fund the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Benefit Trust, by which the MTHA provides health benefits to trainers and their spouses.

**Recreation program**—The board agreed to allocate up to \$35,000 to continue funding of the MTHA recreation program through 2008.

**Thanksgiving dinner**—Funding was approved for the MTHA's annual Thanksgiving dinner for backstretch employees.

### Simulcasting extension

The board agreed, by unanimous vote, to approve simulcasting from December 31, 2007 to June 30, 2008.

### Financial report

The MTHA's financial report for the period January 1 through September 30, 2007 was reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

## Scholarships, from page 4

by trainer Tim Keefe, is a junior biological sciences major at Vanderbilt University.

\$2,000: **Lorie Bennett**, a freelance exercise rider, is working toward a degree in physical therapy from Baltimore City Community College. . . **Hillary Keeton**, assistant manager at Juanita Morris's Winding Creek Farm, is pursuing a master's degree in business administration at Salisbury University and planning to become a certified public accountant specializing in farm and equine management. . . **Cash McHargue**, a groom for trainer Gladys McHargue, is a history major at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. . . **Margaret Wolfendale**, an exercise rider and stable foreman for trainer Howard Wolfendale, is a junior mass communications major at Towson University.

\$1,000: **Christina Hash**, a hotwalker for trainer Holly Robinson, has worked as a student technician under Dr. Adam Lockard of the Maryland Vet Group and attends Delaware Valley College as an equine science major with hopes of pursuing a veterinary degree. . . **Kawana Swank**, a farm employee of trainer Ann Merryman, is studying toward a nursing degree at the Community College of Baltimore County. . . **Kelsey Wallace**, a groom and exercise rider for trainer Scott MacKinnon, attends the University of Maryland College Park.

\$500: **Barbara Abell**, employed at Marilyn Ketts's At Last Farm in Aquasco, Md., attends Delaware Valley College majoring in equine science and management. . . **James Davis**, a hotwalker for trainer Georgia Andreadakis, is working toward a degree in computer science at Baltimore City Community College. . . **John Gasparini**, employed by trainer Joe Raszewski, is enrolled in the North Central (Arizona) University doctoral program, where he intends to conduct research on substance and gambling abuse.

\$1,500: **Meredith Cutaia**, a groom and foreman for trainer Phil Schoenthal, attends Community College of Baltimore County with a veterinary degree as her ultimate goal. . . **Kristy Wilson**, a hotwalker for trainer Howard Wolfendale, pony person, takes upper-level courses at Howard Community College.

## Hoofprints

### New stakes coordinator

Coleman Blind has been named stakes coordinator for Laurel/Pimlico, replacing Wendy Pensiv, who recently gave birth to a son, Denver.

Blind, a veteran of the Pimlico and Laurel racing office for more than 30 years, has been the interim stakes coordinator since the August mini-meet.

### Birth announcement

The MTHA congratulates Maryland Racing Media Association (MRMA) president David Richardson and his wife, Nicole Hart-Richardson, on the birth of their son, Lucas Batiste, who arrived on October 11—just six days after the MRMA Crab Feast.

## Fire, disaster insurance continues

Fire and disaster insurance has been renewed for another 12 months. Under this policy, MTHA members may be compensated for death or humane destruction of their horses due to a number of perils, including fire, lightning, wind storm, smoke and flood.

Coverage extends to horses located at or in transit to or from Pimlico, Laurel, Bowie and Timonium. Additionally, horses are covered when in transit from Bowie, Laurel, Pimlico or Timonium to race and return from out-of-state tracks.

Lloyds Underwriters, Inc. is the insurer.

## Scholarships rely on generosity of many

The Maryland Thoroughbred Scholarship Fund is a joint commitment of the Maryland Racing Media Association, MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund.

Major support for 2007 also came from Milton P. Higgins III and Sondra and Howard Bender/Glade Valley Farms.

Additional contributors were Jay Em Ess Stable, Maryland Horse Industry Foundation, Delaware Park, St. Anthony's Delight, Winding Creek Farm, Tack Express, PTK, LLC, Richard W. Small, Fox Hill Farm, Northview Stallion Station, Mario Pino, Spring Meadow Farm, Rosalee Davison, National Steeplechase Association, Cary Jackson, Taking Risks Stable, Hickory Plains, Beatson Stables, Inc., Buckingham Farm, Robert E. Meyerhoff, At Last Farm, Fair Dinkum Farm, Katharine Peterson and Ken Gertz.

## Committee bulletins

### Bowie

Backstretch chairman Phil Capuano reported:

- Speeding vehicles in the stable area are creating serious hazards.
- There have been problems with the basketball court and soccer field.
- Bunkhouses are in poor condition.
- The track kitchen remains a problem.

### Laurel

Backstretch chairman Larry Murray stated that problems continue with vehicles on the horse path at the receiving barn.

### Pimlico

Backstretch chairman Bill Fitzgibbons said the street vendors' horses are still occupying temporary stalls, but they are expected to be moved out in about two months.

Backstretch chairman Lori Testerman reported:

- Lights on the ends of the barns in the Rogers Avenue area are back in working order.
- The laundry room is now closed at night due to vandalism.

