

# NEWSLETTER

## HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

VOL. 18, NO. 1

JANUARY, 2009

HOWIE FEAGA, PRESIDENT, (410) 531-1872;

JUSTIN BRENDEL, VICE-PRESIDENT, (443) 677-0627

MERHLYN BARNES, SECRETARY, (410) 489-4465;

DONALD BANDEL, TREASURER (410) 531-7918;

ALLAN BANDEL, NEWSLETTER EDITOR, (410) 489-7875

WEB SITE - [www.howardfarmbureau.org](http://www.howardfarmbureau.org)

### Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

The January Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast is scheduled for **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2009** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please join us.

Our guest speaker will be **Howard County States Attorney Dario Broccolino**. Mr. Broccolino will give us a background report on some of the official duties of the Howard County States Attorney's office and how these activities might impact on the local agricultural community.

We hope that you can be present for this informative program. Bring your spouse, and/or a friend. Enjoy the food, the fellowship and a lively and friendly exchange of information. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. and the speaking program will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Please RSVP by noon, Tuesday, January 6, 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 9:00 a.m. We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, **January 8**, at the next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

---

### ***President's Message*** by **Howie Feaga, President** **Howard County Farm Bureau**

I hope that everyone had a great Holiday Season. The past year went by so quickly that it seems to have passed more in a blurr than as a normal 12 whole months. The year ahead of us, 2009, will most likely present many new challenges for us all.

Potential economic hardships will challenge almost everyone's efforts to stay out of financial trouble. Some good advice might be to first try to talk out any problems before they get out of hand. You might ask a friend to just listen to your ideas so that you can face each new challenge with as much good reliable information as you can assemble.

The year-end Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in Ocean City went very well. We were able to get a lot of new policies introduced and accepted, including one that will help to protect our Beekeepers from unnecessary complaints from neighbors.

We are going to try to gain more support from our Nurserymen and Landscapers this year. The membership committee is working hard to encourage more of them to become interested in joining our County Farm Bureau. Next year we also plan to work on trying to interest more of the local Grape Growers and Wineries to join us in our ever more diversified county, to try and keep these industries viable through favorable legislation, ultimately for the good of Howard County.

We have a new Vice-President in place for 2009. Justin Brendel is a life-long farmer and I am looking forward to working with him in the coming years. We also have a couple of new directors on board for the coming year. Larry Barnard is a part-time grain farmer as well as a part-time builder. Phil Jones is a full-time dairy farmer. We welcome them both on the board.

I would also like to thank our secretary Merhlyn Barnes for all that she does in keeping our county organization running smoothly. And thanks to Allan Bandel, our Newsletter editor, for another year of hard work. All of the members of the Howard County Farm Bureau Board of Directors are doing a great job. My sincerest thanks go to all of them.

So, as always, please remember to, "Keep your plow in the ground. We are all pulling for you."

**Activity Update**  
by **Caitlin Patrick, 2008**  
**Miss Howard County Farm Bureau**

I have been having a very busy year so far. After being crowned Miss Howard County Farm Bureau last August, I worked the rest of the week at the Howard County Fair, promoting its activities. After the County Fair, I competed in the state contest at Timonium where I made some life-long friends.

Right after the State Contest, I traveled down to Blacksburg, Virginia where I began attending fall classes at Virginia Tech.

I have been very busy at Virginia Tech. Some of my activities included being in charge of the Thanksgiving dinner. I am an active member of the Dairy Club and played an active role in the Showcase Sale at Virginia Tech.

Next, I traveled to Madison, Wisconsin as a member of the Maryland Dairy Judging Team where we placed sixth in the nation.

I look forward to going into classrooms in the spring to promote the agricultural industry, and to help teach young kids about agriculture.

**Maryland 4-H Youth Participation in the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup**  
by **Kristen M. Wilson**  
**Extension Horse Specialist, CMREC**

Sixteen of Maryland's top 4-Her's, four volunteer coaches, and Regional Extension Horse Specialist Kristen Wilson headed to Louisville, Kentucky from November 6-9, 2008 to compete in Horse Bowl, Horse Judging, Hippology and Horse Communications at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup. This year's Horse Roundup was the largest in history with thirty states and 354 youth registered.

