

# GUIDEBOOK & RULES



2015



## ***OTHER PUBLICATIONS***

*Code of Hunting Practices, 2015*

*Constitution & By-Laws; 2010*

*Directory of Recognized and Registered Hunts; published annually*

*Forming a Hunt: Considerations and Structure; 2003*

*Foxhound Kennel Notebook (4th Edition); 2007*

*Foxhound Kennel Stud Book of America; published annually*

*Introduction to Foxhunting; 2013*

*Guide for Hound Shows, Puppy Shows & Performance Trials; 2013*

*Guide to Being a Master of Foxhounds; 2015*

*Guide to Establishing a Foxhunting Camp; 1999*

*Guide to Kennel Standards of Care Checklist; 2013*

*Guide to Limiting Legal Liability; 1993*

*Guidelines for Developing a Plan to Manage Anti-hunting Demonstrations; 2015*

*Public Relations & Media Guidelines; 1999*

*Social Media Guidelines; 2011*

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**RULES, REGULATIONS and PROCEDURES**  
adopted by the  
MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA  
with information on  
CUSTOMS, USAGES and TRADITIONS  
of the Sport

The rules and customs of mounted foxhunting are difficult to set out in detail, for they are so heavily impacted by history, traditions handed down for generations and the ever changing political and habitat requirements of the 21st century. To define them completely is as difficult as completely defining what is “good, sensible or practical”, but like “good”, there are well-accepted standards and guidelines that, if followed, will result in maintaining the best possible traditions of foxhunting. This guidebook is not intended to be definitive in every detail, but it does contain rules, regulations and procedures that the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America (MFHA) has adopted in an effort to guide its members (this includes Masters, ex-Masters and subscribing members) and its member hunts toward achieving that objective. It also contains information on procedures and provides some insight into their purpose. This guidebook contains the minimum standards and objectives to which Masters, subscribing members and member hunts of the MFHA should and, in some cases, shall adhere. Hunts that do not continue to meet the standards set forth in these rules, or that act in a manner contrary to the best interests of the sport, may be dropped from the roster of recognized and registered hunts by majority vote of the board of directors or be subject to warning, fine, probation, suspension or reduction in status.

The MFHA is the governing body of organized fox, coyote, other acceptable legal quarry and drag hunting in the United States and Canada. Among its activities are the promotion of the sport, the publication of a “Foxhound Stud Book” and the recognition of organized hunts that have met its standards. It records countries and boundaries for organized hunting establishments and extends registration of hunts as a preliminary

step toward recognition. Masters of recognized hunts must be members of the MFHA and must adhere to its rules and should adhere to its guidelines. The participation of hunts as member hunts is voluntary, but once a hunt has accepted registration or recognition, it must adhere to the rules and should adhere to the guidelines of the MFHA and pursue the sport according to the best possible customs and traditions.

Masters are responsible for ensuring that their paid and honorary staff adhere to the rules and guidelines.

The MFHA is governed by a board of directors consisting of a president, one or two vice presidents, a secretary-treasurer (or secretary and treasurer), representatives from each district in the United States and Canada and directors at large, who usually include the three (3) past presidents. The president can, at his discretion, appoint an additional director at large. An executive director is appointed by the board of directors and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the MFHA. The executive director is also known as the “Keeper of the Stud Book”. The officers and directors are elected by the membership.

To properly carry out its purposes and disseminate its policies, the MFHA requires that the current Masters of each of its recognized and registered hunts be current members of the Association and that these member hunts report to the MFHA and respond promptly to inquiries from the executive director or the board. Violation of these requirements may lead to the termination of a member hunt’s recognition or registration.

## **(A) QUALIFICATIONS OF HUNTS**

Organized hunts are *REGISTERED* or *RECOGNIZED* by vote of the Board of Directors of the MFHA. Recognition and registration are granted on an annual basis. The status of all hunts is reviewed annually, and each is re-recognized or re-registered for the following year by the directors.



The MFHA maintains minimum standards and requirements that must be met by newly formed hunting establishments, or hunting entities desiring recognition, before their applications can be considered. Once a hunt has been granted registration or recognition, it must maintain standards and performance at or above the minimum condition or be subject to disqualification.

The following sections set forth the *minimum requirements and procedures* for applications. Further rules and requirements set forth elsewhere in this book, or hereafter adopted by the MFHA, should also be consulted.

## **1. REGISTRATION OF A HUNT**

Registration is the preliminary step that all groups interested in forming and operating a recognized hunting establishment must take. Current Masters must sign an agreement to be bound by the rules and regulations of the MFHA.

Before a hunt can be registered, all of its individual members must be subscribing members (SM) of the MFHA.

Registration is provisional for one (1) year from the date granted and acts as a probationary period to test the character and permanence of any organization wishing to establish and properly maintain a pack of hounds. During the registration period, hunts must build up their organization to meet the requirements of the MFHA.

The procedure for applying for registration is to obtain an application form from the MFHA office. At this time, the executive director will send the applicants a copy of the “MFHA Guidebook & Rules” to assure that all involved parties are fully aware of the MFHA requirements. The form should be executed and signed by the officers or the Masters of the applicant hunt and returned to the MFHA office. The application must be accompanied by a *Foxhound Kennel List*, as described in section (F), and a map clearly outlining the boundaries of the hunting country which the organization plans to hunt or is hunting and for which application is being

made to record with the MFHA. The map should conform in size and scale to the standards set forth in section (B).

In the recording of country by a new hunt, the record thereof shall be *provisional* and shall be made permanent only by vote of the Board of Directors of the MFHA not less than twelve (12) months after the date of registration. Only country that is not recorded to a registered or recognized MFHA hunt will be considered for recording by the applicant.

A minimum of one (1) year must elapse from the date when a hunt is granted registration status to the date when it becomes eligible to apply for recognition.

It should be clearly understood that the expiration of the provisional year of registration does not, in itself, entitle a hunt to recognition but merely makes a hunt eligible to apply for such status. The granting of recognition depends on the hunt having fulfilled all requirements of the MFHA.

If application for registration as an organized hunt and for recording of country has been granted, the standard fee (and an initiation fee) for such registration and recording shall be paid within thirty (30) days, and such a fee shall be paid annually so long as applicant hunt remains provisionally registered and recorded. All Masters of newly registered hunts must sign a statement that they will comply with all rules and guidelines of the MFHA.

## **2. RECOGNITION OF A HUNT**

When a registered hunt becomes eligible to apply for the status of recognition, an officer or a Master of the registered hunt shall write a formal letter applying for recognition to the Executive Director of the MFHA. This letter shall state that the applicant hunt feels it is qualified for recognition and that it has fulfilled all requirements for such status.

The Executive Director of the MFHA shall give the application to the representative of the district in which the applicant hunt is located, with the request that he or she inspect the applicant's hunting establishment and hunting activities. The hunt should provide a suitable horse for the director

to ride. After the inspection has been accomplished, the district representative shall report a recommendation to the board of directors for appropriate action.

When a hunt is notified that it has been recognized, it shall pay the standard fee within thirty (30) days, and each year thereafter shall pay an annual re-recognition fee.

### **3. INACTIVE PERIOD OF A HUNT**

The inactive period of a member hunt shall be reviewed by the executive committee every three (3) years, during which time it will be considered an “inactive registered” hunt. The hunt can be dropped from registration and its claim to recorded country expired at any time if the board of directors does not see progress toward active status.

Application for inactive or reorganizational status must be submitted to the MFHA Executive Director for action by the board of directors and should set forth the reasons for inactivity, the date when the hunt became inactive and what disposition, if any, has been made of its hounds.

### **4. REQUIREMENTS FOR PACKS OF FOXHOUNDS**

These requirements apply to both registered and recognized hunts. Full compliance with the intention of all requirements, however, may not necessarily be expected of a newly established hunt at the time of its initial registration.

#### **PACK**

- (a) A minimum of twelve (12) couple of entered hounds shall be maintained by a live-quarry hunting pack; a drag-hunting pack shall maintain a minimum of six (6) couple of entered hounds. The minimum number must all be registered or eligible for registration in

the “Foxhound Stud Book” and shall be the property of the hunt or the Master.

*NOTE: The 12-couple rule is intended to refer to entered hounds. During the off-season, however, a live-quarry pack may include unentered hounds to be entered the next season when determining compliance with this rule.*

- (b) Hounds must be well mannered, pack-trained, and obedient to voice and horn. All hounds should be accounted for at the end of a day’s hunting or hound exercise. Hounds left out should be the exception rather than the rule. If hounds are left out, staff should continue to look for them by all means available.
- (c) Hounds should not riot; however, should riot occur, the huntsman and his staff should be able to stop them promptly.
- (d) A hound breeding program is *essential* for each member hunt to ensure continuity and the full range of age classes necessary to provide good sport.

*NOTE: Hunts are urged to cooperate by making stud hound services available at no charge.*

- (e) If the purchase of hounds becomes necessary, such hounds should be procured from packs whose bloodlines are eligible for registration in the MFHA “Foxhound Stud Book”. (It is customary for puppies and excess or older hounds to be given, not sold, to other hunts in need).
- (f) All hunts must comply with rules governing the registration of hounds in the “Foxhound Stud Book” as set forth in section (F).

## THE FIELD

Members of the hunting field should be turned out in proper attire as noted in section (J), ride safely, stay off crops and behave in a friendly

manner toward all others, especially landowners and the general public. Field members not in compliance may be sent home at the discretion of the Field Master or Master.

#### HUNT STAFF

- (a) Must be capable of training and handling hounds as set forth under the PACK section above in paragraph (b).
- (b) Must be turned out in suitable livery.
- (c) Must know and comply with the “Code of Hunting Practices”, the “Public Relations & Media Guidelines”, the “Social Media Guidelines” and the “Guidelines for Developing a Plan to Manage Anti-hunting Demonstrations”.

#### MEETS

A minimum of two (2) hunting days a week must be scheduled by published fixture. Prior to opening meet, phone answering machines or email notification is sufficient.

#### SEASON

The hunting season will begin and end in compliance with state or provincial laws and at the discretion of the Masters.

