



# The Horsemen's Newsletter

June 2009

Volume 19 • Number 4

## MTHA looks to boost Maryland-bred program

When slots money begins rolling in, the earnings potential for Maryland-breds at Laurel and Pimlico will receive an extra boost, thanks to a proposed plan involving the MTHA and Maryland Horse Breeders Association (MHBA).

"Details are still being worked out," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "But the goals are clear—they are to enhance the racing program, increase the value of our Maryland-bred product and develop a productive working relationship between the two groups."

The new initiative will involve purse enhancements for Maryland-breds in overnight races. Supported in principle by the MTHA's Negotiating Committee led by Dale Capuano, it is awaiting ratification by the MTHA Board.

It will be funded in part by a portion of slots revenue that was redirected to the Purse Account during the 2009 legislative session to correct an anomaly in the original slots bill.

"Whereas that money was once a source of bitter dispute between the MTHA and MHBA," said Mr. Hoffberger, "we hope it will become part of the foundation for a prosperous future for both horsemen and breeders."

## Options for horses who can no longer race

For a list of facilities in Maryland offering services for retired race horses, go to [www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com).

If you know of a rescue/retirement facility that belongs on this list, please e-mail the MTHA at [mdhorsemen@erols.com](mailto:mdhorsemen@erols.com) or call (410) 265-6842.

**Live racing returns to Maryland on August 1**

**Live racing will return to Maryland sooner than expected, on August 1, with an 11-day mini-meet at Laurel Park.**

Racing at Laurel will continue through August 23, on a three-day-a-week schedule, Fridays through Sundays.

The summer/fall racing program was developed with input from the MTHA's Negotiating Committee chaired by Dale Capuano and also consisting of MTHA President Richard Hoffberger, and Directors John Alecci, John Robb and Katy Voss.

Following a break for the Timonium meet (August 28 through September 7), racing will resume at Laurel on September 12 and run through December 19. It will be conducted four days a week, Wednesdays through Saturdays.

The program calls for 68 live racing days at Laurel through the end of the year.

Highlighting the fall season will be the return of the Grade 1 Frank J. De Francis Memorial Dash, with a purse of \$300,000-guaranteed, at a date to be determined, and Maryland Million Day on September 26.

Except for Maryland Fund races, no other stakes will be offered.

Laurel's turf course is expected to be in prime condition throughout the summer and fall, and will be utilized to the full benefit of horsemen and fans.

"Under the present economic circumstances, we believe this arrangement provides the maximum possible opportunities for horsemen," said Mr. Hoffberger. "Our summer break started early this year, with Pimlico closing on May 23. So fans and horsemen should be more than ready to be back when racing resumes."

**Deadline for stall applications for the fall meet is August 1.**

## Trainer James W. Murphy reflected honor on his profession



James W. Murphy

One of Maryland's most respected trainers, James W. (Jimmy) Murphy, died on June 13 at the age of 82.

A native of Milwaukee, Mr. Murphy was a top show rider in his youth, as well as a successful steeplechase rider. He served in the Army during World War II.

Since launching his training career in 1965, he was credited with more than 100 stakes wins. His best runners included Grade 1 stars Bemo and Bring Out the Band; Delicate, winner of the 1982 Black-Eyed Susan Stakes-G2; Double Sixes, who won the 1994 Pimlico Distaff Handicap-G3; and multiple stakes winner Horatius, who went on to a long and successful stud career in Maryland.

In 2006, the MTHA honored Mr. Murphy as Outstanding Maryland Trainer.

A mentor to younger horsemen at his longtime base at Laurel Park, Mr. Murphy saddled the first winner over the rebuilt Laurel track in January 2005.

He continued to oversee his stable until a few days before his death.



## Rosecroft's owner files for bankruptcy

While its demand for simulcasts of Thoroughbred races is still tied up in court, Rosecroft Raceway's owner, Cloverleaf Enterprises, Inc., has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

The filing took place on June 3.

Cloverleaf's bankruptcy proceeding is unusual in that its stated assets exceed its debts.

Assets for the owner of the harness track in Oxon Hill, Md., are estimated at between \$10 million and \$50 million, and its financial liabilities between \$1 million and \$10 million.

"This complicates an already murky situation," said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger.

