



NEWSLETTER

WWW.HARWOODCIVIC.ORG

OCTOBER 2010

President's Message

Harwood is a wonderful blend of the rural and agricultural lifestyles. The historical and the modern provide us with a setting that is close to the big city yet peacefully private. The Harwood Civic Association strives to keep the citizens informed about crucial issues and to speak out whenever necessary to preserve our way of life. The members of the HCA board have in many cases served for five years or more. It is time to welcome fresh new ideas and perspectives. In short, we need more citizens to actively participate in the life of HCA through positions on the board and in committees.

What does such a commitment entail?

1. Attendance at four board meetings each year. Meetings last approximately ninety minutes.
2. Willingness to spend time supporting HCA in one of its primary commitments:
 - Membership
 - Land Use
 - Events
 - Government and Community Affairs Communications (Newsletter & Website)

3. Organization of and participation in one annual meeting.

What can you expect to receive in return?

- You make new friends.
- You learn more about the resources that our community has to offer.
- You meet the community leaders and learn whom to contact if there is a problem.
- You learn the difference between what is difficult and what may not be possible. You get the satisfaction of knowing that you can make a difference in your own life and those of your neighbors.

If you would like to come to the December board meeting or learn about the various committees, please contact one of the board members.

- Membership- Jan Lehman piedpiper888@comcast.net
- Events- Mike Stricker strickergang@hughes.net
- Land Use- Stacy Schaefer Schaefer.stacy@gmail.com
- Government/Legislative Affairs- Tony Gamboa itgamboa@msn.com
- Communications (newsletter and website) Mike Lofton mssl49@aol.com or John Guthrie john_guthrie@comcast.net

HCA may not survive without new volunteers. Many of us are getting tired. We urge you to consider making at least a two year commitment to keeping this a strong voice for the community.

Jan Lehman, President HCA

Meet the Candidates

October 20, 2010, 7-9 pm

Southern High School Auditorium, Harwood, MD. Harwood Civic Association, Davidsonville Civic Association and the West River Improvement Association will sponsor a forum in which you can meet the candidates. Primary winners in contested general election races are invited to meet the voters of South County. Candidates seeking to represent the Seventh Councilmanic District, District 30 and 33A for the State House of Delegates, State Senate and County Executive for Anne Arundel County will be invited to present themselves and their reasons for seeking these offices. You may ask questions of concern to your neighborhood, your community, and your county regarding present and future governance. You should not miss this opportunity.

Comprehensive Re-Zoning Update

It now seems likely that formal action on the nearly 400 rezoning requests submitted under the once a decade Comprehensive Rezoning process will not come until after the new County Council is seated in December. There are 32 requests in the planning area for South County or Deale/Churcton. Virtually all the requests propose increases in density for land currently zoned residential or conversion of residential zoning to commercial.

The full list of applications is available at <http://www.aacounty.org/PlanZone/LongRange/CompZone.cfm>

The best way to begin understanding these proposals is to use the GIS (geographic information system) tool linked below. This will allow you to see the location of each proposal and review the actual application.

<http://gis-world.aacounty.org/crz/default.aspx>

Finally, remember that this is ultimately a **Political process**. Zoning changes are accomplished via legislation enacted by the County Council. The Council tends to practice "legislative courtesy" and defers to the will of the member for request within their District. So, the District 7 Council member has enormous power in these decisions. Candidate Forums (Southern High – Oct 20) offer an excellent opportunity to judge candidates commitment to "Keeping South County Rural"

Anne Arundel's Vanishing Farms

The U.S. Census of Agriculture for 2007 provides a picture of agricultural land in Maryland as a whole and for each county. Trends can be examined by comparing these results to estimates which are also available for 2002. The following table presents results for Anne Arundel County and its neighbors. During this period only a small decline in agricultural land occurred overall in Maryland. Of all Maryland counties, Anne Arundel suffered the third largest loss of agricultural land -- loss over 20% of its agricultural land. Only Howard and Prince George's Counties suffered greater declines. Montgomery did far better in protecting its agricultural land.

