



NEWSLETTER

January 2017

Mission:

Through an energized, broad based, grassroots coalition representing all facets of the equine industry, the Michigan Equine Partnership (MEP) is committed to increasing the awareness and support, influencing public policy to strengthen the industry, and heightening recognition of the economic opportunities and value of the Michigan equine industry.

Vision:

A leader, partner and the voice of the Michigan equine industry.

Philosophy:

Provide leadership through commitment, empowerment and accountability. Build partnerships with respect, trust, cooperation and respond to the needs of the equine industry with information, assessment, innovation, communication and coordination of services.

Value:

A proud non-profit organization of advocacy through integrity, collaboration and member driven cooperative spirit.

Founding Members

MGLI-International Draft
Horse Association

M.T.O.B.A.

Happy New Year! 2017



Hello Member,

Thank you for your Michigan Equine Partnership membership and your continued support of the equine industry. Exciting times are ahead and your 2017 membership dues will support our moving forward with plans for the Michigan International Horse Park! Our united aspirations enhance economic opportunity and the value of the equine industry in Michigan.

We are pleased to tell you about this year's achievements. First, the Horse Racing Act, No. 271 of 2016, encourages the growth and sustainability of Michigan horse racing, by incentivizing horse breeding in Michigan and encouraging Michigan bred horses to come home to race! Special purses are now available at fairs for 2-year-old and 3-year-old Michigan bred or sired Standardbred harness horses leased or owned by a resident of Michigan. Please be sure to read the law and learn more by visiting: [2016 legislation](#)

The Joint Committee on Administrative Rules established guidelines on draft horse drug testing. As a result, the Great Lakes International (MGLI) Draft Horse Show and Pull held in East Lansing each year now sees higher numbers of competitors because drug testing the winning pairs and randomly testing horses or teams that come in second or third in the pulls levels clears the field of unethical competitors.

And finally, an essential effort by MEP for the horse industry was the passing of the Equine Liability Act which continues to protect equine owners from frivolous lawsuits.

Campbell Farms
Jerry and Lisa Campbell

Tom Cole

Larry Julian

Mast Thoroughbreds
Henry Mast

Val Vail-Shirey

Horsemen's Benevolence & Protective
Association

C.A.N.T.E.R.

Equine World Insurance

Great Lakes Downs, Muskegon



Photo Courtesy of www.horseshmagazine.com

Would you like to
advertise in this
quarterly Newsletter?



This e-newsletter is read by 2,000
horse enthusiasts and is placed on the
MEP website.

We couldn't have done any of this without your support! We look forward to keeping you up to date on legislation in 2017 and are moving forward with plans for the Michigan International Horse Park. Input from members is always welcome. Call us to participate, or for more details on issues.

We welcome new enterprises, so if you know of someone who would like to be a part of this partnership; please let us know.

Sincerely,

Aaron Rice
President
Michigan Equine Partnership

The Michigan Great Lakes International Draft Horse Show and Pull a Fantastic 40th Year Anniversary

With over 1,200 draft horses from the U.S. and Canada, The Michigan Great Lakes International Draft Horse Show and Pull (MGLI) is the largest annual draft horse event in North America. MGLI's annual mid-October 4-day event featured some of the finest Belgians, Clydesdales, Shires, Percherons and mules that have ever performed.

The October 13 - 16, 2016 event was an All American Class A Show for draft horse breeds and new this year was a \$2500 Payout! All Six Horse Breed Classes plus the final were A.S.H.H.C. sanctioned with a \$2500 payout!

Also Different this Year: Barnyard Horse Pull

The BARNYARD HORSE PULL - Class 907, Premiums were raised to \$85 for 1st-16th placings.

New classes for the Shire Breed

Added in 2016 was a set of new classes for the Shire Breed.

New On-Line Feature!

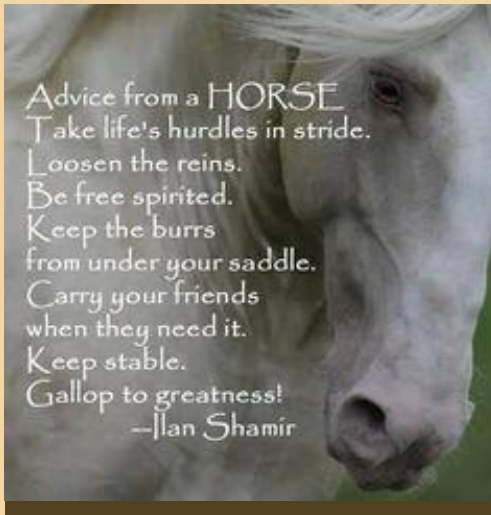
For the October 19 through 22, 2017 Draft Horse Show and Pull, an online registration is now available on the website. An easy and safe online entry and payment form is available. A time saver for everyone! Show entries will open June 15, 2017.

