



The Horsemen's Newsletter

December 2009

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Ocean Downs slots site put on hold

The slots facility approved for Ocean Downs harness track near Ocean City will not meet its scheduled Memorial Day 2010 opening date, according to published reports.

Track owner William M. Rickman informed the slots commission that "unexpected" conditions have delayed the completion of the site indefinitely.

Structural problems and "serious asbestos" have been found in the grandstand, which is undergoing renovations designed to transform it into a slots site.

Ocean Downs was awarded a license for 800 video lottery terminals (slots) and was expected to be the first to begin operation.

It now appears that Penn National Gaming Inc.'s slots parlor in Perryville (Cecil County) will take the lead. Expected to have a late October launching, that site has approval for 1,500 machines. Work reportedly has begun on the foundation for its new building.

Reminder: "Jail time" for claimed horses lasts 60 days

State regulations prohibit horses claimed at Maryland tracks from racing in other states during the 60-day period following the claim.

During Laurel Park's upcoming break in live racing (the hiatus will begin after the last race on December 19, with racing to resume on January 1), claimed horses will not be permitted to race out-of-state unless 60 days have elapsed since the claim.

Anne Arundel County Council could determine fate of Maryland racing

As this newsletter went to press, Maryland's racing industry was facing a potentially crucial turning point. That is the vote by the Anne Arundel County Council, scheduled December 21, on whether to approve zoning for the Cordish Cos.'s slots site at Arundel Mills Mall.

Cordish Cos. has secured the necessary license from the Video Lottery Facilities Location Commission but still must have local zoning approval in order to proceed.

The Council has numerous times de-

layed action on the Cordish request, most recently on December 7, but it appears poised for a vote four days before Christmas.

The MTHA has lobbied extensively to explain the destruction that will occur within the racing industry if the 4,750 slot machines allotted for Anne Arundel County are placed anywhere but at Laurel Park.

MTHA President Richard Hoffberger advised the Anne Arundel County Council as follows:

See *Anne Arundel slots*, page 3

MTHA Christmas Party sparkles with achievers

Photographs courtesy of Jim McCue

The MTHA's Annual Christmas Party and Awards Ceremony, held November 30 at Laurel Park, was one of our most successful ever. Hundreds of horsemen and their guests, along with others involved in the industry, gathered for fine food and fellowship.

MTHA President Richard Hoffberger served as emcee and presented awards to:

JANET L. WAYSON *Outstanding Owner*

A "very educated owner," in the words of her trainer, John J. (Jerry) Robb, Janet Wayson has had an exceptionally winning season while carrying on the racing and breeding operation that she and her late husband, Morgan (Sonny) Wayson, developed over the past four decades.

The Wayson stable won with 33 percent of its starts through this fall, and finished in the money almost 60 percent of the time. Mrs. Wayson's latest star is Great Love, a two-time stakes winner in 2009.

As a cousin of trainer King T. Leatherbury, Mrs. Wayson obviously has racing in her blood. But she credits her husband, who died last year, with developing the foundation of their racing success.



Janet Wayson

"The horses who are now running, and winning, are ones that he selected," said Mrs. Wayson in accepting the award.

See *Christmas Party*, page 2



Christmas Party, from page 1



Hamilton Smith

HAMILTON A. SMITH *Outstanding Trainer*

Few trainers are as consistently successful as Hamilton Smith, who has maintained a public stable in Maryland since 1976.

Mr. Smith has trained at least one stakes winner every year since 1996, and this year he's had seven stakes wins—four of them with William M. Backer's talented 3-year-old filly Blind Date, whose victories include the Grade 3 Virginia Oaks.

Mr. Smith grew up in Ellore, S.C., where his brother, Franklin Smith, maintains one of the East Coast's most active training centers. The close ties between the two brothers allow a horse to stay in a single program through breaking, racing and R&R.

Also key to his operation is his wife, Jody. The Smiths have about 40 horses at Laurel for a dozen different owners.

FREDERICK A. TALLARICO *Special Appreciation*

Fred Tallarico is part of a tradition that continued for 62 years in Maryland racing. For all of that time, a Tallarico served as head usher at the tracks.

It started with John Tallarico in 1946, and continued with Sam Tallarico until Fred Tallarico took over in the early 1980s. Mr. Tallarico retired in 2008, but he returns on major racing days.

Keeping things running smoothly in the box seat section, and escorting winning connections to the winner's circle were two of Mr. Tallarico's main duties. And he handled them with the poise and dignity that was the Tallarico trademark.