The Horse Bowl team coached by Dr. Al Starr (Howard) outsmarted all of the teams claiming the Reserve National Championship with a second place finish overall. Ashleigh Friend (Garrett) earned second place overall with her teammate Kaitlyn Pontuti (Baltimore) taking ninth place overall. Horse Bowl Team members included Mackenzie Barnard (Howard), Ashleigh Friend (Garrett), Kaitlyn Pontuti (Baltimore), and Brook Dudrow (Talbot).

The Horse Judging Team also had an incredible

competition claiming fifth place overall, eighth place in conformation classes, seventh place in performance classes, and tenth place in oral reasons. Sabrina Ginn (Cecil) coached team members Leah Berry (Anne Arundel), Rachel Ginn (Cecil), Rebecca Hoffman (Carroll), and Leigh Ann Stead (Cecil). Rachel Ginn placed tenth in conformation classes, ninth in performance classes, tenth in oral reasons, and sixth overall.

Led by coach Darryll-Ann Buschling (Howard), the Hippology Team placed sixth overall with an eighth place finish in the written phase, and sixth place in the station phase. Hippology team members included Stacey Heaver (Carroll), Megan Levin (Baltimore), Colleen Slevin (Carroll), and Elena Stojic (Montgomery). Individual awards were also won by Stacey Heaver (Carroll) who placed eighth in the judging phase, seventh place in the station phase, and sixth place overall. Individual rankings also included an eighth place in the written phase for Elena Stojic (Montgomery).

The Horse Communications Team, coached by Janie Dell (Carroll) demonstrated and spoke eloquently against tough competition. The team demonstration duo of Megan Jordan (Carroll) and Ashley Newman (Carroll), earned tenth place for their excellent demonstration titled "To Shoe or Not to Shoe". Suzannah Macleod (Carroll) intrigued the judges with her talk about horse slaughter titled "America's Dirty Little Secret", which earned her a thirteenth placing overall. And Kelly Nolte (Carroll) informed the judges with her individual demonstration about riding safety titled "Your Life Depends on It", which earned her a 12th place finish overall.

Congratulations to all of the 4-Her's that superbly represented Maryland at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup!

**2008 MD Corn Hybrid Performance**  
**Test Report now Available**  
from ***Agriculture Information***  
**(Baltimore County Extension Newsletter)**

Dr. Bob Kratochvil, Maryland Extension Crop Production Specialist, has announced that the 2008 Maryland Corn Hybrid Performance Test Report has been posted to the UM Cropping Systems website ([www.md crops.umd.edu](http://www.md crops.umd.edu)). At that site, click on the Corn title along the left side of the page. This will bring you to the page where the 2008 report can be found. The report has a slightly different appearance this year in that it is in two

parts. The written summary and the index to the tables is the first link that you will find. Most everyone is more interested in the Tables of Results which is the second link titled 2008 Maryland Corn Test Data Tables.

**Writing Your Own Farm Business Plan**  
by **Kathy Zimmerman**  
**Agricultural Marketing Specialist**  
**Howard County Economic**  
**Development Authority**

The Agricultural Marketing Program of Howard County Economic Development Authority will be welcoming Peter Surana and Joseph Babinski, SCORE counselors as they present a "Writing Your Own Farm Business Plan" seminar on Thursday, February 26, 2009. The seminar will be held at the Howard County Extension Office in Ellicott City and registration will begin at 9:00 am.

Writing a business plan is a key to the success of any business and plays an even more important role in the agriculture industry. Due to the volatility of agriculture markets it is especially difficult to make changes quickly unless you have a plan in place for all possibilities. A business plan will also be effective in planning for the future, applying for loans, and for family members considering joining the operation. The cost for the seminar is \$80 and includes all of your materials and a box lunch.

The program will begin promptly at 9:30 am and end no later than 3:00 pm. Space is limited so register early for this very effective seminar. You can register online at [www.hceda.org/agriculture](http://www.hceda.org/agriculture) or call Kathy Zimmerman or Jill Joubert at 410-313-6500.