The 2017 RULES & INFORMATION PREMIUM BOOK may be found at: <http://mgli.org/mgli/competitions/>

Governor Appointed Horse Racing Commission

The recently passed horse racing legislation included a Horse Racing Commission to be appointed by the Governor and reporting to the Agriculture and Rural Development Department to provide the Michigan Gaming Control Board with greater insight in the changes industry members believe will help improve and grow the sport. The

Contact Val@julianvail.com for information.



Advice from a HORSE
Take life's hurdles in stride.
Loosen the reins.
Be free spirited.
Keep the burrs
from under your saddle.
Carry your friends
when they need it.
Keep stable.
Gallop to greatness!
—Ilan Shamir



Congress Passes National Forest Service Trail Stewardship Act

Press Release from: American Horse Council

Today, the Senate passed the National Forest Service Trail Stewardship Act of 2015 (H.R.845 S.1110). This follows House passage of the bill earlier this fall. The bill, introduced by Representatives Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Tim Walz (D-MN) and Senators Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Michael Bennet (D-CO), would direct the Forest Service to take several actions to help address the current trail maintenance backlog that is adversely impacting all trail users on many National Forests, including equestrians.

The American Horse Council, Backcountry Horsemen of America, and the Wilderness Society were significantly involved in the creation and passage of this bill.

primary goals of the advisory board are to present industry agreed upon legislative or regulatory improvements for horse racing in Michigan. It is important to note that while the advisory board is housed within the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Michigan Gaming Control Board continues to regulate the industry. The Governor's appointees to the advisory committee includes the following people, each serving a four-year term, which ends in October 2020:

Dr. Don Ryker, of Ortonville, owner of equine veterinary practice Don Ryker DMV and Associates. He will be the advisory board chairman; **George Kutlenios**, of Holly, who is president of the Michigan Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association, who will represent statewide horse racing associations; **Thomas Barrett**, of Novi, current president of the Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association, who will represent statewide horse racing associations; **Mike Carlo**, of Northville, operations manager for the Standardbred track at Northville Downs, who will represent racetracks; **Dr. Nancy Frank**, of Haslett, assistant state veterinarian for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; **Dr. Frank Nickels**, of Haslett, a professor at the Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine

Michigan Harness Horsemen Association Annual Banquet

The MHHA annual banquet and awards ceremony is right around the corner on Saturday, January 21, 2017 at the Johnson Center, Cleary University-Livingston at 3725 Cleary Drive in Howell. The annual meeting begins at 5:00 pm with registration and the reception also beginning at 5:00 pm. Dinner is served at 6:30 pm and the award presentations and scholarship auction will follow. Please go to mhha.com for more information.

2017 Membership Renewal



MEP would like to thank our current members! Without members like you, MEP would not be the voice for the Michigan Equine industry. Now is the time to join MEP!

[Click Here](#) for the membership renewal/membership form! Renewals are due by January 31, 2017.



More news from American Horse Council:
Congress Passes Tax Bill with Horse Benefits; President Signs It (Washington, DC)-

The AHC is pleased Congress has approved this important legislation. The AHC would like to thank Representatives Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Tim Walz (D-MN) and Senators Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) for their leadership and work to pass this bill.

The bill directs the Forest Service to develop a strategy to more effectively utilize volunteers and partners to assist in maintaining national forest trails. It will also provide outfitters and guides the ability to perform trail maintenance activities in lieu of permit fees. Additionally, the bill will address a liability issue that has discouraged some national forests from utilizing volunteers and partner organizations to help perform trail maintenance and will direct the Forest Service to identify and prioritize specific areas with the greatest need for trail maintenance in the national forest system.

In the current fiscal environment, it is unlikely Congress will appropriate additional funds to directly address the trail maintenance backlog. This bill will help improve trail maintenance without the need for additional funding.

The President is expected to sign the bill into law in the near future.



In what might be seen as a thaw in Congressional relations, a bi-partisan tax bill, with multiple provisions favorable to the horse industry, has been passed by Congress. Although the bill has now touched down safely, there were a few gusts and swells that threatened its passage right up to the end. President Obama signed it immediately.

The \$622 billion bill extends or reinstates multiple tax provisions that have been raised, lowered, or allowed to expire over the last decade. Some have now been made permanent in the new bill; others extended for one or two years; but all are retroactive to January 1, 2015 so horse owners and industry stakeholders can take advantage of them for this year.

The bill, called the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015, includes several provisions important to the horse industry and championed by the American Horse Council for some time. These benefits include making all race horses depreciable over three years; the ability to immediately expense or write-off up to \$500,000 in depreciable business property; and bonus depreciation, which allows the deduction of 50% of the cost of new property purchased and placed in service. All of these provisions apply to horses and other assets used in a horse business.

The bill reinstates the 3-year-depreciation schedule for all race horses for all of 2015 and 2016. "This means that if an owner has begun training or racing a horse this year, or will begin training or racing it next year, the three-year depreciation schedule will apply. Owners and trainers don't have to get involved in deciding when to begin training the horse to qualify for the 3-year period, rather than 7 year; it is automatic for all race horses placed in service in 2015 and 2016. The provision allows horse owners to begin training their race horses when they think best and take advantage of the shorter three-year period," noted American Horse Council president Jay Hickey. "Most horses race over three years, not seven, so this is really a fairer schedule."

