



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Champion Tennessee Walking Horse Receives Touch of Class Award

Award Recognizes Equine Excellence in Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MD (Jan. 19, 2013) – Kristen Wilson of Eldersburg (Carroll County) and her multi-national champion 4-year-old Tennessee Walking Horse mare, The Midnight Ride, were presented with the Maryland Horse Industry Board's January Touch of Class Award at the Horse World Expo in Timonium today. Wilson exhibited The Midnight Ride in the Main Ring and received the award during special Expo ceremonies.

The MHIB, a program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture, started the Touch of Class awards in September 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international success. It is awarded monthly.

The Midnight Ride is the National Walking Horse Association Overall High Point Champion of 2012, winning 50 first place ribbons and 77 percent of the classes in which she was entered. The shows were held in six states, including the National and International Grand Champion events.

Wilson, originally from Annapolis, is the former Extension Horse Specialist at the University of Maryland, and worked primarily with the 4-H Horse program as well as teaching in the university's equine studies program. While working fulltime, she showed The Midnight Ride and other horses regularly on weekends on the national walking horse circuit.

Walking horses have a naturally smooth gait, including a flowing four-beat walk, and are sought-after mounts for trail, pleasure riding and showing.

Kathie Morrow of the National Walking Horse Association in Lexington, Ky. said Wilson and The Midnight Ride competed "against hundreds of talented horses from all over the country. As their record indicates, they certainly deserve the national championship. We are very proud of Kristen and this beautiful mare."

This is the second year that MHIB has been presenting the Touch of Class Award. In its second year, MHIB has honored Olympian Suzanne Stettinius of Parkton (Baltimore County); world Mounted Games champion, Mackenzie Taylor of Damascus (Montgomery County) and her pony Inkspot; ASPCA Maclay National Horse Show equitation winner, Jacob Pope of Columbia (Howard County); and Megan Lau of Dickerson (Montgomery County). Officer Lau represented the Montgomery County division of the Maryland National Capital Park Police and won the equitation championship at the North American Police Equestrian Competition.

For more information about MHIB and the Touch of Class award program, contact MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord at 410-841-5798 or ross.peddicord@maryland.gov. Visit the MHIB website www.mda.maryland.gov/horseboard.

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