**Howard County Beekeepers**  
**2009 Short Course**  
by **Don Bandel**

The Howard County Beekeepers Association will once again in 2009 conduct a short course for beginning beekeepers. The location will be the Howard County Fairgrounds.

The short course will consist of five Tuesday evening sessions starting at 7:00 pm. The dates will be February 17 and 24, and March 3, 10, and 17. All sessions will be held in the Dining Hall except for the one on February 24 which will be held in the 4-H Building.

Attendees will be expected to join the Howard County Beekeepers Association. The dues are \$10.00 per year per family. There will also be a class fee of \$30.00 per family.

For further information about the course and on registration, contact Allen Hayes, e-mail [Thehayeshouse4@aol.com](mailto:Thehayeshouse4@aol.com) or 410-489-2835. Preregistration will be appreciated.

**2009 Beekeeping 101**  
by **David Myers, Extension Educator**  
**Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
**Anne Arundel & Prince George's Counties**

Mike Embrey, University of Maryland Extension Apiculturalist, will be offering a beginning beekeeping class at the Wye Research and Education Center in Queenstown, Maryland. The opening session will be held on **Saturday, January 17, 2009** from 9:00 AM -12:00 noon.

Registration fee is \$100.00, which includes the textbook "The Beekeeper's Handbook, Third Edition" by Diana Sammataro. If you have your own book, the fee will be \$70.00.

**You will Learn.....**

- About bees, in general
- About beekeeping equipment
- How and where to set up and establish a hive (i.e. location, wind, etc.)
- How to use a smoker
- How to hive a package of bees

**The class will be held one Saturday per month through April. A final session will be held approximately the third week of September** and will teach how to winterize and protect your hives and bees from diseases and pests.

For registration, contact:

Debby Dant  
Wye Research and Education Center  
PO Box 169  
Queenstown, MD 21658  
410-827-8056 X115, Fax: 410-827-9039  
[ddant@umd.edu](mailto:ddant@umd.edu)

**Registration deadline is January 7, 2009**, in order to purchase books for each registrant. Please make check payable to University of Maryland.

For program information, contact Mike Embrey, 410-827-8056 X148, [membrey@umd.edu](mailto:membrey@umd.edu)

### **Introduction to Beef Production**

contributed by **Trish Moore**

#### **Baltimore County Cooperative Extension**

Baltimore and Harford County Cooperative Extension are offering a program "Introduction to Beef Production", a six night course focused on the basics of beef production. This course is designed to give high school students and new beef producers a strong base for developing a successful operation.

The classes will be held on Tuesday nights beginning January 13, 2009 and running through February 17, 2009. Classes will be 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The dates and locations of each class are:

Jan 13 <sup>th</sup>	Baltimore County Extension Office
Jan 20 <sup>th</sup>	Baltimore County Extension Office
Jan 27 <sup>th</sup>	Harford County Extension Office
Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Harford County Extension Office
Feb 10 <sup>th</sup>	Baltimore County Extension Office
Feb 17 <sup>th</sup>	Baltimore County Extension Office

Course registration for the program series is \$20 for youth 14 to 19 years old and \$30 for adults. Please contact the Baltimore County Extension Office at 410-666-1025 to register or for more information. Space is limited, so please register early. Registration and payment is due to the Extension Office by January 6, 2009.

### **Dairy Industry Makes Great Strides Toward Meeting Environmental Challenges**

submitted by **David Patrick**

In recent years, justified or not, we have witnessed much criticism leveled at the agricultural industry. The poultry industry, for instance, has been accused of contributing to surface and ground water pollution allegedly caused by excessive manure applications. There have even been accusations of harmful air pollution due to ammonia volatilization from manure.

The dairy industry has also not escaped similar unfavorable controversy. However, there are almost always two sides to every story, whether the focus be on dairy, poultry or whatever kind of livestock that is targeted.

In the case of the dairy industry, there were some interesting statistics published in an article in the November 14, 2008 issue of *Farmshine* that indicated that the dairy industry might be more eco-friendly today than it was six decades ago.

According to the data presented, it is obvious that the U.S. dairy industry has made significant strides toward reducing any potentially negative environmental impact that might be created by dairy animals. This progress has primarily been through significantly improved milk production efficiency achieved over the last half century or more.

