

Message from the President



**Michael Erskine,
DVM, DABVP**

First, let me give a sincere “Thank You” to Elizabeth and Bud Winters of Paradise Stables and all their employees for hosting the 1st Annual Maryland Horse Council Barbecue in September. We appreciate your hospitality and all the hard work you did to help make it a success.

We had about 150 people attend the BBQ. They enjoyed an afternoon of great music by the band Cold Hard Cash, food, and most importantly a chance to visit with one another. It was great to see so many people just having a great time. Thanks so much for those who came, and we look forward to another successful BBQ next year.

I want to invite everyone to our Annual Meeting November 13, 2007 at the Miller Senate Office Building in Annapolis. This will be a very important meeting. The MHC needs the input and support of our membership as we prepare for the upcoming legislative session.

We will be discussing potential MHC initiatives such as officially, and without ambiguity, defining horses as agri-

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Trails and Greenways Committee – Fall 2007 Meeting Report

The Maryland Horse Council’s Fall Trails and Greenways Meeting was held at the League of Maryland Horsemen in Marriottsville, MD in conjunction with their October 3rd monthly meeting. More than 50 equestrians from the LOMH, TROT, and several other clubs filled the club house.

After conducting a short business meeting, Wallace Mitchell introduced Peggy Bree, who explained why a strong equestrian network is essential to preserve access to trails. Vicki Sadler announced that the Red Hat Riders would be teaming up with the League of Maryland Horsemen, and TROT to host a trail ride and silent auction to support women battling Breast Cancer. The date is set for Saturday, May 17, 2008. Anyone who would like to help and businesses that would like to make a donation can contact Vicki at trailtoacure@gmail.com.

Nita Settina, our equestrian liaison at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, was our feature speaker. Nita is also the Chief of Nature Tourism, an avid mountain biker, paddler, an occasional horseback rider, and the inspiration behind the fabulous trail maps now available through the DNR. She described the value of sustainable trails, which use design principles to minimize the environmental impacts of trail recreation by resisting erosion and reducing vegetation trampling. Sustainable trails also enhance outdoor recreation experiences and minimize user conflicts.

Nita also gave a brief introduction to the principles of sustainable trail design taught by the International Mountain Bike Association’s (IMBA) Trail Solutions Program. Sustainable trails shed water from the trail surface by following the natural contour of the land, avoiding the “fall line” and low, flat areas. The fall line is the downhill slope of the land where water will naturally flow most directly. Sustainable trails also employ other strategies to continually keep water from standing or running on the trail surface, including: outsloping the trail tread, using grade reversals and ensuring that the steepness of the trail is proportional to the grade of the cross slope.

Nita encouraged the equestrian community to support sustainable trails in their State Parks by considering the following actions: reporting eroding and muddy trail conditions to park managers, volunteering at least once a year for a trail maintenance work day, avoiding trail rides on wet, saturated trails and supporting park trail work through donations of trail tools and equipment. The Maryland Park Service welcomes ongoing input and collaboration with trail

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President *(continued from page 1)*

culture. We will be determining our response to the reported consideration of new taxes on services that would directly affect Maryland's horse industry. We will review our position on Slots. And we will have guest speakers to help describe the legislative process and effective lobbying.

It is very important that we demonstrate our commitment to the horse industry (whether for business or pleasure) and political strength in Annapolis. It is up to us to let our elected officials know of our concerns. We need to participate in the process to ensure that legislative actions do not adversely affect our interests. The first step is to participate. I hope to see you there.

In closing, I want to thank all the MHC volunteers. We have a great group of dedicated individuals helping to advance the MHC and the interests of the entire horse community in Maryland. I continue to be inspired by the efforts and creativity of so many people. We are very fortunate to have them working on our behalf.

I know there are more of you out there. I encourage you to volunteer some of your time. We are all busy, but when we work together we can accomplish great things. The MHC has tremendous support from our administrator, Vanessa Finney. We're moving in the right direction, and we can use more help. Please contact us to become a more active member. I know you will find, as I have found, it very rewarding.

Michael Erskine, DVM, DABVP

MHC Member News

Kudos! Two key MHC volunteers are moving on.

