



# NEWS from MHC'S INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

## EYES UP & KICK! MEMBERS SHARE 2021 PLANS

MHC Industry Professional members are not deflated by 2020 and are not daunted by the post-holiday surge in COVID cases. Eyes are up, and they are kicking on for 2021, determined that this year will be different.

During the 2020 crisis, many barn operators had learned how to pivot in order to stay financially viable. For some lesson farms, the cancelation of the beginner group lessons presented new opportunities for the barn's more intermediate level clients. Explains **Potomac Horse Center** manager **Renee Terselic**, "As you know, the bulk of our business is beginners, and beginners require the opposite of social distancing. Helping them to and from the stall, lifting them for mounting and assisting with dismounting, adjusting their hands and fingers on the reins, adjusting their position, holding hands with the younger clients when they are apprehensive, etc, is impossible now. Also, beginners just feel better when you stay close to them during their first several (or more) rides. It can be intimidating to ride a big, strong horse even if that horse is a 30-year-old, 13-hand pony that stands like a statue. Lessons and In-house leasing for clients who are riding at the intermediate level and above (translation: require no real hands-on assistance and can observe social distancing guidelines) has helped us to at least survive. Space made available by beginners who must unfortunately sit on the sidelines for now has given leasing the opportunity to grow a bit, which has proven to be invaluable to our survival. The horses, arenas and the schedule were simply too busy pre-Covid to allow for leasing, and this opportunity has given us all something to count on in these inconsistent times. It doesn't make us whole, but it is keeping us alive. Bonus: It keeps the horses schooled and in shape for when we are once again able to welcome back our very patient beginner clients."



**Anne Joyner** predicts that her "Talisman Therapeutic Riding will provide a record number of lessons in 2021!" Anne explains how the business was initially impacted by the pandemic, and then how they figured out how to make lemonade out of lemons: "We postponed lessons for eight weeks from mid-March to mid-May. During that time we conducted surveys of our riders, volunteers and staff to determine their "comfort level" in continuing with lessons. We produced a COVID protocol video [for the farm] which demonstrated rider arrival, temperature-taking, hand-washing, lessons and departure. The barn doors were back open! Since then, we have provided daily lessons. After-all, we are an outdoor classroom! As we look to 2021, we anticipate further increases in ridership. We are eager to hire more PATH International Trained Certified Instructors, Therapists and volunteers. We need to add a pony to our herd of twelve. We are adding carriage driving in 2021 to our catalog of eleven pro-

grams. We expect our rider population to continue to change. We are experiencing sizable increases in tweens and teens and expect that to continue throughout 2021. [We find the] tweens and teens come to us because of isolation and anxiety. Our fundraising events in 2021 will be a combination of live and virtual. 2021 looks like a very busy year for the team at Talisman."

Other barn owners, such as **Michele Wellman**, are predicting more stability for their businesses in 2021, anticipating neither shut downs nor dramatic increase in requests for services. "I am planning on a normal year this year, of course accounting for Covid. Our barn [By Chance Farm] requires masks while not riding and we are providing sanitizer (both surface and hand) for use by anyone who needs it. I have been teaching a normal schedule since last fall but I only teach riders on their own horses." In 2020, Michele launched regular cavaletti days, which have become very popular with local riders of all disciplines, and she intends to continue those through 2021. In addition to her 4 licensed shows (which will comply with the USEF COVID Action Plan), By Chance will resume monthly schooling shows, but requiring advanced online entries even for schooling shows. "I guess we are technically full steam ahead," Michele concluded. "I have 30+ boarders who have been very supportive during these stressful times, many who participate or plan to participate in our farm activities and shows. Honestly our barn community has been fantastic."



Reducing contact between show/event secretaries and competitors has catapulted numerous competitions into the digital age. For other competitions already comfortable with digital products, the crisis has ramped up their experiments with new digital tools. For the **Maryland Horse Trails at Loch Moy** (which already has a full calendar of 2021 events), owner **Carolyn Mackintosh** has started using a new touchless scoring system from Australia: "I'm trying it out on my cross country derbies and will use it for all disciplines. The volunteers seem to like it, and Tracy McKenna (associate publisher of *The Equiery* who moonlights at Loch Moy) has been great getting it off the ground. Everyone stays in their cars, using their phones to judge, including dressage judges and scribes. No contact, no score runners or paper. Everything is live scoring. The competitors receive their dressage tests and scores on their phones. We will get through this!"