Tom Gallagher, chief executive officer of Dairy Management, Inc., the organization that manages the national dairy checkoff program, was quoted as saying that "We (the dairy industry) have a great story to tell. The carbon footprint per gallon of milk has declined by 63 percent in the past 60 years. In 1944, we had 25 million cows that produced 52 billion pounds of milk; in 2007, we had 9 million cows that produced 180 billion pounds of milk. That's the equivalent of taking 16.4 million cars off the road, or planting 12.3 billion new trees."

These trends represent a great agricultural success story, one that everyone within, as well as outside of the agricultural community, should be made aware of, and be justly proud of!

Gallagher also reported that his organization is working on ways to bring new income to dairy farms, specifically by cooperating with a gas and electricity buyer on the development of an economic model for methane digesters.

Another income producing possibility could include carbon credit trading, generating perhaps as much as \$24 billion for the U.S. dairy industry.

### **Food Processing: Moving from Concept to Consumers**

***A workshop designed  
by farmers for farmers***

Come hear a presentation by Billie Best of North Egremont, Massachusetts who will untangle who regulates what.

Get an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of on-farm processing.

Meet regulators and licensing agency reps.

Hear how successful on-farm producers did it.

Get information on product branding, marketing and distribution.

For more information, contact Ginger Myers,

Regional Marketing Specialist, University of Maryland Extension, at 301-432-2767 or [gsmyers@umd.edu](mailto:gsmyers@umd.edu). This workshop is funded by a grant from the Hughes Agro-Ecology Center and USDA.

---

**New Master Gardener Handbook**  
**Now Available**

Announcing the brand new *Master Gardener Handbook* - hot off the press last month and a great holiday gift idea.

This is absolutely one of the best master gardener handbooks in the country and represents a two and a half-year effort by many University faculty and staff. We are all very proud of the results of our efforts.

The Handbook will make a wonderful gift for any gardening enthusiast. If you would like to preview the Handbook, go to <http://mastergardener.umd.edu/Handbook.cfm> and click on "sneak peak". Proceeds from the Handbook sales help support the Maryland Master Gardener Program.

Produced by faculty at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, this indispensable gardening tool makes a wonderful addition to the reference library of both beginning and seasoned gardeners. It features a "Bay-Wise" approach to gardening that will help readers improve soil quality, nurture plants, and manage most pests without pesticides. It also explains many of the "hows" and "whys" of horticulture, with special emphasis on diagnosing and solving plant problems.

The 640-page *Maryland Master Gardener Handbook* is divided into 28 chapters, with stated learning objectives for each chapter. There are:

- \* 5 chapters on the basics (ecology, botany, soils, entomology and plant diseases);
- \* 8 chapters on plant groups (turfgrass, herbaceous plants, woody plants, vegetables, small fruits, tree fruits, herbs and houseplants);
- \* 9 new chapters on such subjects as landscape design, invasive species, alternatives to turf, weeds, and water quality and conservation; and
- \* Chapters on other important topics, including composting, aquatic gardening, wetlands and wildlife.

This durable spiral-bound publication also contains 400 color photos, a 114-page integrated pest management section with diagnostic keys for all major plant groups and special keys for cultural and environmental problems and structural and nuisance pests.

To order your copy:

Go to the above-mentioned web site and print out a copy of the order form. If you do not have access to the web, simply make out a check for \$69.00 made payable to University of Maryland (this amount includes tax and shipping), and mail check to:

Maryland Master Gardener Program  
Home and Garden Information Center  
12005 Homewood Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Be sure to clearly indicate your return address or the address to where you wish the Handbook to be shipped.

---

**New Courses Offered this Spring**  
by **M. Linda Martinak, Ed.D.**  
**Assistant Director of Continuing**  
**Professional Education**  
**Anne Arundel Community College**

Spring at Anne Arundel Community College will be greener than usual this year. The School of Continuing and Professional Studies has announced several new non-credit courses designed to meet the needs of those who want to be eco-friendly and to advance their careers in agribusiness, landscaping, nurseries and horticulture.

Pre-Spring - get in the mood:

**HOR 329** - Woody Plants for Landscape Installation. Meets January 31 and February 7, 2009 from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. Taught by Christina Pax.