#### COUNTRY

- (a) All parts of a country recorded for a member hunt by the MFHA (not including reserved country for future expansion) should be hunted a minimum of twice a season. Trails should be passable, and jumping panels and gates should be placed where needed.

- (b) Every effort should be made to further the good will and interest of farmers, landowners and other hunts in the area.

## KENNELS AND HOUND CARE

Kennels should be established in the recorded hunt territory and shall be adequate for the proper and humane maintenance of a pack of hounds throughout the year. Hounds should look well cared for and healthy. Kennels shall not be located in a recorded country of another hunt unless that hunt gives written permission or cedes the territory to the other hunt. The MFHA does not recommend this unusual practice. The MFHA “Guide to Kennel Standards of Care Checklist” laminated poster should be displayed in an appropriate location in the kennel.

The basic essentials for adequate hound kennels and care are:

- (a) At least two (2) separate lodging rooms, each with an outside run of appropriate size.
- (b) Separate lodgings and connecting outside runs for whelping and raising puppies, for the care of sick hounds and for the isolation of bitches in season.
- (c) Suitable raised sleeping benches, preferably with escape space beneath if it is not provided elsewhere in the kennel.
- (d) Adequate light and drainage, with a proper waste disposal system that complies with local, county and state laws.
- (e) Fencing and yards that will contain hounds, keep them separated, and be of sufficient size for the number of hounds.
- (f) Clean, sanitary kennels and feed room protected from adverse weather, rodents, disease and feed spoilage.

- (g) An adequate preventive medicine program, including internal and external parasite control, with immunization and medical attention.
- (h) A watering system that assures that hounds have clean water available at all times.
- (i) Hounds should be exercised regularly, which includes walking out mounted or on foot or bicycle. Walking out is the act of taking the pack out of the kennel and having them under control as they move through an area.

#### CONDUCT OF A DRAG HUNT

- (a) Mounted foxhunting must be simulated—not a steeplechase. The art of laying a drag line requires one to know how live quarry runs in order to simulate the actions and paths of its natural environment.
- (b) When hounds first arrive at the meet, they should be allowed to empty and settle around their huntsman before moving off. Hounds must not be laid on the line at the place of meeting, but should be moved off some distance and cast to pick up the line in a natural hunting-like manner. This procedure should be repeated after each check.
- (c) The drag must be of sufficient length to require at least one (1) check. It is recommended that drag hunts use a blank cast (no drag scent present) at least once during a meet. This allows the huntsman to call hounds back to him, thus reinforcing to hounds that all casts do not produce a chase. This practice makes drag hunting more like live hunting. At the end of day, hounds should be gathered around their huntsman to be counted, praised and allowed to cool down and settle before being trailered or kenneled.

## GENERAL

- (a) Each member hunt is required to file an annual report on a *questionnaire* supplied by the MFHA office. The report is used to edit the annual directories of recognized and registered hunts, and its timely return is a requirement for annual re-recognition or re-registration.
- (b) Any change in the mastership of a member hunt that occurs after the annual report has been filed shall be reported promptly to the MFHA office with the full name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of any new Master. The date when a new Master assumes office or when a retiring Master leaves office should also be reported.
- (c) Major changes in the organization of a member hunt, the ownership of its hounds or its kennel location must be reported promptly. At the discretion of the MFHA, such changes may require application for re-recognition or re-registration by the board of directors. In the case of substantial changes in the hunt, the board of directors, at its discretion, may choose to put the hunt into “inactive or reorganizational status” to allow the hunt time to meet MFHA standards again while not losing registered status.
- (d) Changes in the recorded country of a member hunt require application to the board of directors through the executive director and district director in accordance with section (B), for recording by the board of directors.
- (e) Changes in the recorded name of a member hunt or any merger with member hunts or non-member packs require application to the executive director for re-registration or re-recognition by the board of directors.



- (f) It is advisable to register the colors and buttons of a member hunt with the MFHA. More than one member hunt may register the same colors. The MFHA does not grant exclusive right to any color registered with it.
- (g) Organized hunting should be conducted in a manner that will provide a positive image and fair chase on an equal and unselfish basis to the members of the field, the landowners, the followers and friends of the member hunt and the general public living both within and outside the area registered to the member hunt.
- (h) Each member hunt, with the possible exception of a privately owned pack or subscription pack, should have a hunt committee whose function is to assist the Master in formulating hunt policy, maintaining the hunt country, establishing good relationships with landowners, ensuring that the hunt is financially sound, promoting a responsible breeding program and providing the best possible sport. Although the by-laws of member hunts may differ, the hunt committee should be a powerful, supportive council.

## SUBSCRIBING MEMBERSHIP

A subscribing membership (SM) is an associate membership with the MFHA. It focuses on country-oriented people who wish to become more involved in field sport issues. It is an opportunity for them to belong to the MFHA and take part in helping to secure a future for hunting with hounds and country lifestyles. It is not limited to foxhunters. Keepers of Foxhounds, Beagles, Bassets, bird dogs or just pets may join. It is open to anyone who cares about the future of country lifestyles and wants his or her voice to make a difference. It is strongly recommended that hunts require all of their members to be SMs. Hunts founded after 2004 must require that all members are SMs.

## **(B) COUNTRY**

### **1. RECORDING OF COUNTRY**

Territory should be hunted regularly before application to record is sent to the MFHA, unless it is to be requested as reserved country. The proposed territory may then be set aside (for a limited time) until the hunt meets registration requirements. No request for registration of initial or additional territory shall be considered until a hunt has started to develop and hunt that country.

- (a) **SIZE.** The area of a hunting country should be such that it can be reasonably paneled, maintained and hunted. The size of a recorded country should normally not exceed an area of approximately 250 square miles, plus a reserve for future expansion. It is not necessary to actively hunt reserve country. More than one area may be recorded to a member hunt, and these areas need not be contiguous. Drag hunts do not require as much territory as live hunts.
  
- (b) **MAPS AND DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY.** All applications for recording hunt country, whether new country or changes to an existing recorded country, must be accompanied by a detailed map, at a scale of one-quarter inch to the mile, clearly showing the boundaries of the territory. A USGS map on a 1:250,000 scale or a county map is suitable. The boundaries should be roads, railway lines or rivers that can be recognized in the field. Political boundaries, such as counties or townships, or straight lines drawn between two points on the map are not acceptable. Cities and large towns should not be included in the recorded country. The member hunt's kennels must be noted on the map and "reserve" country shaded or outlined to distinguish it from the actual territory hunted.

The application also must be accompanied by a state map with the territory shaded to ascertain the hunt's general location in relationship to other hunts, if any.

- (c) **SHARING A HUNT COUNTRY.** The board of directors will not normally record the same piece of country to two member hunts even though the current Masters wish to hunt it jointly.

## **2. LOAN OF COUNTRY**

A Master may, with the written consent of his or her committee, lend a portion of his or her country to an adjoining member hunt. The loan agreement must be made on the MFHA *Loan Agreement Form*, which is available on the MFHA website.

The term of the loan should be for a period of not less than one (1) year nor more than five (5) years. At the termination of the loan period, all of the Masters of both hunts shall sign a new loan agreement if they wish to continue the arrangement. A signed copy of the loan agreement must be filed with the MFHA, voted on affirmatively by the board of directors and recorded before the agreement becomes effective.

## **3. ABANDONED COUNTRY**

If an entire hunt country, or a portion of hunt country, has not been hunted at least once each and every season, it may, at the sole discretion of the board, be considered that the country in question has not been fairly hunted and that it has been abandoned. The board of directors may or may not re-record the abandoned country to another member hunt. This does not apply to reserve country.

## **4. HUNT FIXTURES**

Upon request from the district representative, Masters may be required to provide, on an annual basis, a map showing all locations of their meets. In addition, copies of all fixture cards must be sent to the district representative. As a courtesy, it is appropriate to send a fixture card to Masters of neighboring hunts.

## **5. RESERVE COUNTRY**

Reserve country is an accommodation to a hunt to allow future expansion. If a new hunt desires that country and the member hunt has never developed or specified in writing a plan to develop such country, the board has the right, but not the obligation, to reassign it.

## **6. NEW HUNTS IN OR NEAR RECORDED COUNTRY**

The MFHA will not register or recognize any new foxhunting establishment organized within the recorded boundaries of a registered or recognized member hunt unless those responsible for proposing the new hunt have obtained the written consent of the Masters and/or the committee of the existing hunt.

Consent having been given, an agreement shall be signed by proper officials of the established member hunt and the new hunt, to the effect that the new hunt is permitted to hunt within certain specified boundaries only during the period of the agreement. A copy of this agreement must be lodged with the Executive Director of the MFHA and recorded only after affirmative vote of the board.

It is the policy of the MFHA to protect the recorded country of recognized and registered member hunts, provided that the recorded country accurately represents the territory that is being fairly hunted, plus a reasonable reserve for future expansion.

It is also the policy of the MFHA to promote the sport of mounted foxhunting by encouraging the formation of new hunts. This may involve the registration or recognition of a new hunt near or adjacent to the boundaries of an established member hunt. Under these circumstances, the board of directors will protect the recorded country of the established member hunt unless the member hunt's recorded country is deemed to be abandoned or their reserve country is thought to be excessively large.

## **7. NON-FOXHUNTING PACKS**

The National Beagle Club does not recognize any new Beagle or Basset pack organized within the boundaries of an already established hunt (Beagles, Bassets, Harriers or Foxhounds) until those responsible for the proposed new hunt have obtained the consent of the Master of the existing hunt.

A pack of Harriers, Beagles or Basset hounds should not be formed in an MFHA recognized or registered country without the consent of the Masters and/or the committee of that member hunt.

## **8. TERRITORY DISPUTES**

Disputes between hunts tarnish the image of mounted foxhunting and are not in the best interests of the sport. Disputes, when they do arise, must be settled as quickly and quietly as possible and in a courteous manner. If the Masters involved believe they cannot settle the dispute themselves, they should ask their district representative to mediate the dispute. They may also contact the MFHA Executive Director to request help. The district representative and executive director will gather the facts and provide them to the president and the executive committee.

