



The Horsemen's Newsletter

November 2015

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Backstretch Scholarship Award Winners Announced

Two strong, determined women, Jenny Hamilton and Kara Evans, lead the list of scholarship winners who will be recognized Saturday, Nov. 7, at the Maryland Racing Media Association's annual Crab Feast in the Carriage Room at Laurel Park.

Hamilton, winner of the \$2,500 Lucy Acton Memorial Scholarship for Service, and Evans, winner of the \$2,500 Eddie McMullen Memorial Scholarship, both have shown their drive and love of horses by working full time on local Maryland farms while, at the same time, taking major course loads and putting themselves through several educational programs.



This year the MRMA, which was originally organized in 1937, is distributing a total of \$20,000 to

12 applicants. All of the winners either work at Maryland racetracks or are employed on thoroughbred farms in the state. This year, the memorial awards prizes were kept the same, but in the other three levels they were all increased by about \$250. This year's awards bring the total amount of money distributed over the past 15 years to nearly \$400,000.

All award recipients will be formally honored and receive their awards during the annual Crab Feast.

The 2015 winners are:

Hamilton, the Acton award winner, has worked as an Exercise Rider for a who's who of Maryland trainers over the past 20 years. While working for the likes of Graham Motion, Hamilton Smith, Scott Lake, Robin Graham and Linda Albert she has earned a teaching degree. Then, while working full time as a science teacher, and running the barn of her late friend and trainer Flee Stisted, she took night classes to complete prerequisite veterinary medicine classes.

Now, at age 48, she has been accepted into the Maryland Virginia Regional College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech. This fall she is maintaining a 3.5 grade point average and said after she completes school she plans "to work on the racetrack and with local farms, specializing in lameness and orthopedics."

[CONTINUE READING](#) >

MTHA Christmas Party & Toy Drive

DECEMBER 7 • 6 P.M. – 10 P.M.

LAUREL PARK CARRIAGE ROOM

The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association will host the popular Horsemen's Christmas Party celebration on Monday evening, Dec. 7, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. in Laurel Park's Carriage Room.

Dubbed *Maryland Racing's Party of the Year*, the MTHA Christmas party will feature a buffet dinner, open bar and a dance floor with tunes provided by one of the area's top party band, *The New Ramonos*.

Also making an appearance is the Horsemen's Award ceremony to be held at the outset of the party.

Tickets are \$35 in advance, \$45 each at the door or \$300 for a table of ten and can be purchased on race days in the MTHA racetrack office at Laurel Park or by calling 410-902-6842. See Diana Pinones in the MTHA office for more details.

Horsemen are urged to purchase tickets in advance.

MTHA will also be hosting its annual toy drive for the second consecutive year and is asking attendees to the party to bring a new, unwrapped toy to be collected at the door. Gifts will be distributed to children of backstretch workers during the holiday season.



[Buy Tickets](#)

John Baboolal Gone At Age 65

John Hardeo Baboolal, Jockey, of North Beach, Maryland, passed away on September 11 at the age of 65. He was born in Trinidad on April 26, 1950.

His early years were spent at the Santa Rosa Race Track where he learned to muck stalls and exercise racehorses. His dream was to become a jockey as a young boy because he loved the speed and power of the magnificent horses. He had a clock in his head and the hands to hold the reins. At the age of fifteen he obtained his jockeys license and pro-



ceeded to become one of the most talented jockeys in Trinidad before coming to the United States in December, 1967.

He rode his first win in the United States on February 29, 1968 on a horse named "SHAMAN". He won races for some of the top trainers in the State of Maryland: R. E. Dutrow, Tuffy Hacker, Ronald Cartright, Grover (Bud) Delp, King T. Leatherbury, Howard Wolfendale and Ernest (Chico) Green to name a few.

CONTINUE READING >

Howard Bender Passes Away at 84

Howard Bender, who with his late wife, Sondra, operated one of Maryland's most successful and largest racing stables, passed away Monday, Sept. 28, at the age of 84.

"It was a little bit of a shock," said Larry Murray, Bender's trainer for nearly three decades and the manager of Bender's farm, Glade Valley, near Frederick. "But it's hard to have too many regrets. He had a long and great life and touched an awful lot of people."

Bender and his late wife had been active in the breeding and racing business in Maryland since 1983 and were honored by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association in 2001, 2002 and 2003 as Maryland Breeders of the Year. Howard was honored again in 2014, and on Sept. 11 of this year received the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association's award, which honors the achievements of thoroughbred breeders in 23 states and Canada, and owners in the four major North American racing regions.

In 2014, Bender bred stakes winners Bear Access, winner of the Maryland Million Ladies Stakes; More Than A Cruise, winner of the Conniver Stakes; and Ghost Bay, named 2-year-old Maryland-bred champion male after winning the Maryland Juvenile Futurity. Horses bred in Bender's name and/or in partnership with his late wife made 154 starts in 2014, won 25 races with 19 seconds and 20 thirds, for earnings of \$818,565.

