



# The Horsemen's Newsletter

August 2012

Vol. 22 • Number 7

## Special Expanded Gaming Session Called For August 9

Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley announced that he would in fact call lawmakers back to Annapolis for the second time since the General Assembly adjourned in April - this time to vote on a plan to add table games to existing venues in Maryland and to pave the way for a destination casino in Prince George's County, likely at National Harbor off Interstate 95.

Flanked by House Speaker Michael E. Busch and Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, the Governor said he will summon legislators for a special session beginning August 9.

By gathering then, legislators would apparently have just enough time to debate a bill and vote on whether to put the gambling expansion proposal on the ballot for the November election.

The special session follows one O'Malley called in May to finish work on budget-related bills - including an income tax increase - that were left incomplete at the end of the legislature's 90-day session in part because they became tangled in a House-Senate struggle over gambling.

O'Malley persuaded Busch and Miller to put aside casino issues in that session and set up a work group to study the gambling issue, in the hope of reaching consensus in time to call a second special session on the issue. But the panel failed to reach a consensus when its House-appointed members balked at a plan agreed to by the O'Malley administration and the Senate, and the prospects for such a session seemed to fade.

Talks continued, however, as pro-

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## Purses See Significant Bump At Timonium & Laurel Park

Late summer and fall racing in Maryland returns on a much higher note, as revenue from slot machines is starting to make an impact to boost purses in the state.

The Timonium Thoroughbred meeting, held in conjunction with the Maryland State Fair, runs for seven days in August and September (Friday, August 24 through Sunday August 26 and Friday, August 31 through Monday, September 3), concluding on Labor Day, will see a 20 percent increase in purses on average compared to a year ago.

In 2011, overnight purses at the 5/8-mile oval averaged \$118,000. They will be boosted to over \$140,000 a day for 2012.

Also making a return to the fair meet is the \$10,000 trainer bonus award, which is given to the leading trainer over the seven days.

In addition to the bump at Timonium, the Maryland Jockey Club unveiled its 2012 Laurel Park fall schedule with increases in the number of stakes as well as purses. This fall, 32 stakes races are scheduled, five more than a year ago (the schedule does not include Maryland Fund stakes, which will be announced in late August). And average daily purses go from their \$210,000 per day average in the spring to \$240,000 per day.

In 2011, the purses at Laurel Park averaged \$185,000 over 115 days of racing.

The 69-day fall meeting resumes at Laurel Park two days after Labor Day, on September 5. Live racing will be held four days a week through the end of the year on a Wednesday through Saturday schedule, holidays excluded.

Headlining the fall stand will be the 27th running of the Jim McKay Maryland Million Day for the offspring of Maryland-based stallions on Saturday, October 6.

This year also marks the return of the Fall Festival of Racing on October 27. That card will



feature  
five 100,000

stakes races on the turf - Laurel Futurity, Selima, Laurel Dash, Laurel Turf Cup and Lady Baltimore - as well as the \$350,000 Frank J. De Francis Memorial Dash.

"It is important to have stakes races bolster our Saturday cards," said MJC president Tom Chuckas. "To build our business from a handle standpoint, races need to be more attractive to simulcast players. We are in the process of finalizing the promotional schedule for the fall, which we expect will bring more fans into the building."

Although purse levels have been positively affected by the arrival of the Maryland Live! Casino in June, the racing industry's share of revenue derived from simulcast wagering at Laurel Park is down approximately 18% since the opening of the Arundel Mills casino.

Pimlico's simulcast numbers have remained steady during this time, which signals Laurel Park is being significantly impacted by competition from a new gaming venue located in its immediate market.

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ponents and opponents battered each other with negative media campaigns.

The special session will likely pit allies of a Prince George's casino against David Cordish, Chief Executive of the company that developed the Maryland Live! Casino at Arundel Mills. Cordish argues that allowing a new casino to his south would cut deeply into his market share and that the addition of table games would not make up the loss.