FRANCISCO M. OSEGUERA *Outstanding Backstretch Employee, Bowie*

Francisco Oseguera admits that he has "a lot of emotion" when one of the horses he grooms wins a race.

And as a groom for Chris Grove, he's

had his hands on a lot of winners—including the likes of stakes winners Silmaril, Lexi Star, and Five Steps.

A native of Mexico, Mr. Oseguera came to the U.S. 26 years ago and he has worked for many different trainers, both in New York and Maryland.

His experience and work ethic make him a model employee, according to Mr. Grove.

"He does everything expected of him plus any additional work that is needed," Mr. Grove says.

Adds Mr. Grove: "Francisco is a real team player. I never have to go behind him to check on his work."

LOUIS D. BERNIER, JR. *Outstanding Backstretch Employee, Laurel*

His job as an assistant to trainer Ferris Allen is a second career for Lou Bernier, who maintained his own public stable for many years.

A native of Baltimore, and a lifelong racetracker, Mr. Bernier started out as a groom for John Lenzini Sr. at Pimlico in 1963.

In the early 1990s, he rose to the top with Root Boy, a popular, hard-hitting runner who won or placed in 25 of 32 starts. Root Boy won four stakes, including the Grade 3 Stephen Foster Handicap at Churchill Downs.

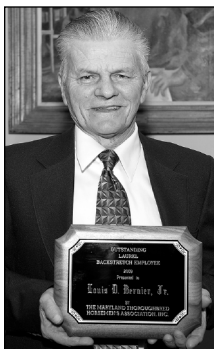
Unfortunately, Root Boy is most often remembered for his horrific breakdown in the 1993 running of the Maryland Million Classic.

Although Root Boy survived, and went on to stand at stud in Maryland, Mr. Bernier was so shaken that he left racing. It was a while before he came back, looking for employment.

Mr. Bernier went to work for Mr. Allen about five years ago, and now runs the Laurel Park division of the Allen stable. He is in charge of 20 employees, and he oversees the care of nearly 40 horses.



Francisco Oseguera



Louis Bernier

Hoofprints

Thanksgiving dinners were warmly received

The MTHA's annual Thanksgiving dinner drew more than 400 backstretch employees to the track kitchens at Bowie and Laurel, reported Health and Welfare Committee Chairman Rich Meyer.

"This is a longstanding tradition that the MTHA is proud to continue," said Mr. Meyer.

Dr. Nat White elected AAEP president

Dr. Nat White, director of the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine's Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Va., has been elected president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP).

The AAEP, based in Lexington, Ky., is the major organization bringing together equine veterinarians of all disciplines.

NTRA Moment of the Year

Voting is underway for the National Thoroughbred Racing Association's 11th annual NTRA Moment of the Year. Those selecting the winning image automatically will be entered in a random drawing for a trip for two to the January 18 Eclipse Awards ceremony in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on January 2. For more information visit www.ntra.com.

Committee bulletins

Bowie

Backstretch chairman Phil Capuano reported:

- Problems with the footing in the Hacienda have been resolved. Maintenance replaced the surface with new material.

- The track surface has been well maintained.

EHV-1 Precautions

The Maryland Jockey Club is currently banning from its facilities any horse shipping from Calder, or who last started at that Florida track. The restriction is due to an outbreak of EHV-1 at Calder.

Trainers are once again reminded to have their horses vaccinated for EHV-1.



Anne Arundel slots, from page 1

"Simply put, if the County Council approves the zoning for the Arundel Mills facility, the demise of the racing and breeding industry in the State will follow. Notwithstanding that the horsemen and breeders benefit from every slot dollar wagered regardless of location, there is absolutely no incentive whatsoever for a track operator to operate a race track in competition with a

nearby casino.

"With Maryland racing at a critical juncture given the impending auction at Laurel Park, an approval of zoning for the slots facility at Arundel Mills will render Laurel Park virtually worthless as a racing operation.

"While the proponents of a slots facility at Arundel Mills point to the hundreds of jobs that the facility will create,

there will be a commensurate or greater loss of jobs at Laurel Park.

On the other hand, the possibility of a slots facility at Laurel Park will invite serious competition for the acquisition of Laurel Park at auction, eventual construction of a newly designed and renovated racing facility, a state-of-the-art video lottery facility and an invigorated racing industry creating additional racing and slots-related jobs, including the jobs that are anticipated for Arundel Mills."

IN MEMORIAM

Charles R. (Charlie) Lewis, a successful trainer in Maryland for more than 50 years, died on December 2 at the age of 91.