When a dispute cannot be solved or has reached the point that it could be detrimental to foxhunting's image, the president, in his discretion, may appoint a committee to try to mediate a decision. That committee normally will consist of three (3) knowledgeable, experienced foxhunters (they need not be on the board of directors) of neutral persuasion. They will travel to the area, investigate and interview both sides. If the committee cannot obtain a solution agreeable to both sides, the aggrieved parties may request a hearing with the executive committee of the board of directors.

In that case, the executive committee will report its findings and conclusions to the board, which will decide the matter according to the laws of common sense and the rules and traditions of mounted foxhunting.

In arriving at its decision, the board will consider the wishes of the hunts in dispute, the landowners in the hunting country and most importantly what is best for the image and future of foxhunting.

## **9. HUNT SPONSORED ACTIVITIES**

No registered or recognized hunt should schedule or conduct hunt-sponsored activities in another hunt's territory without first receiving permission from that hunt. All hunts are encouraged to be reasonable about and receptive to such requests. If either hunt feels that the other is being unreasonable about such a request, they may ask for the district representative's assistance. If an agreement cannot be reached, the board of directors shall make the decision.

### **(C) THE QUARRY & HOT PURSUIT**

1. The hounds of any recognized or registered pack shall not be hunted in the territory of another hunt except by invitation or by mutual arrangement previously made with neighboring Masters. However, if the quarry is properly found in the home territory of the hounds being hunted, and if they should carry the line over the boundary into country recorded to another member hunt, it is proper to continue to pursue the hunted quarry. Should the quarry go to ground in neighboring country, no attempt should be made to continue the chase or to find another quarry in that country. The hounds should be taken back to their own territory.

2. If a pack of hounds should run the quarry over the border into a member hunt's country and apparently lose him, they should turn back into their own domain. However, if the quarry is halloa'd at no great distance from where their quarry was lost and it appears to be their hunted quarry, they may go on and hunt that quarry. However, if the halloa is not in the immediate vicinity where the quarry was lost, then it should be ignored and the hounds returned to their own country. The hunting of a "bagged" or "dropped" quarry, or any other practice that does not give the animal a

sporting chance, is contrary to the best traditions of the sport. In fact, it is not a sport at all. It is inconsistent with the true principles of mounted foxhunting and is strictly forbidden.

3. The tradition of bleeding originated in ancient times as a ritual to honor the hunted animal. It is the position of the MFHA that this practice not be encouraged. If done, it should be used with discretion, as it is too easily misunderstood and misinterpreted. If this tradition remains in a given hunt, the individual member should be allowed to decide whether to participate.

4. All Masters, huntsmen and staff must adhere to the “Code of Hunting Practices”, the “Public Relations & Media Guidelines”, and comply with the “MFHA Guidebook & Rules”.

## **(D) FOXHOUND TRAINING PRESERVES** (Fox or Coyote pens)

The following rules apply to any member hunt of the MFHA that uses a Foxhound Training Preserve (FTP), also known as a fox pen:

### **RULE #1:**

A FTP is only for limited training of hounds.

### **RULE #2:**

FTPs may not be listed on a fixture card or announced to anyone other than staff.

### **RULE #3:**

No recognized or registered hunt is permitted to hold any joint meet or competition in FTPs.

### **RULE #4:**

Wearing of colors or formal foxhunting attire in a FTP is forbidden.

#### RULE #5:

Any Master using a FTP should ensure that the facility meets state standards and regulations. In the absence of state standards or regulations, the following rules are a minimum standard for FTPs used by MFHA members.

- (a) FTPs are required to practice good health management as deemed necessary by state and federal officials. State law requires mandatory disease investigation, testing and disease reporting. Foxes or coyotes should be inspected or treated by licensed veterinarians. Foxes or coyotes released in FTPs should be checked for injury and disease by the preserve owner before being released. Any diseased or injured animal should not be released and should be humanely destroyed.
- (b) All FTPs shall provide the necessary habitat to meet the food, water and covert requirements of wild foxes or coyotes. Animals being transported or held for release shall likewise be kept in a safe, sanitary and humane manner with food, water and protection from the elements available.
- (c) FTPs may be stocked with foxes at a maximum rate of one fox per ten (10) acres of enclosure. Hunts should exercise restraint in determining the number of hounds using these preserves at any one time and in the number of events that are allowed to take place within a preserve during a period of time. It is incumbent upon the owner of the preserve and user of the FTP to exercise good stewardship of the wildlife resources in the FTP.
- (d) FTPs containing less than 100 contiguous acres shall not be used by member hunts. All preserves should have dense coverts with conditions as natural as possible and numerous escape areas for game.



- (e) FTPs must be securely fenced with hound-proof escape areas (natural or artificial) at a rate of no less than one (1) for every twenty (20) acres of enclosure with adequate escape areas for the number of foxes and coyotes in the preserve. Each escape area or device must be readily available and must not be immediately adjacent to any other such area or device.

The MFHA does not consider the use of FTPs to be at all central to the sport of foxhunting. Mounted foxhunting as a sport is the hunting of the fox or coyote in its wild and natural state with a pack of hounds while adhering to all the principles of fair chase as outlined in the “Code of Hunting Practices”. The MFHA does not endorse or promote the use of FTPs. However, if they are used, the MFHA supports the introduction and passage of regulations by states to control the use of FTPs.

FTPs may be detrimental to mounted foxhunting. Too frequent use of preserves may promote individuality in hounds and discourage hunting as a pack. Bad habits such as splitting, skirting, laziness, careless drawing, wildness and cheating can develop. Young hounds taken to preserves should be taken with steady older hounds that are not so fast that young hounds can't keep up. Masters should keep public opinion in mind and should remember that many of the hunt's members may not understand the use of FTPs. The negative repercussions associated with using the preserves may not be worth the training value.

## **(E) HOUNDS**

No Master should allow puppies of his or her hunt to be walked, exercised or raised in the country of another hunt without the consent of the Master of such other country.

Any Master proposing to sell or give hounds to any person in a recorded hunting country other than his own should first obtain the consent of the Master or the hunt committee of such other country.

It is customary among Masters of Hounds to allow each other the free use of any hounds in their kennels for stud purposes. No Master charges a stud fee. However, the usual practice for a Master sending bitches to be bred at an outside kennel is to send the huntsman a gratuity for any trouble he or she may have been put to in the matter. This should not be regarded as a requirement.

No Master shall help or encourage a new pack of hounds to form in the recorded country of an established member hunt. If he or she does so, he or she will be acting in a manner contrary to the spirit and rules of the MFHA and will be subject to discipline by the board. Where there is uncertainty concerning areas recorded by registered or recognized member hunts, the MFHA office should be consulted.

## **1. GUIDE FOR DRAFTING HOUNDS**

No hound may be drafted to a hunt that is not a member of the MFHA without first checking with the MFHA Executive Director to ascertain said hunt's status with the MFHA. Hounds may not be drafted to unsanctioned hunts.

As the practice of drafting hounds between hunts is common, the following guidelines are provided to minimize problems that may occur. Normally, once a hound is given to a hunt, the subsequent disposition of that hound is entirely the new hunt's responsibility. If there are any stipulations attached to the hound, they should be clearly delineated in writing to the respective Master(s) at the time of transfer. However, if a hound is not suitable for the new owner, it is common courtesy to offer to return the hound to its original owner in a timely manner with transportation fees paid by the hunt that drafted the hound.

Hounds are normally given to a hunt. If a hound is given to a Master or huntsman, it should be stated in writing to whom the hound belongs. In the absence of any statement to the contrary, it is assumed that the hound was given to the hunt. If the hound was given to a Master or huntsman, get from the hound are the property of the hunt unless a prior signed

agreement as to the disposition of get was made when the hound came into the kennel. Generally speaking, it is not a good idea for hounds to be the property of a professional huntsman.

Never draft hounds that are unhealthy. If a hound has a manageable physical or behavioral problem, make sure the new owner knows what it is. Hounds may not be drafted to night hunters or deer hunters in the territory of another member hunt. Finally, always provide a five-generation pedigree for each drafted hound and a health and inoculation record.

## **2. OLD HOUNDS POLICY**

All foxhunters love hounds, and a very difficult decision must often be made when a hound gets to a point in life that it cannot or should not hunt any longer. What are the alternatives?

The MFHA has compiled guidelines for Masters to consider. The MFHA does not recommend one method over another. That is for the Master to decide. Whatever the decision, the foremost concern should be for the health and welfare of the hound. A hound in pain or poor health that cannot be helped should be humanely euthanized.

- (a) Older steady hounds are very helpful in a pack. Utilizing their abilities sparingly as they get older can prolong their removal from the pack. On bad scenting days, an old hound can find the quarry when others cannot and set the pack right if necessary. On fast, good scenting days, considering leaving them in the kennels may be more appropriate.
- (b) Many hunts keep exceptional older hounds in kennel as long as they are healthy without hunting them. They walk out and are part of the pack. If you consider this an alternative, realize that the old hound's drive to hunt seldom diminishes and leaving him in the kennel, if a hound becomes upset when hounds go out to hunt, may not be the kind thing for that hound.

- (c) Many hunts retire hounds to member's farms or homes. Adopting a hound can be a good thing. They often make good pets and are easy to house train if that is what the individual wants. The key is giving it an environment in which it can live comfortably. Do not give old hounds to anyone who cannot properly care for them or who doesn't have the room or time to give them proper exercise. Do not give old hounds or hounds that must be retired early to anyone who will not keep them in a proper facility. Make sure anyone receiving an old hound understands that even very old hounds love to hunt and will do so if given the chance. This can cause problems with neighbors.
- (d) Some hunts have developed hound retirement facilities, keeping an area for old hounds only. These hounds must be cared for, supervised and given medical assistance if necessary. They must have adequate room to exercise, a healthy environment and good housing. Hounds that have severe medical problems or do not socialize well should not be considered for this alternative.
- (e) Often the kindest alternative is euthanasia. This category includes hounds with severe medical problems or constant pain, hounds that can no longer hunt anymore and for good reasons are not adoptable and hounds for which there are no other alternatives. Humane euthanasia should be done by a veterinarian or an experienced, trained individual capable of performing the procedure. The American Veterinarian Medical Association (AVMA) guidelines on euthanasia are acceptable.

