

# NEWSLETTER

## HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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### **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.**

The Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast for the month of September is scheduled for **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 9, 2010** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please mark this date on your calendar and plan to join us.

Our guest speaker in September will be **Ms. Katherine Kesselring** who is Solar Business Development Manager for the commercial enterprise, ***Clean Currents - Solar.***

As you might have already guessed, Ms. Kesselring's presentation will be concerned mainly with some of the interesting ways in which solar arrays can help to reduce energy costs, especially during the hot summer months when air conditioning often becomes such a major energy "hog".

This will be a great opportunity for you to interact with an expert in the rapidly emerging field of solar energy development. Bring your spouse, and/or a friend to this breakfast meeting. Enjoy some excellent food, some great fellowship and plan to have a lively and friendly exchange of information. Breakfast will be served beginning at 8:00 a.m. and the speaker program will start at 8:30 a.m.

Please RSVP by noon, Tuesday, September 7 by calling either Charlotte Mullinix, at (410) 489-4510 or Martha Clark at (410) 531-3455. The cost of the breakfast is \$10.00 per person, payable at the door.

The formal part of the program will conclude by approximately 9:00 a.m. We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, **September 9**, at the Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

### **President's Message**

**by Howie Feaga, President  
Howard County Farm Bureau**

I hope that everyone enjoyed the recent week-long 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Howard County Fair. It was fortunate that the heat finally broke so that the week was, all in all, pretty good.

I want to congratulate Miss Tess Gavagan for being selected as 2010 Miss Howard County Farm Bureau and also offer congratulations to Miss Nicole King, 2010 Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau, and to Mr. Mathew Chaney, 2010 Future Howard County Farmer. I am sure that they will be great representatives of Howard County's agricultural community for this coming year, as well as into the future.

I want to thank Jay Rhine for serving as a great MC for the contest. I also want to thank Danielle Bauer for doing a great job this past year as our 2009 Miss Howard County Farm Bureau and wish her well as she enrolls at West Virginia University this fall. A big thank you also to the Farm Bureau Women's Committee for all their hard work in organizing the contests.

We finally received some much needed rain, and I hope everyone got some of it. The showers have really been spotty this year. Some of the much needed rain arrived in a bit of a nasty storm in some places. I hope that you all fared well with it. I know that the rain arrived a little late for some crops, but it will really help our suffering hay fields and pastures. Being the perpetual optimist, I am looking forward to a nice fall, one in which we can get our harvest in safely and quickly.

Your Maryland Farm Bureau PAC Voters Guide is out in time for the September 14 primary election. The county committees have evaluated the candidates and they have prepared a list of those that earned the 1<sup>st</sup> round of endorsements. Let me know if you need a copy. You should have received them in the mail.

Our “Meet the Candidate’s” event at the Fair on Tuesday evening went fairly well. We had 14 candidates register to speak and answer questions from the audience. Attendance could have been better, but I know that there were a lot of other events going on at the same time. I would like to thank all the candidates who participated. We really appreciate the time that they gave us from their busy schedules.

Well that’s about it for now, I hope everyone enjoys the rest of the summer. The kids are back in school now and the summer months have sure gone by quickly. Be sure to watch out for those yellow buses and the kids who are walking home from school. Finally, like I always say, “Keep your plow in the ground. We’re all pulling for you”.

**Miss Howard County Farm Bureau**  
**Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau**  
**Future Howard County Farmer**  
 by Annette Fleishell  
 Contest Chairperson

It is Sunday afternoon in the main show ring at the Howard County Fair, and the 2010 Miss Howard County Farm Bureau Contest is reaching its climax. Both contestants, Claire Bennett from Union Bridge, and Tess Gavagan from Clarksville, have delivered impressive speeches, and expertly answered their “fish bowl” questions. Danielle Bauer, the 2009 Miss Howard County Farm Bureau says “Thank, you”, and tells us about her eventful and rewarding year representing farming in Howard County. And thank, you, Danielle, for doing such a great job!

MC of the contest, Jay Rhine, who is also Vice President of the Howard County Farm Bureau, informs the crowd that it is time to announce the judges’ selection for 2010. Suddenly the audience turns quiet as he says... and, the 2010 Miss Howard County Farm Bureau is Tess Gavagan!



L to R: Nicole Lynn King, Tess Cavagan and Mathew Chaney.

Tess, 18, is president of Howard County 4-H Beef Club, where she carries projects in horse, steer, lamb, goat, and swine. She manages their total care including feed selection, weighing, hauling, cleaning pens and stalls, and of course a very busy week at the fair showing them. She also cares for her donkey, rabbit, hamster, and chinchillas.

A junior at River Hill High School near Clarksville, she is a member of the Go Green Team and the Volleyball Team. She also participates in the Days End Horse Rescue Project, and is a volunteer on the DCFD Firefighting BBQ Team for the Washington Hospital Center Burn Foundation. She works during the summer at “Talbot Run” where she boards her horse, and is camp leader for the Horseback Riding Camp. At the 4-H Livestock Sale on Friday, Tess purchased a goat, then donated the re-sale money to the camp.

For her future plans, Tess expects to attend college in Veterinary Medicine or Agriculture, and some day hopes to live locally with her own farm and family business.

Congratulations, Tess!

During the intermission of the Miss Howard County Farm Bureau program, the winners of the 2010 Future Howard County Farmer and the 2010 Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau contests were announced. The judging portion of the contests had taken place earlier in the day, when the contestants interviewed with the judges and presented their posters which depicted their livestock/farming activities.

