



# Newsletter

[www.harwoodcivic.org](http://www.harwoodcivic.org)

Summer 2009

## President's Message

HCA has had a very busy summer dealing with a variety of local issues. One of our goals as a community organization is to keep our neighbors aware of issues and events that will have a direct effect on the quality of life here in Harwood .

Our greatest challenge so far was putting together a forum to introduce the citizens of District 7 to the candidates vying for the seat vacated by Ed Reilly when he accepted the position of state senator to fill the vacancy created when Janet Greenip resigned her position. The rules governing the selection of her replacement allowed only one week between the application deadline and the selection of the new representative by the County Council. Although no direct testimony by citizens was allowed at the council meeting, the forum allowed the people of District 7 to hear from the candidates and then make their feelings known via e-mail or phone calls. Out of eleven declared candidates we were able to present eight for position statements and questions from the floor. Ms. Tricia Johnson is our new representative until the general election in 2010. Our goal is to make sure that Ms. Johnson is kept aware of those issues that concern our Harwood community.

The citizens of Sands Road were finally able to meet face to face with representatives of the Chaney Company regarding the expansion of the Riddle Sand and Gravel Mine. Although the expansion seems to be inevitable, at least the citizens directly affected have contact personnel to whom concerns can be addressed as the project continues.

The county park at Wooton's Landing is getting attention as HCA partners with the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary and Anne Arundel Park and Planning to suggest ways to restore the park and make it more accessible to the local citizens. Further meetings will

occur as the project proceeds.

The HCA board would like to encourage more direct involvement by more members of the association. In the next few months we will be making contact to ask that you join a committee to follow the interests set forward on your membership application. Fresh ideas and new leadership will ensure that HCA remains a viable force in the community for years to come.

It is a pleasure and an honor to serve as the HCA president. Please contact me at 410-741-1698 or [piedpiper888@comcast.net](mailto:piedpiper888@comcast.net) if you have questions or concerns.

Jan Lehman, President HCA

## **Maryland League of Conservation Voters (MDLVC) 2009 Legislative Scorecard**

MDLVC is a non-partisan environmental advocacy organization that has a thirty-year history of evaluating voting records of Maryland legislators on environmental issues. Harwood is represented by legislators in Districts 30, 33, 7, 33A. Results for 2009 & Lifetime scores are:

	<u>2009 score</u>	<u>Lifetime score</u>
<u>District 30</u>		
Del. Michael Busch	100%	79%
Del. Virginia Claggett	100%	95%
Del. Ron George	50%	44%
Sen. John Astle	44%	64%
<u>District 33</u>		
Sen. Janet Greenip	8%	8%
<u>District 33A</u>		
Del. Bob Costa	71%	56%

## **HCA Hosts Dialogue Between The Chaney Company And The Sands Road Community**

Citizens from the Sands Road community met with management representatives of Chaney Enterprises at the Davidsonville Radio Club on July 14. A relaxed atmosphere provided the opportunity to ask questions and hear about the company's mining philosophy and their plans for the expansion of work at the Riddle site. The major areas of concern were truck traffic on Sands Road, noise from the mining equipment, construction of a north side berm to provide additional sound buffer, hours of operation, and environmental impact on the surrounding area. Mr. Billy Mancuso, the Director of Safety and Security, stressed that he can be contacted via his cell phone( 240-299-7172) if citizens witness any unsafe driving practices. Callers should be as descriptive as possible with color of the truck, time of day, and any numbers visible on the rear of the vehicle. Trucks are also not allowed to line up on Sands Road prior to the 7:00AM opening of the facility.

Mr. Page Wyrrough, the General Manager, indicated that he sees himself as a neighbor since he lives in the area. He sees safety and environmental safeguards as good business practices. He and the Project Manager, Ms Bonnie Watson, spent a good deal of time explaining the time line for the mining as well as the process that will be followed. They discussed other projects that Chaney has completed in environmentally sensitive areas. They indicated that the facility's expansion would not increase their water usage because of their "closed loop system". They also explained the twice-a-year inspections by MSHA (Mining Safety Health Administration) that they must pass.

