



# The Horsemen's Newsletter

June 2008

Volume 18 • Number 6

## Magna holds tight, awaiting referendum

It appears unlikely that Magna Entertainment Corp. (MEC) will sell Laurel and Pimlico before November, when the referendum on slots is scheduled to take place.

Meanwhile, MEC's vice-president of racing, Scott Borgemenke, has announced that Magna will campaign for the slots referendum. However, Magna has not yet advised of its financial contribution to the effort.

Magna's initial reluctance to support the referendum reportedly was based on concerns that Laurel is not named as a slots site in the legislation approved in last fall's special session of the Maryland General Assembly.

"It's clear that the legislation is designed for Laurel to be a site," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "And it's also clear that Magna will have a tough time securing the license if it does not actively support the referendum."

## MJC makes leadership change official

As expected, Tom Chuckas has been named president and chief operating officer of the Maryland Jockey Club.

Mr. Chuckas, the former CEO of Rosecroft Raceway, moved into the post on June 1, replacing Chris Dragone.

Mr. Chuckas had served as a special consultant to Magna Entertainment Corp. chairman Frank Stronach since May 1.

News of the impending change in leadership appeared in last month's issue of *The Horsemen's Newsletter*.

## Slate of nominees for MTHA Board of Directors election

Ballots for the Board of Directors election will be mailed to all MTHA members in early July.

Deadline for return is August 4.

A slate of nominees, developed by the Nominating Committee, was presented to the Board and general membership at the MTHA's annual meeting held June 5 at the Ramada Inn Laurel. One additional nomination was accepted upon petition.

Following is the list of candidates, in the order in which they appear on the ballot. The order was drawn the same way post positions are drawn for a race.

### Owners

1. Richard J. Meyer
2. Arnold A. Heft
3. James M. Boyce
4. C. Robert Haynes
5. Howard M. Bender
6. William T. Fitzgibbons, Sr.
7. H. Neil Glasser
8. Richard J. Hoffberger
9. Wayne A. Harrison
10. Christine E. Bricker
11. Lucy C. Kessler
12. Theodore R. Montuori
13. Phillip L. Capuano
14. Russell C. Schalk, Jr.

### Trainers

15. Katharine M. Voss
16. Philip B. Schoenthal
17. Christopher W. Grove
18. Linda S. Gaudet
19. Carlos A. Garcia
20. Talbot J. Albert, IV
21. Valora A. Testerman
22. Timothy L. Keefe
23. W. Robert Bailes
24. John V. Alecci
25. Lawrence E. Murray
26. Dale Capuano
27. John J. Robb

## Jim McKay was friend to horsemen



The MTHA joins the rest of the Thoroughbred industry in mourning the loss of Jim McKay, the legendary ABC sports-caster, who died on Belmont Stakes day, June 7, at the age of 86.

Mr. McKay, in addition to his many other fine attributes, was a good friend to Maryland horsemen. For several years, in the late 1980s and early '90s, he provided an invaluable service to the MTHA as the emcee for our annual awards ceremony.

The originator of the Maryland Million, and himself a longtime Maryland-based owner, Mr. McKay "cast Maryland racing in a special kind of glow," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "He focused on the tradition and excellence of Thoroughbreds in this state in a way that couldn't help but make everyone proud."



## Board actions

Meeting held June 5 in Laurel

*Members present: Richard J. Hoffberger, President; Richard J. Meyer, Vice President; John V. Alecci, Dale Capuano, Phillip L. Capuano, William T. Fitzgibbons, Sr., Linda S. Gaudet, H. Neil Glasser, Timothy L. Keefe, Lawrence E. Murray, Katharine M. Voss*

*Members absent: Howard M. Bender, Arnold A. Heft, John J. Robb, Valora A. Testerman*

### Simulcasting extension

The board agreed, by unanimous vote, to approve simulcasting from July 1 through December 31, 2008.

### Annual audit

The audit of the MTHA's financial statements for 2007 was presented and accepted.

Ellin & Tucker, Chartered performed the audit.

## Committee bulletins

### Bowie

Backstretch chairman Phil Capuano reported that noise from tree-trimming trucks parked in the stable area has frightened a number of horses, especially 2-year-olds, and contributed to an unusually large incidence of loose horses.

### Laurel

Backstretch chairman Larry Murray said an exposed electrical wire was quickly attended to after track management was informed of the situation.

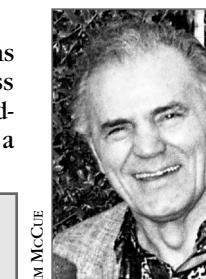
### Pimlico

Backstretch chairman Bill Fitzgibbons said action was taken to restrict access to the glassed-in area next to the paddock to trainers and jockeys following a race.

