



# The Horsemen's Newsletter

April 2007

Volume 17 • Number 4

## Magna discusses closing Bowie—again

Magna Entertainment Corp. recently initiated a discussion with MTHA representatives regarding the possible sale of its Bowie Training Center property.

Magna, which owns Bowie through its majority interest in the Maryland Jockey Club, has been seeking to divest itself of non-income-producing properties throughout its financially pressed race track empire. Bowie appears on a short-list of properties that Magna is proposing for sale.

However, selling Bowie would be—at the very least—a lengthy and complex transaction, requiring a change in state law.

The MTHA is willing to consider supporting the closing of Bowie Training Center—if, and only if, Magna commits to building additional facilities at Laurel. Those facilities must completely replace the Bowie barns and include a training track.

## MTHA's new Web site

The MTHA's new Web site provides information on the various programs sponsored by the MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, profiles and photographs of directors, a history of annual award winners, plus up-to-date claiming and medication rules, an archive of *The Horsemen's Newsletter*, calendar listings of racing dates and auction sales, and more.

**Check it out at**  
**[www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com)**

As many horsemen are well aware, the Maryland General Assembly adjourned on April 9 without taking any action to provide relief for the racing industry.

"We were disappointed that a slots program did not emerge from this session," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "We are hopeful that Governor O'Malley will make a racing-related slots bill part of a major budget initiative in 2008.

However, it was doubly disappointing that the legislature did not agree to a purse enhancement to help Maryland compete with neighboring states in the interim."

A bill that would have provided an enhancement of more than \$10 million to Thoroughbred purses—House Bill

348, sponsored by Delegate Nancy J. King (D, Distr. 39, Montgomery County), et al.—passed the House on a vote of 121 to 15 but faltered in the Senate, where leadership is focused on securing slots. The Senate did not approve any appropriations of more than \$250,000 this year.

As always, the MTHA will work diligently in the coming months to minimize the inevitable financial challenges.

"No decisions have been made regarding the balance of the racing program for this year, although changes are expected," said Mr. Hoffberger. "Even at this point the Purse Account numbers are troubling. We will do our best, and hope for legislative support in 2008, or possibly in a special session this fall."

## Backstretch Health Fairs scheduled in May at all three tracks

Health Fairs, co-sponsored by the MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, will be conducted free of charge for backstretch workers at the following locations:

**Bowie—May 22 (Tuesday), in the conference room.**

**Laurel—May 23 (Wednesday), in the recreation area next to the track kitchen.**

**Pimlico—May 24 (Thursday), in the MTHA office above the track kitchen.**

**Hours are 8:30 to 1 p.m. each day.**

Services, provided by Adventist Health Care, will include lipid profiling, HIV testing, screenings for blood pressure, body fat composition, carbon monoxide and skin cancer, PSA testing, colo-rectal counseling, plus seated massage therapy and more. Health promoters will be on hand to answer questions.

Important note: Cholesterol tests require a 12-hour fast (no food or drink in the 12 hours before the test). HIV tests require pre-approval by a physician. Individuals seeking HIV testing should visit Dr. Harry M. Harris in the Backstretch Health Center prior to the Health Fair. The Health Center is open Fridays and Saturdays in the track kitchen building at Laurel, and Tuesdays in the First Aid Room at Pimlico. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon at both locations.

For more information call Bobby Lillis at (410) 265-6843.



## Board actions

Meeting held April 11 in Laurel

*Members present: Richard J. Hoffberger, 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*

*Member absent: Richard J. Meyer*

### Claiming rules

Dale Capuano, who serves as chairman of the MTHA's Negotiating Committee, reported on a recent discussion involving the committee and representatives of the Maryland Jockey Club and Maryland Racing Commission, regarding the claiming rules.

The board then considered the following proposals, which are expected to undergo further review by the Racing Commission:

- Requiring a claimed horse to race for a claiming price no lower than the claim for 21 days following the claim. The board voted 7 to 6 not to support the proposal. Voting against the proposed change were Alecci, D. Capuano, P. Capuano, Fitzgibbons, Glasser, Heft and Robb. Voting for the change were Bender, Gaudet, Keefe, Murray, Testerman and Voss.

- Instituting a rule similar to Delaware and New York, whereby only trainers who are assigned stalls in Maryland, or have had a horse claimed during

the current meet, are eligible to enter a claim. (Trainers not assigned stalls in Maryland would be restricted to a lose one/claim one basis.) The board agreed by unanimous vote to support this rule.

- Limiting multiple claims in a race. The board agreed by unanimous vote to support this rule.

- Requiring a horse who has not raced within the last 60 days to have a published workout within 45 days of his next start. The board agreed by unanimous vote to support this rule.