In response to questions about the requested berm along the north side of the property, Mr Wyrrough indicated that the mining of the site will produce a natural sound barrier as the site becomes deeper, but he will investigate to see if a berm will produce a significant lowering of the noise level. The noise from the back up alarms on the trucks is mandated by regulations that the company must follow.

With regard to the environmental issues, Ms Watson indicated that anyone wishing to be informed of

hearings on the matter should contact the Surface Mining Division at MDE and ask to be added to the notification list.

The company expects the work to begin no sooner that March of 2010. In the current economic climate, the amount of mining will be dictated by the demand for their product. The actual work will be done by Hardesty and Sons, a sub-contractor. Any additional questions or concerns may be addressed to Ms Watson at 301-632-3012.

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### **Landfills Reduce Nearby Property Values**

Most residents who live anywhere near a landfill are quite familiar with the damage they do to the quality of life. Noise, dust, odors, heavy truck traffic, and groundwater contamination are all part of the impacts landfills bring to their neighbors.

They may also reduce the value of your property. After all, what informed buyer wouldn't be hesitant about buying a home near a landfill, particularly one that has contaminated groundwater supplies.

I recently successfully appealed my property tax assessment. In the aftermath of reports that the PST landfill on Sands Rd. was producing contamination in groundwater monitoring wells, I sought and received a reduction in the assessed value of my home. Frankly, it is not particularly satisfying to know that my home is devalued by the landfill but you may get a tax break if you appeal. Information on appeals can be found at: [www.dat.state.md.us/](http://www.dat.state.md.us/)  
Mike Lofton

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### **PST Groundwater Contamination Update**

In 2007 monitoring wells at the PST landfill on Sands Rd showed groundwater contamination. Elevated levels of the metals beryllium, cadmium and chromium were found. Chromium was found at 260 to 730 parts per billion in three wells. The maximum safety level is 100 parts per billion.

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At the urging of the Harwood Civic Association and then Councilman Ed Reilly, the AA County Health Department offered free well tests to residents with drinking water wells near the landfill. Five residents agreed to have their wells tested. All came back with no detect for any of the constituents of concern including arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, and chromium. These were the only parameters the Department of Health identified as a concern.

This information provides the Department of Health with baseline information for off-site private wells in this area of the County. Letters have been sent to each resident notifying them of their test results. The Department of Health will continue to monitor the monitoring well data from the PST Landfill. Off-site private well users will be provided with well water testing should the monitoring well data indicate a significant change in water quality at the site.

These results underscore the need for perpetual monitoring of the PST landfill as it impacts area groundwater supplies.

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## General Development Plan Update

August 17, 7 PM County Council Hearings on the GDP This meeting of the County Council will be devoted to one bill-#64-09 adopting the GDP. The GDP will guide growth and development policy in Anne Arundel County for the next decade. Get your comments and concerns to members of the County Council and attend the hearings!

For more info:

[www.aacounty.org/PlanZone/LongRange/GDP.cfm](http://www.aacounty.org/PlanZone/LongRange/GDP.cfm)

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## Riverdale Baptist Church

### The following letter from the president of the president of the Bristol Civic Association to its members should be of interest to the members of the HCA.

Dear Bristol Residents & Community Leaders, Riverdale Baptist Church's attempt to build a mega-church-school-complex on 57 acres of environmentally sensitive land in Anne Arundel County is being made public (at our request) by the MDE Maryland Department of the Environment at an Official Public Hearing:

DATE: Wednesday, August 19, 2009

TIME: 7:00 to 9:00 PM (Plans available at 6:30 for review)

LOCATION: Tracey's Landing Elementary School rts 2 & 256

Riverdale Baptist Church / ABCA submitted plans to the County to subdivide a 57 acre parcel from one lot to four lots. HOWEVER, Riverdale also submitted plans to the MDE to build a SCHOOL COMPLEX in addition to the four residential lots they were allowed.