Chosen as Future Howard County Farmer was Matthew Chaney, 11 of Union Bridge. Matt attends 6<sup>th</sup> grade at New Market Middle School, is in the Honors program, and plays lacrosse and basketball. He is recording Secretary of the Daisy Ag 4-H Club, and the Beef Club. His 4-H projects include market pigs and lambs, breeding goat, livestock judging and skillathon. Runner-up for the contest was Colby Hough, 8 of Mount Airy and a member of the 4-H Beef Club.

Chosen as Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau was Nicole Lynn King, 10, of Glenwood. Nicole serves as Reporter for the Dayton 4-H club where she publishes the monthly newsletter. In 4-H she carries projects in market swine, rabbits, dairy leasing, pygmy goats, dogs, sewing and crafts. She helped out at the Fair Petting Zoo, and the MD Sheep & Wool Festival. She is home schooled and likes soccer, swimming, fishing, hiking and kayaking. Other contestants were: Kali Lynn Frazer, 10, of Libertytown and the Dayton 4-H Club; Rebecca Lynn Herriotts, 9, of Glenwood and Dayton 4-H Club; and Lindsey Williams, 10, of Woodbine and the Dayton 4-H Club.

Congratulations, Matthew and Nicole! And thank you to all of the other wonderful contestants!

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## **Clark First Woman Honored with MACAA Service to Ag Award.**

by Bruce Hotchkiss, Senior Editor

*The Delmarva Farmer*

June 28, 2010



**Ocean City, Md.** The Distinguished Service to Agriculture award of the Maryland Association of County Agricultural Agents (MACAA) had never honored a woman since it was first presented in 1974.

That 36-year skein has been broken.

The MACAA award for 2010 was presented to Martha Clark of Glenelg (Howard County) at the ag agents' annual meeting last week in Ocean City.

Clark, an iconic leader of Maryland agriculture for nearly a half century, is the treasurer of Edgewood

Farms, a family farm corporation, but her service to the industry has extended well beyond the farm gate.

She served five years as president of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, leaving that post at the 2001 annual meeting.

She also has been a member of the Maryland Agricultural Commission, president of the Maryland Ag Education Foundation, a member of the Leadership Advisory Council to the Dean of the University of Maryland College of Agriculture, chairman of the Maryland Farm Bureau Women, and scores of other organizations involving such broad scope interests as the dairy industry, women in agriculture, garden clubs, and ag economic development at the county, state and national levels.

The Maryland county ag agents honored Jeremy Criss with their coveted honorary county agent award.

Criss is the Extension liaison to the officials in Montgomery County as the lead person for agriculture with the Department of Economic Development.

He was described as “a great supporter of Extension and agriculture not only in Montgomery County but also beyond its borders... working with agricultural leaders to develop new and innovative ways to keep agriculture moving forward in Montgomery County.”

Criss was unable to be in Ocean City to personally accept the honor. Colleagues said he was filming a segment for local cable presentation entitled “Did you Know...” pulling together the comments of a group of Montgomery County farmers.

*[NOTE – Re-printed with permission from The Delmarva Farmer, June 29, 2010.]*

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**Howard Soil Conservation District  
Receives 3 Awards from MASCD**  
by Kristal McCormick, Howard SCD

At its Solomon’s Island Meeting in July, the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) recognized the Howard Soil Conservation

District and Howard County’s agricultural outreach efforts with presentation of three awards for its 2009 activities.

Brent Rutley, our newest District Supervisor, received the 2009 “Outstanding Contributions by a New Supervisor Award”. This award recognizes a new supervisor who has made unique and/or outstanding contributions deserving of special recognition.

Brent, his wife Amy and their four sons own and operate a tree farm. He also built a landscape design and build company, *Capital LLC*. The following are just a few testaments to Mr. Rutley’s hard work and dedication. On their farm, they apply best management practices including integrated pest management, nutrient management, grass mow strips, wildflowers in the tree rows, a buffer around their lake, and utilization of energy sources such as wind, solar and biomass.

Since before day one, Brent has supported the District’s mission and has been very involved. He has been vocal and supportive regarding important Board of Supervisor decisions. Not only is he a dedicated member of the Howard Soil Conservation Board of Supervisors, Mr. Rutley is also a board member of the Maryland Nursery Landscaping Association.

The Howard Soil Conservation District was also presented with the “Attendance Award”. This important award is based on supervisor involvement at the District level as well as at the state level.

And finally, another very important award recognized the Farm-City Committee. The Farm-City Committee received the 2009 “Outstanding Contribution” award which recognizes an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution.

Starting the tradition in 2004, the Howard County Farm-City Program is now in its seventh year. Each year, over 50,000 people visit over sixty (60) activities over a period of fourteen (14) to seventeen (17) days. This is accomplished on a budget of less than \$20,000 dollars. The committee



consists of more than thirty (30) individuals representing eighteen (18) local businesses and organizations.

The participating organizations include the Howard County Antique Farm Machinery Club, Howard County Bee Keepers Association, Howard County Conservancy, Howard County Farm Bureau, Howard County Library, Howard County Economic Development Authority, Howard County Public School System, Howard Soil Conservation District, Living Farm Heritage Museum, University of Maryland Extension, and local farms such as: Clark's Elioak Farm, Edgewood Farm, Sharp's at Waterford and Triadelphia Lake View Farm as well as Howard County government agencies such as: Ag-land Preservation, Health Department, Public Information Office, Recreation and Parks, and Tourism.

Be sure to be on the alert for the soon to be released 2010 schedule of events (<http://www.farmheritage.org/FarmCityA.htm>).

