

POTOMAC HORSE CENTER



14211 Quince Orchard Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Phone 301-208-0200

History

Built in the late 1950's by Frederick G. Harding to "Foster the Olympic Spirit", and renowned for producing many of our industries top professional equestrians, including world-class riders, passionate riding instructors, all-important barn managers, indispensable grooms, life-long equine enthusiasts, and the supporters and rescuers of the animals that can't speak for themselves, the Potomac Horse Center (PHC) has continued operating in that same spirit by introducing the public to horses at the grass roots level since the current management took over the lease in 1993.

Mission

PHC proudly introduces the experience of horses and horseback riding to the public; horse ownership is NOT required! We offer access to these amazing animals as well as green space amid sprawling suburbia to folks of all levels, abilities and interests.

Who Are We?

PHC is a public facility leased from the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). We are the largest publicly available facility that not only caters to our immediate community, but also contributes to the larger, very important, multi-million-dollar Montgomery County and Maryland state equine industry. In addition to supporting tack shops, feed stores, veterinarians, equine transport services, local farmers (who provide hay), and sawmills (that supply shavings for bedding), PHC's presence is crucial to the preservation of all-important greenspace that is located in a densely populated and rapidly growing area, where more and more open land is being covered by expansive housing developments.

We offer pony rides, riding lessons for children and adults, therapeutic riding lessons, boarding, training, a popular summer camp and unmounted hands-on horsemanship classes, as well as free admission to all open house and horse show events throughout the year. We are open to the public 7 days per week, 363 days per year, and are easily accessible by public transportation. In addition to our loyal local community, Montgomery County and the M-NCPPC, we support and work in cooperation with: The Maryland Horse Council, the Maryland Farm Bureau, the Maryland Horse Industry Board and the Maryland Department of Agriculture, to name a few.

Why We Need Your Voice

Since executing our lease with the M-NCPPC in 1993, PHC has worked hard to maintain what was already a 30-year-old infrastructure, through a maintenance agreement and a Capital Improvement program. 30 years later, the maintenance agreement and Capital Improvement program are simply not enough to maintain the now 60-year-old infrastructure's needs.

OVER >>>>>

Our wonderful community has donated ~\$300,000 to the leaky roofs and complete replacement of the riding arena floors and surfaces to ensure the safety of our riders and horses, but we also need the help of the property owners (Montgomery County, Maryland) and our lease managers, (M-NCPPC). Understandably, our generous donors are feeling frustrated, tapped out and hesitant to contribute more, as they have yet to see any action at all from the M-NCPPC and their network. Additionally, we need a new lease with new terms going forward.

On December 22, 2023, the M-NCPPC informed us that we need to vacate and relocate our Main Barn and arena operations – the absolute heartbeat of our entire operation and business – to elsewhere on the property by January 22, 2024, while they decide what to do about the repairs and recommendations noted for the Main Barn in a recent engineering report they received on November 22, 2023. Although moving our operation will be survivable in the *very* short term under these limiting conditions, and we will go forward with business as usual as much as possible, we don't know if it's survivable beyond that.

How You Can Help

- **Visit** our website, potomachorsecenter.com for updates
- **See** smiling faces and get updates on Instagram and Facebook @potomachorsecenter
- **Join** our mailing list, preservepotomachorsecenter@gmail.com
- **Send** your letters, drawings, Emails and snail mail to:

gary.burnett@montgomeryparks.org
kenny.black@montgomeryparks.org
david.tobin@montgomeryparks.org

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC)
2425 Reddie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Md 20902
Attn: Gary Burnett, Kenny Black or David Tobin

Bullet Points to Help You When Writing Your Letters:

- How and why riding and time at the barn is important to you (horses, friends, exercise)
- The long and successful history of our beloved PHC – generations of families have ridden with us!
- The mental health aspects of time at the barn, horses and greenspace
- Horses teach respect and empathy
- Undisputed documentation of therapeutic benefits for those with special needs
- Horseback riding means less social media time!
- Speak from the heart! Passion and frustration, stated respectfully, speak loudest!
- Letters from minors are as important as letters from adults!
- We are available by public transportation!
- Riding is a unique sports option in Montgomery County
- Trail adjacent

THANK YOU!