The bill also raises the so-called Section 179 business expense deduction back to \$500,000 and makes it permanent, effective January 1, 2015. It had reverted to \$25,000 for 2015. This change will allow anyone in the horse business to immediately depreciate up to \$500,000 of the cost of any investment in industry assets, including horses, fences, equipment, tack, trucks, etc., purchased and placed in service in 2015 and 2016. The deduction is still reduced dollar-for-dollar once investments in all one's business activities hit \$2 million.

"The 179 expense deduction is a real stimulus to the \$102 billion horse industry and will support thousands of jobs," said Hickey. "And it applies to all depreciable assets used in the horse business, including horses, be they yearlings, race or show horses, mares, stallions, or breeding shares."

The bill restores bonus depreciation for qualifying new property, including assets used in the horse business, such as yearlings and other equipment, purchased and placed in service during 2015 through 2019. It had expired for 2015, but is now restored to 50 percent for business property placed in service during 2015, 2016 and 2017. It then phases down to 40 percent in 2018, and 30 percent in 2019. The first use of the horse or equipment must begin with the taxpayer. Yearlings are eligible for bonus depreciation and new equipment, but not horses like mares or stallions that have raced, shown, or been bred, since they have already been used.

The extender bill would also restore and make permanent favorable tax treatment for land donated for conservation purposes, particularly land donated by farmers and ranchers.

"The AHC has been working to have all these provisions increased or reinstated and is pleased they have been acted upon. They have been made retroactive to cover all of 2015. "We had hoped these provisions would have been extended earlier in the year. This would have made planning and decisions to invest in the horse business easier. Congress apparently follows the 'better late than never schedule'," said Hickey.

For more information on these bills and other national news please visit horsecouncil.org

USDA Animal Care Provides Update on Its Horse Protection Program

Managers at horse shows/exhibitions/sales/auctions regulated under the Horse Protection Act continue to help USDA strive toward our shared goals of ending the practice of soring horses and restoring fair competition.



To further this collaborative relationship, Bernadette Juarez has issued a letter to these managers updating them on the refinements APHIS has made to the USDA Horse Protection Program. The letter, summarized below, can be found in its entirety [here](#).

Animal Care's 5-year strategic plan emphasizes building trusted relationships with the regulated horse industry as a key to promoting animal welfare. To this end, Juarez has met with dozens of organizations, associations, managers, exhibitors, trainers and owners to begin the very real process of earning the trust of these valuable stakeholders. Her letter is a reflection of USDA's commitment to delivering the change they desire.

First, Animal Care shifted the day-to-day oversight of Horse Protection Act inspections from its headquarters office to its field operations team. This will provide more direct oversight and leadership.

Second, USDA proposed changing the Horse Protection Act regulations to, among other things, strengthen the system for detecting soreness in horses, and refine the list of devices, equipment, substances, and practices that are prohibited to prevent the soring of horses.

Third, we have diligently reminded horse show managers that the Horse Protection Act directs them - not USDA - to disqualify or prohibit sored horses from participating in their events.

Finally, Juarez has initiated a comprehensive review of Animal Care's website, publications and correspondence to better provide information and eliminate out-of-date content.

"It is my strongest belief that our refinements will enable us to accomplish what we have been trying to do ever since the Horse Protection Act was created in 1970," Juarez said. "With the continued assistance from the horse industry and the support of all our stakeholders, we are one step closer to ending the soring of horses and restoring fair competition at events covered by the Horse Protection Act."

WANTED

Photos wanted!

Do you have any horse related photos you would like to share with MEP? We are always looking for new photos to use in newsletters, on the website and in other MEP projects. What would be better than to use photos from our very own Michigan horse family!

If you have any photos you would like to share with us, please send them to kristinaq43@gmail.com with "Horse Photos" in the subject line.

2017-18 Legislative Leadership Michigan Senate & House of Representatives Michigan Senate

Senate Majority Leader	Senator Arlan B. Meekhof	Senate District 30
Senate Majority Floor Leader	Senator Mike Kowall	Senate District 15
Senate President Pro Tem	Senator Tonya Schuitmaker	Senate District 26
Senate Minority Leader	Senator Jim Ananich	Senate District 27

Senate Minority Floor Leader Senator Morris Hood III Senate District 3
Senate Appropriations Chair Senator Dave Hildenbrand Senate District 29

Michigan House of Representatives

Speaker of the House	Representative Tom Leonard	House District 93
Majority Floor Leader	Representative Dan Lauwers	House District 81
Speaker Pro-Tem	Representative Lee Chatfield	House District 107
Minority Leader	Representative Sam Singh	House District 69
Minority Floor Leader	Representative Christine Greig	House District 37
House Appropriations Chair	Representative Laura Cox	House District 19

First Session Day-Swearing in of Legislature-Wednesday, January 11, 2017

MEP, 235 N. Pine Street, Lansing, MI 48933