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### **What Does the Future of Cooperative Extension Hold?**

by **Dr. Nick T. Place, Associate Dean & Associate Director, University of Maryland Extension UME, 1202 Symons Hall, College Park, MD**

I recently came across a blog on The Center for Public Issues Education by two administrators from Sarasota County Florida, Jim Ley (County Administrator) and David Bullock (Deputy County Administrator). On this blog they have shared some of their thoughts and have asked a number of critical questions about the sustainability of Extension into the future. The questions they ask are being asked by many others across the US, and we are hearing these questions here in MD. This is a very critical and transformational time for Extension and we must be able to confidently address these questions as we move into the future. Here is the information that is being shared in this blog. You can access their blog at: <http://www.centerpie.com/what-does-the-future-of-cooperative-extension-hold/>

Their blog: We want to share some thoughts we are having here in Sarasota County about the changing role of Extension Services and examine some

challenges based on how we see the forces affecting local government impacting the Extension service. These challenges can be applied to many local government services. These are things we are asking in Sarasota County of our Extension office and also of our entire County government workforce.

A lot of smart of people have spent a lot of time thinking, studying, and writing about the role of Extension in the future and we don't pretend to be on par with that work. Rather, we approach the future of Extension from the same perspective we approach all local government services. Across the state, public safety, transportation, human services, and most other services are being trimmed due to the new budget and revenue realities. All indications are that Extension will have to be addressed as well. The University of Georgia proposed a budget for the coming year that called for closure of half of all Extension offices in the state. Expect this to be the first such proposal.

Here are some questions we are asking about Extension:

- How will Extension's help grow local economies in the coming years?
- What is Extension's return to the community on resources invested and how does that compare with other investments?
- What is Extension's role in creating a resilient local economy?
- If Extension is reduced significantly, what effect will that have on the University of Florida's ability to distribute its expertise and knowledge into local communities?
- How is agricultural based Extension dealing with the urbanization of Florida coastal communities and can it find relevance in the future?
- Counties and the State are currently spending more than they collect and are living off reserves or disappearing funds. This will end. When it does, resource allocations that don't contribute to the economy will starve in the coming years. If the role of Extension in the future doesn't include adding measurable economic value to the community then resources will quickly be redirected to those services that do enhance local economies.

We believe that in order to survive, Extension will have to be smaller, higher performing, and its contract with the community will be more performance based than in the past. If current Extension staff is surrounding itself with Extension supporters, they are fooling themselves and walking down a dead end path. Extension will need to reach out beyond its day to day horizons to groups not typically targeted and find ways to bring economic value. Resource allocations will be determined largely by people who have little to no knowledge of the role, relevance, or return of Extension services.

The Extension Service has some assets to call on: long positive history in most communities, access to a ton of expertise (from the University) that can be brought to bear on behalf of local issues, an informed neutral voice based on solid values. Those attributes are rare commodities in the public square today. But the ability to bring these and other attributes to the table may need to be better developed in current staff both at the local level and the University level.

We believe the coming years will be a time of struggle for some in Extension and for others it will be a time of extraordinary opportunity as new business models are evolved. Challenges to both local staff and University staff will be significant.

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**Nation Will Pay  
for Land Grant Fund Cuts**

by **Dr. Mark R. McLellan,**  
**University of Florida**

*Re-printed from University of Maryland Extension,  
Agronomy News, August 5, 2010*

With the deepest recession since the 1930s, the decline in tax revenues, and the growing demand for emergency public services for unemployed workers and their families, state government budgets are in crisis.

Not surprisingly, many states are freezing or even cutting their funding for some of the greatest assets of

the American education system — our public land grant universities.

All across the country, state universities are being forced to raise tuition, cut faculty positions or rely on part-timers, and curtail courses of study and research programs. While these cutbacks may help to balance budgets in the short-term, the nation will pay dearly for years to come as our workers' skills, our scientific know-how, and our progress on urgent priorities, from food safety to childhood obesity and renewable energy all will be sacrificed for the sake of avoiding tough choices here and now.

Public land grant universities serve at least four essential functions: educating a cross-section of young Americans; conducting essential research in science and technology; engaging in "extension" (or outreach) efforts to the agriculture and food industries; and addressing urgent issues, such as improving children's nutrition and controlling climate change.

With their core mission of education, the land grant universities' contribution is unequalled. The top 10 public universities alone teach more than 350,000 undergraduate students — more than six times the total enrollments of the Ivy League institutions. Moreover, public universities are much more affordable and accessible for students from middle class and low income families — the great majority of the population.

When it comes to cutting-edge scientific and technological research, state universities are second to none. Some of this research is focused on the land grants' founding purpose of promoting agricultural know-how in the widest sense: finding new, better, and more sustainable ways to produce and use food, fuel and other necessities.

Far from being ivory towers, the land grant universities are dedicated to sharing this knowledge with all who need it. Through the U.S.

Department of Agriculture's extension programs, the land grant universities disseminate state-of-the-art scientific and technological advances to the nation's farmers, the food industry, the restaurant industry, nutritionists, educators, and others who can make good use of this know-how.

The creation of new knowledge and new understanding through research is at the very soul of our land-grant universities. The day we abandon the search for new knowledge is the day we cease to be effective universities.

On many of the nation's most pressing challenges, the land grant universities are on the frontiers of discovering, developing, and disseminating important ideas. New ways to combat childhood obesity, to develop renewable fuels, and to reduce and respond to impacts of climate change are being devised by the land grant universities and shared by the extension programs.

But the USDA's research and education program receives only about \$1 billion a year, a small share of total federal funding for research and development. Meanwhile, in their states, the land grant universities are on the budgetary chopping blocks.

It's time that the President and Congress provided the necessary resources through the annual appropriations process for the universities that are teaching the students and conducting the research to replenish the nation's skills and know-how.

Shortchanging the land grant universities gives America's future short shrift. Every federal dollar dedicated to land grant universities represents a tremendous return on investment because of our commitment to fully link research and teaching and extension with the great expectations of our citizens.