Spring Courses:

**ENV 508** - Smart Landscape Design for the Environment. Meets April 4, 2009 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Taught by Christina Pax.

**ENV 509** - Perennials and Grasses for Landscaping. Meets April 11, 2009 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Taught by Christina Pax.

**ENV 510** - Start a Career in Sustainable Agribusiness. Meets April 22 and April 29, 2009 from 6:00 to 9:30 pm. Taught by Ginger Myers and Linda Martinak.

Courses **ENV 508** and **ENV 510** will be offered at the college's Arundel Mills location. **ENV 509** and **HOR 329** will take place at the Glen Burnie Town Center location at Crain Highway and Baltimore/Annapolis Blvd. (Near Rt. 97, one mile away from Rt. 100).

For information or to register for any of these courses, please contact Dr. M. Linda Martinak at 410-777-2912 or e-mail at [mmartinak@aacc.edu](mailto:mmartinak@aacc.edu).

**Privacy – Nutrient Management Records**  
as reported in ***Farm Notes, Carroll County Extension Newsletter, December, 2008***

A hearing was held December 8, 2008 in Anne Arundel County Circuit Court on the suits filed against MDA by the Waterkeeper Alliance and Maryland Farm Bureau regarding the release of nutrient management records.

Balanced in the scale is the question of how MDA should respond to requests for nutrient management records more than three years old. Farm Bureau argued that the nutrient management law on privacy of information, 8-801.1(b)(2), should be interpreted such that the Department only maintain the records for three years and while doing so, protect the identity of the individual for whom the plan was prepared.

The Attorney General's Office, representing the Department, maintains that confidentiality shall be maintained for only three years, after which records could be released without the removal of any identifying information. The Waterkeeper's attorney added additional arguments in support of the Attorney General's Office interpretation.

The judge listened to arguments for approximately 90 minutes, followed by rebuttals and questions from the bench. The judge did not issue a ruling yesterday, but committed to review the material filed with the court and the testimony presented during the hearing. The judge's intention is to issue a ruling within 30 days. All parties agreed that no records would be released until the court issues a ruling.

**Composting Livestock Mortality**  
as reported in ***Farm Notes, Carroll County Extension Newsletter, December, 2008***

If you have livestock, you inevitably have dead stock – a reality of animal agriculture. With the rising costs and availability of rendering services and increased concern for bio-security on farms, producers need to consider all their options for disposing of their livestock mortalities.

Composting can be an environmentally sound way to handle livestock mortalities – it's a natural way to recycle organic materials, there are no odors generated from a properly managed compost pile, and the final product is a good soil conditioner for gardening or crops. Composting done correctly destroys pathogens, weed seeds and insect eggs, as well as reduces the bio-security risk presented by rendering trucks coming onto farmsteads. Composting can be a cost-effective disposal alternative – start-up and operating costs are minimal, but composting does require good management.

Livestock mortality composting is more than dead animals on a pile. But, composting does not have to be high tech and expensive to be effective.

Composting is defined as the biological decomposition of organic wastes under controlled conditions to a state where storage, handling, and land application can be achieved without adversely affecting the environment. The process of composting results in the production of carbon dioxide, water, minerals and stabilized organic matter (humus).

To successfully compost you must have a good composting recipe, which entails the correct Carbon/Nitrogen ratio, the right amount of moisture and good porosity. The C:N ratio should range from 25:1 to 40:1. A C:N ratio that is too low results in ammonia and other odors. A high C:N ratio results in slow decomposition and low temperature.

The composting moisture target is 55 percent. If the compost pile is too dry, it results in lower pile temperature and slow decomposition. If moisture levels are too high, putrid odors result and flies are attracted to the compost pile. Porosity is important to the aerobic process of composting. Oxygen levels above 5 percent should be maintained. If porosity is low, decomposition rates slow down, along with reduced temperatures, and odors ensue. Also, if porosity is too high, decomposition rates and temperature are lower.

Heat is an important byproduct of the bacterial

activity that's responsible for 80-90 percent of the decomposition. An effective compost pile should reach temperatures of 130-150 degrees F. The increased temperature stimulates rapid heat-loving bacteria growth, which promotes decay. Temperatures above 130 degrees for three days also kill most pathogens, along with destroying insect larvae and weed seeds.