You may recall over the last few years, that the Bristol Civic Association exercised our legal rights to appeal building permits and won each case in District Court and Circuit Court. Riverdale Baptist Church then sued Anne Arundel County, claiming they were denied these permits because they were a religious group! The County buckled under pressure of a RLUIPA lawsuit and struck a deal to expedite all permits, grant extensions and basically paved the way for all future developers to do the same.

Now, Riverdale has applied for a Non-Tidal Wetlands Permit "for permanent impacts to the South County Wetlands Preserve". We need your voice and your presence at this hearing.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Sproesser, President

Bristol Civic Association

1417 Wrighton Road, Lothian, MD 20711

H: 443-607-8144 O: 202-224-2028

email: [paulajeanhome@yahoo.com](mailto:paulajeanhome@yahoo.com)

## Harwood Civic Association holds County Council Forum

On the evening of July 8, 2009 HCA sponsored a public forum for applicants to replace Councilman Ed Reilly as the District 7 member on the AA County Council. The forum was held to create the only opportunity for citizens to meet and question their new Council member. Seven of the twelve declared applicants participated, including Tricia Johnson (see related article in this issue) who was chosen to replace Mr. Reilly a few days later. In a process strangely reminiscent of the appointment of colonial governors by British monarchs, the county charter procedure came under harsh criticism by residents and county council members. In addition to the applicants, two members of the County Council, several reporters and approximately fifty citizens attended the event.

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### Tricia L. Johnson Appointed to County Council

Tricia L. Johnson was appointed to the County Council in July 2009 to fill the vacancy left by Councilman Edward Reilly.

Tricia was born and raised in Illinois, but moved to Maryland after her college graduation. She has been a resident of Anne Arundel County for 17 years. She has been a community volunteer in both Prince George's and Anne Arundel counties, as a member and officer of parent-teacher organizations, athletic associations, school booster clubs, charitable institutions, pre-school programs, community and neighborhood associations, and the Mother of Twins Club. Tricia served as a PTA board member for 12 years and President of the Davidsonville Elementary PTA from 1996-2002.

Tricia's five children have all attended Anne Arundel County public schools and are graduates of South River High School. Her oldest daughter, Jessie, is a graduate of the University of Delaware. Twin daughters, Abby and Erin, and son, Garrett, are graduates of Lynchburg College and youngest child, Kate is a freshman at Mary Washington University in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Ms. Johnson graduated from Monmouth College in western Illinois.

Ms. Johnson is the Director of Marketing and Events for Lake Presidential Golf Club in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. She served on the Anne Arundel County Board of Education for six years, serving two years as School Board President.

Contact Council member Johnson at:

44 Calvert Street, 1st Floor

Annapolis, MD 21401

Annapolis Office: (410) 222-1401

Work: (410) 721-2461

Email: [tricia.johnson@aacounty.org](mailto:tricia.johnson@aacounty.org)

Email: [jmaloney@aacounty.org](mailto:jmaloney@aacounty.org)

Legislative Assistant: Joyce Maloney

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### Rollin' On The River

Anne Arundel County has miles of shoreline, but how does one access the waterways if one does not live in a water-privileged community? As the newly selected president of HCA, I felt it was my civic duty to get out there and experience at least one of our waterways. The Free Kayak nights at the Discovery Center in Shadyside provided the perfect opportunity. Unfortunately my first attempt was rained out. Undaunted, I appeared again on a balmy Thursday evening to see if I could remember how to paddle a kayak. After the required release forms were filled out, I was given a life jacket, a paddle, and a bright yellow sit-in version. The water was a bit shallow at the launch point, but some careful maneuvering sent me into navigable water. First I practiced turns, stops, and speed changes. Then I just sat and listened to the silence. Utter bliss. In a kayak one actually sits right at the water line, and as I looked across the water at some water fowl, I felt that I was really a part of the environment. On every first and third Thursday, from 5:00PM until a half hour before sunset volunteers from the center are available to assist. Even with little or no experience, a person can enjoy the West River and if you are lucky, the company of wildlife and a lovely sunset. More information can be found at [www.westrhoderiverkeeper.org](http://www.westrhoderiverkeeper.org).