The MFHA reiterates that it does not recommend one method over another. The choice is the responsibility of the Master and the hunt, depending on their situation or philosophy. However, the MFHA strongly encourages that actions be taken for the benefit of the hound. No matter how difficult and emotional the decision, it must be based on what is best for the hound.

## **(F) THE FOXHOUND KENNEL STUD BOOK**

### **1. RULES AND DEFINITIONS**

- (a) **RULES.** The filing of breeding records on an annual basis with the MFHA's Keeper of the Stud Book is obligatory for all registered and recognized hunts and is the responsibility of the Master. Non-member hunts may also register their hounds in the "Foxhound Stud Book", providing that they qualify and adhere to MFHA rules for hound registration. There is a fee for the initial registration of the non-member pack in addition to the standard litter registration fee. The records comprise: (1) pedigrees for all hounds entered in the current year by each hunt according to the instructions provided, and (2) an annual foxhound kennel list of all foxhounds in the kennel with their year of entry, sire and dam.

This is only a registry for hounds. If a non-member hound is registered in the "Foxhound Stud Book" it may compete in MFHA sanctioned hound shows "if" the show allows them to enter.

- (b) **ELIGIBILITY.** American, Crossbred, English and Penn-Marydel Foxhounds and Harriers are eligible for registration or listing in the "Foxhound Stud Book", provided that they meet the MFHA registration requirements (Prior to 2008, Penn-Marydel's were identified as American in the "Foxhound Stud Book").
- (c) **HUNTING.** All foxhounds registered in the "Foxhound Stud Book" and all sires and dams in the first and second preceding generations must be acceptably certified to have legally hunted fox, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion or drag.
- (d) **BREEDING.** Hounds bred by a person or organization not primarily devoted to hunting acceptable quarry (fox, coyote, bobcat,

mountain lion or drag) will not be considered to have hunted for the purpose of qualifying with the provision of this rule.

- (e) **REGISTRATION.** Pedigrees should be on the form provided by the MFHA office and should be sent in after all hounds for the current year have been entered and before December 31<sup>st</sup>. All hounds entered by each hunt must be registered, listed or recorded in the “Foxhound Stud Book” at the MFHA office. After a hound is entered on acceptable live quarry or drag, said hound may be registered or listed in the “Foxhound Stud Book”.
  
- (f) **LISTING.** Foxhounds with pedigrees containing not more than one (1) fault in the third generation (a hound that has an unknown sire or dam, unknown prefix or date of entry or a hound that did not hunt acceptable live quarry) will be listed in the “Foxhound Stud Book”, providing that a three-generation pedigree is submitted with a certification that the first and second previous generations have regularly hunted fox, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion or drag. The progeny will be eligible for registration in accordance with rules regarding the registration of American, Crossbred, English or Penn-Marydel foxhounds.
  
- (g) **THE NAME** of an entered hound is made up of three (3) parts: the prefix (name of the hunt that entered the hound, the given name and the year of entry). The prefix, name and year of entry do not change when an entered hound is drafted from one pack to another. A hound is entered when he has been hunted on a regular and systematic basis. The name of an unentered hound consists only of the given name with no hunt prefix or entry year even when the proposed future entry date is known.

## FOXHOUND BREEDS

- (h) AMERICAN and PENN-MARYDEL FOXHOUNDS must have no more than one (1) outcross in the fourth generation or, in the case of hounds with Crossbred ancestors in more than one (1) line, not more than one sixteenth ( $1/16^{\text{th}}$ ) total outcross.
- (i) Since 2008, Penn-Marydel (PM) hounds have been given breed recognition and have their own section in the “Foxhound Stud Book”. The additional term Penn-Marydel Listed (PL) applies to Penn-Marydel hounds that are 12.5% or less outcross and when bred to a pure PM their get are considered pure PM. Crossbred classification will be verified by the Keeper of the Stud Book in accordance with rules of the MFHA.
- (j) ENGLISH FOXHOUNDS must have no more than one (1) outcross in the fourth generation or, in the case of hounds with Crossbred ancestors in more than one (1) line, not more than one sixteenth ( $1/16^{\text{th}}$ ) total outcross. (This rule applies to hounds entered in 1978 or thereafter; for English hounds entered before 1978, the earlier  $1/32^{\text{nd}}$  outcross rule was in effect.)
- (k) All hounds registered under these outcross rulings as American, English or Penn-Marydel hounds will be regarded thereafter as pure American, English or Penn-Marydel foxhounds in determining the type of their progeny.
- (l) CROSSBRED FOXHOUNDS are foxhounds that do not qualify under the fractional rulings as either American, English or Penn-Marydel foxhounds.
- (m) OUTCROSS. Outcrosses from other scenting breeds may be listed with the Keeper of the Stud Book, providing that a three-generation pedigree is submitted with a certification that the first and second

previous generations have regularly hunted fox, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion or drag, with one such non-foxhound outcross permitted in the third generation. One-eighth ( $1/8^{\text{th}}$ ) outcross is permitted for such listing. The progeny may be eligible for registration in accordance with rules regarding the registration of American, Crossbred, English and Penn-Marydel foxhounds.

#### FOXHOUND KENNEL LIST

- (n) Masters of all member hunts are required to send the Keeper of the Stud Book a list of all entered hounds in their kennels each year. The list should be on the form provided by the MFHA and should be sent to the MFHA office with the pedigrees for the registration of the current year's entry before December 31<sup>st</sup>. Any member hunt that does not submit its list by December 31<sup>st</sup> will be charged a fine determined by the board of directors. Hound lists published by hunts are acceptable.
- (o) THE FOXHOUND KENNEL LIST – ENTERED HOUNDS should give the hunt prefix (if different from the name of the member hunt submitting the list), name, year of entry and sex for each entered hound, and its sire and dam. It should be arranged chronologically by litter and year of entry. Within each litter, the hounds should be alphabetically listed, first dogs and then bitches. To indicate the breed, use the letters “A”, “CB”, “E”, “PM”, or “PL” for American, Crossbred, English, Penn-Marydel, Penn-Marydel Listed, respectively.
- (p) UNENTERED HOUNDS may be shown at the end of the list under a separate heading if they have been named.
- (q) DRAFTED HOUNDS. The Keeper of the Stud Book must be notified of any unentered hounds drafted to any hunt, including hunts in countries other than the USA and Canada. Normally this is



done by listing them on a litter certificate noting the sex and where they were sent.

## **2. REGISTRATION FEE**

There is a fee for the registration or listing of hounds. Upon registration, the Keeper of the Stud Book will return a confirmation sheet showing all registrations in the form in which they will be published. The sheet should be checked for accuracy and agreement with the hunt's records.

## **3. FORMS**

*Three-generation Pedigree* and *Foxhound Kennel List* forms, as well as printed instructions for the preparation of pedigrees and the registration of hounds, are available from the MFHA office and on the MFHA website. These forms will be sent to the Master in charge of hound registration of each year. The MFHA online hound search is available to assist with completing three-generation pedigrees.

## **4. STUD BOOKS**

- (a) The "Foxhound Kennel Stud Book of North America" has been published annually since 1973. Prices and availability of all volumes may be obtained from the MFHA office. Each hunt is required to purchase a copy of the "Foxhound Stud Book". All Masters are asked to purchase a copy of the annual "Foxhound Stud Book" so that we can cover the publication cost of this valuable document. It is imperative that whoever is contributing to or making breeding decisions has a copy at their disposal.
- (b) **PEDIGREE DATABASE SEARCH.** The MFHA's comprehensive online hound search program, available on the MFHA website, contains all registered foxhounds recorded with the Keeper of the Stud Book. It is updated annually and is invaluable in assisting serious hound breeders in their breeding decisions and hound

research. English and Irish hounds have their own registry, and they are not normally recorded in the MFHA “Foxhound Stud Book” unless they have been used as a sire or dam in North America. The English Foxhound Stud Book is available online with a link from the MFHA website.

## **(G) THE MASTER – DUTIES AND RIGHTS**

1. Masters wishing to resign should so acquaint the chairperson or secretary of their hunt committee or the secretary of their hunt to give the most opportune chance of securing the services of the best replacement Master possible.
2. A change of mastership or of arrangements for hunting a country for the ensuing season should be announced as early as possible.
3. All Masters of member hunts must be members in good standing of the MFHA. Masters in arrears of dues more than 90 days after billing will not be listed as Masters in MFHA publications or Baily’s hunting directory in England. Masters Emeritus of member hunts who are not members of the MFHA are not listed as ex-Masters in any MFHA publication.
4. As it is only fair to give hunt employees as long as possible to seek a new situation, unless a hunt employee is dismissed for cause (contract violation or severe misconduct), a Masters should notify them of their re-employment or dismissal before January 1<sup>st</sup>. Hunt employees should, as a condition of their employment, be required to give notice before January 1<sup>st</sup> if they do not intend to stay for the next season, which normally begins May 1<sup>st</sup>. This gives a new employee time to prepare for the hunting season. Giving notice in this way should be considered proper behavior and should not lead to any negative consequences.

5. When a hunt employee is dismissed for reasons other than cause it is appropriate to provide a reasonable severance package depending on the years of employment and reasons for dismissal.

6. No Master of a registered or recognized member hunt may negotiate for the employment of a member hunt's employee without first ascertaining that he or she has given notice. The proper way to determine an employee's eligibility is to contact the employee's Master before talking to the employee.

Even though an advertisement may appear in a publication soliciting employment by a member hunt employee, or by a hunt offering employment for a hunt employee, it is strongly recommended that the present Master be contacted to verify that the employee has reached a valid point of termination of employment.

A Master who breaks the traditions of mounted foxhunting by giving mid-season employment to a hunt employee who has left his or her position during a hunting season without a satisfactory agreement with his or her employer is subject to censure by the board of the MFHA.

A hunt employee who does not honor his or her agreement to give proper notice and leaves in mid-season without agreement by the hunt shall not be listed for employment by the MFHA and will be ineligible for any assistance from the MFHA.

