

Press Release

State of Maryland
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services



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Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Gary D. Maynard
Secretary

Second Chances Inmate Thoroughbred Rescue Farm to Cut the Ribbon on New Run-in Shelter

Wednesday, 6/22 at 11 a.m. in Sykesville

What: DPSCS Secretary Gary Maynard and DOC inmates and staff cut the ribbon on a run-in shelter at Second Chances Farm, 6900 Slacks Road in Sykesville.

When: Wednesday, June 22 at 11 a.m.

Background: Second Chances is one of only eight inmate-run horse rescue farms in the nation operating thanks to a partnership with the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation. It currently has five inmate workers and four horses.

This run-in shelter, the farm's second, was funded by a private citizen's \$5,000 donation, and built by inmates. The 12x32-foot structure will eventually allow the farm to add more horses from the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, which rescues horses that are no longer able to race and thus face an uncertain future.

The more horses the farm adds, the more inmates may enter the program. Eventually, DPSCS hopes to have as many as 30 horses and 15 inmates in the program. Thus far, 24 inmates have participated and seven have completed their entire horse care and classroom curriculum to earn a Groomsman Elite certificate, making them potentially employable in the equine industry.

Secretary Gary Maynard is responsible for several states' inmate rescue farm projects, thanks to his work with the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation.

Second Chances Farm has five pastures and a barn and classroom space built by inmates. It is adjacent to Central Maryland Correctional Facility in the rolling hills of southern Carroll County.

More information on the program is on the pages below.



Second Chances Farm

On May 14, 2009 the Second Chances Farm opened their barn doors to receive its first three retired/rescued thoroughbred race horses. This unique program is possible because of a partnership between DPSCS and the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF).

The farm is the first program of its kind to be taught in the state of Maryland. Secretary Gary D. Maynard spearheaded similar programs in other states throughout his various careers within corrections. The partnership not only benefits the horses, but also the offenders who work at the site. There are infinite opportunities for program expansion to include things such as therapeutic and community outreach initiatives.

About the Program

As a Public Safety Works program, Second Chances Farm is a restorative justice tool that DPSCS hopes to utilize to give our offender population work skills while also teaching compassion through the care of a living animal. The project began in 2008 with the resurrection of a dilapidated barn and surrounding grounds near our Central Maryland Correctional Facility in Sykesville, MD by offenders in our pre-release system and Maryland Correctional Enterprises. It will eventually be home to approximately 40 horses, and will employ 15 offenders who are nearing their release from the correctional system. This project is also a natural extension of Maryland's proud tradition in horse racing.

All aspects of this program have been funded by the generosity of donations to TRF.

About the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF)

For more than 20 years it has been TRF's mission to rescue thoroughbred horses whose careers have come to an end and whose futures are frighteningly uncertain. It is rare that a horse will find himself competing at the Triple Crown level. More commonly, the majority of horses are consistently put on the track in the hope that they can provide a continuing stream of income for the owner. Once they can no longer produce income, they become a financial burden that few owners are willing or able to sustain.

Many times, these horses wind up at an auction where they are sold and ultimately end up in a slaughter house. Their meat is sent to foreign countries for human consumption. Annually, more than 100,000 horses face this horrible fate. This is where the TRF enters the picture. They work diligently to find foster farms which can care for the horses that are rescued. The ultimate goal is for the horses to be adopted out and re-trained as pleasure riding, polo, therapeutic and jumping horses.

The TRF Curriculum

TRF has partnered with correctional agencies in more than eight states throughout the country to implement an educational course called Groom Elite. The program provides the opportunity for qualified offenders to learn every aspect of equine care. The Groom Elite course consists of six months of classroom instruction as well as daily hands-on experience for each student. Upon successfully completing the course, the offenders can earn a Groom Elite certificate. Once they are released from incarceration, the students can pursue related careers in the horse industry. The program also provides assistance to graduates in finding employment at horse farms, training facilities, etc.

To learn more about the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation visit their website <http://www.trfinc.org/>.

Meet the Horses



QUITE RIGHTLY

A Kentucky bred Bay Gelding, Quinn is our herd leader. He is 12 years old and during his career won 3 firsts, 11 seconds and 7 thirds. "AKA Quinn"



GREEK RULER

A 7 year old Bay Gelding who was bred in West Virginia. He was only able to race 13 times in his career before being retired for a knee injury. "AKA Greek"



SEEKING REVENGE

A Maryland bred Bay Gelding, Stevie is 5 years old and retired soon after starting his career due to a broken knee. "AKA Stevie"



PRINCE OF MINE

A 7 year old Gelding. Records coming soon. "AKA Prince"

Contact Us

For more information on volunteer opportunities and how you can help Second Chances Farm, please contact: Program Coordinator Conni Swenson 443-552-8007

There are opportunities to sponsor any of our horses, as well as donate to the upkeep of the facility. Through your support we can impact the number of horses that can be rescued, and offenders who may be given the chance to participate in this valuable program.

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services protects the public, its employees and the detainees and offenders under its supervision.

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