To achieve AA County's General Development Plan goal (<http://www.aacounty.org>) of preserving 20,000 acres of agricultural land, over two thirds of the farmland existing in 2007 must be preserved.

A strong, viable agricultural preservation program is vital to AA County's economic health. There are large and growing backlogs in needed expenditures for schools, roads and other services within the county. There are also large new categories of expenditures on the horizon ranging from the devolution of pension plans from the state to county level to the need to address the growing effect of storm water on the health of the Bay. Both have been reported in The Capital.

Residential development has been shown not to pay for itself in a tax cap county such as ours, so in the long run this development will contribute to increasing backlogs (The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Lave and Lyons, *the Problems with Property Tax Revenue Caps*). At the same time, agricultural land provides the county with about twice as much revenue as it costs to provide services (American Farmland Trust: Fact Sheet/Cost of Community Service Studies, August 2007).

Protecting our agriculture land is not only cost effective for the county; it also preserves our agricultural heritage for future generations.

Land in Agriculture, 2007 and 2002

Statewide and by Selected County	Acres 2007	Acres 2002	Percent Change
Maryland	2051756	2077630	-1.3%
Anne Arundel	29244	39379	-20.4%
Baltimore	78282	71224	9.0%
Calvert	26443	30032	-13.6%
Frederick	202087	195827	3.1%
Harford	75166	81409	-8.3%
Howard	29371	37582	-28.0%
Montgomery	67613	75077	-11.0%
Prince Georges	37005	45462	-22.9%

U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2007 Census of Agriculture, Table 1: County Summary Highlights www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Index.asp

PST Landfill Report

The closed PST rubble landfill on Sands Rd. is the gift that keeps on giving.

Recent samples from ground water monitoring wells at the dump continue to show contamination of ground water. Following is the body of a July 1, 2010 letter from the AA County Health Dept. to Al Tucker, President of the Chesapeake Environmental Protection Assoc. (CEPA). CEPA is providing oversight of groundwater concerns along with MDE and the AA County Health Dept.

“The Anne Arundel County Department of Health has been aware of the discovery of contaminants in excess of Federal MCLs (Maximum Contaminant Levels) in monitoring wells at the site. The levels of these contaminants (arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium and vinyl chloride) continue to be monitored By the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the County Department of Health. As noted in your report, the Department of Health conducted water quality tests on five residential wells around the former PST Landfill, with all results being negative for those contaminants. The Department of Health continues to receive ongoing reports of monitoring well data from MDE and reviews this data closely. Furthermore, the five residential wells tested in 2009 by the Department will be retested on a two year interval; subject to availability of funds. The protection of the health and safety of the residents near the landfill remains a high priority.”
Douglas L. Hart, Acting Health Officer

DNR Approves Wooton’s Landing Dock

Jug Bay director Chris Swarth has sent HCA an update on the progress of the canoe/kayak dock at Wooton’s Landing Park. The Department of Natural Resources has agreed to provide a total of \$10,000 to build the dock. The full set of engineering drawings has been completed, and all required paperwork has been submitted to Maryland Department of the Environment for a wetland permit. Although the process is long and detailed, the final result will be a real asset to the Harwood community as the dock will give us access to the recreational resources of the PatuxentRiver..

Thanksgiving Farm Winery

As agriculture struggles to survive in Anne Arundel County an exciting new business is taking root in Harwood. Thanksgiving Farm approximately 58 acres in size was once part of a 332 acre farm called Richland. In 1892, Richland was purchased by Robert and Mary Cheston from the estate of John Kremelburg. In 1954, the Cheston family sold 58 acres of Richland to the Taliaferro family, who named the parcel Thanksgiving Farm. The Taliaferros sold Thanksgiving Farm to the Heimbuch family in 1996, at which time there were no vineyards at Thanksgiving Farm. Doug and Maureen Heimbuch are proprietors, grape growers and wine makers

To preserve the rural character of Thanksgiving Farm in perpetuity, the Heimbuch family granted Anne Arundel County a conservation easement under the County’s Agricultural and Woodland Preservation Program.

