

Maryland State Fair Historical Overview

- I am Gerry Brewster, the Chairman of the Board of the MSF and Agricultural Society and along with Donna Myers, the first female President in the 142-year-history of the MSF, we have the honor of leading our Board of Directors.
- On behalf of our entire Board and our dedicated staff, we would like to welcome you to the 139th MY Maryland State Fair !!! Although the MSF was founded 142 years ago, this is only our 139th Fair because the Fairgrounds were used during World War II in our Nation's time of need as a US Army Truck Depot and Maintenance Facility.
- The first Fair recorded here was in 1879 on 37 acres leased from Dr. Grafton Bosley, though historical accounts reflect that horse racing has existed on this site since 1819.
- In the early years, the Maryland State Fair was principally owned by the Maryland Jockey Club.
- In 1950, a buyer came forward and the Maryland Jockey Club planned to sell the Maryland State Fair so that an electric power tool and parts factory could be built.
- To prevent this, hundreds of Marylanders from every part of Maryland came together to form the Committee to Save the Maryland State Fair. This group included farmers, tradesmen, doctors, lawyers, homemakers, and others from every walk of life, and from all jurisdictions of Maryland.
- This group raised the \$500,000 necessary to prevent the sale, saving the Maryland State Fair.
- The Committee to Save the Maryland State Fair then decided that they never wanted to see the Fairgrounds developed for industrial use, so they chartered a new organization called the Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society, Inc., with a mission to promote Maryland's #1 industry, Agriculture, the preservation of open space, and the education of Marylanders regarding the importance of agriculture in their daily lives.
- The Maryland State Fair exists today for the benefit of all Marylanders as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.
- Our Angus show alone brings competitors to the Maryland State Fairgrounds from 24 different states. We also have the #1 Hog show in the Nation.
- In partnership with our horse racing industry partners, we have the #1 OTB in the State of Maryland.
- The Maryland State Fair is a critical partner in Maryland's equine industry, which supports 28,000 Maryland jobs and has a \$2.1 Billion economic impact.
- The Maryland State Fair hosts 2 million people per year on our campus.
- The Maryland State Fair generates some 20,000 entries of fruits and vegetables, quilts and crafts, horses and cows, ponies and calves, sheep, swine, goats, llamas, and so much more, entered by thousands of Marylanders from one end of our great State to the other.
- The MSF's impact on the Maryland economy and quality of life is substantial. This includes:
 - 550,000 Fair visitors from all of Maryland's 23 counties, Baltimore City and beyond
 - 2,000,000 annual visitors
 - nearly 500 full- and part-time employees
 - thousands of children who play sports in our infield
 - Our annual Fasig-Tipton horse sales gross in excess of \$40 million with buyers and sellers coming from around the world.

- We are proud to donate free use and reduced admission in excess of \$1 Million annually to various organizations and groups, including:
 - Maryland School for the Blind
 - ARC
 - 4-H and FFA Youth
 - The American Legion and other veterans' organizations
 - Local elementary school children
 - The Boy Scouts
 - The Red Cross
 - The Baltimore County Fire and Police Departments
 - The MD State Police graduation Ceremonies, K-9 Training, Bomb Squad Training, and Emergency Training
 - Maryland State Highway Training
 - Baltimore County Farmer's Market
 - Community Recycling and Earth Day Cleanup
 - BGE Emergency Staging
- We also award four Grove Miller Scholarships and one Marlon Huff scholarship each year to Maryland's outstanding youth.
- We're excited that the Maryland State fair has embarked on the following environmental initiatives:
 - Going Solar – SolarGaines
 - Cow Palace Insulation
 - Stormwater management
 - Tree planting
 - High-efficiency HVAC and new roof
 - Earth Day Cleanup
 - New LED lights
 - Recycling
 - Manure to mushroom farms
 - Oyster shell replanting
 - Crab shell composting
- Each year's MSF emphasizes Maryland's culture that brings us all together. Driving through beautiful Maryland farmland and by the Chesapeake Bay, we can't help but be thankful for those who work so hard to provide food for our tables, clothing for our backs, and so much more.
- Entertainment at the MSF has included:
 - Interactive LEGOs
 - Helicopter rides
 - Glass blowers
 - Live concerts
 - the U-Learn Center with live births
 - the STEM Innovation Station
 - Animal exhibits
 - Maryland Foods Pavilion
 - a milking clinic
 - a goat mountain
 - Not to mention a midway filled with thrilling rides and challenging games!
 - Horse Land
 - Veteran's Exhibits
 - Mounted police
 - the Negro League Baseball Exhibit
 - Bull riding
 - Barrel racing
 - a mechanical bull
 - Swifty Swine pig racing
- We are happy to report that, thanks to the support of our Governor and our State Legislators, our Baltimore County Executive and County Council members, our Board of Directors and our dedicated and hard-working staff, as well as each and every one of you here today, things at the Maryland State Fairgrounds are on the upswing. The MSF is really taking off, not only by showcasing agriculture, but also by creating an economic engine with untapped potential that, with your support, knows no limits. We are all incredibly excited about the myriad of opportunities that could take place on the Maryland State Fairgrounds that would benefit our great County and State economically, environmentally, and culturally. All we need are the necessary resources to do so. We look forward to working with each and every one of you on this exciting path forward. Thank you.