## IN MEMORIAM

**William B. Higgins**, 67, a longtime employee of trainer Donald Souder, died on October 2.

**James A. Lombardi, Jr.**, 53, a longtime employee of trainer Henry Walters, died on October 5.

## The Horsemen's Newsletter

Published monthly by the

### Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, Inc.

6314 Windsor Mill Road,  
Baltimore, Md. 21207;  
(410) 265-6842;  
fax (410) 265-6841;

e-mail: mdhorsemen@erols.com  
Web site: www.mdhorsemen.com

*The Horsemen's Newsletter*  
reports on issues and events of interest  
to owners and trainers in Maryland.  
Your suggestions are welcome.

## Senate approves bill that would ease H-2B visa problems

versions of the bill.

This legislation became necessary after the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced two years ago that it would begin enforcing the cap of 66,000 on H-2B workers. This meant that alien workers in many industries, including some in the horse industry, could not be issued H-2B visas.

The "returning worker" exemption is not a permanent provision and has had to be extended each year. It had expired September 30, 2007.

Maryland Senator Barbara A. Mikulski has pledged to continue to work to keep this provision in the bill during conference and to make the provision permanent as part of any comprehensive immigration reform legislation considered.

/American Horse Council

## Recreation report

*From Dan Mangum,  
MTHA Recreation Director.*

### Basketball

The winter basketball league is almost filled. Anyone wanting to add a team should call Dan immediately at (410) 802-5798.

### Bowling

The MTHA will sponsor a bowling tournament on Monday, November 5 at noon at the Laurel AMF Fairlanes. To sign up, call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

### Donations

The following generous people donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: Russell Clark, Clint Cosner, David Burdette, Diane Foley, Gene Gilhooly, Georganne Hale.

### Happy Thanksgiving!

The MTHA, continuing its longstanding tradition, will provide complimentary dinners for all backstretch workers in the track kitchens on Thanksgiving Day.

## Horsemen's calendar

### RACING

**Laurel** ..... Now through Dec. 31

### FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC AUCTIONS AT TIMONIUM

(410) 392-5555

**December Mixed** ..... Dec. 2, 3

**Winter Mixed** ..... Feb. 4  
(Entries close Dec. 5)

### OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Selected Fall Mixed**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... Nov. 4

**Keeneland November Breeding Stock**, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. .... Nov. 5-19

**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Adena Springs Mixed**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... Nov. 8

**Keeneland January Horses of All Ages**, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. .... Jan. 7-14

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Winter Mixed**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... Jan. 16-19

**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Winter Mixed**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... Feb. 10, 11

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... Feb. 12

**Fasig-Tipton Florida Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**, Calder Race Course, Miami, Fla. (859) 255-1555. .... Feb. 26

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Adena Springs Two-Year-Olds in Training**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... March 17

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... March 18, 19



Jane Merryman,  
winner of the  
Eddie McMullen  
Memorial  
Scholarship

ceived \$4,500 to advance her career as a student at the University of Pennsylvania's school of veterinary medicine.

Ms. Merryman, a second-time scholarship winner, gallops horses at Fair Hill Training Center for her father, trainer Edwin Merryman, during school breaks. Last summer, she also shadowed working veterinarians at Fair Hill.

**Andrea Latimer**, another second-time scholarship winner, received \$4,000. Ms. Latimer attends Colorado State University, majoring in equine science and agricultural business. She has most

**MTHA**  
6314 Windsor Mill Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21207

**October 2007**



## Scholarship program distributes \$33,000 to record 17 recipients

recently been employed at John McDaniel's Hickory Ridge Farm.

Other winners were:

\$3,500: **Sonja Alekscic**, employed by trainer Holly Robinson, attends Towson University as a biology major with plans to pursue veterinary medicine.

\$3,000: **Stephanie Wolf** works at Sean and Kelli Magee's Flying Free Farm and majors in English at the University of Maryland College Park.

\$2,500: **Alexandra Curtiss**, employed

See **Scholarships**, page 2

## Thoughts and comment

### MTHA Board of Directors

Richard J. Hoffberger  
President

Richard J. Meyer  
Vice President

John V. Alecci  
Howard M. Bender  
Dale Capuano

Phillip L. Capuano  
William T. Fitzgibbons, Sr.

Linda S. Gaudet  
H. Neil Glasser  
Arnold A. Heft

Timothy L. Keefe  
Lawrence E. Murray  
John J. Robb

Valora A. Testerman  
Katharine M. Voss

**A**nother successful Maryland Million Day has made its way into the record books—with all-time high handle and attendance for the 22nd annual event that took place on October 13 at Laurel. And horsemen can step up and take a share of the credit.

Each year, with the standing approval of the MTHA, the horsemen's share of the handle from Maryland Million Day goes to support the Maryland Million program.

All of the purse money that is generated on Maryland Million Day goes back into the Maryland Million. This makes Maryland horsemen one of the largest contributors to this special day, and these funds have been a major component of the Maryland Million

funding for the past 22 years. As the handle on Maryland Million Day has continued to rise, the value of our contribution has risen proportionately.

When the Maryland Million was in the early stages of its development in 1985, its originators called upon the horsemen's group for support, and met with an immediate and positive response.

Maryland's horsemen have been proud to be part of an innovative program that has boosted all aspects of Maryland racing and breeding. We salute the Maryland Million, are glad to be a part of its success, and hope that our rewarding alliance continues in the future.

/Richard J. Hoffberger, MTHA President