Over the years, The Benders won more than 500 races and more than \$14 million in purses. They had two horses in Triple Crown races: Southern Appeal in the 1986 Kentucky Derby, who finished 13th, and Foufa's Warrior, who was seventh in the 2003 Preakness Stakes.

The Benders' horses also had wonderful success in the Maryland Million. Their most successful homebred was La Reine's Terms, who won 11 stakes including five in 2002 on five different turf courses. La Reine's Terms retired with \$804,591 in earnings after winning the 2005 Maryland Million Turf.

Bender had foresight and Murray said a plan had already been put in place for winding down the operation at Glade Valley Farm.

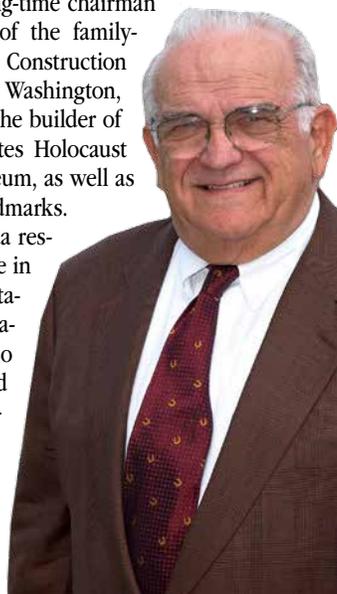
"We had started a kind of reduction plan," Murray said. "We've already sold three yearlings at Keeneland and the rest will go at Timonium next week. Some of the mares will go in November and we will see all the other mares go in January."

Murray said the plan had been to race through next year, but notes the timing could change now. When all the horses are gone and everything has been taken care of, Murray said he will retire.

"I don't know just when that will be," he said. "We have a number of retirees here, mares in their 30s, a lot of them pretty old. I don't know, I just may be here until they come to the end of their days."

While Bender had great success with his thoroughbreds and had served on the MTHA Board of Directors for nearly two decades, he also had great success in the business world. He was the long-time chairman 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.

The Bethesda resident was active in civic and charitable organizations, and also supported many area institutions, including American University's Bender Arena.



MTHA Aftercare Program Making A Difference!



The MTHA Aftercare Committee was tasked last year with determining how to distribute the funds that are collected from each horse that passes through the starting gate. The direction from the board was to use the available funds primarily for the direct care of horses that are retired from Maryland tracks. Grant applications were sent out to farms in the mid-Atlantic area and 7 were returned, 5 from Maryland farms, 1 each from New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

The committee reviewed the information from the grant applicants and decided to concentrate initially on the 5 Maryland farms and visited those farms as part of our due diligence to ensure the facilities were viable options for thoroughbreds needing a home after racing.

The first round of grant money was given at the MTHA Christmas Part and the amount awarded to the 5 recipients was based on criteria that included the # of horses that came directly from the track, the # of thoroughbreds at the farm, willingness to take horses directly from the track and # of thoroughbreds adopted out. We recently awarded a second round of grant money to 4 of the farms in July.

We strongly believe that most retired thoroughbreds have a potential second career out there and our mission is to help these farms help these horses find that second job. We look forward to building relationships with these farms that will allow our retired TBs to be re-trained and move on to a new home and career thus making room for the next retired thoroughbred. In future articles we plan to profile several of these farms.

Board Actions

MTHA Board Meeting – October 9, 2015 – Laurel Park

Members present: Timothy L. Keefe (President), Linda S. Gaudet (Vice President), R. Larry Johnson (Vice President), A. Ferris Allen, Christine E. Bricker, Dale Capuano, JoAnn Hayden, Robert T. Manfuso, H. Graham Motion, Lawrence E. Murray, Charles J. Reed, Michael J. Trombetta and Katharine M. Voss.

Members absent: Ellen M. Charles and Michael F. Horning (Treasurer).

Field Sizes

The Board unanimously voted to endorse the practice of limiting field sizes in some races to 12 starters.

Election of Officers

The Board unanimously approved the existing slate of officers to continue their term for one year by acclamation.

Christmas Party

The Board unanimously voted to approve all expenditures related to the 2015 Horsemen's Christmas Party.

Stronach Group Deserves Kudos for Changes

The camera panned the apron along the front stretch at Laurel Park Race Track Saturday, Oct. 17, showing a scene more familiar in old 1911 and 1940 photographs than in modern-day horse racing. But there, on the infield's big screen was pictured a massive crowd, from one end of the stretch to the other, enjoying the sunshine and the racing – and it wasn't a Triple Crown race, either.