The MFHA will keep a "Hunt Staff Registry" of member hunts looking for staff and employees looking for positions in hunt service. This service is available to both hunts and hunt employees.

7. When a decision has been made at a meeting of a member hunt affecting the mastership or future arrangements for hunting a country, it is imperative, in the interests of mounted foxhunting, that the minority should loyally abide by the wishes of the majority of those present at the meeting and not attempt to reopen the question subsequently.

8. As soon as the arrangements for the ensuing season are decided, the Executive Director of the MFHA shall be notified of the name, address, phone numbers and e-mail address of the new Master, or name, address, phone numbers and e-mail address of the chairperson of the hunt committee when there temporarily is no Master. The first name of Master's spouses is requested for the membership directory.

9. When a Master takes over a pack of hounds, both he or she and the hunt committee should have an accurate list of the hounds taken over.

10. Hounds brought into a pack by the incoming Master in excess of the specified number he or she took over shall remain his or her property, but the progeny of those hounds bred in the country become merged into the pack. Progeny are the property of the hunt and are available to be selected to complete the specified numbers, as enumerated below.

11. On giving up the mastership, the retiring Master shall leave in the kennel at least the same number of "entered" working hounds and unentered hounds as he took over, in approximately the same proportions of ages and sexes. In the event that there are not enough hounds, he or she must make good the deficiency. The retiring Master is expected to "put to" a sufficient number of bitches to produce enough whelps, in the ordinary course of events, from which to make the entry for the succeeding season.

12. If an outgoing Master owned and hunted hounds, a representative of the committee, the outgoing Master and the incoming Master shall select the "entered" and "unentered" hounds to be left in the kennel.

13. All drafted-in hounds are the property of the hunt unless the drafted-in hounds were given to the huntsman or Master and unless that transaction was documented in writing or can be verified by the person who drafted the hounds. No hounds shall be drafted out of the kennel during the Master's last season without the knowledge and consent of the

hunt committee. Professional huntsmen may own hounds if there has been a prior agreement.

14. A Master of a pack of hounds, whether a membership, subscription or private pack, has the right to take hounds home when, in his or her judgment, so doing is in the best interest of the sport (or of the hounds). If a Master encounters a disciplinary problem, such as the field over-riding hounds, kicking a hound or riding over crops, it is usually better to send the offender(s) home rather than take hounds home and by so doing spoil the day's sport for the other members of the field.

15. It must be distinctly understood that in the absence of the Master, whether in the field or in kennels, the individual acting on his or her behalf during his or her absence carries the same responsibility and the same authority as would the Master.

16. If a Master is asked to bring his or her hounds into another hunt's country for a day's hunting, the words "By Invitation" should be inserted on the fixture card. If, on the other hand, a portion of a country is being lent for the whole season by written agreement, no such explanation is necessary.

17. Cub hunting or Autumn hunting before opening meet is entirely at the discretion of the Master, as is the decision as to whether a fixture card should be published. Cub or Autumn hunting is for training young hounds and not for entertaining the field. It may be reserved in whole or in part for hunt staff only.

18. No Master may participate in any form of commercial advertising that in any way uses to advantage the fact that he or she holds the office of Master of Foxhounds, without the express permission of the executive committee of the board of directors. Such advertising may be contrary to the spirit of the sport (as well as the principles of the MFHA) and detrimental to the image of organized hunting. Any publicity concerning your hunt must be carefully considered. The MFHA's Executive Director

is qualified and willing to give good advice on this important subject. However, good publicity is vital to the growth and maintenance of our sport.

19. If a Joint Master or Masters are appointed, the specific duties and obligations of each Joint Master should be carefully delineated at the time he or she takes office.

20. Awarding of individual hunt colors and buttons is completely a Master's prerogative. The following guidelines are provided to assist Masters: Prerequisites should include hunting regularly to permit a proper evaluation of the individual's qualifications. Assisting with the affairs of the hunt is important. Any member awarded colors should, in the opinion of the Master, be a person knowledgeable of mounted foxhunting etiquette and a proficient rider who, when hunting with any hunt, would not be an embarrassment to their hunt. Most hunts do not award colors and buttons to anyone who has been a hunting member less than two (2) seasons or to children younger than sixteen (16) years old.

21. All Masters must know the "Code of Hunting Practices", "MFHA Guidelines & Rules", "Public Relations & Media Guidelines", and the "Guidelines for Developing a Plan to Manage Anti-hunting or Animal Rights Demonstrations". Copies of these publications are available from the MFHA office.

22. The term "unsanctioned pack" (formerly "outlaw pack") is used to describe a pack of hounds that hunt in a recognized or registered member hunt's territory without its permission and its actions are considered detrimental to the sport of foxhunting. An unsanctioned pack shall not be so labeled unless the board of directors has determined it to be necessary and voted accordingly at the request of the offended member hunt. Member hunts shall not have joint meets with, draft hounds to or from, or participate in events with unsanctioned packs. Member hunts should strongly discourage their memberships from hunting with unsanctioned packs.

23. The term "farmer pack" traditionally refers to farmers who hunt their hounds in territory registered to a member hunt with the permission of the latter. More recently, the term has been applied to packs that:

- (a) Do not meet MFHA standards, but do cooperate and are thought to comply generally with MFHA rules and guidelines, and who may wish to become members of the MFHA in the future.
- (b) Hunt in country not recorded to a member hunt.
- (c) Hunt in country of member hunts that have not voiced an objection.

There are no restrictions for member hunts concerning farmer packs.

24. The term "no status" refers to a hunt that the MFHA does not recognize in any manner or has no direct knowledge of.

25. The term "unsanctioned person" refers to an individual that the board, after careful consideration, believes to be acting in a manner detrimental to the sport of foxhunting. Such person would not be invited to, or allowed to participate in, any MFHA membership functions. The MFHA recommends that an unsanctioned person not be allowed to hunt with or join any member hunt. An unsanctioned person cannot judge or participate in any MFHA sanctioned hound show.

## **(H) THE FIELD – OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS THE MASTER**

The position of Master can be a thankless job. If a gentleman or lady hunts his or her own hounds, the pleasure derived from it makes up for many hardships. But to the average Master, there are days of worry and bitter disappointments that must be borne, and anything that any member of the field can do to help him or her and show him or her that their

efforts are appreciated will be welcome. Do not think that because you happen to be a newcomer, he or she will not appreciate your thanks or that he or she does not notice that you are trying to help and not to hinder. Try to help the Master in any way you can. By so doing, you will increase your own sport and everyone else's as well.

Members of the field should carefully observe the following:

1. The Master, hunt staff and hounds should be given the right of way at all times. Always turn your horse so that its head is facing hounds, Master or staff as they pass.
2. The Master and hunt staff can enjoy members' conversation and society when they are not in the field with hounds, riders, hunting and damages on their minds.
3. All halloaing, calling out to and attempts at hunting hounds by members of the field are not only very bad manners, but apt to spoil sport for everyone. However, saying "ware hound" if a hound is attempting to come through the field warns other field members to give the hound the right of away.
4. If you take down a rail, put it back. If you open a gate, shut it. Leave everything as you found it.
5. If you break a fence or do any damage that you cannot repair, report it at once to the responsible officers of the hunt so that it may be made good. Always offer to help fix damage and or pay for costs incurred by the hunt.
6. Do not ride over crops, and keep off all seeded fields.
7. A newcomer to a country who wishes to hunt should first contact the hunt secretary to determine whether new members are being accepted, as well as to acquaint himself or herself with local protocol. If you arrive at



the meet and have been given permission to bring a guest, arrive early and introduce your guest to the Master. Then have your guest meet the hunt secretary to sign the release of liability and pay the capping fee before hounds move off. You should assist your guest during the hunt.

8. No one should speak to a huntsman in the field without first riding up to the Master and getting permission to do so. The less a huntsman is spoken to, the more time he or she will have to attend to business at hand.

9. Members should come to the MEET and not anticipate the draw by joining the hunt after hounds move off. They should be particularly careful to refrain from going through or near any covert as there is always a chance of disturbing the quarry prematurely.

10. Those who lag behind, late-comers, persons on green horses, those who talk loudly, leave gates open or break fences (without reporting the breakage or repairing it) are a constant worry to a Master. All members should arrive at the meet in sufficient time to be mounted before hounds move off. Members who arrive late should not try to find the field unless given permission by the Master. If permission has been granted, do not ride through coverts. Stay on paths and roads, if at all possible, and wait until you can join the field without disrupting the hunting in progress. If you must leave the hunt early, get permission from the Field Master to excuse yourself, and take roads, if at all possible, to get back to the meet. Take care not to disrupt hunting or pass through areas that are yet to be drawn.

11. Hill-toppers, second and third flights or fields, car followers and other interested persons can be helpful to a hunt. Their enthusiasm and support should be encouraged.

12. When a hunt has been given the privilege of riding over a landowner's property, it does not mean that members of that hunt, or anyone else, have the right to trespass without specific permission from the landowner, the appointed agent, tenant or farmer, whether hacking on

non-hunting days, going to a meet or not keeping up or returning from a hunt.

13. At the close of the day, when you leave the pack to go home, ride up to the Master and say, "Thank you" or "Good night." It is the least you can do for the person whose one thought all day has been to show you a good day's sport. It means a lot.

14. The time to clean one's trailer is not at a meet. Pick up trash around your trailer whether it is yours or not. Pay attention to wet areas so that you do not cause damage.

15. Be courteous and friendly to the public. A smile, wave of the hand or tipping one's cap does wonders for the good of our sport. Do not impede traffic while on your horse. Public relations are everyone's responsibility.

16. Keep safety foremost in your mind. If you are on a chase and the person in front of you fails to keep up, pass safely. Otherwise, stay in your position. If your horse refuses a jump even once, move to the back of the field.

## **(I) HOUND SHOWS**

1. The MFHA encourages the participation of all member hunts in hound and puppy shows. Such shows can be beneficial and educational and can give the staff and members of each hunt an opportunity to learn about breeding and the importance of conformation in their respective packs as well as others.