## Electronic funds transfer available

Reminder: Funds may be transferred electronically from your horsemen's bookkeeper account to your bank account, or to a horsemen's account at another participating track.

For more information visit [www.incompass-solutions.com](http://www.incompass-solutions.com) or call (800) 467-7385.



Clem Florio, a former handicapper for the Maryland Jockey Club who lent character and expertise to Maryland racing for nearly 40 years, died on May 25 in Hollywood, Fla. He was 78.

Born in Queens, New York, Mr. Florio grew up near Aqueduct and found his way to the boxing ring at an early age to help support his family.

As the Ozone Park Assassin, he compiled an 8-6 record in the middleweight division from 1950 to 1964.

He started at the top in racing—as a groom for Hall of Fame trainer James

## Maryland schedule during current break in live racing

### MTHA

The MTHA will continue to provide its full range of services to members. The MTHA's office at Laurel Park is open from Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to noon, except for the week of July 21, when it will close for employee vacations. Horsemen needing assistance that week are asked to call the main office at (410) 265-6842.

### Racing Office

The Racing Office is closed. Entries for Colonial Downs are not being taken in Maryland.

### Licensing Office

The Maryland Racing Commission Licensing Office is closed.

Owners and trainers may follow their customary procedure, submitting applications to the Commission's main office in Towson. For more information call the Commission at (410) 296-9682.

### Horsemen's Bookkeeper

The Horsemen's Bookkeeper's office is open at Laurel Park, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Gate schooling

The starting gate is available for schooling from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the following days: Bowie—Tuesdays and Fridays; Laurel—Wednesdays and Saturdays; Pimlico—Mondays and Thursdays.

### Turf courses

The Pimlico and Laurel turf courses are closed.

### Medication issues

Questions regarding Lasix or other medications should be directed to the Maryland Racing Commission at (410) 296-9682; fax (410) 296-9687.

### Questions/problems with stalls

For Pimlico and Laurel, contact Terry Overmier at (443) 324-6646. For Bowie, contact Jerry Burdick at (301) 802-9440.

*There is no shuttle service from Maryland tracks to Colonial Downs. Trainers must arrange their own transportation.*

## Clem Florio, former MJC oddsmaker, won respect throughout racing world

"Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons, and went on to launch his career as a handicapper with the *Miami News*.

Mr. Florio was a turf writer/handicapper for the *Baltimore News-American* from 1965 to '78 and *The Washington Post* from 1978 to '87.

He was the track handicapper, setting the morning line odds at Pimlico and Laurel, from 1993 through 2001.

Among his many noteworthy feats, Mr. Florio was among the few who picked the winner of the 1983 Preakness—Maryland-bred Deputed Testimony.

"Clem was an encyclopedia of information about Maryland racing," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "And his kindness and radiant good humor made him a favorite in any field."

## Thoughts and comment, from page 4

But put Woods in a tournament, and you can sell TV time. It's not only Woods's ability on the golf course that gives him notoriety. It's all of the national promotion and millions of dollars that corporations spend promoting his image that give him the recognition. Wouldn't the racing industry like to have major advertisers promoting someone the same way Woods is promoted? Think of the "free" advertising the horse industry would receive.

Unfortunately, most of the stars in our sport don't last long enough for the general public to get to know them. It's the trainers and jockeys who can generate ongoing interest in addition to the horse.

When the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA) was created in 1998, it was charged with becoming self-sustaining within a few years. That effort was thwarted, in part, because many of the NTRA's money-making ideas were rejected by member tracks. Tracks balked at directing funds from those efforts to an entity other than themselves. This made it impossible for

## IN MEMORIAM

**Brandon Benson**, a photographer whose work appeared in many racing publications, died May 22 at the age of 21. Mr. Benson received the Maryland Jockey Club's award for the best Preakness photograph of last year. The award-winning photograph appeared on the cover of the July 2007 *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred*.

## The Horsemen's Newsletter

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### 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](mailto:mdhorsemen@erols.com)  
Web site: [www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com)

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

the NTRA to implement marketing programs that it was charged with. Again, our industry could not get together for the greater good.

Television has generated untold millions of dollars for other sports. Just think where the NFL would be if every team had to make a separate deal with the networks. Would there have been a full day of national promotion surrounding the Super Bowl? Virtually every major sport is better organized than the racing industry.

The tracks have a lot to gain from bet-

ter promotional efforts, as they're the ones responsible for promoting the sport. Yet we seldom see any new ideas coming from our track management. Sure, we see ways they can sell the signal better, or for less cost, or a new computer platform to get the signal into our homes or offices. But we don't see the kind of promotion that surrounds NASCAR or other successful sports events.

