



## MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD

A Program of the Maryland Department of Agriculture  
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### Mission

- Promote the use and development of horses in Maryland
- Support research related to equine health and related issues
- Create public awareness of the value of equine activities as they relate to green space preservation
- Develop and disseminate information concerning the equine industry
- Advise the Department of Agriculture regarding matters affecting the State's horse industry
- License, inspect and enforce provisions of Ag Article-701 (stable licensing)

### Board Members

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Karen Fulton, Vice Chair  
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Dr. Amy Burk  
*Equine Academic Community*  
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*Organized Shows & Events*  
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Dr. Michael Odian  
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*Humane Societies*  
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*MD Horse Council*

### Staff

Ross Peddicord  
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Ellen James  
*Inspector, Northern/Western Md.*  
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Tonya Kendrick  
*Stable Licensing*  
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*Research*

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# On the Bit

Quarterly News

Fall 2015

## Message from the Executive Director



Our quarterly newsletter features updates and brief analysis of our activities.

On the regulatory side, we license

commercial lesson, boarding, rental and rescue operations. From the commodities board perspective, we work with our partners to spur economic development of the horse industry and particularly to initiate marketing efforts to grow the recreational riding sector.

We are always eager to hear your ideas, suggestions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Thank you for all that you do to contribute to a strong and vibrant Maryland horse industry!

Ross Peddicord

## 2015 Was A Very Good Year!

As a state program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), our Fiscal Year ends June 30. We have filed our 2015 Annual Report with MDA, and the numbers look good. We licensed 770 stables, an increase of 112 stables from 2014. The Feed Fund, based on the amount of horse feed sold in the state, grew by 8 percent.

More and more commercial

stables have become aware not only that State Law requires them to be licensed, but by doing so, they become part of a large network deeply concerned about equine welfare and part of a group that works hard to improve the state's horse industry.

The increase in the Feed Fund indicates that our equine numbers are either improving or that we are paying more attention to

the amount and/or quality of the grain we provide them. Whatever the reason, the numbers are going in the right direction.

Our Annual Report is available on our website [mda.maryland.gov/horseboard](http://mda.maryland.gov/horseboard) and distributed in hard copy at the Maryland Horse Council annual meeting in November.

## Horse Park Study Released— Now for the Hard Part!

Consultants, hired by the Maryland Stadium Authority at the request of MDA and the Maryland Horse Industry Board, have completed the study. We held a series of 17 briefings this summer with public officials, equine industry leaders and stakeholders of the facilities who had responded to a Request For Information (RFI) to participate in the system.

The report calls for major upgrades at the Prince George's

Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro as the state's major show/expo complex and to the Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area in Elkton as the major field event venue.

Now the hard part begins—where to find the money to make these improvements. At its Sep-

tember meeting, MHIB passed a resolution to take the leadership role in working with all parties to thoroughly study and digest the Report's findings; prioritize facility upgrades; and then work to secure the funding.

Download a copy of the Horse Park Study at  
<http://www.mdstad.com/pdf/HorseParkStudy2015.pdf>

## Grants

The application period for MHIB's annual grant program closed October 2. Grant recipients will be announced no later than January 1, 2016. Funding will be available after that date. Projects

should be completed by June 30, 2016. Since the Feed Fund was established in 2002, MHIB has awarded nearly \$350,000 in grants to more than 275 projects throughout Maryland.

In addition to the routine grants (which average approximately \$1,500-\$3,000 per project), the Board is considering more major funding for equine scientific research.

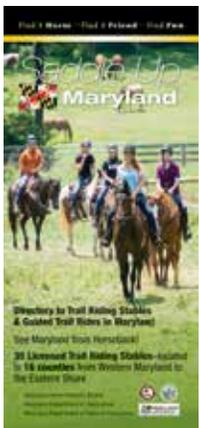
## Economic Impact Study

MHIB and other industry representatives met in September with the Sage Policy Group to initiate an economic impact study on the state's horse industry in time for the 2016 General Assembly session.

## SADDLE UP MARYLAND Directory of Guided Trail Rides

Formerly produced by *The Equi-ery*, this key marketing piece is now published by MHIB

There are 35 licensed trail riding stables in 16 Maryland counties.



Brochures will continue to be placed with Tourism and Welcome Centers throughout Maryland, and are also available on the MHIB website.