2. It is recommended that puppy shows be held at individual hunts or among neighboring hunts. Suggestions for holding such events can be obtained through the district representatives and from a copy of "A Guide for Hound Shows, Puppy Shows & Performance Trials".

3. The MFHA will recognize district or regional hound shows, allow the use of its seal and extend its auspices provided that the show has been held two (2) consecutive years and that all other requirements for recognition have been met. The general requirements, hound eligibility and minimum class requirements can be obtained from the MFHA office. Recognized shows are required to check the pedigree of entries and to have at least one (1) approved MFHA judge for each ring. In situations where two (2) judges are used, the MFHA approved judge must have equal or senior judge status. The MFHA's online pedigree search program is available to assist show secretaries in the verification of hound registration, type and pedigrees.

4. No entered hound belonging to a pack registered or recognized by the MFHA shall be eligible to compete in foxhound classes at hound shows held under its auspices unless said hound has been registered in the MFHA "Foxhound Stud Book". Unentered hounds must be eligible for registration.

## **(J) SUGGESTIONS FOR PROPER HUNT ATTIRE**

The formal hunting dress, below, is given for guidance only. Over the years, it has proved to be practical, comfortable and comparatively safe, for which reason it has become traditional. Masters have always had the authority to insist on whatever degree of formality or informality of dress that suits their particular countries. These suggestions reflect decades of tradition and should only be deviated from for significant reasons.

When a hunt member with colors is invited or requests to hunt with another hunt during the formal season, the proper attire is always a plain black or navy coat without colors, unless it is a joint meet or you have been invited to wear your hunt's colors by a Master of the hunt with which you wish to ride. To encourage participation, most hunts allow you to wear your colors and buttons if that conforms to local custom.

## 1. PERSONAL APPOINTMENTS

### MASTER – LADY OR GENTLEMAN – FORMAL ATTIRE

*Coat:* Square-cornered, single-breasted frock coat, cut to suit the wishes of the owner, with no flaps on the waistline and no pockets on the outside of the coat except an optional whistle pocket. A Master who does not hunt hounds should have four (4) front hunt buttons. A Master who does hunt hounds should have five (5) buttons. There should also be two (2) hunt buttons on the back of the coat if it is a frock coat and two (2) or three (3) small buttons on the cuff of each sleeve. The material should be twill or Melton cloth. Scarlet (called “red” or “scarlet”) is the most traditional color for hunting, but if the regular hunt livery is of another color, that color should be worn. Many lady Masters prefer not to wear scarlet and prefer black or navy. The collar and lapels of hunt coats should be in conformity with the hunt’s livery. No Master, whipper-in, huntsman or member should wear his or her hunt livery (scarlet coat, hunt colors or buttons) in another country unless invited to do so. When scarlet is worn, both ladies and gentlemen should wear white breeches. It is correct to wear a black or dark coat when participating in a joint meet without your own hounds.

*Breeches:* Should be white, tan, rust, canary or buff, of heavy cord, synthetic stretch twill or other material. Lightweight breeches of synthetic knits are acceptable. With a scarlet coat, ladies and gentlemen should wear white breeches.

*Vest:* Canary, tattersall or appropriate hunt color.

*Hat:* Black or dark blue velvet safety helmet approved by the American Society of Testing Materials (ASTM), with ribbons down or up, according to local custom. (Ribbons down traditionally indicate professional hunt staff or amateur huntsman.)

*Boots:* With scarlet coats, traditional hunting boots of black calf with brown tops sewn on, well polished, with tabs sewn on but not down. White or

brown boot garters (to match breeches) may be worn. Ladies wearing black or navy may wear plain black boots or boots with patent leather tops with tabs sewn on but not down. Black rubber boots are acceptable in wet weather.

*Spurs:* Of heavy pattern with moderately short neck and no rowels. Spurs should be set high on the boot just below the ankle, and the spur arms should be parallel to the ground. The buckle should be on top of the boot with the free end of the spur strap on the outside of the boot.

*Gloves:* Heavy wash buff, brown or black leather. White string or navy wool gloves are also acceptable.

*Crop:* Traditional hunting whip with lash.

*Horn:* Masters, huntsman or designated whippers-in only. The traditional hunting horn is carried either between buttons of the coat or in a leather case fastened on either side of the front of the saddle.

*No Horn should be carried by anyone except Master, huntsman, or first whipper-in when given permission by the Master.*

*Wire Cutters:* Wire cutters may be carried in a leather case attached to the saddle.

*Neckwear:* Plain white hunting stock neatly tied and fastened with a plain, horizontal safety pin. Ends of the stock should be pinned down to remain tidy.

*Flask and Sandwich Case:* Gentlemen may carry either a flask or sandwich case (or both). Ladies may carry either a sandwich case or a combination flask and sandwich case.

## HONORARY (AMATEUR) HUNTSMAN

Turnout is the same as for the Master except there should be four (4) or five (5) buttons on front of coat, and ribbon on hat should be down.

## PROFESSIONAL HUNTSMAN

Same as Honorary Huntsman *except*:

*Couplings*: Should carry one set of couplings fastened to dee on off side of saddle.

*Crop*: Traditional hunting whip and lash or white whip with white lash. The lash should be long enough to strike the ground.

*Flask and Sandwich Case*: Not permitted.

## HONORARY WHIPPER-IN

Same as Honorary Huntsman *except*:

*Couplings*: Should carry one set fastened to a dee on off side of saddle.

## PROFESSIONAL WHIPPER-IN

Same as Honorary Whipper-In *except*:

*Flask and sandwich case are not permissible.*

*Coat* should have a large "hare pocket" on inside of skirt.

*Stirrup leather* should be worn outside coat over right shoulder, under left arm, buckled in front with the point of the strap down.

*Hat*: Ribbon down.

*Crop*: Regulation hunt whip and lash or white whip and lash that is long enough to strike the ground.

## GENTLEMAN MEMBER

*Scarlet coat*: should have rounded corners and three (3) buttons in front, two (2) on the back and two (2) or three (3) on each sleeve in brass with the

insignia adapted by the hunt. Scarlet coats are worn only by members who have been awarded their colors.

*Black coat:* Black hunting coat or frock coat cut same as scarlet coat are preferable to a shadbelly coat. Buttons should be plain or black. In hunts where the field wears black, members wear the hunt buttons on their black coats. If not awarded colors, buttons must be plain or black. There should be three (3) buttons on the front of the coat and two (2) buttons on back if frock coat. It is not customary to wear hunt colors on the collar of a black coat. It is customary that brass buttons on black coats are reserved for Masters and ex-Masters.

*Vest:* Canary, tattersall or appropriate color designated by the Master.

*Breeches:* May be tan, buff or white (only with a frock coat), of heavy cord, synthetic stretch twill or other heavy material.

*Hat:* ASTM-approved safety helmet in black velvet with chin harness fastened is strongly recommended. Ribbon should be up. If you plan to wear a bowler, it is wise to check with the Master of the hunt, as some hunts do not allow them. Top hats, with optional hat-guard, may be worn with scarlet coat, frock coat or shadbelly coat, but they are not recommended by the MFHA.

*Boots:* Plain black calf boots without tops are worn with black hunting coat. Brown-topped boots should be worn with a scarlet frock coat. Black field boots with laces are not considered proper formal boots. White or brown boot garters (to match breeches) may be worn.

*Hair:* If long, it should be confined neatly.

*Neckwear:* Plain white hunting stock, neatly tied and fastened with a plain, horizontal safety pin. Ends of the stock should be pinned down to remain tidy.

*Spurs:* Same as for Master

*Crop:* Traditional hunting whip and lash (white whip or lash are not appropriate).

#### LADY MEMBER (ASTRIDE)

*Coat:* Frock or hunting coat of black, dark blue or dark gray, suitably cut, with plain dark buttons. If she has been awarded colors, she may wear the hunt's buttons and collar trimmings. A frock coat should have rounded corners with three (3) buttons in front and two (2) on back. Hunting coats should have rounded corners and three (3) buttons on the front. Both should have two (2) buttons on each sleeve.

*Vest:* Canary, tattersall or appropriate color designated by hunt.

*Breeches:* Buff, tan or canary (not white) cord or heavy synthetic stretch twill (not knitted) material.

*Hat:* ASTM-approved safety helmet, black or dark blue velvet with chin strap. Ribbon up. If you plan to wear a black bowler, it is wise to check with the Master of the hunt, as some hunts do not allow them. Silk top hat (the crown should be six inches or more and worn only with a frock coat). The MFHA does not recommend wearing a bowler or top hat in the hunt field. Short dressage hats are not appropriate.

*Sandwich Case* (or combination flask and sandwich case): Optional. Flask case is not customary.

*Hair:* Should be neatly confined. Hair nets are advisable and correct.

*Gloves:* Wash, buff, black or brown leather. White string or navy wool or cotton string gloves in cold or rainy weather.

*Spurs:* Regular hunting spurs, same as for Master

*Neckwear:* Plain white hunting stock, neatly tied and fastened with a plain, horizontal safety pin. The ends should be pinned down to remain tidy. No other jewelry should be visible.



*Crop:* Light hunting whip with lash, smaller shaft than a gentlemen's (white is not appropriate).

*Boots:* Black calf hunting boots without laces. Black leather or patent leather tops are appropriate with tabs sewn on but not down, especially with a frock coat. If scarlet is worn, black boots with brown leather tops with tabs sewn on but not down are appropriate.

#### LADY MEMBER (SIDE-SADDLE)

Same as LADY MEMBER (Astride) *except*:

*Habits:* Dark Melton or other cloth, suitably cut.

*Veil:* Must be worn with a top hat, not a bowler.

*Hat:* Silk top hat to be worn with double-breasted dress hunting coat (crown should be six inches); black bowler (derby) may be worn with plain jackets. Safety headgear in black with chin harness properly fastened is strongly recommended with ribbon up. It should be noted the top hat and derby offer no protection to the head.

## 2. EXCEPTIONS TO THE SUGGESTED ATTIRE

### JUNIORS

It is not necessary for juniors to wear formal attire, as it is often both difficult and expensive to obtain properly fitting formal attire in small sizes.