Cordish may have lost a key arguing point, however, with the decision of MGM Resorts International—the prospective operator of a casino at National Harbor on the Potomac in Prince George's County—to drop demands for a cut in the state's 67 percent tax on slot machine revenues.

National Harbor is the Prince George's site with the most powerful political backing—along with a prime riverfront site that its proponents tout as ideal for a “destination” casino. However, the legislation described by Busch is expected to require National Harbor to compete with other Prince George's sites, including Rosecroft Raceway, for a license.

Proposals to cut the state's high tax rate on slots had been one of the chief objections raised by House Democrats, who expressed concern the state could gain little or no money under such a deal.

Also on the table could be modifications to the current Thoroughbred racing industry's share of revenue from the existing gaming legislation.

MTHA representatives are actively engaged in this current debate and will continue to vigorously advocate for Maryland Thoroughbred industry interests.

## Howard Bender Receives Maryland Racing Media Association's Highest Honor

Longtime owner/breeder and MTHA board member Howard Bender has been selected to receive the Maryland Racing Media Association's highest honor, the Humphrey S. Finney Award, which is given in recognition of lifetime contributions to the Maryland horse racing industry. The award will be presented at the MRMA crabfeast on October 13.

With his late wife, Sondra, who passed away this past February, Bender has been one of Maryland's most successful breeders, turning out dozens of stakes horses who were born and raised at Glade Valley Farms near Frederick, the Thoroughbred nursery in which Mr. Bender's father, Jack I. Bender, was a founding partner.

Since purchasing their first race horses in 1983, the Benders campaigned a large stable, composed almost exclusively of homebreds, based at Laurel Park with their private trainer Lawrence E. (Larry) Murray. Helping to keep the operation running smoothly has been racing manager Deepak Ohri.

Among the prominent runners to carry the couple's familiar silks have been Maryland-bred champions La Reine's Terms, Secret Odds and Promenade Girl and Saratoga graded stakes winner King's Nest. One of their first runners was Grade 1 winner Southern Appeal. On Maryland Million Day, Bender horses captured five Mary-

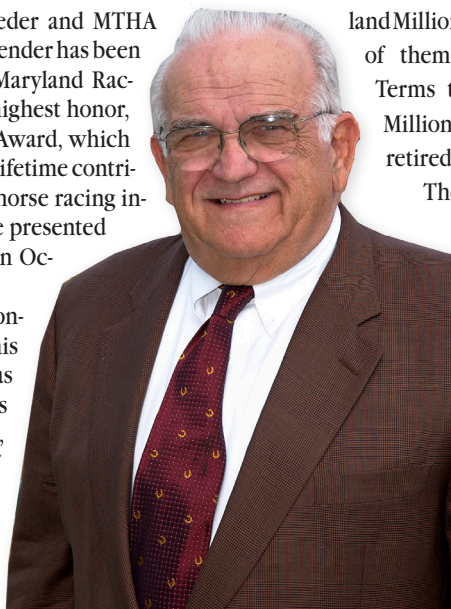
land Million races in their colors—four of them homebreds. La Reine's Terms twice won the Maryland Million Turf, his last at age 10, and retired with earnings of \$804,591.

The Benders were honored by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association as Breeder of the Year for three consecutive years, from 2001 to 2003.

Bender is Chairman of the Board of the family-owned Blake Construction Co., Inc., in Washington, D.C., and was the builder of the United

States Holocaust Memorial Museum as well as other local landmarks. He is active in a number of civic and charitable organizations, including being a strong supporter of MRMA with scholarship donations through The Bender Foundation, and his family's philanthropy has helped frame many area institutions, including American University's Bender Arena.

Presented since 1984, the Humphrey S. Finney Award has gone to such Maryland Thoroughbred industry legends as Jim McKay, Alfred G. Vanderbilt, King T. Leatherbury, Allaire du Pont and Ben Cohen.