The MTHA, along with the Maryland Jockey Club and Maryland Horse Breeders Association, continues to seek to reclaim fees that Cloverleaf owes for simulcasting of Thoroughbred races.

An industrywide 15-year agreement signed in April 2006 calls for Cloverleaf to pay \$5.9 million a year for the right to receive Thoroughbred signals. Cloverleaf has paid nothing since December 31, 2008.

Based on Cloverleaf's refusal to live up to the deal, the Maryland Racing Commission withdrew permission for Thoroughbred simulcasting into Rosecroft as of late April.

Cloverleaf subsequently obtained an injunction that has made it possible to receive a few Thoroughbred signals.

## Maryland schedule during Colonial Downs

*The Colonial Downs meet extends from June 5 to July 28.*

**Colonial Downs Racing Office:** (877) 482-7223, (804) 966-7223; **Fax:** (804) 966-5110.

### MTHA

Office at Laurel will be open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to noon.

### Maryland Racing Commission

The Maryland Racing Commission office will be closed. Questions regarding Lasix should be directed to the Commission's main office at (410) 296-9682/296-9683/296-9684; **Fax:** (410) 296-9687.

## PAC CONTRIBUTION: YOUR INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

Our state elected officials have acted favorably on a number of key issues involving the industry. We must do our best to ensure that those who have supported our interests in the past have an opportunity to do so in the future.

Please help by making a donation to your Political Action Committee. Donations will go toward the election campaigns of state officials who hold the best promise for our industry.

The Thoroughbred Horsemen's PAC advocates for the entire Maryland Thoroughbred industry, while promoting the interests of horsemen.

**Please make checks payable to Thoroughbred Horsemen's PAC.**

Send checks to

**MTHA, 6314 Windsor Mill Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207.**

### AMOUNT OF DONATION

\$100  \$250  \$500  other

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

*By authority Wayne W. Wright, Treasurer*

## Hoofprints

### Gate schooling at Bowie

Under a new Maryland Jockey Club policy, gate schooling at Bowie does not begin until after the harrow break.

The change was made to allow sufficient time for those wanting to jog their horses the wrong way on the race track.

Wrong-way jogging ends when gate schooling starts.

### Cole, Lake top Pimlico meet

Robert L. Cole, Jr., and Scott Lake led the owner and trainer standings at the 20-day Pimlico meet that ended on May 23.

Mr. Cole had seven wins, one more than Paula and Tom Haughey's PTK LLC.

Pimlico's leading trainer for the fourth consecutive year, Mr. Lake won winning 18 races, nine more than runner-up Mike Trombetta.

Charlie Hall (443) 324-6646, (301) 674-5108.

### Stable area issues

Bowie—Contact Victor (Blue) Marshall (240) 876-6414.

Laurel—Contact Tony Edwards (443) 250-9872.

### Race track issues

Contact David Whitman (443) 250-9870.

### Check cashing at Laurel

Checks will be approved Mondays through Fridays, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. only. All checks must be approved. No checks over \$2,000 will be cashed.

## Thoughts, from page 4

voked on the spot.

The MTHA has compiled a list of retirement/rescue facilities in Maryland. It was printed in last month's newsletter, and is posted at [www.mdhorsemen.com](http://www.mdhorsemen.com). The list, while extensive, will never be complete. Other facilities are no doubt out there doing the same kind of work, with less publicity. With a little effort, owners and trainers can find the right place for an individual horse.

The point is—a viable market exists for Thoroughbreds who can no longer race. That might not have been true five years ago but times have changed, in this case much for the better.

As owners or trainers, we have a serious responsibility. The fate of our horses is in our hands not just while they are with us, but often far beyond. They place their trust in us, and we owe them a good life in return.

*/Timothy L. Keefe, MTHA Director*

## IN MEMORIAM

**Otto Earl Begley**, known as Earl Begley, Sr., died on April 29 at the age of 78. A former longtime assistant to the late trainer Bernard P. (Bernie) Bond, Mr. Begley retired several years ago. His son, Earl Patrick Begley, is a trainer in Maryland.

**Malcolm Commer, Ph.D.**, 61, a former University of Maryland livestock economist and Maryland Horse Council president, died on June 10 at the age of 61.

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

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Your suggestions are welcome.

