



The Horsemen's Newsletter

May 2007

Volume 17 • Number 5

Claiming rule change to take effect May 17

A rule change aimed at preserving Maryland's horse population took effect on May 17.

Under the new rule, only trainers assigned stalls at Pimlico, Laurel and Bowie are eligible to enter a claim. An owner who does not employ the services of a trainer with stalls at a Maryland track is allowed to claim only to replace a horse lost to a claim in Maryland (lose one/claim one).

The new rule is similar to those in Delaware and New York.

The MTHA board supported the change by unanimous vote at its April 11 meeting.

The Maryland Racing Commission agreed, by unanimous vote at its April 17 meeting, to propose the rule change on an emergency basis. It then proceeded

See *Claiming rule*, page 2

MTHA to maintain office at Laurel during summer

The MTHA will continue to provide its full range of services to members when there is no live racing in Maryland this summer, including during the Colonial Downs meet (which runs from June 15 to August 7).

The MTHA's race track office will be open from Monday through Friday, at Laurel. Hours will be 9 a.m. to noon.

Bowie Training Center faces no immediate threat

Sale would require change in law

Horsemen should not be alarmed about recent news reports indicating that Bowie Training Center is up for sale, said MTHA President Richard Hoffberger.

"Selling Bowie would require a change in state law," Mr. Hoffberger explained. "If it does happen, it will be a long process. Accommodations for Bowie horsemen almost certainly will be at the top of the list of priorities for the state legislature. And the MTHA, as always, stands well-prepared to represent horsemen's interests."

Added Mr. Hoffberger: "The MTHA's position has been stated many times before, and we'll say it again: The MTHA is willing to consider supporting the closing of Bowie Training Center—if, and only if, Magna commits to building additional facilities at Laurel. Those facilities must satisfactorily replace the Bowie barns and include a training track."

At Magna Entertainment Corp.'s annual shareholders meeting on May 9, chairman Frank Stronach and CEO Michael Neuman reportedly presented a

list of properties the company intends to sell by the end of this year to offset its \$559 million in debt.

Bowie was listed among the "non-strategic assets" that Magna planned to put on the market, either individually or as a package.

Bowie has existed as a training center since 1985, when its racing operation closed down.

Racing at Bowie was brought to an end under a track consolidation plan successfully negotiated by the groups that owned Pimlico and Laurel at that time.

The state agreed to give Laurel and Pimlico exclusive rights to mile-track racing, but required that the tracks maintain Bowie as a training center.

At the same time, Laurel and Pimlico received substantial financial compensation in the form of a reduction in the state's share of the takeout.

Under the terms of the agreement, a portion of the tracks' newfound revenue was to go toward the maintenance of the facilities at Bowie.

National Issues Forum: June 17 to 20 in Washington, D.C.

The American Horse Council (AHC) will host the 2007 National Issues Forum June 17 to 20 in Washington, D.C.

It will feature seminars on a wide range of topics, including:

- Disease control: Who's really responsible?

- The Unwanted Horse Coalition and its mission to help people "own responsibly."

- Equine identification/National Animal Identification System: Is there life left? The United States Department of Agriculture says the national identification system is voluntary. What does this mean for the proposed system?

The forum will be held at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel. For more information visit the AHC Web site, www.horsecouncil.org, or call the AHC at (202) 296-4031.



Church services for backstretch employees

Pastor Dago Dupuy provides outreach services to backstretch employees at Iglesia Maranatha, a church near Laurel Park.

The program includes Bible studies on Thursdays and church services on Sundays. Special activities for families are scheduled once a month. A free round-trip shuttle departs from the Laurel stablegate at 7 p.m. on Thursdays and at 4:45 p.m. on Sundays.

Also, on the last Saturday of every month, Pastor Dupuy conducts church services in the recreation room of the track kitchen at Laurel.

Everyone on the backstretch is invited to attend any of these services.

For more information call Pastor Dupuy at (301) 440-2918.

Maryland Horse Radio delivers news and features

Don't forget to tune in to Maryland Horse Radio at WBIS-AM 1190 for live hour-long shows at 9 a.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. on Sundays.

The current series of programs, which continues through June 9, feature interviews with local horsemen along with Triple Crown highlights and other news items.

Broadcasts can also be heard at www.wbis1190.com.

Claiming rule, from page 1

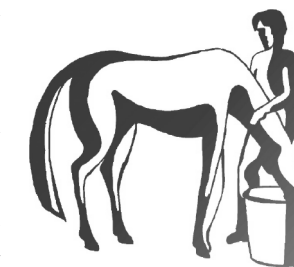
through the rules changing process.

"This change will eliminate the practice of out-of-state stables 'raiding' our horse population at the end of a meet," explained MTHA President Richard Hoffberger. "Last spring, when Pimlico ended and our summer live racing hiatus began, there were a number of claims by out-of-state horsemen. And it was difficult, if not impossible, to replace those horses from out-of-state locations."