NOTE: Dr. Mark McClellan is the Dean and Director of Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. *This article first appeared in The Southern Farm Press on July 7, 2010.*

## **Clovers that Affect Horses**

by **Donna Foulk, Penn State University  
Extension, County Educator**

*Re-printed from Farm Notes, Carroll County  
Maryland Extension, August, 2010*

**Distribution** - White clover is a very common legume that is frequently found in pastures. White clover can grow if soil fertility is poor, and will survive close grazing. It is a short lived perennial, and it is a prolific seed producer. Although individual plants do not live very long, new plants are constantly being produced from seed. Red clover is also a common pasture legume. Since it does not tolerate continuous grazing, it is not normally found in overgrazed pastures.

**Description** - White clover has no upright stems and spreads by stolons. Stolons are stems that run along the surface of the ground, and produce new plants. The plant has compound leaves with three leaflets, and a white "V" on each leaflet. Flowers are white in color. Red clover is a short lived perennial that has an erect growth habit. The plant has reddish purple flowers at the end of each stem. Stems are hairy.

**Toxic Properties** - The clover plant itself is not toxic. The toxin, slaframine, is produced by the *Rhizoctonia* fungus which grows on clovers and alfalfa during periods of stress (high humidity, drought, and continuous grazing). Hay made from contaminated forages is also suspect, and the slaframine can remain in hay for several years. When consumed while grazing or as hay, clover infected with this fungus will often cause horses to slobber excessively, which is known as Slaframine poisoning. The fungus infects red clover, white clover, alsike clover, and alfalfa. Slaframine poisoning is not life-threatening, but it can cause excessive salivation,

**Symptoms** - The slaframine stimulates the salivary glands and causes horses to drool. Although this is a nuisance, horses rarely suffer any health effects

from grazing infected clover. Other symptoms occasionally include tearing, skin lesions, difficulty breathing, increased urination and feed refusal. It is not uncommon for some horses in a pasture to be more effected than others, since horses vary in their preference for clover and sensitivity to the toxin.

**Management** - There are several strategies to reduce drooling caused by *Rhizoctonia*:

- Remove horses from infected pastures.
- Mow pastures until brown spots are no longer present on the leaves.
- Increase the concentration of grass by applying nitrogen fertilizer in spring and fall.
- Rest and rotate pastures to allow the grass to remain tall and competitive with the clover.
- Broad leaf herbicides, labeled for pasture use, can be used to remove existing clover plants from pastures.

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### **Drought Weather Concerns**

by **Dr. Ann Swinker**

**Penn State Extension Horse Specialist**

*Re-printed from Farm Notes, Carroll County  
Maryland Extension, August, 2010*

Pennsylvania's drought weather conditions can create environments that result in poor desirable grass growth and allowing weeds to out-compete the good grasses in pastures. This can be especially dangerous when pastures are overgrazed and contain toxic weeds or plants that can accumulate undesirable high levels of nutrients.

During a very dry season, some plants begin to accumulate Nitrates. Slightly high nitrate concentrations can result in broodmares aborting. By the time the source of the problem is determined, the horses will have suffered severe effects. Horses avoid these types of plants under normal circumstances, but

when grass is scarce or pastures are overgrazed, they will sometimes turn to them for nourishment. The best solution for ingesting these types of plants is to remove animals from affected forage.

Horses on over-grazed or drought-stricken pastures will need to be fed hay or other alternative forage sources to keep them from eating infected weeds or accumulator plants. Extreme weather conditions can place a heavy strain on pastures, hay fields, and feedstuff growth, which could mean you need to supplement your horse's diet with alternative forages.

Horses require more water during a drought because they are forced to eat more fibrous, less palatable grasses and weeds. In addition to hydration, horses require extra water to maintain normal gut function.

Drought conditions can also severely affect the water source quality. Because of evaporation, natural water sources can contain higher concentrations of minerals and/or contaminants that would be diluted under normal circumstances. Stagnant water pools are also ideal conditions for blooms of blue-green algae, which is very toxic to horses and can even cause death. If you are concerned about water contaminants, consider having your water tested, or fence horses away from the stagnant water. You may need to apply water to dry lots.

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### **What Can or Should be Done in the Face of this Economic Downturn?**

by **Delegate Gail Bates**

The first week in August, I attended the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) annual meeting in San Diego, CA. ALEC is a balance of public sector (legislators) and private sector (businesses) and works to advance the Jeffersonian principles of free markets, limited government,



federalism and individual liberty among America's State Legislators. I was honored to receive one of seven 2010 Legislator of the Year Awards for my efforts to reduce state spending and limit the spread of government.

We had a number of excellent speakers including Gov. Rick Perry of Texas, Gov. Joe Manchin of W. Va., John Fund columnist of the Wall Street Journal and Scott Rasmussen President of Rasmussen Reports. Each provided commentary on both the National economy and on the upcoming elections. All agreed that the economic downturn has been made worse by the current policies.

John Fund opined that business owners want predictability and stability in order to plan for growth. However, the speed with which major legislative changes have been made at the Federal level has created nothing but uncertainty. Even the "Bush Tax Cuts" are set to expire at the end of December, yet congress still has not passed legislation to either extend or to modify. He called the demise of these cuts "the largest increase in history." How are individuals or businesses to plan for hiring or investments if the rules keep changing?

Another of Mr. Fund's messages had to do with the language that is used in politics and the easy slide from one thing to another. The example he gave was how one or two letters can make a world of difference – from millions to billions to trillions – seemingly small change, but huge difference in impact. It is hard to grasp these mega numbers, but he gave a simple comparison:

1 million seconds = 12 days  
 1 billion seconds = 32 years  
 1 trillion seconds = 32,000 years

How does that make you feel when you hear our State budget deficit is \$2 billion and our national debt is \$75 trillion?