## Committee bulletins

### Bowie

Backstretch chairman Phil Capuano reported that the air conditioner in the recreation hall/track kitchen is not working, despite several efforts to repair it.

## Recreation report

*From Dan Mangum,  
MTHA Recreation Director.  
For information on the MTHA's  
year-round recreation program call  
(410) 802-5798.*

### Golf outing

The MTHA will sponsor a golf outing at Ft. Meade on August 10. Sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan.

### Evening at Camden Yards

The Orioles defeated the Mets 6-5 on June 18, much to the delight of backstretch workers and friends who attended the game compliments of the MTHA. Thirty tickets were distributed in a drawing.

### Laurel

Backstretch chairman Larry Murray reported that frequent heavy rains have washed out major portions of the horse paths. Maintenance has been working on the problem.

### Orioles tickets

Winners of the latest Orioles ticket drawings were Mike Thomas and J.D. Brown.

The next drawing will be held August 1 for the final three games.

### Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: Damon Dilodovico and his stable crew, Gene Gilhooly, Sylvia and Arnold Heft and Dennis Noel.

Special thanks to the Maryland Jockey Club for its donation of hats.

## Maryland Horse Industry Forum set August 6 in Upper Marlboro

All segments of Maryland's horse community have been invited to participate in a Maryland Horse Industry Forum to take place on Thursday, August 6 from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. in The Show Place Arena at the Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro.

The forum is organized by the Maryland Horse Industry Board in cooperation with the Maryland Horse Council.

There is no cost to attend.

For more information visit [www.mdhorseforum.com](http://www.mdhorseforum.com) or contact Kelley Fitzgerald at (410) 841-2785.

## Horsemen's calendar

### RACING

**Colonial Downs** ..... June 5-July 28  
**Laurel** ..... Aug. 1-23;  
Sept. 12-Dec. 19  
**Timonium** ..... Aug. 28-Sept. 7

**Maryland Million Day**  
Sept. 26 at Laurel

### FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC AUCTIONS AT TIMONIUM

**Eastern Fall Yearlings** ..... Oct. 5-7  
(Entries close July 13)  
**December Mixed** ..... Dec. 6, 7  
(Entries close Sept. 21)

### OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July**  
**Selected Yearlings**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... July 20, 21  
**Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Selected Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (518) 328-1800. .... Aug. 10, 11  
**Fasig-Tipton New York-bred Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (518) 328-1800. .... Aug. 15, 16  
**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected/Open Yearlings**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... Aug. 24-28  
**Keeneland September Yearlings**, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. .... Sept. 14-27  
**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Fall Mixed**, Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. .... Oct. 12-16  
**New York Breeders' Sales Company Saratoga Fall Mixed**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. (518) 587-1555. .... Oct. 18, 19  
**Saratoga Springs, NY Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Yearlings**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... Oct. 26-28  
**Keeneland November Breeding Stock**, Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. .... Nov. 8-21  
**Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Selected Fall Mixed**, Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. .... Nov. 9



## Health Fairs offer valuable services— and they're free

**A healthy workforce is important to the horses in your barn. But don't do it just for them—do it for yourself!**

Dates are:

Thursday, July 9: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Bowie Conference Room

Thursday, July 16: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Laurel Recreation Room

Note: A 12-hour fast is required for cholesterol tests. All results are confidential and will be sent to the address that you provide. Health Fairs are sponsored by the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund.



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

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## Thoughts and comment

**High-strung. Burned out. Crippled.**  
For too long this was the image that many people had of ex-race horses—and the reason why some people shied away from adopting them and converting them to new careers.

Thankfully, more people seem to be catching on to the fact that most Thoroughbred race horses can have a productive and rewarding life beyond the track.

All it takes, in most instances, is a reasonable amount of patience and the right kind of re-training. When knowledgeable people are directing the transition, the chances of success are very

good.

The increasing number of people willing to take on ex-race horses is good news for our industry.

Today, it's much easier to do the right thing and find a good home for a horse who can no longer race. In fact, it may be easier to find a new home than to send a horse to the killers.

And Magna's policy reinforces the point for trainers who choose to ignore humane options: A trainer at Laurel or Bowie found sending a horse to slaughter will have his stabling privileges re-

See **Thoughts**, page 3

## MTHA Board of Directors

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