As of press time, websites for **A Moment in Time**, **Full Moon Farm**, **Linden Farm**, **Meadowbrook**, **Worthmore Equestrian Center** and **Wyndham Oaks** have scheduled clinics and competitions now through summer. **A Bit Better Farm** has clinics scheduled for the first quarter of 2021 while **Waredaca** has planned out a full year of clin-

# ABOUT MHC'S INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP



ics on their website. **Woodland Horse Center** is ramping up for 2021 summer camp. Meanwhile, **Highridge Farm** kicked off the year with a fun show on January 2, and plans to keep on keepin' on! And let's not forget the postponed inaugural **Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill**, now scheduled for October 14 - 17, 2021 at the Fair Hill Special Event Zone in Elkton, MD.



Even though many facilities have found ways to move forward during the crisis, not every program is able to continue. Potomac has decided to opt-out of participating in the JEL, NCEL & IEA Show Team leagues for the 2020-21 season. **Quantum Leap** has scaled-back to existing core clients, and according to owner **Katie Carr**, does not plan to really fully re-open until well after the pandemic is under control. The **Chesapeake Dressage Institute** remains closed to outside visitors, but is hoping to re-open in the spring. Barns too numerous to list here have not (as of press time) committed to lesson programs, shows or summer camps, remaining in a state of suspended animation, waiting in an existential purgatory for the COVID tide to recede. Needless to say, it can't come soon enough.

## NEWS BY, FROM OR ABOUT INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

**Rigidply Rafters** received the 2020 Gold Key Award from Rural Builder magazine. Suppliers nominated and voted for excellent service to the construction industry by Rural Builder readers.

Kudos to **Carolyn Mackintosh (Loch Moy Farm)**, for being the driving force behind the new USEA Volunteer Medal Program, launched in 2020 to enhance the recognition of resilient volunteers, particularly meaningful during the pandemic.

For 2021, the **Maryland Therapeutic Riding Center** welcomes **Jessica Mitchell** in the role of "Barn Coordinator," mentoring potential new clients and volunteers during peak program times. A 5-year volunteer for MTR, Jessica moves into her professional role as Barn Coordinator as she begins her journey towards becoming a PATH International Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor and pursuing an EAGALA Equine Specialist Certification.

For 2021, **Full Moon Farm** unveiled a new website.

**Wonderland Farm**, located on an historic 62-acre estate in Elkton, celebrated its two-year anniversary on January 18.

What's new with your business for 2021? Let us know!  
IndustryNews@mdhorsecouncil.org

## WELCOME NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS!

Cloverland Farm • Garrison Forest School • Kent Veterinary Center • St. Patrick's Racing Stable LLC • Veteran Writing Services, LLC

## THIS EQUIERY COLUMN IS FOR YOU!

This monthly column in *The Equiery*, (which is owned and published by the Maryland Horse Council) is designed to meet the demands of MHC's Industry Professional Members: a place where you can publicize your professional news and updates. Have you taken on a new partner? Hired a new manager or trainer? Brought a new vet into your practice? Promoted an employee? Moved your location? Received a commendation or award? Changed brokerages or practices? Hired a new director of development? If so, we want to know! Please send your news to IndustryNews@mdhorsecouncil.org.

## WHAT IS AN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL?

Industry Professional Memberships are open to owners and managers of equine or equine-related businesses, farms and shows/events, and to independent contractors and service providers. Equine businesses include (but are not limited to) farms and stables offering any equine-related service (such as boarding, training, lessons, trail rides, pony parties, breeding, mare care, foaling, carriage horses, and equine entertainment).

Equine-related businesses include (but are not limited to) tack, feed and other retail stores; trailer manufacturers, sales & service; shipping; feed mills; manufacturers of saddles, supplements, tack, and shoes; hay, straw, shavings, feed, and other products; insurance, financial, legal, accounting, and marketing services; auction houses and sales sites; competition venues and race tracks; veterinary practices and hospitals.

Independent contractors include (but are not limited to) veterinarians, farriers, equine therapists, saddle fitters, trainers, instructors, stall muckers, braiders, and equine dentists.

## Industry Professional Membership Benefits include:

- direct input into policy and advocacy by the Maryland Horse Council on State of Maryland legislative and regulatory affairs, to protect and grow the diverse Maryland horse industry
- exclusive invitations to Business Networking events and seminars (not open to any other membership category)
- business logo and link on MHC member directory page
- discounts on select nationally known products and services, such as John Deere, Sherwin Williams, Suncoast, Nationwide, Redbrand, US Equestrian, New Holland, Toro, eXmark, tenda - and more
- exclusive discounts for advertising and marketing via *The Equiery's* multi-media products. Contact Tracy McKenna to find out more! tracy@equiery.com or 410-802-4219

Annual Membership Dues: \$100  
Lifetime Membership: \$1,000

This feature is a benefit for MHC Industry Professional Members. To learn more or submit news & updates, contact Business Network Co-Chairs Jane Seigler & Crystal Brumme Pickett at IndustryNews@mdhorsecouncil.org

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