## WOOTON'S LANDING- A PARK WITH POTENTIAL

Concern over the condition of Wooton's Landing Park led HCA to initiate a meeting with representatives from Anne Arundel County Parks and the Jug Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, which administers the facility. On July 7 HCA representatives Jan Lehman and Mike Lofton met with Ranger Adam Smith and Chris Swarth, the director of the Jug Bay facility. Bea Poulin, Assistant to the County Executive, Community and Constituent Services, also attended the meeting.

The property was a sand and gravel mine prior to 1973. Once the materials were exhausted, the land was deeded to Anne Arundel County. The land sat idle for nearly twenty years, during which time it became an unofficial dumping ground and dirt bike area. In 1989 the State Highway Administration began to consider its potential as a wetland habitat. It was constructed to mitigate for wetland loss due to highway construction projects. Work began in 1992 with seventy-three acres being transformed into forested wetland habitat to complement forty-five acres of existing wetlands. Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks took over active management in 1998. The goal was to utilize the facility for active studies of wildlife and the wetlands as well as providing a site for hiking and wildlife observation via nature trails. Two observation decks were constructed for wildlife viewing. The park is also listed as a launch site for cartop boats along the Patuxent River Trail.

Unfortunately, the park has fallen victim to vandalism. The signs for the nature trail have been removed; the observation decks have been partially destroyed. Due to flooding issues, the boat launch site is often muddy or under water. HCA feels that more widespread citizen involvement plus improvement of the boat launching area would add a valuable recreation site to the Harwood area.

Potential partners include DACA which also has a park and boat launch area on the Patuxent River Trail, the citizens of Maryland Manor directly across the street, Southern High School, HCA, and the Jug Bay Sanctuary. The next meeting will be held at Jug Bay on August 20, at 7:00PM. Anyone interested in participating please call Jan Lehman at 410-741-1698.

## River and Wetlands Activities

One of HCA's goals for this year has been to form a continuing relationship with the stewards of our local waterways. Here are some of the activities for the months of August and September on the Patuxent, Rhode, and West Rivers.

### Jug Bay Wetland Sanctuary

[www.jugbay.org](http://www.jugbay.org) Call 410-741-9330 to register.

Monarch Butterflies- Hands-on program Ages 8+ August 8, 10AM-Noon

Plummer House at the Glendening Preserve  
Naturalist Training-Plants 101- Teens and Adults  
August 15, 10AM-Noon - Learn about native plants, their habitats and adaptations.

Discover Wetlands by Canoe- Children must be at least 7 and accompanied by an adult-  
Advance Reservation Required- \$10 fee  
Saturday- August 22, 4-8 PM Saturday  
September 26, 9AM-1PM

Birding at Jug Bay- Ages 12 and older Saturday,  
Sept. 5, 8-11AM

September Equinox Hike- All Ages  
Sunday, September 20, 5-7PM

### West/Rhode Riverkeeper

[www.westrhoderiverkeeper.org](http://www.westrhoderiverkeeper.org) Call 410-867-7171

Free Kayaking- Discovery center- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursdays May-September 5PM –Sunset  
Sunset Cruise on the Richard Lee- September 20  
Fall Fundraiser- 5-7PM -Call to register.

### Patuxent Riverkeeper

[www.patuxentriverkeeper.org](http://www.patuxentriverkeeper.org) 301-249-3616  
Tubing and Camping on the C&O Canal-  
August 8-9 – Call to register.

See Events on back page

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## **EVENTS**

September 12 8AM-2PM

Sudley Convenience Center

Hazardous household Waste Dropoff

Thursdays thru 10/29

Cedar Grove United Church in Deale

Farmers' Market



**P.O. Box 162, Harwood, MD 20776**