### News Clips

#### Assistance Fund Receives Grant

Thoroughbred Charities of America has awarded a grant to the Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, Inc., the organization that provides medical care and other benefits for backstretch employees in need.

TCA distributes grants to several categories of Thoroughbred industry related non-profits including rescue, rehabilitation and adoption organizations, as well as education and backstretch programs.



#### Demolition Will Wait

The long rumored razing of the track kitchen building and home to the MTHA's racetrack operations office at Pimlico has been delayed indefinitely according to Maryland Jockey Club officials.

Originally scheduled for demolition in the summer of 2012 to pave the way for additional parking for Preakness week festivities, the project was set back because of cost concerns related to the required relocation of natural gas lines feeding the main grandstand that run through the existing structure.

### *In Memoriam*

**Laura Louise McLean** died peacefully at her home in The Plains, Va., surrounded by her family on July 23.

“Weedie”, born February 26, 1943, in Baltimore, Md., started riding horses as a young girl. Her equestrian passion became a lifelong journey.

Early in her career, she exercised race horses at Sagamore Farm in Glynndon. She later became an accomplished bloodstock agent and Thoroughbred trainer.





# Board Actions



MTHA Board Meeting – July 2, 2012 – Laurel Park

**Members present:** Richard J. Hoffberger, president, Christine E. Bricker, Dale Capuano, Linda S. Gaudet, H. Neil Glasser, Christopher W. Grove, R. Larry Johnson, Timothy L. Keefe, Katharine M. Voss.

**Members absent:** W. Robert Bailes, Howard M. Bender, Arnold A. Heft, Michael F. Horning, Lawrence E. Murray and Richard J. Meyer, vice-president.

## Bylaw Changes

A motion was made stating "No bylaw changes shall occur until after the next scheduled Board election in 2014." The motion carried 6 for, 3 against. Voting in favor were: Mr. Capuano, Mrs. Gaudet, Mr. Glasser, Mr. Grove, Mr. Hoffberger and Mr. Keefe. Voting against were: Ms. Bricker, Mr. Johnson and Ms. Voss.

## Timonium State Fair Meet

A meeting of the MTHA Purse Committee was summarized where the decision was made to increase the purses at the 2012 Timonium State Fair meet by approximately 20%. The Board expressed unanimous support for this action.

A motion was also made stating: "This Board approve a \$5,000.00 contribution from the Thoroughbred Purse Account to fund half of the Trainer Bonus program during the 2012 Timonium State Fair meet." Voted unanimously.

## Negotiations With The Stronach Group

The Board was notified that the confidentiality clause has been lifted in the negotiations between the MTHA, MHBA and the Stronach Group that are hosted by the Maryland Racing Commission. The Stronach Group's Maryland Racing Proposal from February 2012 was outlined that called for:

- two 40-day race meets with the ability to purchase additional days at a to-be-determined rate;
- the immediate closure of Bowie in return for an unbinding commitment to build new barns at Laurel Park and share the costs with MTHA;
- the forfeiture by the MTHA of 3% of wagering revenues to MJC;
- a change in the percentage of revenue to MJC for future OTB locations in which MJC would retain 80% of the net revenues from wagers placed at such facilities;
- the funding of the Racetrack Workers Pension Plan by the MTHA;
- agree to cede to the track simulcast rights for the period of ten years.

## Arbitration With Rosecroft

It was reported that the dates of the Arbitration with Rosecroft have been set for the week of December 10, 2012.

A motion was made stating: "As has been historical practice, this Board authorizes all previous and future legal fees related to the Rosecroft arbitration case to be paid from the Thoroughbred Purse Account. These fees are to be reimbursed at the percentages 47% MTHA, 47% MJC and 6% MHBA." Voted unanimously.



## Rec Report

From Dan Mangum 410-802-5798

### Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch, or made a monetary contribution: Gene Gilhooley, Stuart Patti and Jack Adamecz.

### Poker

Winner of the Texas Hold'em tournament on July 23 was Nate Clark. Thanks to all.