Maryland Jockey Club president Lou Raffetto has promised to provide stall assignments for trainers who are based at Maryland farms and training centers, allowing them to remain eligible to enter claims.

Congress considers major immigration reform

From the American Horse Council



Comprehensive immigration legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives to reform the nation's immigration laws. The Security Through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy Act of 2007 (HR 1645), called the STRIVE Act, was introduced by Representatives Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.) and Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.).

The STRIVE Act would initiate a new guest-worker program for H-2Cs that would replace many of the non-immigrant alien worker categories included in existing programs, including the current H-2B program. H-2Cs would be year-round workers who could be ad-

mitted for three years.

The H-2C visa would be valid for three years and renewable for another three.

H-2C workers would have an opportunity to apply for permanent resident status (Green Card), either through an employer or by self-petitioning, after five years of employment.

Broad reform legislation similar to the STRIVE Act has not yet been introduced in the Senate. But the White House and various Senators are attempting to craft such legislation.

For more information contact the American Horse Council at (202) 296-4031; AHC@horsecouncil.org; www.horsecouncil.org.

Hoofprints

Racing Commission to relocate again

The Maryland Racing Commission is seeking new quarters for its main office, which recently moved to Pimlico. A new location has not been determined, according to the Commission's executive director, Mike Hopkins.

However, state officials have given the Commission until June 1 to complete its relocation.

Thanks, Connie!

The MTHA extends special appreciation to Connie Whitescarver, who provides outstanding service to Maryland horsemen each year while directing the sign-up procedure for the Backstretch Pension Plan.

Dogwood Dominion Award

Nominations are being accepted for the annual Dogwood Dominion Award, honoring unsung heroes in the industry.

This is the 15th year for the national program, whose past honorees include Maryland racing official Howard "Gelo" Hall.

Nominations should be received no later than June 25 and be mailed or faxed to: Mary Jane Howell, Dogwood Stable, P.O. Box 1549, Aiken, S.C. 29802; fax (803) 642-2747. A nominating form can be found at www.dogwoodstable.com. For more information call Mary Jane Howell (803) 642-2972.

Scholarship applications available soon

Applications for the 2007 Backstretch Scholarship Program will be available soon.

Information will be posted on the MTHA's Web site, at www.mdhorsemen.com, and in future issues of *The Horsemen's Newsletter*. The program is open to backstretch employees enrolled in college this fall. It is administered by the Maryland Racing Media Association.

Deadline for applying will be early September.

Information on graded races

The 2007 edition of *International Cataloguing Standards and International Statistics* is available, both in print and on the Web site for the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities at <http://www.ifhaonline.org/standardsBook.asp>. For information call (800) 333-1778.

Equine Science Symposium

Equine researchers, educators and industry representatives from around the globe will assemble in Hunt Valley from June 5 to 9 for the Twentieth Equine Science Society Symposium, hosted by the University of Maryland. For information visit www.enps.org/2007 or contact ess@assoqhq.org.

Thoughts, from page 4

tion on issues affecting local horsemen. Over the years, the MTHA has successfully represented horsemen in Annapolis and before the Maryland Racing Commission, and has won key concessions from track management involving stabling and other issues.

∞ A vast array of services—none of which existed before the MTHA came along, and all now helping to improve the quality of life for owners, trainers and their employees.

The MTHA has been instrumental in establishing the Backstretch Pension Plan. . . Backstretch Health Center. . . Health Fairs. . . year-round recreation program. . . English classes for backstretch employees. . . and more. It has also provided major support for the Horsemen's Counseling Program and Backstretch Scholarship Program.

∞ Improved oversight of the Purse

IN MEMORIAM

Frank Shenski, one of Maryland's longest-active owner/trainers and a fixture at Bowie since the early 1950s, died April 28. He was 93. Mr. Shenski, who made his home on Race Track Road near the entrance to Bowie, was a leading trainer in this state early in his career. He retired in 2001, but continued to attend the races until recently. Mr. Shenski was a combat veteran of World War II.

George Clarke, 72, a former owner/trainer who served as the stall superintendent at Pimlico before retiring about six years ago, died April 29. Mr. Clarke had also operated a vanning business for many years.

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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.

Account, including an annual audit.

∞ A monthly newsletter with factual information on current issues. This year we've added a state-of-the-art Web site, something not even envisioned 20 years ago.

The MTHA has been emulated by other horsemen's groups throughout the country.

From the beginning, the MTHA has

Recreation report

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

Golf

The MTHA's golf outing has been postponed once again. The new date is August 13. It will be held at Ft. Meade. Sign up in the track kitchens or call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

Orioles night

Sign-up sheets are posted in the track kitchens for Orioles night, June 13. Thirty box seat tickets to the game versus the Washington Nationals will be distributed to backstretch workers through a series of drawings.