Thanksgiving Farm® wines are made exclusively from sun-ripened grapes grown in the vineyards at Thanksgiving Farm using traditional fermentation methods and French oak barrel aging. Winemaking efforts are focused on producing a single, premium red wine made from a blend of Bordeaux grapes - Meritage wine . For each vintage, the Heimbuchs carefully choose the proportions of each grape variety to be included based on the vintage-specific ripeness and flavor of each variety. Only grapes from older vines are used for Meritage.

A second label, Farmhouse Red, is made with the remaining ripe grapes that are not needed for the Meritage.

Thanksgiving Farm is not open to the public. Occasional tours and tastings are available by appointment only. Visit their website www.Thanksgivingfarm.com to find local retailers carrying Thanksgiving farms wines.

A Clean Chesapeake Bay – Who cares?

You've Got to Know It to Love It

This year I observed (no celebration) my 65th birthday and accepted the cruel reality that the Chesapeake Bay is unlikely to be significantly cleaner in my lifetime. It wasn't easy.

My first visit to the beautiful Bay was at about age 5. Over these 60 years I have lived; on the Severn River, within walking distance of the South River and Eastern Bay, and kept boats on Rockhold Creek and West River.

The details of the Bay's slow death over this period are well documented by scientists and scholars. The change from a Bay of abundance to one of ulcerated rockfish, health threatening bacteria and oxygen starved creatures is regularly reported.

We know the causes of this tragedy and we know the solutions. So why is there so little progress? Certainly, there are many special interests that don't want to pay to clean up their discharges. Farmers, builders, power companies, and homeowners resist the kind of change necessary to clean up the Bay.

How can it be that broad-based, committed public demand for a clean bay fails to override these special interests? Why don't political candidates commit (and keep those commitments) to specific cleanup programs with detailed goals, timetables, and funding methods?

Increasingly, I am convinced it is because most people don't really care enough to do what is necessary. They don't care because they don't truly know the Chesapeake. For a majority of Anne Arundel County residents the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries are practically inaccessible. They don't have the opportunity to develop the kind of personal relationship that creates a passion for the Chesapeake and the willingness to both make and demand change.

The Chesapeake Bay - The Ultimate "Gated Community"

Anne Arundel County boasts of its 500 miles of shoreline but for the majority of residents this is private property, off limits to the hundreds of thousands of citizens that don't have waterfront homes or live in waterfront-privileged communities. Anne Arundel County offers not a single public

beach or boat ramp and has no real plan for adequate public access. Yes, Sandy Point & Truxton Park (Operated by the State & City respectively) provide some opportunity. Sandy Point can be a traffic nightmare and frequently fills to capacity.

According to a 2009 National Park Service report, *less than 2 percent of the 11,600 mile shoreline of the tidal region is publicly accessible.*

What we have is a Leadership Failure.

The County (read you, the taxpayer) has already purchased thousands of waterfront acres with miles of shoreline, i.e., Beverly/Triton Beach 340 acres with 6,200' of shoreline, Franklin Point 475 acres with 6,800' of shoreline; Mayo Beach 25 acres with 1,700' of shoreline. The list goes on & on with County-owned land on virtually every major waterway. Millions of dollars are spent annually to dredge the waterways of the privileged. The Anne Arundel County Health Department regularly tests almost 100 private beaches so that the privileged will know if their water is clean. Increasingly it is not!