Whichever type of "turnout" is chosen, it should be clean and appropriate for various weather conditions, with an ASTM-approved safety helmet with chin strap properly fastened.

**FORMAL ATTIRE:** Same as for Lady Member (Astride). Junior colors may be worn according to individual hunt customs.

*Hat:* A plain, properly fitting black ASTM-approved safety helmet with chin strap properly fastened is required, with ribbon up.

*Crop:* A lightweight hunting crop with or without lash.

*Neckwear:* A plain white stock, neatly tied and fastened with a plain, horizontal safety pin.

*Hair:* If long, it should be neatly confined or braided.

**INFORMAL ATTIRE:** A tweed coat in a muted color (no reds), tan or brown breeches or jodhpurs, shined brown/black jodhpur boots, string or brown/black leather gloves, a plain or patterned muted-colored stock, neatly tied and fastened with a plain, horizontal safety pin. A white stock is not correct. "Ratcatcher" shirts are also correct with a neckband, horizontal plain stock pin or a man's necktie. Muted-color turtleneck shirts are appropriate. Hat as stated under formal attire.

In hunting countries where extremes of temperature occur, modifications to the foregoing suggested formal attire may be in order. Such modifications for extreme temperatures may be made by the Master(s) of individual hunts as needed, particularly in cold weather when parkas and heavy jackets may be worn over regular coats. Likewise, in hot weather, jackets may not be required.

### **3. INFORMAL OR RATCATCHER ATTIRE**

#### **GENTLEMEN & LADIES**

*Hat:* Plain ASTM-approved black or brown velvet helmet with chin strap is strongly recommended, ribbon up.

*Coat:* Tweed or wool in muted color, tailored and single or double-vented.

*Shirt:* Ratcatcher or other light-colored shirt. Stock tie (plain or colored) with horizontal pin, or man's necktie. A plain or patterned muted-color stock or necktie, with ends pinned down to remain tidy. White stock ties are not correct. Neckbands are also appropriate for ladies. Turtlenecks and polo shirts are usually reserved for children but are used in some hunts that experience hot temperatures during the hunting season.

*Breeches:* Earthtone colors – buff, tan, gray or rust.

*Spurs:* Regular hunting spurs with no rowels.

*Boots:* Brown or black leather dress boots or brown field boots with laces. Formal boots with brown, patent or leather tops are not appropriate. Rubber boots are acceptable, as are canvas-topped (Newmarket) boots, and jodhpur boots with either canvas or leather leggings. Three-buckle brown field boots are also correct.

*Gloves:* Black or brown leather or string gloves. White is not correct.

*Wire Cutters, Flask, Sandwich Case:* Same as in formal attire.

*Crop:* Regulation hunting whip. Thong or lash may be removed during cubhunting. White whip or lash is not correct.

#### LADY MEMBER – SIDE SADDLE

*Coat:* Beige, brown or off-white; suitably cut; plain, tweed or salt sack.

*Skirt:* Should coordinate with the coat.

*Hat:* Bowler, velvet hunting cap or black velvet ASTM- approved safety helmet with chin harness fastened. Bowlers and velvet hunting caps without chin straps do not protect the head when hunting.

*Veil:* Not appropriate for informal attire.

#### 4. ACCESSORIES

*Raincoats.* Masters may allow certain rain gear (common sense should prevail). They should be used sparingly in muted colors (brown, black or dark green). Staff may wear red rain gear.

*Eyewear.* Sunglasses or tinted eyewear are not recommended unless specifically prescribed or recommended by a physician or allowed by the Master. This does not preclude clear prescription glasses. However, it is

common practice for riders in hunt areas such as California and Nevada to wear sunglasses.

## 5. TACK APPOINTMENTS

Horses and all tack should be impeccably groomed, clean, polished and shining. It is a disservice to the landowners to do anything less.

*Bridle:* Brown leather, either double or single. A cavesson (noseband) should be used. Colored or ornamental browbands are not acceptable.

*Breastplate:* Optional, plain or raised leather. Martingale attachment optional.

*Martingale:* Optional; if used, it should be plain/raised leather. A running martingale must have “stops” on the reins.

*Saddle:* Brown. Saddle pads should be saddle-shaped, of a light color (white, buff, yellow). Numnahs or saddle cloths are not proper. Stirrup irons with optional pads should be large, plain and clean (shined). Safety equipment such as cruppers, grazing over-checks and safety stirrups should be used whenever needed.

*Girth:* Preferably brown leather, but clean neoprene, string and cloth girths are permissible, as are girth covers made of fleece.

*Accessories:* Accessories such as figure eight and flash nosebands, bell and shin boots, gel and cushion saddle pads may be used for safety, comfort or health of the horse. Accessories like fly hoods and ear or muzzle covers are not appropriate in the hunting field.

*Clipped horses:* Clipping provides horses the ability to more effectively thermo-regulate their bodies. Therefore, full body clips with the legs left long are recommended. Trace clipping does not provide for efficient thermo-regulation, and ornamental clipping is inappropriate.

## MFHA FOUNDATION

The MFHA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization with the overarching mission to preserve and protect foxhunting for future generations. MFHA Foundation is dedicated to providing information and programs designed to educate and inform the public about the sport of foxhunting, promoting the conservation of lands, facilitating the preservation of natural habitats, and supporting and encouraging research on the health, welfare and training of hounds and horses.

Promoting knowledge of the basis for and the value of traditional field sports is the most effective way to deal with public media that might otherwise exploit ignorance of field sports by distorting and misrepresenting them in stories opposed to mounted foxhunting and other outdoor pursuits.

The Foundation is not a public advocacy lobbying force on behalf of field sports. That job is left to others already well-established in that field. A well-supported Foundation teaches historic truths about our sport and disseminates them as widely as possible, in print and via other media, to educate and stimulate the interest of the public. The Foundation was instrumental in the creation of *COVERTSIDE*, the official MFHA newsmagazine that is available to subscribing members of the MFHA and interested parties to assist in these purposes.

The Foundation also acts as an umbrella organization to allow donors to give funds to either the Foundation or the Hunt Staff Benefit Foundation (HSBF). HSBF is a monetary assistance fund for hunt staff professionals and their families who are in dire financial need. HSBF is not a retirement fund, but is a fund to provide aid in circumstances where health or other financial crises warrant special assistance from a fund contributed by the foxhunting community.

The Foundation received its initial funds in 2007 from contributors who shared a vision during the MFHA Centennial celebration. Today, the

Foundation receives funds from direct and legacy contributions. In an effort to conserve resources and increase efficiencies, the MFHA Educational Foundation merged into the MFHA Foundation in 2010, and the Foundation began to operate as an umbrella fundraising organization by performing all fundraising programs for both HSBF and the Foundation. The Foundation and HSBF have separately invested funds that generate income for their respective programs and operations.

The Foundation can succeed in educating the public and professionals about foxhunting, preserving habitat and carrying out the other aspects of its mission only through the continued support and funding from individuals and organizations who also believe in preserving and protecting foxhunting for future generations. Donations are TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

## **HUNT STAFF BENEFIT FOUNDATION (HSBF)**

Foxhunters, especially Masters, recognize and appreciate the very important part professional hunt employees play in the operation and welfare of mounted foxhunting. Their dedication to a lifestyle of mounted foxhunting has many intrinsic rewards, but few of them are financial. Their hours are long in the field, kennels, stables and hunt country and in other related efforts. More than sixty percent of the hunts in America and Canada use professionals as huntsmen, whippers-in and kennelmen. The professional makes substantial contributions to amateur hunt staff, by setting an example and providing professional advice. The contributions of professional hunt staff to the sport of mounted foxhunting in North America are numerous and essential. Many professionals could obtain more lucrative jobs were it not for their extraordinary love of hounds and hunting.

It is sometimes vital to the future of mounted foxhunting that these fine people be provided a “safety net” of adequate financial assistance or other relief in old age or whenever and as often as periods of disability, emergency or financial inadequacies occur.

The HSBF also assists the Foundation in its educational mission for professional development, but only for hunt staff who cannot afford to otherwise pay to improve their knowledge and skills.

**THE HUNT STAFF BENEFIT FOUNDATION IS NOT A RETIREMENT FUND.** It provides monetary assistance to past or present hunt staff professionals and their families who are in dire financial need. Grants can take the form of helping with medical bills in unusual circumstances. Grants are made only to those whose circumstances (health or financial crises) warrant our help. Grants are sometimes provided to widows and close family members of deceased hunt professionals whose loss has devastated their lives.

To achieve these purposes on an overall basis, the **MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.**, in 1930 established a fund for the benefit of hunt employees of all registered and recognized member hunts.

The HSBF was established on July 27, 1938, under Massachusetts law as a charitable trust and is now the expanded, sustainable, ongoing and improved outgrowth of that significant concept and action.

Over the years, contributions made to the fund by hunts and individuals have increased the capacity of the fund to render assistance to more hunt employees in larger amounts.

All Masters should understand the purpose of procedures for benefits available to hunt employees under the HSBF so that deserving and eligible hunt employees needing assistance are not overlooked.

## **PURPOSE**

“The purpose of the HSBF shall be to provide financial assistance or other relief to hunt employees and persons who have been in the employ of a member hunt for a period of one (1) year or more who are in need of financial assistance and have become either physically or mentally incapable

of performing their duties by reason of illness, accident, disability or old age, and to provide financial assistance or other relief for the widows and children of deceased persons who are qualified for and received benefits hereunder during their lives or were eligible to qualify but for the fact that during their lives they were not in need of financial assistance or other relief and were neither physically nor mentally incapable of performing their duties by reason of illness, accident, disability or old age...”

The HSBF also assists hunt staff with programs that enhance their professionalism and quality of life.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To qualify as a beneficiary, a hunt employee (in addition to meeting the standards under above section titled PURPOSE) must have been in hunt service at least one (1) season and have commenced a second season.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

To be eligible for consideration, a hunt employee must file, or have filed on his or her behalf, the official *Hunt Staff Benefit Application Form* addressed to the HSBF chairperson, requesting financial assistance or relief. The application form is available from the MFHA office and on the MFHA website. The Master of the hunt involved must approve the application when it is submitted by others. Preferably, the Master should make the application on behalf of the hunt employee, as the Master is usually closest to the situation. If the current Master is not familiar with the situation, the ex-Master who employed the person in question will submit the application. The applicant should include all factual information that might be pertinent or useful to the board in processing the case. In addition to any other information the board may require, the application shall contain the following:

- (a) A complete copy of the applicant's most recent federal income tax return, with all attachments, or a notarized statement that



the applicant's income was not high enough to require filing a federal income tax return.