Until we can all get together and give a small portion of our revenue for the greater good of the industry, we will not be able to take full advantage of our resources.

*/Richard J. Hoffberger, MTHA President*

## Recreation report

*From Dan Mangum,  
MTHA Recreation Director  
(410) 437-4405*

### Softball

Pickup softball games are played at Pimlico on Fridays at 6 p.m.

### Orioles night at Camden Yards

Winners in the ticket drawing for the MTHA's Orioles night at Camden Yards, June 18, vs. the Houston Astros, included John Collins, Raul Garrido, Francisco Zunno and Damon Dilodovico.

## Horsemen's calendar

### RACING

*Laurel* ..... To be announced  
*Colonial Downs* ..... June 9 through Aug. 6

### Maryland Million Day Oct. 4, Laurel Park

### FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC AUCTIONS AT TIMONIUM

(410) 392-5555  
*Eastern Fall Yearlings* ..... Sept. 29-Oct. 1  
(Entries close July 9)  
*December Mixed* ..... Dec. 7, 8  
(Entries close Sept. 21)

### OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

*Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July Selected Yearlings*, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555 ..... July 14, 15  
*Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Selected Yearlings*, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 4, 5  
*Fasig-Tipton New York Preferred Yearlings*, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 9, 10  
*Fasig-Tipton New York Open Yearlings*, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (516) 328-1800 ..... Aug. 12

### Golf outing

The new date for the MTHA's golf outing is Monday, June 28 at Ft. Meade. Sign-up sheets are posted in the track kitchens.

### Baysox tickets

A limited number of Baysox tickets are still available for August and September.

### Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: J.D. Brown, Gene Gilhooly and Sylvia and Arnold Heft.

## Thoughts and comment

*Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected/Open Yearlings*, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154 ..... Aug. 18-22

*Keeneland September Yearlings*, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412 ..... Sept. 8-21

*Charles Town Thoroughbred Horse Sales Fall Mixed*, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Charles Town, W. Va. (304) 725-8026 ..... Sept. 22

*Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Fall Mixed*, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154 ..... Oct. 6-10  
*New York Breeders' Sales Company Fall Mixed*, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (518) 587-1555 ..... Oct. 12

*Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Yearlings*, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555 ..... Oct. 20-22  
*Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Selected Fall Mixed*, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555 ..... Nov. 2

*Keeneland November Breeding Stock*, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412 ..... Nov. 2-15

*Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Adena Springs Mixed*, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555 ..... Nov. 6



## Hoofprints

### Health Fairs a big success

Rich Meyer, chairman of the MTHA's Health and Welfare Committee, reported strong attendance figures for the Health



Luigi Gino was among many who participated in the Health Fairs.

Fairs sponsored by the MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund in early June at all three tracks.

"We are gratified that horsemen are taking advantage of this important service," said Mr. Meyer. "Helping to maintain a healthy workforce is one of the most valuable roles of our two organizations."

### Cole, Lake lead Pimlico meet

Robert Cole and Scott Lake took the owner and trainer titles, respectively, at the Pimlico spring meet that ended June 7.

Mr. Cole had 10 wins with four dif-

ferent trainers.

Mr. Lake topped the trainers' standings at Pimlico for the third consecutive year, winning 23 races.

### Fasig-Tipton sale completed

Fasig-Tipton, the nation's oldest Thoroughbred auctioneering firm and a major presence in Maryland, is now under the ownership of Synergy Investments. The deal announced in April was finalized on May 30.

Synergy Investments is headed by Abdulla Al Habbai, a close associate of Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed, and is based in that country.



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

**June 2008**

## Thoughts and comment

Slots—and the fast-approaching referendum to take place in November—are the main issue for Maryland's racing industry right now. And that's as it should be. Without additional revenue, the industry faces a swift downhill slide.

But slots won't be a panacea in Maryland or anyplace else.

In order for our industry to grow and thrive, the slots revenue must also be used as a springboard for racing to better promote itself.

Promotion and a coordinated effort between various industry groups, including various tracks, is woefully lacking throughout our sport.

For example—Efforts to allow the jockeys to place advertisements on their breeches have met with resistance from owners and tracks.

The question has always been: What's in it for me? How much of the revenue will I get? The answer has always been nothing. A large part of nothing is still nothing.

Are the owners of the horses entitled to proceeds from such advertising? Does the golf course where Tiger Woods plays get a cut from Nike or any of Woods's other sponsors? Of course not.

See **Thoughts**, page 3

### MTHA Board of Directors

**Richard J. Hoffberger**  
*President*

**Richard J. Meyer**  
*Vice President*

**John V. Alecci**  
**Howard M. Bender**

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**Phillip L. Capuano**

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