### O's Night At Camden Yards

The MTHA held its annual night at Camden Yards on June 28 with the Orioles losing to the New York Mets 11-7. Even with the loss, all had a great time at the stadium. MTHA sponsored 25 free tickets to this event for backstretch workers and their families.

Some of the winners were Damon Dilodovico, Eugene Gumbs, Tony Monroe, Libby Butts and Harley Foote.



## Calendar

### Live Racing:

Timonium ..... Aug. 24-Sept. 3  
Laurel Park ..... Sept. 5-Dec. 31



### Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Auctions:

Eastern Fall Yearling ..... Oct. 1, 2  
December Mixed ..... Dec. 3

### Out of State Auctions:

*Fasig-Tipton New York Saratoga Selected Yearling Sale*  
Saratoga Springs, NY ..... Aug. 6, 7  
*Fasig-Tipton New York Bred Yearling Sale*  
Saratoga Springs, NY ..... Aug. 11, 12  
*Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Selected/Open Yearlings*  
Ocala, FL ..... Aug. 21-23  
*Keeneland September Yearlings*  
Lexington, KY ..... Sept. 10-21  
*Ocala Breeders' Sales Company Fall Mixed Sale*  
Ocala, FL ..... Oct. 16-18



## Reminder

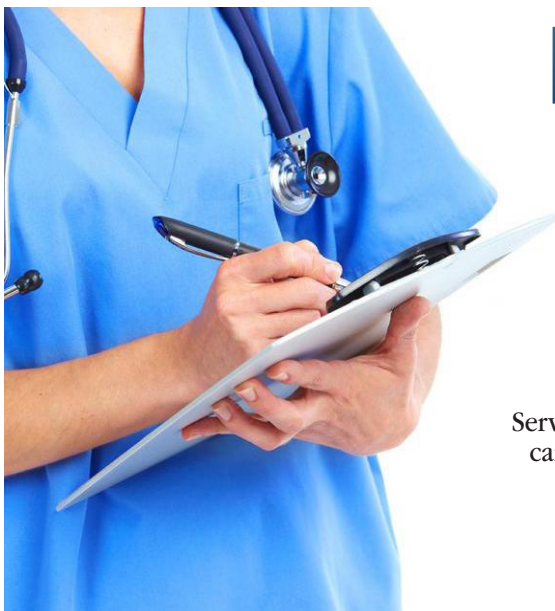
*Stall Applications  
are due Sept. 1 for  
the Laurel Fall Meet*

## 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.



# Free Health Fairs

Attention ALL Backstretch Employees, Assistant Trainers, Exercise Persons, Grooms, Hotwalkers, Stable Foremen, Trainers, etc.

**Tuesday, September 4**

**9:30 am to 12:30 pm • Bowie Track Kitchen**

**Monday, September 10**

**9:30 am to 12:30 pm • Laurel Park Rec. Room**

Services include lipid profile, prostate, blood pressure, body fat composition, carbon monoxide and skin cancer screenings, massage therapy and more.

Note: 10-hour fasting is required for cholesterol tests. All results are confidential and will be sent to the address that you provide.

Sponsored by MTHA & MHAF



**MTHA**

6314 Windsor Mill Road  
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**August 2012**

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## Backstretch Appreciation Day

Food, fun and fellowship will highlight the MTHA's Backstretch Appreciation Day on September 9. The event will take place in the white house area adjacent to the paddock area.

Everyone's favorites will be served: pit beef and roasted pork, chicken and salads, catered by Russell Clark. Soda will also be provided.

Door prizes will be distributed.

All backstretch personnel and their families are invited to attend free of charge.

Backstretch Appreciation Day honors the unsung heroes of our industry.

**Sunday, September 9 • 1-4 PM**



### MTHA Board of Directors

Richard J. Hoffberger  
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Christine E. Bricker

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R. Larry Johnson  
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Katharine M. Voss