- (b) A certificate from the applicant's doctor verifying that they are no longer able to continue in hunt service, or be otherwise employed because of illness, accident, old age or other physical or mental infirmity or disability.
- (c) A copy of extraordinary outstanding medical bills not covered by the hunt's insurance
- (d) A completed *Hunt Staff Benefit Application Form*.

The applicant will be required periodically, upon request from the board, to submit continued substantiation of income by sending federal income tax forms or to confirm that the medical condition still exists to qualify for continued assistance.

## **PAYMENT OF BENEFITS**

The board shall, at their sole discretion, approve or deny applications for benefits and establish the amount, frequency, duration, termination or resumption of payments made to a beneficiary. Decisions are based solely upon the eligible applicant's financial need in the light of personal circumstances, which may change.

## **REVIEW**

The situation and status of any hunt employee or beneficiary may be reviewed at any time by the board. Likewise, requests for review or special action may be made at any time by submitting to the board all the necessary or useful information and stating the nature of the request.

## **MANAGEMENT**

Management of the HSBF is vested in three (3) directors who are members of the MFHA and are elected at the annual meeting of the MFHA, for staggered three-year terms. The directors appoint one (1) of their members as executive director to carry out administrative functions. The executive director then must be confirmed through election by the MFHA membership at the annual meeting.

The HSBF is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization devoted to hunt employees. Contributions to the Hunt Staff Benefit Foundation in the form of checks, cash, securities or property are **TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.**

In the final analysis, the HSBF's capacity to help hunt employees is a function of its continuing growth and earning power, made possible through the collective efforts of the hunting fraternity. It assures a sound base for the flourishing of mounted foxhunting by encouraging future employees to come into hunt service and current employees to remain in hunt service.

## **FOXHOUND CLUB OF NORTH AMERICA (FCNA)**

The Foxhound Club of North America was dissolved after subscribing membership was formed.

## FOXHUNTING HISTORY

Mounted foxhunting has existed in America since Colonial days, and the development of the sport kept pace with the progress of the United States as it extended its influence across the Appalachians to the West Coast. Hounds of various types were brought from Europe by the early settlers who reached these shores. By 1900, the American foxhound was the product of breeding their descendants with hounds that continued to be imported, especially from England, Ireland and France. The oldest continuing hunt in North America is the Montreal Hunt in Canada, established in 1826. The oldest continuing hunt in the United States is Piedmont Hunt, established in Virginia in 1840.

The earliest record of the importation of hounds to this country was on June 30, 1650, when Robert Brooke arrived in Maryland with his family, 28 servants and his hounds. By the early 1700's, mounted foxhunting was spreading rapidly in Maryland, Virginia and probably other colonies. Hounds were also used for other forms of hunting. Early planters with sporting English blood imported red foxes from England in 1730 and celebrated the event at Chestertown, Maryland. George Washington was born two years later, and his diaries make it evident that, in adulthood, the favorite sport of his good friend Lord Fairfax was mounted foxhunting. The sport has grown ever since, but its formal organization, as with other sports, did not begin until some years after the Civil War.

The Masters of Foxhounds Association of America was formed in 1907 as a parent organization to be both custodian of the boundaries of each foxhunting territory and the medium through which hunting organizations could apply for territory, submit complaints and have leadership.

The first step toward the formation of a parent association took place on the evening of February 14, 1907, when Messrs. Louis Baetjer, Westmoreland Davis, R. Penn Smith, Harry Worcester Smith, Henry G. Vaughan and Major W. Austin Wadsworth met at the old Waldorf Astoria

Hotel on 34<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City, at the invitation of Mr. Harry Worcester Smith. They adopted a "Constitution and By-laws", which generally followed the lines of the British Masters of Foxhounds Association.

Major W. Austin Wadsworth was elected first President of the new Association, Harry Worcester Smith was made chairman of the hunt committee and Henry G. Vaughan, secretary-treasurer. These officers, together with Westmoreland Davis, Edward Crozier, R. Penn Smith, Thomas Hitchcock, Charles E. Mather, A. Henry Higginson and John R. Valentine, constituted the first hunt committee.

On the evening of May 15, 1907, Messrs. Thomas Hitchcock, Harry Worcester Smith, Henry G. Vaughan and Major W. Austin Wadsworth met at the Knickerbocker Club, New York City, and revised the "Constitution and By-laws". The principal change was the substitution of an executive committee to manage the affairs of the Association in place of the hunt committee. The Association was incorporated in Massachusetts in 1926. The "Constitution and By-laws" adopted at that time provided for a board of directors, but it was known only as the "executive committee." Major revisions of the "Constitution and By-laws" were adopted in 1971 to conform to standard corporate procedures. Since then, the governing body has been called the board of directors.

Seven (7) members attended the Annual Meeting of the Association held on February 14, 1908, in the Cafe of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show at Madison Square Garden. At that meeting, the Association voted to invite Canadian Masters to become members, to sanction the Third National Hound Show in Lincoln, Massachusetts, and to publish a "Foxhound Stud Book". At the Annual Meeting held at the same location on February 12, 1909, the secretary reported that "there were eighteen members" and that "eight descriptions of hunt country and two maps had been filed."

The first known "recognition" of hunts began with the American Hunt and Pony Racing Association in 1893. From about 1899 through 1908,

recognition was granted by the Stewards of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association, and from 1909 through 1933, by its hunt committee. Although the MFHA was founded in 1907 and immediately began to "record" hunting countries and, later, to "register" hunts, it was not until 1933, under the Presidency of Henry G. Vaughan, that the prerogative of recognition was relinquished by the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association. Since 1934, the registration and recognition of hunts has been under the exclusive authority of the MFHA.

Each year, the members of the MFHA elect a president, two (2) vice presidents, a secretary, a treasurer (or secretary-treasurer) and an executive director, as well as three (3) or more directors. In 1971, the "Constitution and By-laws" were amended to impose a limit of four (4) successive one-year terms for the president and the two (2) vice presidents. There is a term limit of five (5) years for the secretary-treasurer and no limit for the services of the executive director. As of January 2008, the board of directors consists of all officers, sixteen (16) district representatives and four (4) directors at large (the three (3) past presidents and a director at large, if desired, appointed by the president). Directors, other than officers, are elected for three-year terms. Including the current president, there have been twenty-six (26) presidents of the MFHA. The nominating committee consists of the three (3) past presidents and the current president. In case of a tie, the first vice president casts a vote. The nominating chairman is the most recently retired president.

Mr. Henry G. Vaughan, during his long service first as secretary and then as president, from 1907 to 1938, did more than anyone to build up the Association in those early years. He devoted much time and thought to it and had the Association office in his law offices. After incorporation in 1926, his personal secretary, Miss Clara H. Sampson, served as clerk to conform to Massachusetts law requiring the clerk to be a resident of that State. She was succeeded in 1939 by Mr. Joseph J. Jones, who had worked in Mr. Vaughan's office since 1923 and had been Keeper of the Foxhound Stud Book since 1936. He ran the office most efficiently and was consulted frequently by all presidents until his retirement in 1973.

Dr. John B. Glass served as the Association's office clerk from 1973 until his retirement in 1995. He instituted publication of the "Foxhound Stud Book" annually and issued the Association's first publication list. In 1984, he directed the installation of a computer system to manage the registration of foxhounds. Since then, the new litter registration certificates and camera-ready copy for publication of the "Foxhound Stud Book" have been prepared by computer. During his tenure, he edited 22 Stud Books and 23 sets of annual Hunt Directories. At his suggestion, the title of clerk was changed and in 1993 his successor, LTC Dennis J. Foster (US Army, ret.), was designated executive director. Since 1993, Col. Foster has added to and changed the job description of the former clerk/secretary. He actively rides and hunts with member hunts and assists them with their problems. He represents the MFHA on national and international boards that work with other countries to save hunting around the globe. He is a proponent of animal welfare (our obligation to care for and treat animal humanely) and is considered an international expert on animal rights organizations and their strategies whose political bottom line is a petless/meatless society. As of this printing, he is still serving.

After his retirement in 1995, Dr. Glass and the MFHA cooperated in the publication of "FoxDog," an innovative computer program created and written by Dr. Glass. The program allowed Masters and huntsmen to consult the "Foxhound Stud Book", retrieve pedigrees, determine get of sires and dams, prepare registration papers and manage kennel lists on a home computer. FoxDog has since been replaced by a more modern program that is available on the MFHA website.

For many years, the Annual Meeting has been held in New York City on the Friday before the last Saturday in January. The board of directors meets three (3) times a year. In addition to the day before the Annual Meeting, it also meets in late Spring, often in conjunction with the Virginia Foxhound Club hound show. The Autumn directors' meeting has been held in different regions of the United States and Canada since 1973.

In 1980, the MFHA published a history of the Association written by Alexander Mackay-Smith, entitled "Masters of Foxhounds."

The MFHA celebrated its Centennial in 2007. In January of that year, there were 723 members of the Association, more than 5,000 subscribing members and 164 recognized or registered hunts in the United States and Canada. The year-long Centennial celebration was planned, organized and implemented by then President Mason H. Lampton, MFH, with the assistance of countless volunteers and people dedicated to the future of the sport. Hound shows, performance trails, field hunter championships, joint meets, art shows and memorabilia sales were held throughout the year to give everyone a chance to celebrate foxhunting. The year began with a Centennial Ball at historic Cipriani's in New York City, a lavish event attended by almost a thousand foxhunters from all over the USA and Canada and leaders of hunting with hounds from 11 different countries. Closing ceremonies were held at Morven Park in Virginia. In all, Centennial events raised \$2.2 million to help secure mounted foxhunting for future generations.