The excitement and turnout coincided with the Maryland Jockey Club's official unveiling of \$14 million in improvements, \$7 million of them in the clubhouse and grandstand, at Laurel during the 30th annual Jim McKay Maryland Million Day.

"It was great," said Tim Keefe, president of the MTHA. "I've watched the process, going to meetings there every Tuesday. I knew what was coming. I've seen the slow progress through all the remodeling. But to see it all finished, all at once, it had a big effect. It was impressive."

Maryland Million Day celebrates and honors Maryland racing – its owners, breeders, trainers and its horses – and it turned out to be its best day ever. Attendance was up 55 percent to 19,119; the betting handle was up 37 percent, more than \$1 million, to \$3.8 million.

"I heard from all the horsemen about how much they appreciated what we've been doing

Counseling Program

The Board unanimously approved the relocation of the Counsellor's office to the Recreation Room at Laurel Park. In addition, the Board unanimously appropriated necessary funds to refurbish the Rec. Room to house the Counsellor, create a common mail distribution area and make this space more usable for the backstretch community."

Thanksgiving Dinners

The Board unanimously voted to approve all expenditures related to serving Thanksgiving Dinners to backstretch employees and their families on Thanksgiving Day at Laurel Park and Pimlico.

with the renovations," track vice president and general manager Sal Sinatra said. "It's a reflection on all of us. We all shared in a wonderful day."

It was a wonderful day, but Keefe and Bruce Quade, a Maryland Racing Commission board member and past chairman, gave The Stronach Group, owners of the MJC, and its representatives – chief operating officer Tim Ritvo and Sinatra – high marks for the revitalization project that has been and continues to be underway at the track.

There are new hardwood floors, rugs, and blue and white paint scheme on the walls; bright red and blue banners hanging from the rafters, helping to make the facility brighter; New furniture, including work desks for fans who like to handicap, and comfortable couches for relaxing in front of some of the televisions. Speaking of TVs, there are hundreds of them, including a 17 1/2-foot-high definition screen in the new simulcast center, Silks. And, there are new restaurants and new concession stands, all with improved food offerings and slightly lower prices; mobile apps, a simulcast and replay center, bars and a new events area called Marylandia that features food trucks, live entertainment and Flying Dog craft beers and cider. Not to mention, new barns.

CONTINUE READING >



Rec Report

Softball

The Laurel MTHA softball team just completed its first year in the Prince George's County Fall Double-Header Softball League. The team played really well and is already looking forward to competing next season.

Poker Tournament

The winner of the MTHA Poker Tournament was Tony Aquirre, second was Sam Davis.

The next Tournament will be held on Tuesday, November 10th in the Laurel Rec. Room beginning at Noon. All are welcome.

Soccer

The MTHA Fall Soccer League at Laurel was again a huge success. We have had over 50 participants playing on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

The championship game will be held on Monday, November 2 at 1:00 p.m. The winning team will be presented with their awards at the annual MTHA Christmas Party in December.

Golf Tournament

The MTHA Golf outing held September 28th at Walden Country Club had 45 participants. The prize winners were as follows:

1ST PLACE– Jose Corrales, Alfonso Griffith, Chris Michael and Eddie Pryzbyla.

2ND PLACE– J.D. Brown, John Dawson, Oscar Dawson and Fred Whiteside.

3RD PLACE– Wayne Potts, Marty Leonard, Clarence Boswell and Brandon Barthsinger.

1ST CLOSEST TO THE PIN– John Dawson.

2ND CLOSEST TO THE PIN– Chris Michael.

LONGEST DRIVE– Fred Whiteside.

Bowling League

The MTHA bowling league began on Monday, October 19th at Laurel AMF Fairlanes. We had approximately 30 bowlers consisting on 8 teams. We would like to add at least two more teams to participate.

We bowl on Mondays beginning @ 11:45 A.M. To add a team call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

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MTHA

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THANKSGIVING DINNER



The MTHA will continue the tradition of serving Thanksgiving dinner free of charge on Thursday, November 26th to all backstretch workers and their families at Laurel Park and Pimlico.

Turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy and all the trimmings will be served from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Laurel Park in the track kitchen and from 8 a.m. to noon at Pimlico in the Snack Room above Barn 8.



MTHA
500 Redland Court, #105
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November 2015

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Obamacare Registration Assistance Provided



The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association will assist backstretch workers to learn more about and sign up for health care under the new Affordable Care Act.

For help in English or Spanish, stop in the MTHA racetrack office during live racing from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or call Bobby Lillis at 410-902-6843 or Jasmine Arian at 301-776-0404.

Board of Directors

- Timothy L. Keefe, President
- Linda S. Gaudet, Vice President
- R. Larry Johnson, Vice President
- Michael F. Horning, Treasurer
- Katharine M. Voss, Secretary
- A. Ferris Allen, III
- Christine E. Bricker
- Dale Capuano
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