Peggy Bree, our long, long time Trails & Greenways Committee Co-Chair and Coordinator, is moving to – alas – another state. She promises to stay in touch, but obviously wrangling all the Maryland trail groups into a cohesive communication unit won't be practical for her any longer.

Donata Dow, a website designer for the U.S. Navy, was responsible for revamping and polishing the look of the MHC website. However, the growth of MHC and the volume of work for it has increased to such an extent that it is no longer practical for a volunteer to keep it updated, and we have contracted the maintenance and updating of the site to a local firm.

MHC owes both Donata and Peggy a huge thank you for their many years of volunteer service and dedication to YOU, the Maryland equestrian community.

If you would like to send your thanks, you can do so by e-mailing them at bree@riva.net, donata@radix.net.



Volunteers Needed for Horse World Expo

The MHC is looking for volunteers to man our booth at the upcoming Horse World Expo, January 17 – 20, 2008. Volunteers will receive a complimentary entrance ticket to the entire expo on the day of their volunteer shift. Shifts are typically two to three hours. If you are able to volunteer, please contact Royce Herman as soon as possible at raherman1@verizon.net or at 410-758-2081.

Trails and Greenways Committee

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riders to improve existing trails, as well as, to create new, more sustainable trail systems in Maryland.

Nita also introduced Amy Lutsko. Amy is a specialist in trail design and maintenance, and she's currently assigned to Patapsco State Park, and supervises a Maryland Conserva-tion Corps crew. She's a great resource and has the knowledge we need to tackle erosion and repair our trails. The DNR also offered their popular Trail Maps of State Parks for a nominal fee.

After the meeting the room buzzed with people making friends and networking. TROT and Pat Oliva will be working with the DNR on planning a new trail system in Patuxent River State Park. The Maryland Horse Council will be working with Southern Maryland Trail Riders (SMTR) and the Maryland Arabian Horse Association (MAHA) to implement Horse Camping in some of Maryland's State Parks, and a steering committee will be formed to help plan a state-wide network of equestrian trails.

That's a lot of exciting news, and thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of our meeting. Feel free to reprint the minutes in your club newsletters, and please join us on-line so we can reach you with important news about Maryland Trails.

E-mail: MarylandTrailRiders@yahoo.com

On the web:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MarylandTrailRiders/>

Thanks!

Peggy Bree

MHC Trails and Greenways Committee

Contact: bree@riva.net



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Executive Committee
2007 – 2008
www.mdhorsecouncil.org**

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We welcome the following organizations and individuals to The Maryland Horse Council membership.

Farm Members

Loch Moy Farm – Carolyn MacIntosh
Some Day Soon Farm – Suzanne Quarles

Individual Members

Louise Este Hollyday
Howard Wolf

(new members from August – October 2007)

A Refreshed Look

Maryland Horse Council Meeting of the Board of Directors Meeting Highlights

The Maryland Horse Industry Board Health Advisory Committee has been endorsing the hiring of an epidemiologist at the University of Maryland, the improvement of diagnostic equipment at the MDA State Laboratories, the evaluation of current necropsy and cremation fees at the MDA to see if they can be lowered and made more affordable, the adoption and support of the American Association's horse biosecurity practices by the MDA, and the State Fair Board to recommend or mandate Rabies vaccinations for horses competing at the State Fair.

There are 35 horse rescues that belong to the Maryland Association of Rescues and Equine Sanctuaries. For information on their November meeting, please contact kathy.defhr@comcast.net or visit mdhorsecouncil.org.

The March 2008 MHC Equine Health Seminar will likely focus on equine colic.

A new chair of the Trails and Greenways committee is needed.

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board is requesting input from the members of the horse industry who have an interest in transportation. There are line items in their proposal for miles of pedestrian and biker pathways. There may be an opportunity to meet with the Transportation Board to voice the concern of horse owners over the lack of space for riding horses in the hopes that they would construct greenways

for riding horses in the state and region.

A member who is currently undergoing a tax battle with the State of Maryland (the State is attempting to collect amusement taxes, such as those collected at amusement parks, on revenues from the member's pony ride business), encouraged people to lobby members of the Maryland Congress to view horses as agriculture, which would thereby exempt pony rides and carriage rides from the amusement tax. Currently, the tax assessor does not consider pony rides to be part of agriculture. The Frederick Agriculture Business Council is discussing this issue and how broadly it affects the agricultural industry. Montgomery County passed legislation that exempted agricultural events (pick your own, corn mazes, etc) from amusement taxes.