The messages were not all negative, several speakers suggested that like in our personal budgets, difficult

times are opportunities to prioritize. It was suggested that we re-structure state government, fundamentally rethinking what we must do and how we do it to maximize outcomes. This is a great opportunity to re-evaluate programs as to effectiveness and eliminate those with little or no impact. Re-structuring government can provide cost savings while actually enhancing service delivery.

Most economists believe we are several years away from actual recovery. As the most highly taxed state in the region, we can't continue to raise taxes. Difficult decisions will need to be made after this next election. Some might see this as a problem, but it can be a wonderful opportunity to reassess the role and scope of government and put in place meaningful reforms. It is what you would do in your business or your family, should we expect less from our government?

On a second topic, I want to offer thanks to Howie Feaga and the Howard County Farm Bureau for organizing the first candidate night at the County Fair. It gave many of us the opportunity to discuss issues of concern and to answer questions from farm families. Thanks to the candidates who participated and to all the people who came to watch and listen.

Don't forget to vote in both the Primary, Sept. 14, and General Election, Nov. 2, this year and make your voice count. In addition to the normal election days, there will be 6 days of early voting with dates and times as follows:

Primary Early voting: Open September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 10:00am to 8:00pm, closed September 5<sup>th</sup>, Open September 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> 10:00am to 8:00pm

General Early voting: Open October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 10:00am to 8:00pm, Closed October 24<sup>th</sup>, Open October 25<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup> 10:00am to 8:00pm

The Early Voting Sites for the 2010 Primary and General Elections are as follows:

Ridgely's Run Community Center  
8400 Mission Rd  
Jessup Md 20794

Ellicott City Senior Center  
9401 Frederick Rd  
Ellicott City Md 21042

The Bain Center  
5470 Ruth Keeton Way  
Columbia Md 21044

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### **Keep Yourself Safe During Storms**

*Re-printed from Farm Notes, Carroll County  
Maryland Extension, June, 2010*

Spring has arrived...and that means lightning and thunderstorms. Farmers need to protect themselves from these natural outdoor occurrences since they work long hours outside. Even though it is rare to be struck by lightning, it does happen. Lightning can kill a person or cause a structure fire.

According to the North Dakota Farmers Union, lightning is Farmers Union Mutual Insurance's largest cause of livestock losses. In one year, the insurance company paid for more than 300 head of livestock and almost \$200,000 in losses. To minimize livestock loss, they suggest that you remove or ground trees in pastures; try to keep livestock away from high points during storms; ground wire fences; and trust only an experienced installer to do this work.

#### **Protect Yourself during a Lightning Storm**

According to the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, here are a few ways to help keep safe from lightning while you're working in and around the farm.

- Take shelter inside a building or car, and close the windows and doors. Get off farm machinery.
- Avoid electrical fences, clothes lines, metal pipes, rails, telephone poles and other conductors. Put

down any object that might conduct electricity, such as a rake, hoe or shovel. Seek low ground, preferably a ditch or gully.

- If you are outside with no protection, get to a low spot. Make your body low to the ground, but do not lie flat on the earth. Curl on your side or drop to your knees and bend forward, putting your hands on your knees.
- Don't take refuge under any tall, isolated object, such as a tent or tree. Standing under a group of trees, shorter than others in the area, is better than being in the open.
- If there is a group of people, spread out. If someone feels their hair stand on end, it may mean lightning is about to strike. Stay calm and keep low. This will help reduce your chances of being struck by lightning.
- Get out of the water if you're swimming or boating. If boating, stay low and avoid contact with the water.
- Keep clear of windows inside a dwelling. Turn off the television and any electrical appliances. Postpone baths, showers and doing dishes until the storm passes because there is the possibility of electrocution. Stay away from water and gas pipes, electrical appliances and telephones because electricity can travel through these and cause electrocution.

#### **FAQs about Lightning**

*What are the odds of being struck by lightning?*

The odds of being struck in your lifetime (estimated to be 80 years) are 1 in 3000. Assuming the average person has 10 family members and others with whom they are close, then the chances are 1 in 300 that a lightning strike will closely affect a person during their lifetime.

*How many people are killed by lightning?*

According to the National Weather Service, during

the past 30 years (1979-2008) lightning killed an average of 58 people each year. Documented injuries average about 300 per year, although undocumented injuries are likely to be much higher.

*How often does lightning strike the ground?*

Lightning strikes the ground approximately 25 million times each year in the U.S.

*Is it possible to have lightning without thunder?*

No, it is not possible to have lightning without thunder. Thunder is a direct result of lightning. However, it **IS possible that you could not hear the thunder** because it was too far away. Sometimes it is called “heat lightning” because it occurs most often in the summer.

*Does lightning always strike the tallest object?*

Never say always! Lightning USUALLY strikes the tallest object. It makes sense that the tallest object is most attractive because it is the easiest path for the lightning to take.

*NOAA safety posters say lightning can strike 10 miles away from a thunderstorm. Is this true?*

Yes, it is true. Lightning that strikes away from a thunderstorm are often called “bolts from the blue.. Lightning has its own agenda. It is random and unpredictable and defies our attempts to fit it into a convenient box to describe its behavior. We don’t really know why it sometimes connects with the ground and not a tree, or a beach instead of the water.

*How many lightning deaths are water-related?*

In a study of 35 years of lightning incident statistics, 8 percent were water-related.

*What is dry lightning?*

Dry lightning is lightning that occurs without rain nearby. The NOAA Storm Prediction Center routinely forecasts dry lightning because this kind is more likely to cause forest fires.

