



Raising money with racing pigs: Maris Farms teams with local businesses, health plan group to raise funds in 2016 for new cause: Seattle Children's

In the spirit of horse racing's famous Triple Crown series, Maris Farms will again hold its Triple 'PIG' Crown racing series – now in its 10th year – but with a new cause and an additional major partner amongst supporting local businesses. The pig races are one of the featured activities at Maris Farms, which has become a favorite fall destination in Pierce County for its pumpkins, corn maze and haunted woods attraction.

After raising more than \$23,000 over its first nine years for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, event coordinator Steve Templeman reports that Maris Farms has decided to move toward a local recipient for the month-long fundraising activity in supporting Seattle Children's Hospital.

"St. Jude is and has been a very deserving recipient in our pig racing fundraiser, and we've appreciated their cause and commitment toward children's cancer research as well as their enthusiastic participation and partnership with us all these years," Templeman said. "We just felt like it was time to go in a different direction as far as partnering with a more local organization that is committed to very similar values, research and breakthrough discoveries. It's an exciting change and a cause we're looking forward to supporting for many years to come."

Additionally, Maris Farms has added a major promotional partner in the Washington Healthplanfinder group, which will contribute both in promotional dollars and prizes for race-wagers (donators) as well as fun, quirky little signs/posters helping promote their services. Washington Healthplanfinder is an online marketplace for individuals, families and small businesses in Washington to compare and enroll in health insurance coverage and gain access to tax credits, reduced cost sharing and public programs such as Medicaid. Washington Healthplanfinder is also a major promotional partner for The Haunted Woods at Maris Farms this season.

"Teaming up with Washington Healthplanfinder is going to help give our promotional opportunities a financial boost as well as a larger audience reach with all those that follow them either via social media or just through their online presence," Templeman explained. "They are a very progressive and creative group that has been quite enthusiastic about wanting to participate in and be associated with these two great events and activities at our farm."

In addition to the normal weekend races which start Saturday, Oct. 1st, there will again be the three marquee races – The PIGtucky Derby (Oct. 8th, 2 pm), The SQUEAKness (Oct. 15th, 2 pm) and The BOARmont Stakes (Oct. 22nd, 2 pm).

Last season's series winner, Arnold SchwartzenHOGGER – who captured only one (the SQUEAKness) of the three marquee races – managed the most wins last season with 15 and will be back to defend his title in 2016 as part of the Anytime Fitness sponsored Fitness Fanatics. BABE (sponsored by Westside Pizza) and Ben Suuubert each totaled 13 victories last season to finish in a tie for second in the series. The story in the pig-race paddock last season, however was a little pig who almost died before the season even started named Miracle (sponsored by Wally's Drive In of Buckley). Nearly half the size of her eight fellow race mates, Miracle was considered an "extra" and never even expected to race last season. She fell ill a week before October and nearly died, but miraculously healed after taking an antibiotic just hours from heading to "hog heaven." Then, when BACON Fitz (another Wally's Drive In sponsored hog) fell ill himself mid-season, Miracle became an emergency replacement, meant more as just a "warm body" to fill the race chute. That "warm body" stunned the pig-race world and fans at PIGlico Downs by winning 3 races her first weekend – without ever training or running a race until that weekend. She went on to win a total of 7.

"That was quite a story, that we'll likely never see again in our lifetime," longtime pig race announcer Dennis 'HOG Father' Riley said. "Little Miracle had a big heart and there was not one fan who watched her throughout the season that wasn't pulling for her to win."

Miracle won't be back in 2016 as she was retired shortly after the season and is capitalizing on her celebrity with a cross country tour full of motivational speaking engagements for the Oscar Mayer Hot Dog company.

On a small round track near the animal barn, several races will occur during the course of a weekend day. Prior to each racing session (3 races per session, 3 sessions per day), racing fans can make donations of \$1 (1 ticket) or \$3 (5 tickets) and pick a pig they feel will win that race.

After someone donates, they will receive a numbered raffle ticket – they keep half and put the other half in the slot of their “chosen” winner. At the end of the race, the announcer will draw a name from the winning pig(s) slot(s), and that individual will win a prize from one of our sponsors. **ALL DONORS will earn a special “pignostication” pig nose for their contribution.** ALL DONATIONS go to Seattle’s Children’s Hospital.

The unprecedented racing series raised more than \$23,000 for St. Jude’s during its nine-year run.

In addition to the newest promotional partner, the Triple Pig Crown series has three major sponsors – Anytime Fitness, Westside Pizza and Wally’s Drive In – which each sponsor the different racing “groups.” There are several other sponsors who are contributing cash and/or prizes to this event, including Applebee’s, Monster Energy Drink and Smith Bros. Dairy.

Our 9 competitors include:

FITNESS FANATICS PRESENTED BY ANYTIME FITNESS – #1 Arnold SchwartenHOGGER, #2 Richard SOWmmons, #3 Jack LaLOIN

PRESIDENTIAL PACK PRESENTED BY WESTSIDE PIZZA - #6 BOARack Obama, #7 Mr. Wiggy PIGGY (Trump), #8 HilBUR (Clinton)

LOCAL RADIO DJ’S PRESENTED BY Wally’s Drive In – #950 (KJR SPORTS RADIO) Chuck SOWell, #99.9 (KISW’s) This Little MIGGY, #100.7 (The Wolf’s) BACON Fitz and 106.1 (KISS FM’s) BenderLOIN

As one of the nation's top five pediatric research centers, Seattle Children's Research Institute is dedicated to making breakthrough discoveries that help prevent, treat and eliminate childhood disease. Their researchers have pioneered groundbreaking cystic fibrosis treatments and cutting-edge cancer therapies that help a child's immune system defeat cancer, and made other major contributions to pediatric medicine. Now, with more than 330,000 square feet of clinical and laboratory space, a workforce of over 1,500 people and nearly \$99 million in total extramural funding for the 2015 fiscal year, they are working toward the next wave of lifesaving discoveries. To accelerate their progress, the research institute is organized into [eight centers](#), each one specializing in areas like cancer immunotherapy, neuroscience and child health and behavior. The centers are supported by faculty from the [Treuman Katz Center for Pediatric Bioethics](#), the nation's first pediatric bioethics center

Maris Farms, in its 17th year of operation at this current site, is located in scenic east Pierce County about 3 miles west of Buckley, Washington, at 25001 Sumner-Buckley Highway. It has been selling pumpkins for 20 years (first five years were at a different location). Check www.MarisFarms.com for more details.