The import/export facility feasibility study, at the time of the meeting, was still collecting the necessary data for the study, including surveys of shippers and horse industry members. The team has investigated a cargo facility at the BWI airport that is currently not in use, which seems promising after preliminary investigation. It would likely cost around \$4.5 million to construct the facility. There are some concerns over the economic feasibility and the potential negative impacts of a Maryland facility on other import/export facilities.

The February 2008 MHC Equine

Business seminar will most likely feature employment issues; if you have any other ideas for topics, or would like to be on the advisory committee for the seminar, please e-mail jane@reddemeade.com.

Anne Arundel County government is considering including some equestrian amenities at the old Naval Academy Dairy, which the county has acquired as a park.

Harford and Howard Counties are each investigating establishing a horse park for their respective counties.

Volunteers are needed to man the MHC booth at Expo! Please contact Royce Herman at raherman1@verizon.net.

MHC Trails & Greenways Committee Update

—submitted by Peggy Bree
(soon to be retired committee chair)

I've been encouraging the clubs to network. People are already signing up for the Fall Invitational at the League of Maryland Horsemen on Oct 12-14. Tuckahoe Equestrian Center has set April 19-20 as the dates for the Spring Invitational. Maryland Trail Riders on-line just got it's 300th member, and I now get several requests every week from people who want to join.

The Southeastern Equestrian Trail Conference in Knoxville was a big success. Pat Oliva joined me as a representative from TROT.

Maryland Horse Council Meeting of the Board of Directors August 21, 2007 • Frederick County Fairgrounds

First, and perhaps the most important is the question of who will represent trail riders at a national level. There are several groups out there, including the AHC's State Horse Council Recreation Advisory Committee (SHCRAC), but for some reason the state horse councils aren't perceived as having a strong voice on trail issues. There are several other groups that do have an organized national focus like the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) and Back Country Horsemen (BCH), but some people feel equestrians would be better served by the creation of an organization modeled after Trout Unlimited or the National Wild Turkey Federation. Personally, I'm reluctant to see another organization created when our volunteers are already spread rather thin. I'm following this discussion with trail advocates from other regions.

Second, the US Forest Service is continuing to try to restrict equestrians to "designated horse trails" especially in the mountains of Northern Georgia. At first this sounds reasonable, but then it turns out that there are a very limited number of "designated horse trails" and the total amount of land that can be accessed by horse is extremely restricted. Back Country Horsemen is leading this fight, and even though Maryland doesn't have any National Forests, I'll be monitoring this situation because we may expect State Forests to implement similar restrictive policies if this becomes a growing national trend.

Directors Present:

Kathleen Schwartz	Days End Farm Rescue, Inc.
Keith Wills	Dir. At Large for Businesses
Dr. Amy Burk	Dir. At Large for Individual Members
Steuart Pittman	Dir. At Large for Farms
Jane Seigler	Dir. At Large for Farms
Gretchen Mobberley	Dir. At Large for Farms
Darryll Ann Buschling	Dir. At Large for Youth
Holly Hamilton	Goshen Hounds
Mary Anne Steele	Howard County Horse Show Association
Nicky Ratliff	Humane Society of Carroll County
Kathy Dobson	League of Maryland Horsemen
Mike Erskine	Maryland Assoc. of Equine Practitioners
Patty Sasscer	Maryland Association of Wildlife Conservation
Cricket Goodall	Maryland Horse Breeders Association
Terry Christensen	Maryland State Quarter Horse Association
Christine Bricker	Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association
Guillermo Warley	New Market Middleton Valley Hounds
Monica Breland	Potomac Hunt Club
Mardee Rochelle	Potomac Valley Dressage Association
Elizabeth Yewell P.G.	Equestrian Center, Showplace Arena
Ann Corcoran	The Ranger Foundation, Inc.
Priscilla Huffman	Trail Riders of Today
Royce Herman	Tuckahoe Equestrian Center

Directors Absent:

Joseph Zentgraf	Carroll County Equestrian Council
Sharon Roberts	Cloverleaf Standardbred Owners Association
Michelle Jennings	Director-at-Large -Businesses
Crystal Kimball	Director-at-Large -Businesses
Vicki O'Hara	Director-at-Large Individuals
Beverly A. Raymond	Director-at-Large Individuals
(Vacant)	Elkridge Harford Hunt
Debbie Rollins Frank	Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation, Inc.
Charlie Colgan	Fair Hill International, Inc.
Jim McDonald	Graham Equestrian Center, Inc.
(Vacant)	Howard County Iron Bridge Hounds
Christy Clagett	Marlborough Hounds
Cathy Tucker-Slaterback	Maryland Combined Training Association
Jacqueline Harrington	Maryland 4-H Foundation
Margaret Wilterdink	Maryland Dressage Association
Dorothy Troutman	Maryland Equestrian Foundation/ Rosaryville Conservancy
Tim Streaker	Maryland Farriers Association
Deloise Noble-Strong	Maryland Horse Shows Assoc. Rep
Carrie Everly	Maryland Jockey Club
Felicia Hilleary	Maryland Standardbred Breeders Assn.
David Turner	Mid-Atlantic Saddlebred Assoc
Gayle Miller	Plantation Walking Horses of MD
Susie Webb	Washington International Horse Show
Cindy Wood	Wicomico Hunt

Welcome New Sponsors

The Maryland Horse Council would like to welcome aboard new annual sponsors B&D Builders, MidAtlantic Farm Credit, and Southern States. MHC has long enjoyed support from both Farm Credit and Southern States for various activities, but we are proud to announce that they are now annual sponsors.

In addition, B&D Builders has joined us, as well. B&D built the barn that was the location of our first annual MHC BBQ, Paradise Stables, and through that event B&D got to know MHC and has joined forces.

These sponsors join the other current annual sponsors: Naden/Lean, The Equiery, and Maryland Horse Breeders Association. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact secretary@mdhorsecouncil.org.

Classified Ad

WANTED - Chairperson for the Maryland Horse Council's Trails and Greenways Committee

If you're looking for a rewarding project to help save Maryland's Equestrian Trails, look no further. Now that my husband is retiring, I'm looking for someone to pick up the reins of the Maryland Horse Council's Trails and Greenways Committee. During the last five years I've initiated a number of activities that can easily be continued, like our well attended Spring and Fall Trail Committee Meetings, and the very popular Spring and Fall Invitational Weekends hosted by the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center and the League of Maryland Horsemen.

Each year I have attended the Southeastern Equestrian Trail Conference to network with trail advocates in other states, and returned with a binder full of useful technical information. I communicate regularly with our Equestrian Advocate in Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, Nita Settina.

Together, we're working on a project to bring equestrian camping to more of our State Parks, and to develop some additional trail systems that will really expand our trail riding opportunities throughout Maryland.

I'll still be around to help, and our next Chairperson will have over 300 members of Maryland Trail Riders to communicate with on-line to shape the future of the Trails and Greenways Committee and Maryland's Equestrian Trails. It's been a wonderful experience for me, and many thanks to everyone who helped make my tenure as Chairperson a success. There are too many of you to name, but please accept my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation.

Please let me know if you're ready to step up to the mounting block!
Warm Regards,
Peggy Bree
(410)224-8804, bree@riva.net

MARK YOUR Calendar

Coming in February,
MHC's Second Annual
Business Seminar.

Watch for more details!

The 2008 Seminar will focus on employment issues. Plan to join us as we explore such topics as:

- benefits and compensation
- tax consequences of bartering, payment-in-kind, and working student relationships
- workers compensation
- employment contracts
- hiring, firing, equal employment and discrimination issues
- independent contractors• immigration enforcement issues, and a whole lot more.

U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

November 13, 2007 Annual Meeting and Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting

All Members Welcome
Meet and Greet Reception 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Miller Senate Office Building
East I Conference Room
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Governor O'Malley and all State Senators and Delegates have been invited to this reception and meeting. We will be discussing current issues facing the General Assembly and recent Special Session. Attend this meeting; become informed; make a difference to Maryland's Horse Industry!