A Choice Must be Made

Even the casual observer can't help but conclude that we are on the path of failure. A chance to change direction is coming. This Fall, Anne Arundel County will revise our Recreation Plan. This is an opportunity to create an Action Plan that will set detailed goals, timetables, and funding methods for abundant, easy public access. And, most important, an opportunity to start building the critical mass of bay area residents with a personal passion for the Bay that can successfully demand the changes necessary to actually "Save the Bay". I urge those with water privilege and the array of Riverkeepers and other Bay advocates to demand that the Gate barring the public be opened. The powerful minority may choose to try to keep the resource for itself but it is likely to become a resource not worth having.

The old sage Bill Burton said it best, *"How can vital citizen support come about to save the Chesapeake without access to it? People must have a taste of the Bay before they are willing to fight and sacrifice for its well-being."*, Bill Burton, April 2006, *The Bay Weekly*

Mike Lofton
Harwood, MD 20776

Calendar of Events

Christ Church 92nd annual Homecoming Dinner, Country Store and Bake Sale

Saturday, Oct 16 from 1 - 5 pm. Parish Hall is on the corner of Owensville and Owensville-Sudley Road in West River. Come enjoy ham and fried oysters, potato salad, coleslaw, applesauce, succotash, desserts and drinks with family-style service. There will be children's activities, and a yard sale from 8 AM to 12:30 PM. Cost of the meal is \$18 for adults and \$8 for children under 12.

October 17 - West River Heritage Day Oyster Festival

Captain Salem Avery Museum *A Waterman's Home*

1418 East West Shady Side Rd.
P.O. Box 89, Shady Side, Md. 20764 410-867-4486
Time: 12:30-5 Admission \$6.00 children <12 free

Jug Bay Sanctuary

410 741-9330
Great Paint Out Open-House
Sun, October 24, 2pm – 6pm
1361 Wrighton Rd, 20711

You are invited to enjoy a display and sale of paintings inspired by scenes at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary and created by members of the Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters Association. There will be light refreshments and live folk music. Entry to the Sanctuary will be free to all.

Birdwalk

Sat, November 6, 8am – 11am & Sat, December 4, 8am – 11am

Learn the skills of identifying birds by sight and sound. Binoculars and field guides are available to borrow. Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather. Not appropriate for children younger than 12. Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Lothian, MD.

Winter Waterbird Survey

Thu, November 18, 7:30am – 9:30am & Thu, December 2, 7:30am – 9:30am

Enjoy the winter beauty of early an winter morning on the Patuxent while counting waterbirds: Canada geese, harriers, eagles, herons, and many different

kinds of ducks. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. Bring binoculars & a field guide if you have them, also available to borrow. For adults. No experience necessary. Call to register.

Holiday Wreath Stewardship Event

Sun, November 21, 12pm – 3pm
5702 Plummer Lane, Lothian MD 20711

Description Have some fun while helping to keep invasive plants from taking over our habitats. Participants will remove pine trees and honeysuckle vines, then have a chance to turn them into festive decorations for the holidays. Decorating materials will be provided. Bring work gloves and hand pruners if you have them. Dress for the weather. All ages welcome.

Smithsonian Environmental Research Center

Open to the public
9:00AM to 4:30PM
Monday-Friday
(except national holidays)

October 16, 2010 9:00 AM

Canoe excursion and fall leaf viewing
Paddle along the shores of Muddy Creek and the Rhode River to learn about one of the many tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. We'll look for wildlife birds, reptiles, and more. This trip is designed for beginning and intermediate paddlers. Basic instruction will be given at the start of the program. Cost is \$14 per adult and \$7 for children 6-12 years old.; limited to 16 participants. Pre-registration and payment are required.
Age: 6 years and older

October 30, 2010 1:00PM

Introduction to spiders
Spiders are thought to be scary and creepy but they're an important part of the balance of nature. Come learn about hunting and wandering spiders, their forms, shapes, and ways of getting a meal. Fun for all ages! Pre-registration suggested. \$5/person.

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November 06, 2010 1:00PM

Contee Farm walk and talk

Hike into history on this guided tour to the ruins of Sparrows Rest and Java Plantation on SERC's new property. We'll talk about the changes of the land from the early Native Americans through colonial times and into the present. Some uphill walking is required; wear long pants and hiking shoes.