*What types of damage can lightning cause?*

Cloud-to-ground lightning can kill or injure people by

direct or indirect means. The lightning current can branch off to a person from a tree, fence, pole, or other tall object. In addition, flashes may conduct their current through the ground to a person after the flash strikes a nearby tree, antenna, or other tall object. The current may also travel through power or telephone lines or plumbing pipes to a person who is in contact with an electrical appliance, telephone or plumbing fixture. Similarly, objects can be directly struck, and this impact may result in an explosion, burn or total destruction.

For More Information: [www.nasdonline.org](http://www.nasdonline.org),  
[www.nssl.noaa.gov](http://www.nssl.noaa.gov) or [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

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## Ag Preservation Easement Settlements Begin

by Joy Levy

**Ag-Land Preservation Administrator  
Department of Planning and Zoning**

County Executive Ken Ulman is pleased to announce that the first of several “Batch 14” agricultural easement settlements occurred on July 16, 2010. The Leona Stedding property in Sykesville (88 acres) is now permanently preserved in the Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Program (ALPP).

“It gives me great pleasure to see landowners taking part in protecting the quality of life in Howard County by preserving their farmland for future generations,” said County Executive Ulman. “Local farms provide us with healthy, locally-grown food, scenic landscapes, jobs, recreational opportunities, and the list goes on.”

The Stedding property, along with the John L.

Carroll, Jr. property (54 acres), was approved by the County Council at their June 7, 2010 session. The Council must approve the Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA), the payment mechanism used to acquire the development rights. Once approved, settlement on the easements can be scheduled. The John Carroll property settlement is scheduled for September 8.

At their July 6, 2010 meeting, the Council approved the IPAs for the Camilla and Philip Carroll property (500 acres) and the Marshall Rea property (162 acres). The Rea property will go to settlement on August 31. The last remaining property of the initial five to accept the County's offer, owned by the Mannarelli family (107 acres), was approved at the Council's July 29 meeting.

There were a total of seven property owners (out of 13 applicants) that were made preliminary offers last fall, two of whom did not accept their offers. The ALPP is hopeful that the five that have completed the approval process will all have settled by the end of the year.

In addition to the five properties mentioned above, the County has extended offers to two additional properties. The owners of the M&H Corporation farm on Frederick Road in Woodbine (70 acres) and the Zepp farm on Rt. 32 in Sykesville (82.5 acres) have expressed their interest in placing their properties under easement. Formal offers will be made soon.

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**The Hired Hand, the New Tractor,  
and the Blacksnake**  
by Allan Bandel

Among some of my earliest childhood memories, was an event that occurred during the early 1940s while my brother and I were still quite young, in the process of growing up, and having fun too, on the family's Howard County dairy farm. This was a great time for us. Because of our youthful innocence, we could really enjoy the wonders of rural living without a lot

of concern about the more serious problems of the day. Our parents and grandparents had just survived the Great Depression, and now World War II was raging in Europe and the Pacific. We tried not to allow the darker side of what was going on in the outside world to allow a dark cloud to linger for long over our childhood years.

One of those more poignant memories of that time involves a part-time farmhand, a new tractor, and a big blacksnake. The novice hired hand was a teenager named Richard. He was about twice my age at the time. He was a nice enough young fellow as I recall. But he was often easily excitable which sometimes caused him to be a little bit reckless and perhaps unpredictable at times. His judgement, we discovered, was sometimes "clouded" and not always the most reliable.

Having only recently moved out to rural Howard County from the big city, Richard was not yet at all well versed in many of our family's more conservative, albeit more sensible, "country ways". Simply put, he had to be much more closely supervised than the usual "run of the mill" kind of helpers that we normally tried to hire. But this was wartime, and good help was hard to come by.

This particular event took place one warm sunny spring day at my paternal grandparent's farm on Triadelphia Road, a couple of miles west of U.S. Route 40, the Old National Pike. Our community was still very rural in those days, much different from what it is today. For example, most of the county roads, including the one that we lived on, were still fairly primitive by today's standards. Many were characterized by rough gravel surfaces subject to the formation of bumpy "washboard" areas, numerous potholes and even nasty ruts. If not graded and repaired frequently, the ruts were often deep enough to "swallow" an automobile up to its axles following a heavy rain. The county road past our farm was at least a decade away from being paved with the more desirable, much

smoother, hard surface composed of tar and chips, or macadam.

Adjacent to Grandpop's traditional country-style, wood frame, wood shingled farmhouse, and other nearby outbuildings, all of which he had built himself (he had been a carpenter by trade), there was a mature apple orchard abutting the county road.

Grandpop had laboriously planted the orchard himself and cared for it over many years. Before the age of modern pesticides, he sprayed it when needed with an old-fashioned lime-sulfur mixture to control insects and diseases. It was not a huge orchard, extending over only about five or six acres. But it supplied us with many bushels of tasty apples, most of the surplus of which Dad sold to customers on his Catonsville area market route. He had established this market business years earlier in an effort to help support the family through the Great Depression of the 1930s.

On this particularly memorable day, Mother had been busily toiling over her "modern" kerosene cookstove in a corner of her kitchen at the rear of the house. Over the clatter of pots and pans, she could clearly hear the familiar sound of our brand new John Deere model "B" two-cylinder tractor running. The customary "put-put" sound of the engine could be heard coming from the nearby apple orchard. The tractor, she knew, was being operated by our relatively inexperienced, teenaged, part-time hired hand, Richard.

Although somewhat concerned that the inexperienced hired hand was running the new tractor, she was reassured at first by the customary, well-recognized, unique sound of the two-cylinder engine, sometimes fondly referred to as a "Poppin' Johnny". Like all of us, she was quite proud of that new tractor. If nothing else, it was a symbol of our family's slow, but successful, emergence from the terrible "grips" of the Depression. It also represented a major degree of progress in our switching from horse farming to tractor farming. It represented a major move upward on the rungs of the economic ladder of success.

Obviously, she did not want anything bad to happen to that expensive new tractor.