Orioles tickets

Monthly drawings for Orioles tickets are also being held. Winners, to date,

Horsemen's calendar

RACING

Pimlico Now through June 9
Laurel Aug. 10 through Aug. 23;
Sept. 5 through Dec. 31
Timonium Aug. 24 through Sept. 3

FASIG-TIPTON MIDLANTIC

AUCTIONS AT TIMONIUM

(410) 392-5555
Two-Year-Olds in Training May 21, 22
**Two-Year-Olds in Training
and Horses of Racing Age** June 26
Eastern Fall Yearlings Oct. 1-3
Entries close July 9
December Mixed Dec. 2, 3

OUT-OF-STATE AUCTIONS

**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Two-Year-Olds and Horses of Racing Age**,
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. June 19, 20
Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July Yearlings,
Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. July 16, 17
**Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Selected
Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
(516) 328-1800. Aug. 6, 7
**Fasig-Tipton New York
Preferred Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
(516) 328-1800. Aug. 10, 11

also worked closely with the Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, an organization that is having an anniversary of its own in 2007—marking 60 years of continuous service to horsemen.

There's more to be accomplished, of course. But as the Maryland racing industry continues to face some of the toughest challenges in its history, the MTHA stands prepared—as always—to strive for the very best on behalf of its members.

/Wayne W. Wright,
MTHA executive secretary

are Mark Dillow (April 21, Bowie), Sylvia Ruiz (May 9, Pimlico) and Eddie Reyes (May 23, Laurel).

Six sets remain. If you have signed up, you remain eligible (there's no need to sign up again).

Softball

Softball will start in early June at Laurel. For more information call Dan at (410) 802-5798.

Donations

The following generous people recently donated clothing, reading material and/or other items for distribution on the backstretch: Jean Chalk, Butch Cogle, Gene Gilhooly, Chris Grove, Sylvia and Arnold Heft, Miriam and Herb Mittenhal, Paul Rich and Katherine Size.

**Fasig-Tipton New York
Open Yearlings**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
(516) 328-1800. Aug. 14
**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Selected/Open Yearlings**,
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. Aug. 20-24
Keeneland September Yearlings,
Lexington, Ky. (800) 456-3412. Sept. 10-24
**Ocala Breeders' Sales Company
Fall Mixed**,
Ocala, Fla. (352) 237-2154. Oct. 8-12
**New York Breeders' Sales Company
Fall Mixed**, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
(518) 587-1555. Oct. 14
Fasig-Tipton Kentucky Fall Yearlings,
Lexington, Ky. (859) 255-1555. Oct. 22-24

**Check the
MTHA Web site
for notice
of the next
Board Meeting.**
Go to www.mdhorsemen.com
and click on Calendar.

Health Fair schedule

Health Fairs, co-sponsored by the MTHA and Maryland Horsemen's Assistance Fund, will be conducted free of charge for backstretch workers at Bowie, Laurel and Pimlico. See schedule at right.

Services, provided by Adventist Health Care, will include lipid profiling, HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) testing, screenings for blood pressure, body fat composition, carbon monoxide and skin cancer, PSA testing, colo-rectal counseling, plus seated massage therapy and more.

Health promoters will be on hand to answer questions.

Important note: Cholesterol tests require a 12-hour fast (no food or drink in the 12 hours before the test). HIV and HCV tests require pre-approval by a physician. Individuals seeking HIV and/or HCV testing should visit Dr. Harry M. Harris in the Backstretch Health Center prior to the Health Fair.

The Health Center is open Fridays and Saturdays in the track kitchen building at Laurel, and Tuesdays in the First Aid Room at Pimlico. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon at both locations.

For more information call Bobby Lillis at (410) 265-6843.



MTHA
6314 Windsor Mill Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21207

May 2007

Thoughts and comment

Back in 1987, Maryland horsemen declared their independence.

They established a new organization known as the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (MTHA), and petitioned the Racing Commission to become the official representative for owners and trainers in this state.

Until that time, for many years, Maryland horsemen had been affiliates of a national organization that assessed heavy financial dues while falling far short in its commitment to the needs of local horsemen.

This year the MTHA reaches an im-

portant milestone. It has stood the test of time for 20 years.

And as we look back, we can proudly say that the organization has fulfilled every single one of its original promises. These include:

∞ Board meetings open to all members.

∞ A board of directors increased in size to 15 (composed of seven owners, seven trainers and one from either category).

∞ Strong and effective representa-

See *Thoughts*, page 3

BOWIE

May 22 (Tuesday), in the conference room.

LAUREL

May 23 (Wednesday), in the recreation area next to the track kitchen.

PIMLICO

May 24 (Thursday), in the MTHA office above the track kitchen.

Hours are 8:30 a.m.
to 1 p.m. each day.

MTHA Board of Directors

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Vice President

John V. Alecci
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Phillip L. Capuano, Sr.
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