Free. Age: 8+

November 13, 2010 11:00AM

What research is done at SERC?

Ever wondered what goes on here at SERC? We'll talk about our 18 different laboratories and their research, from native orchids and blue crabs to marine invasive species and mangroves.

November 17, 2010 7:00 PM

SERC Evening Lecture Series: Archaeology and Contemporary Marine Ecosystems. Tobin Rick, National Museum of Natural History

November 20, 2010 10:00 AM

Citizen Science: Fall Bird Survey

Come take a walk to help survey the fall migratory birds moving through the area. Beginning birders are welcome. We hope to see warblers, wading birds, and more. For ages 12+. Bring binoculars if you have them, a limited number are available to borrow. \$5/person.

December 04, 2010 10:00 AM

Citizen Science: Winter Signs and Tracking

Join a naturalist for a winter hike along out trails to search for signs of our winter residents and their activity. No experience is necessary. We'll search and catalog tracks, gnaw marks, holes, and more. For ages 12+ Pre-registration is suggested. \$5/person

December 11, 2010 11:00AM

Making Sand Castles

During this dark season we'll shed a little light by making sand castles either for gifts or holiday decorations, pre-registration required; \$12/person; limited to 15 people. Age: 6+

January 15, 2010 10:00 AM

Citizen Science: Winter Waterfowl Walk

Help a SERC naturalist survey the waterfowl on the Rhode River and Muddy Creek. We'll be looking for shovelers, ruddy ducks, canvasbacks, goldeneyes, and more. No experience necessary; bring binoculars if you have them; a limited number are available to borrow. Pre-registration is suggested; ages 12+ \$5

January 29, 2010 9:00 AM

Teaching About the Bay (Pre-K-5th Grade) Teacher Workshop

Teachers, Parents, and home-school parents are encouraged to attend this workshop designed to provide ideas for engaging children in nature and stewardship of the Bay. We'll cover learning styles, hands-on activities, and resources you can use for your student(s). Pre-registration is required. \$20

2010 Board and Officers

President – Jan Lehman	410-741-1698
piedpiper888@comcast.net	
Vice Pres. – Stacy Schaefer	410-867-6831
schaefer.stacy@gmail.com	
Treasurer – Tom Harley	410-741-0423
thomas_harley@ita.doc.gov	
Secretary – Mike Stricker	410-867-0389
strickergang@hughes.net	
Alice Murray	410-867-4610
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John Guthrie	410-867-8249
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itgamboa@msn.com	
Mike Lofton	410-867-3623
mrl49@aol.com	
Pat Sinclair	301-706-5554
pr20f@nih.gov	

Meet New Board Member Pat Sinclair

Patricia Sinclair also known as Dr. Reichelderfer (at work) and previously Mrs. Graze (two kids) is one of the first of the 'baby boomers' (1946). She grew up in the west, but spent 7 years in Maryland getting her master's and doctorate at the University of Maryland before returning to the west. In 1991 she and her family relocated back to Maryland where she has been ever since. While out west she was active in her children's activities including Boy Scouts, Soccer (coaching) and the school system. Back in Maryland she maintained that interest working with her daughter as part of the Citizens Advisory Council for Lothian Middle School, on the Superintendents' advisory board for 'year-around-schools', judging science fairs, and making presentations before both the Anne Arundel Board of Education and Council.

She works full-time at the National Institute's of Health in the area of women and HIV/AIDS. She has played tennis since she was 10 (and still keeps trying), fished since she could hold a rod, dug clams, and is a certified scuba diver. She is an avid gardener and is very proud of her 'brown thumb' award from the Entomology Department at the Univ. of Md. She likes cooking (and eating), the theater, throwing pots on a wheel, and most recently photographing the old tobacco barns in southern Maryland.

(A photo of Pat will be on www.harwoodcivic.org)

Corporate Members

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