Suddenly though, she was startled by an abrupt change in the engine's normal steady cadence. There was now a curious new rise and fall occurring in the engine's tempo. This unusual variation in pitch and tone immediately attracted her attention and caused her to wonder just what was going on now out there in the normally peaceful apple orchard.

At the time, Richard, who was a local, but wholly city-bred teenager, had been directed by Dad to assist with some now long forgotten, but legitimate, field chores in the orchard. There was some initial hesitancy to even allow Richard on the tractor. Like any teenager though, Richard was intensely interested in that shiny new piece of mechanical equipment, and when given the opportunity finally to drive it "all by himself", he literally "jumped" at the chance. This unexpected opportunity virtually made him overflow with nervous energy and excitement.

Knowing how easily excitable he was, Richard had been thoroughly warned beforehand that he must be very careful and take his time operating the new tractor. He was firmly instructed to go "slow and easy" until he became more thoroughly acquainted with all of the tractor's unique features. Although given instruction, he had not yet gained much experience in safe operation of our shiny new John Deere. So far, so good, Mother thought. Richard did have a legitimate reason for operating the tractor in the apple orchard that morning.

Since Mother was busy doing household chores in her kitchen, an area which happened to be in a part of the house near the orchard, she could clearly hear the sound of the tractor. But, because there were no kitchen windows facing the orchard, she could not actually see what was happening outside without physically moving into another part of the house or actually walking out to the orchard itself.



When she first heard the normal rhythmic sounds of the tractor's engine change so abruptly, Mother's initial reaction was simply one of puzzlement. For some unknown reason, she heard the engine accelerating rapidly, then quickly slowing down. This whole process kept repeating itself, over and over again.

Although she didn't understand the mechanical aspects of what was happening, of what was causing the tractor's normal rhythm to change so abruptly, what she learned later was that she was hearing Richard opening and closing the throttle as he alternately sped up, then just as abruptly slowed down the tractor. This undulating rhythm continued to cycle over and over again. It was definitely an unusual combination of sounds coming from the orchard that otherwise quiet, pleasant spring morning.

Still puzzled, all she knew was that what she was hearing now was not normal. What was going on out there? Was our young helper in trouble, or was he simply operating the tractor in a wild and reckless manner? Was he irresponsibly ignoring the rules that Dad had laid down for him and that he had agreed to? Was he exposing himself to danger in the process?

It wasn't long before Mother's curiosity got the best of her and she hurried out to the orchard where she could obtain a better view at what was going on. And what she observed truly amazed her. Her attitude quickly changed from one of puzzlement to one of outright alarm.

She saw young Richard guiding the tractor around in tight circles at relatively high speeds, twisting and turning first to the left, and then to the right, in and out among the big apple trees. He seemed to be totally oblivious to the tree limbs that were smacking him in the face and brushing along the sides of our new tractor as he drove wildly through the apple trees. Contact with the low-hanging tree limbs was leaving lengthy, unsightly brownish stains on the otherwise unblemished paint of the tractor's bright green hood.

At first, Richard did not realize that Mother was approaching and that she was trying to get his attention. His focus was entirely on the ground, as he twisted the steering wheel vigorously, first in one direction, and then in the other as he maneuvered crazily among the apple trees. As he twisted the steering wheel violently from left to right and back again, he was simultaneously pressing down on first one, then the other of the rear wheel brakes in an attempt to lock first one, then the other of the big rear tires to facilitate those violent short, spinning turns.

During all of this fast action, Richard didn't seem to be aware so much of what might be happening to the tractor as he was in concentrating on following some movement on the ground. As he continued swinging the tractor around and around in wild circles, alternately accelerating and decelerating, sometimes making figure eights in the grass and many times just narrowly missing one or another of the many closely spaced trees, he appeared to be trying to follow something moving swiftly and erratically through the tall grass.

Finally, Mother decided that she had seen enough of this "reckless" behavior as Richard continued to put our expensive new tractor at risk. What was he up to anyway? Had he gone completely berserk? Or was he just playing like a child with a new toy?

Now, both highly concerned and somewhat alarmed, she ran toward him, briskly waving her bright, colorfully printed Southern States "feed sack" apron, a homemade garment that she had made from a cotton sack which originally held mash for her flock of laying hens. She vigorously waved it like a bright multi-colored flag, brandishing it around high over her head, all in a desperate attempt to attract his attention.

When Richard finally noticed Mother's approach, he at last got the message that she wanted him to stop the tractor. But instead, when he saw her coming toward him through the thick stand of

orchardgrass, he started waving excitedly back at her, even standing up perilously on the tractor operator's platform while holding on tightly to the steering wheel for support.

When he could do so without immediately falling off the tractor, Richard would wave his free arm and point toward the ground in an area near the tractor. It wasn't until that moment that Mother finally understood just what Richard was so excited about. Still pointing to the ground, and in a state of frenzied excitement, he loudly shouted a warning to Mother, "Snake! Snake!"

Richard had discovered a long shiny blacksnake moving slowly through the tall orchardgrass. He had been trying desperately to run over it, hopefully to "dispatch" it, to send it on its way to "snake heaven" using the weight of the tractor's wheels as a lethal weapon. Not surprisingly, after all of this wildly erratic behavior, the snake won the duel, and hastily slithered away through the tall grass and ultimately to safety.

Subsequently, young Richard was "grounded" for quite some time afterward. He was forbidden to approach anywhere near the tractor until he had demonstrated a little more common sense. Little did he realize that even if he had been able to run over the blacksnake, it is highly unlikely that his efforts would have caused much damage to the hapless reptile since it was well protected by the cushioning effect of the thick carpet of spongy grass.