January 17, 2008 Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting

(in conjunction with Horse World Expo)
All Members Welcome
Meet and Greet Reception 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
Vista Room
Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium

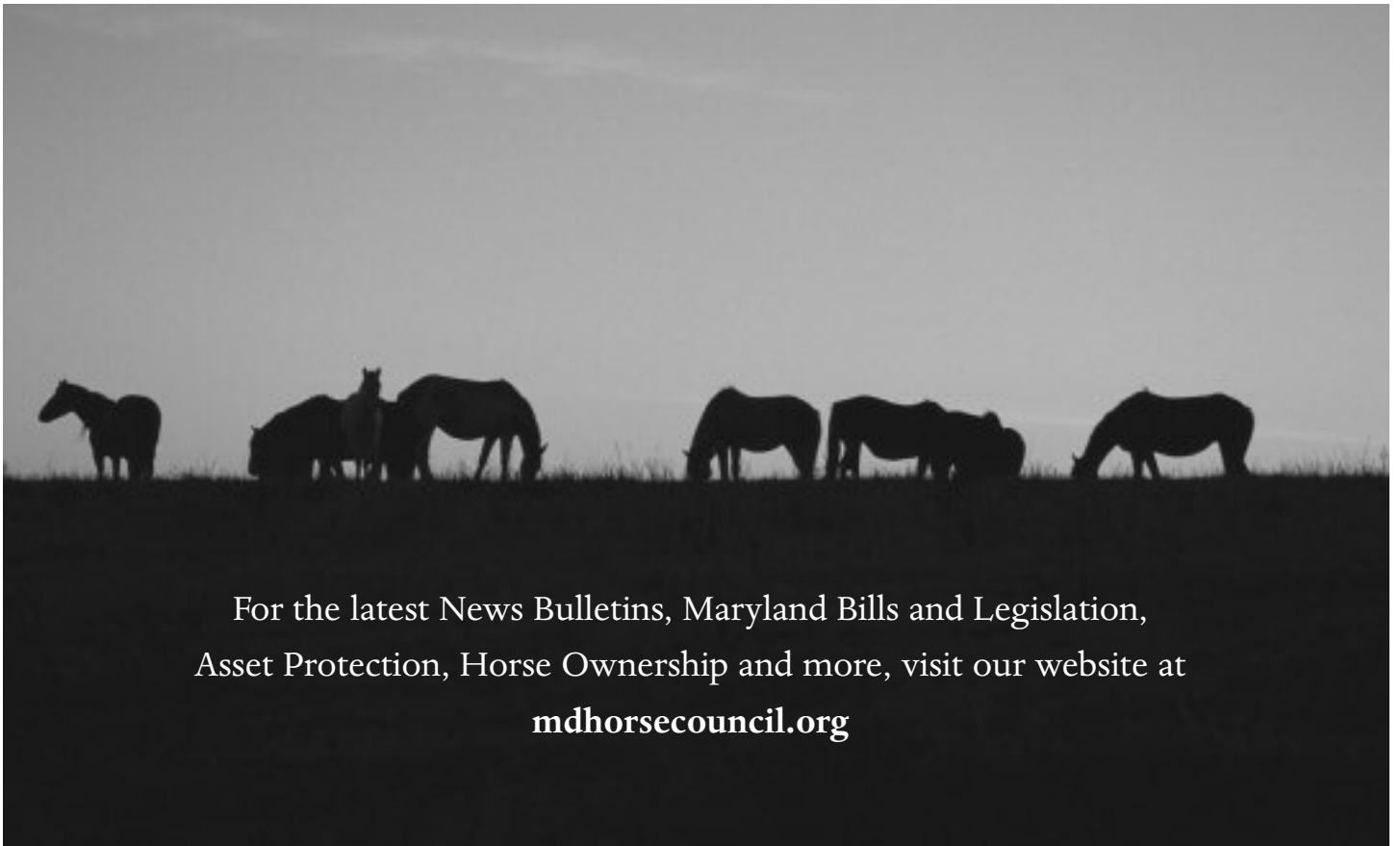
For more information about any MHC event, please call **410-489-7826** or e-mail secretary@mdhorsecouncil.org

January 17 – 20, 2008 Maryland Horse World Expo

Maryland State Fairgrounds
Timonium, MD
www.horseworldexpo.com



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For the latest News Bulletins, Maryland Bills and Legislation,
Asset Protection, Horse Ownership and more, visit our website at
mdhorsecouncil.org