### Drug and Alcohol Program

By unanimous vote, the board agreed to continue its support of the Drug and Alcohol Program at the same level as in previous years.

### AHC membership

The board voted unanimously to renew the MTHA's membership in the American Horse Council, the major organization providing representation for the Thoroughbred industry in the U.S. Congress.

### Financial report

The MTHA's financial report for the period January 1 through March 31, 2007 was reviewed and unanimously approved as presented.

### Budget

The MTHA's 2007 budget was presented and approved.

## Committee bulletins

### Bowie

Backstretch chairman Phil Capuano reported:

- A number of barns have been newly painted.
- Speeding vehicles in the stable area are a major safety hazard.

### Laurel

John Alecci reported the need for a safety fence at the gap near the track kitchen.

Linda Gaudet described a problem with loose horses in the afternoons.

## Hoofprints

### Racing Commission moves office to Pimlico

The Maryland Racing Commission's main office has been relocated to Pimlico, on the grandstand mezzanine.

The Commission's new address is 5201 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore, Md. 21215.

### Medical Center reopens

The Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Va., reopened to outpatients on March 30, following an official release of quarantine on March 27.

The center, which belongs to the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, resumed full operations, including inpatient and emergency care, on April 2.

For more information, call the center's toll-free hotline at (866) 438-7235.

### Unwanted Horse Council

The Unwanted Horse Council (UHC), which operates under the auspices of the American Horse Council, has launched a Web site and published a brochure to explain its mission of helping people to "own responsibly."

For more information visit [www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org](http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org) or call Katy Carter, coordinator, at (202) 296-4031.

### Barbaro Memorial Fund

NTRA Charities has established the Barbaro Memorial Fund to support equine research and is offering "Riding with Barbaro" bracelets at a cost of \$2 plus shipping and handling.

For more information visit [ntra.com/barbarofund](http://ntra.com/barbarofund) or call (800) 792-NTRA.

## Preakness Week security procedures

The Maryland Jockey Club has announced that security procedures for this year's Preakness will be essentially the same as those in recent years.

Horsemen are advised of the following:

- Starting May 1, all employees, vendors, owners, trainers and other backstretch personnel will be required to wear their Maryland Racing Commission picture license on their outer clothing at all times.

- Pimlico's Hayward Avenue stable gate entrance will be relocated to the corner of Winner and Rogers Avenues for Preakness and Black-Eyed Susan Days.

- Hayward Avenue stable area parking on Preakness Day will be restricted to horsemen and other individuals with appropriate parking hangtags and Maryland Racing Commission licenses.

- Rogers Avenue will be closed to vehicular traffic on Preakness Day. Access to the stable area is via Winner Avenue either from Hayward Avenue or Northern Parkway, not Woodcrest.

- Horse vans will not be permitted access to the Hayward Avenue Stable area after 8 a.m. on Preakness Day.

For more information contact Georganne Hale at (800) 638-1859.

## Thoughts, from page 4

Maryland's horsemen have sponsored health fairs annually for many years. And in the time I've been privileged to serve as medical director of the Backstretch Health Center (since 2000), I have observed their benefits firsthand.

Health fair screenings have led to diagnosis of serious and life-threatening diseases. That, of course, is the primary goal, as early diagnosis and treatment provide the absolute best hope for a successful outcome.

However, health fairs have also helped many people begin to deal with other—sometimes chronic and nagging—problems that interfered with their personal life and made them less productive on the job.

Our backstretch workforce is healthi-

## IN MEMORIAM

**Domingo Montero**, a longtime race-tracker who was honored by the MTHA as Outstanding Backstretch Employee at Laurel in 1996, died April 9 at the age of 70. Mr. Montero came to the U.S. from his native Uruguay in 1966. At various times a licensed trainer in his own right, winning races at Garden State in the 1970s, he was employed as an assistant to trainers Jose Martin and Oscar Barrera on the New York/Florida circuit before going to work for Maryland-based Dean Gaudet in 1986. For the past several years he worked for Robin Graham at Laurel.

**John G. Pappas**, 63, who was employed by the Maryland Racing Commission for 33 years and most recently served as administrator of the test barn, died April 6.

## The Horsemen's Newsletter

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The Horsemen's Newsletter  
reports on issues and events of interest  
to owners and trainers in Maryland.

Your suggestions are welcome.

er, by far, than it would be without the annual health fairs.

Health fairs work hand in hand with the Backstretch Health Center, which is open year-round, providing backstretch workers and their families with drop-in care on Fridays and Saturdays at Laurel and Tuesdays at Pimlico (9 a.m. to noon at both locations). This service is also free.