Mr. Lewis, who established himself as a Hall of Fame show rider in his youth, worked on Eddie Blind's starting gate crew before taking out his trainer's license in 1950. In the 1950s and '60s he several times ranked as the state's leading trainer.

A former member of the Maryland State Fair Board, Mr. Lewis was a long-time chairman of its racing committee.

Herbert J. (Jack) Miller, Jr., a highly accomplished Washington, D.C., lawyer and longtime owner/breeder with his wife, Carey Kinsolving Miller, died on November 14 at the age of 85.

The Millers bred and raced a number of stakes winners, including Maryland-bred champion Angelina County and her granddaughter Saxet Heights.

Achsab Stettinius O'Donovan, who with her late husband Hugh J. O'Donovan bred and raised horses in Maryland for more than 50 years, died on November 17. She was 87. Mr. O'Donovan died in 2003.

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.

Thoughts, from page 4

(MJC), the Health Center has proven extremely effective in improving the overall health of the work force. It is staffed by medical director Harry M. Harris, M.D., who sees patients on a first-come, first-served basis on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

Medical care is provided to backstretch workers and their families free of charge.

The Horsemen's Counseling Program (HCP), also a cooperative effort involving the MHAf, MTHA and MJC, is provided through the University of Maryland Medical System and offers mental health services, and counseling and rehabilitation for those dealing with drug

and alcohol problems.

Treatment includes continuing individual counseling, group therapy and vocational services provided by an on-track counselor.

Participation is strictly confidential.

HCP counselor Bill Borchardt is available on an immediate basis at (301) 776-0404.

For more information call MHAf benefits coordinator Bobby Lillis at (410) 265-6843 or go to www.mdhorsemen.com and click on Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund.

*/Richard J. Meyer, President, MHAf
Vice President, MTHA*

Recreation report

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

Basketball

There is room for one more team for the Sunday night basketball league beginning in January at Meade High School.

Bowling

The bowling tournament will take

place on January 21 at Laurel Fairlanes.

Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: Linda Andrisani, Herb and Miriam Mittenthal, Lisa Richardson, John Robb, Robin Fulco and Tom and Mimi Voss.

Horsemen's calendar

RACING

Laurel Park Now through April 10

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

Two-Year-Olds in Training . . . May 17, 18
(Entries close Feb. 15)

OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

Keeneland January Horses of All Ages,
Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. . Jan. 11-16

Ocala Breeders' Sales Co., Winter Mixed,
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. . . Jan. 19, 20

Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Winter Mixed
Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. . . . Feb. 8

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. Feb. 16

**Fasig-Tipton Florida
Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**
Calder Race Course, Miami, Fla.
(859) 255-1555. March 2

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Adena
Springs Two-Year-Olds in Training**
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. March 15

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Selected Two-Year-Olds in Training**
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. . . March 16, 17

Keeneland Two-Year-Olds in Training,
Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. . . . April 5

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Spring Two-Year-Olds in Training**
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. . . . April 19-22



Schedule during December break in live racing

*There will be no live racing at Laurel Park during the final 12 days of December.
The break begins after the last race on Saturday, December 19. Racing resumes on January 1.
During the break, the following schedule is in effect:*

MTHA Office

Open: December 22, 23 and 31,
9 a.m. to noon.

Racing Office and Horsemen's Bookkeeper

Open: December 22,
9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
December 29 and 30 (entries).
December 31 (scratches and riders).

Maryland Racing Commission (People ID)

Office will close on December 19
after the races and reopen on
January 1.

Jocks' Room and Silks Room

Reopens on December 30.

Gate schooling

Monday to Thursday,
December 21 to 24.

Monday to Thursday,
December 28 to 31.

Hours: Laurel, 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.;
Bowie, 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

***Bowie and Laurel will be closed
for training on Christmas Day,
December 25.***



MTHA
6314 Windsor Mill Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21207

December 2009

Thoughts and comment

Maryland racing is in dire straits financially. And, unfortunately, those who are most often negatively impacted are our own employees.

With that in mind, I urge all owners and trainers to familiarize themselves with the services available through the Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund (MHAF), and to pass the information along to their employees whenever the need arises.

Assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis, and backstretch employees must present legitimate evidence of need. That said, the Fund has helped countless individuals with a wide range

of medical and dental needs, and in certain instances has eased the burden of living expenses for our lowest income-earners.

The Fund carefully allocates its resources so as to help as many individuals as possible.

The Backstretch Health Center, located in the track kitchen building at Laurel Park, is one of the Fund's major means of providing direct assistance to the backstretch community.

A joint project with the MTHA, with support from the Maryland Jockey Club

See *Thoughts*, page 3

MTHA Board of Directors

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