Other MHIB publications include a Horse Discovery Center rack card and a 2015 Calendar of Events.

## Welcome to Horse Land

In conjunction with our many racing and non-racing partners, MHIB helped coordinate a giant equine educational exhibit called Horse Land at the Maryland State Fair. This effort was geared mainly to introduce children to horses, but drew folks of all ages. We welcomed more than 12,000 visitors to the big tent, located between the Kiddie Land rides and the racetrack grandstand.

Popular activities included stick horse making with kids leaping over a small jump course; dressing in jockey silks and riding the Equicizer; farrier demonstra-

tions; mini horsemanship lessons with 3 live horses; and a petting stable with 4 donkeys and ponies.

Among the participants: 14 equine organizations, 11 Horse Discovery Centers, 4 therapeutic riding centers, and 3 equine rescue/sanctuaries. Six licensed stables provided animals for the exhibit (City Ranch, Ebb Tide Stables, Olney Pony Farm, Windy Way Horses, Holly Ridge Farm and vR Equine Therapy).

While the general public might not attend a horse show or a racetrack on their own as a first time experience, large communi-



ty events like the State Fair (and county fairs) are excellent opportunities to introduce folks to horses for the first time.

## Swedish Delegation Visits In October

Maryland continues her reciprocal relationship with Sweden, which began in the spring of 2013 when the Swedish publishers of *Gallop* Magazine visited and fell in love with our state. Last fall MHIB received a grant from the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export association to send a delegation to learn about the Swedish horse industry and another grant this year to invite a Swedish delegation here to learn about the many different aspects of our industry.

Delegation members include Mats & Caterina Genberg, the *Gallop* publishers; Dr. Karl Heimdahl, president of the Swedish

Warmblood Assoc.; Kent Ohlander, GM of the Jagersro harness track, home of the Swedish Derby; Staffan Lidbeck, former Olympic competitor and current chef d'equipe and national vet for the Swedish Olympic Team; and Lena Malmqvist, president of the Swedish Equestrian Federation for the Skane (southern Sweden) district.

Sweden has the largest number of horseback riders per capita of any country and its industry has many similarities with Maryland. There are 950 registered riding clubs in Sweden; Maryland has nearly 800 licensed riding sta-

bles. A number of Maryland stables, such as Riversedge, Hilltop Farm and Beall Spring Farm have business dealings in Sweden. Winbak Farm and other Maryland harness breeders sell horses and genetics to Sweden. *Gallop* provides coverage of the Maryland horse industry to its international readership.

The visit will promote Maryland as a destination for Swedish horsemen interested in purchasing horses/genetics and related products as well as visitors to attend Maryland equine stables, sales and attractions.

## Ongoing Implementation of Five-Year Strategic Marketing Plan

Now entering its fourth year, MHIB continues many elements of its 5-Year Strategic Marketing Plan. They include:

**Touch of Class Award**—The monthly presentation provides a steady stream of news releases going to about 200 media outlets through the MDA Communications office about Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition.

**Horse Discovery Centers**—These are existing stables that have been certified to provide positive first time equine experiences to the

general public. This is a volunteer program open to all licensed stables. New applications to become an HDC will be taken in 2016.

**Horse History Committee**—Our first Horse History Trail won the 2014 Md. Tourism Council award for best new product costing under \$5K. Visit MDHistoricHorseTrails.com More of these self-guided trails that capture our equine heritage are in the works. MHIB contributed to production of *Racing The Times*, a 90-minute documentary on the history of Maryland horse racing that was

shown on MPT.

**Horses For Courses**—A new project in partnership with the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) and other industry organizations to develop a horse curriculum for Maryland schools, grades 4-8. A team of 10 stable operators are currently writing the curriculum under the guidance of MAEF's Peggy Eppig. Maryland horse farms/attractions can become "go-to" sites for school visits and its operators certified as farm-based educators.

**Grassroots Outreach**—During

2015 MHIB had booths and gave presentations at 36 venues and also participated in another 22 industry meetings and events. Upcoming events include: Presentations for the St. Mary's County Ag Commission; the National Retired Racehorse Makeover in Lexington, Ky.; the Maryland Tourism Summit; the annual meeting of the Maryland Association of Agricultural Fairs & Shows; the EQUUS Film Festival in New York City (which will feature a showing of *Racing The Times*) and the Lisbon Horse Parade.