The MTHA and MHAF have worked hard to ensure that every backstretch worker has access to quality medical care. It's their right, and our commitment.

*/Harry M. Harris, M.D.  
Medical Director*

## Recreation report

*From Dan Mangum,  
MTHA Recreation Director  
(410) 802-5798*

### Golf

Due to inclement weather, the MTHA golf outing originally scheduled for April 16 has been postponed to June 25 at Ft. Meade. Sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

### Orioles tickets

Vic and Carol Hunter, employed by Paul Johnson at Bowie, won the MTHA's first Orioles ticket drawing of the season.

### Congratulations

Milt Quick, a member of the parking

## Holiday brunch was well-attended

This year, for the first time, the Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund (MHAF) sponsored a complimentary spring holiday brunch for backstretch workers.

The event, held Easter Sunday, April 8, in the track kitchens at Bowie, Laurel and Pimlico, was well-attended.

"As we know, there are no holidays from the care and feeding of horses," said MHAF President Rich Meyer. "The meal was a small token of thanks to the people who performed these duties while others were at home with family."

lot crew, has been inducted into the Maryland Slow Pitch Softball Hall of Fame.

### Special thanks to—

Mark Dillow, who donated a new set of pool balls for the recreation room at Bowie.

### Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: J.D. Brown, Jean Chalk, Gene Gilhooly, Sylvia and Arnold Heft, Fran Raffetto, Paul Rich and Russell Schalk.

## Horsemen's calendar

### RACING

**Pimlico** ..... Now through June 9  
**Laurel** ..... Aug. 10 through Aug. 23;

Sept. 5 through Dec. 31

**Timonium** ..... Aug. 24 through Sept. 3

**FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC AUCTIONS AT TIMONIUM**  
(410) 392-5555

**Two-Year-Olds in Training** ..... May 21, 22

**Two-Year-Olds in Training and Horses of Racing Age** ..... June 26  
Entries close May 18

**Eastern Fall Yearlings** ..... Oct. 1-3  
Entries close July 9

**OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS**  
**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Spring Two-Year-Olds in Training**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154 ..... April 24-27

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Two-Year-Olds and Horses of Racing Age**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154 ..... June 19, 20

**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July Selected Yearlings**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555 ..... July 16, 17

**Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Selected Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 6, 7

**Fasig-Tipton New York Preferred Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 10, 11

**Fasig-Tipton New York Open Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 14

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected/Open Yearlings**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154 ..... Aug. 20-24

**Check the MTHA Web site for notice of the next Board Meeting.**  
Go to [www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com) and click on Calendar.



## Final call for Pension Plan Registration

Registration for the MTHA's Backstretch Pension Plan for the year ended 2006 is ending soon. Listed here are the remaining dates and locations.

Everyone employed in the care of horses on the backstretch is eligible to participate—including assistant trainers, exercise riders, grooms, hotwalkers, stable foremen and trainers.

Bring your Maryland Racing Commission Badge and W-2, 1099, or tax return for 2006. For more information call the MTHA office at (410) 265-6842.

**Failure to register will result in the loss of your 2006 benefit**

### April 23 through April 27

Laurel Track Kitchen,  
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### April 30 through May 4

Pimlico MTHA Office,  
10 a.m. to noon



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

**April 2007**

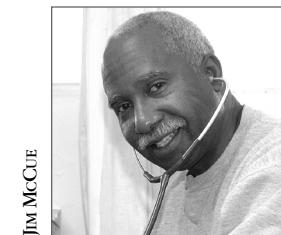
## Maryland Horse Radio returns to airwaves

Stan Salter's Maryland Horse Radio has resumed with live hour-long shows at 9 a.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. on Sundays, through June 9, at WBIS-AM 1190.

The programs will feature interviews with local horsemen along with Triple Crown highlights and other news items.

Broadcasts can also be heard at [www.wbis1190.com](http://www.wbis1190.com).

## Thoughts and comment



Dr. Harry M. Harris

Do you put off going to visit a doctor? If so, you are not alone. Many people hesitate to go for a check-up. Perhaps it's because they're feeling fine and don't want to bother. Or maybe there's some concern about what the doctor will find. Sadly, the cost of doctors' fees and tests holds back far too many.

Health fairs, like those the MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund

(MHAF) will sponsor next month at all three tracks (see article on page 1), can—and do—help save lives of people like these.

Medical tests that might cost hundreds of dollars at a private office or clinic are available at absolutely no charge.

For those who don't like to travel—not a problem. At Bowie, Laurel and Pimlico, it's a short walk from every barn.

Difficult to work things into a busy schedule? In most cases, from start to finish, the testing requires no more than half an hour.

See *Thoughts*, page 3

## MTHA Board of Directors

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