Granted, many of us are not very fond of snakes, even the harmless black variety, and we do not feel comfortable with them when we unexpectedly find one co-habiting with us in "our space" close to the house or in one of the farm buildings. Nevertheless, it was a totally irresponsible act on the part of our young, and easily excitable, hired hand to risk damage to our new tractor just in a foolish attempt to shorten the life of one poor, essentially harmless, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Howard County blacksnake.

I doubt that the blacksnake actually meant any particular harm to anyone. It was probably only in the orchard in the first place hunting for its next meal – and in the process, would have been helping to rid the apple orchard of field mice and other small varmints. I expect that field mice (and possibly a carelessly operated tractor) could have done a whole lot more damage to the apple trees than the blacksnake could ever have done to its human neighbors and tormentors.

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### **The Trust Factor**

by **Timothy S. Barkley, Sr.**  
**JD, CFP, CSA**  
**Attorney at Law**

What is a trust?

A trust is many things . . . an entity, a relationship, a contract. A trust is a means of accomplishing goals, saving taxes, protecting children from themselves and the unscrupulous, providing for the disabled, giving to charity.

But what, really, is a trust?

A trust is not a document – the document merely provides evidence of the trust. A trust is an agreement or contract between the person setting it up – the "grantor" or "settlor" or "trustor" – and the person who is to manage the trust – the "trustee" – to accomplish certain purposes, for the benefit of "beneficiaries." A trust must have a "res," that is, trust principal: something to be managed. A trust can be oral or written.

A trust is an "invisible" legal entity, like a corporation. The author of this article has set up a corporation to accomplish the practice of law, and as part of that endeavor, the corporation has gained title to assets. The author does not own those assets. His corporation does. But, as sole shareholder and director of that corporation, he controls those assets.

In the same way, the author has set up a trust. The trust holds title to assets. The author does not own those assets, but as grantor, trustee and beneficiary of that trust, the author has complete control over those assets. No one can tell the author how to manage the assets comprising the res or principal of the trust.

When the grantor serving as trustee dies or becomes unable to manage his own affairs, including his trust, someone hand-picked steps in to manage the trust and make distribution according to the terms of the trust, as shown in the trust document.

A trust is a bucket. That's right, a bucket. This analogy is not unique to the author, but has been very helpful in explaining trusts to clients of the author's law practice.

When you set up a trust, you get a bucket. You put stuff in the bucket – “funding” your trust. You carry around the bucket, controlling it as you will, pouring stuff out – making distributions – and putting stuff in as you wish. No one can tell you how, when or whether to put stuff in or dump stuff out.

When you die – kick the bucket! – the person you have named steps in to manage the trust. They carry around the bucket and control it according to the directions on the label – the trust document. They might pour out assets on your children for their support, or to their college for education, or to a hospital for medical care. The uses to which the stuff in your bucket can be put are limited only by your imagination and need.

A trust, however understood, is an excellent solution for many of your needs and desires. A trust is often part of planning for the discharge of your responsibilities and the realization of your goals. A trust is not for everyone, but, correctly employed, it can be a useful tool.

## **Got Internet Access?**

### **Access Your Newsletter on the Web**

If you have a computer with access to the internet, then why not help the Howard County Farm Bureau save a significant amount of money on the cost of postage and paper by choosing to receive *The Newsletter* electronically? Just click on the Howard County Farm Bureau's website, [www.howardfarmbureau.org](http://www.howardfarmbureau.org) and access the current, or even back issues. It's quick, easy, economical, and sometimes in color. The electronic version also makes it easy for you to copy, print, and save certain articles, even the entire newsletter if you choose. Give it a try!

As you know, postage rates are rising. There seems to be no end in sight. With each issue, there are approximately 1,300 Newsletters printed and sent through conventional mail. The cost is nearly \$2,000 dollars per issue. The cost of using the internet, which many members already have, is but a fraction of this amount. The Howard County Farm Bureau can obviously save a significant number of dollars by utilizing the internet instead of the U.S. Postal Service.

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### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2010**

- Aug 27-  
Sep 6     **Maryland State Fair.** Timonium, MD
- Sep 1-  
Oct 6     **Beginning a Successful Small Farm Part I.** 7 to 9 pm, Frederick County Extension Office. Contact: (301) 600-3576.
- Sep 2     **Ayrshire Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 2     **Holstein Field Day.** Futurity (Maryland State Fair). Timonium, MD.

- Sep 2 **Jersey Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 2 **Milking Shorthorn Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 2 **Red & White Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 3 **Brown Swiss Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 3 **Guernsey Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 3 **Holsteins Field Day.** Maryland State Fair. Timonium, MD.
- Sep 11 **2010 Horse Pasture Seminar.** 9 am to 3 pm. Central Maryland Research & Education Center, 4241 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD. Contact: [www.ansc.umd.edu/ERG](http://www.ansc.umd.edu/ERG)
- Oct 19 -- **Farmer Training & Certification - Nutrient Management Plan Writing.**

Multiple evening classes & exam. 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Frederick County Extension Office. Information: (410) 841-5959.

Dec 2 – **Farmer Training & Certification - Nutrient Management Plan Writing.** Multiple daytime classes & exam. 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Wye Research & Education Center. Information: (410) 841-5959.

Dec 17 **Pest Management Conference.** Howard Community College, Columbia, MD. Contact: Suzanne Klick, (301) 596-9413.

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**[NOTE]:** Some programs require pre-registration and/or a fee. For programs sponsored by University of Maryland Extension, if you need special assistance to participate, please contact the person indicated at least two weeks in advance of the event.



The Opening Day Parade is about to start now that all of the contestants for the Miss Howard County Farm Bureau, Little Miss Howard County Farm Bureau and Future Howard County Farmer are on board the float. The float was planned, assembled and colorfully decorated by the Howard County Farm Bureau Women's Committee.