The only time a compost pile should have an odor is when it's being mixed. If carcasses are covered properly, there should be no odor from decomposing livestock. Keeping the carcasses under enough cover also keeps vermin, such as coyotes, out of the pile.

A livestock composting pile should be located away from livestock housing facilities and away from normal farm traffic, and at least 300 feet from surface water. The pile should have a feedstock base of 1-2 feet. The feedstock will vary by farm, but is commonly sawdust, straw, manure, or combinations thereof. Carcasses should be at least 1 foot from the pile's edge and covered with at least 1 foot of feedstock, with at least 6 inches between carcasses. The rate of decomposition will vary with the level of management and size of the animals being composted.

Regulations pertaining to livestock composting vary by county, state, and country. Start by contacting your local health department to determine what regulations you must adhere to.

---

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

When the days wane early, a nip in the air hints at winter, and the last leaves rattle on the trees in the wind, we pause and reflect on the passage of life. The year slips past, hastened by the approaching solstice, and we turn toward the sun, seeking a last glimpse of the bright promise of fleeting time.

To generations past, winter was one of the many dyings that we experience on the way to our final rest. The rhythms of morning and evening prayer, the ebb and flow of liturgical cycles, and rituals of family and community affirmed our beginnings and endings, and confirmed our bent toward our last and true home.

As modern, even postmodern and post-post-modern individuals, we frenetically dance to a quickened tempo, buy, buy, buy, do, do, do,

without much time to be. Yet it's in winter that we are still sometimes able to entrain with the living pulse of the nature of things and know ourselves best.

As the rhythm slows, take time this Thanksgiving season to reflect on the things for which you are grateful. Yesterday's triumphs and tomorrow's challenges blend to enliven our souls. Even in difficulty, we should count our blessings – family, friends, community. A small town provides support structures that those living elsewhere must live without.

In this time when our economy is faltering and we are reminded constantly of our impending doom, we still have much for which to be thankful. We live in a country with a resilient economy, and our nation has a knack for finding its way out of the woods.

One of the most powerful things we can do as we survey the landscape is to take charge of our own destiny. In times of trouble, we are reminded that our fate is in our hands, and not in the hands of those who would be our corporate masters.

Thank you for visiting with us in the past years, and for entrusting us with your hopes. We look forward to the privilege of serving you and your family and friends as you plan for the future.

---

**The War Years: Company 769**  
**of The Maryland Minutemen**  
by **Allan Bandel**

While World War II was raging across Europe and the Pacific, far from our shores, we, the civilian population in Howard County, still felt very close to the conflict. From my perspective, at least, as a young kid during that time, there always seemed to be that "ominous, dark war cloud" hovering over the U.S. horizon. We lived with the ever-present possibility of an enemy attack on the shores of the North American continent. This was the kind of "atmosphere" that members of my generation grew up with. Almost from the day that I was born until the day the war ended (when I was about eight years old), we lived every day with that war cloud hanging over our heads. Although the war changed our way of life, it was still perceived as just "normal" for many of us.

Although the feared enemy invasion of the mid-Atlantic coast never happened, fortunately, the situation was not taken lightly by local citizens. One

outcome was that all across the U.S., groups of local farmers and businessmen formed companies of citizen militia. These organizations were known as Minutemen. Here locally, able-bodied men in Howard County's Third Election District were organized into Company 769 of the Reserve Militia - Maryland Minutemen. These civilian "soldiers" assembled regularly to drill and to train as soldiers in case the unthinkable should occur.

The goal of the Maryland Minutemen was to protect citizens from acts of sabotage. In addition to training with firearms, the group of men in Company 769 took specialized training in fire fighting. When they met to drill, the Minutemen were required to provide their own firearms, whatever weapon that they had access to, rifle or shotgun, that was in good operating condition. Some members, like my Dad, drilled with their bolt-action 22 caliber rifles. Others brought their double-barreled 12 gauge shotguns. For whatever reason, the men of Company 769 were never issued military firearms. But they were issued uniforms and ammunition.

Company 769, the unit that Dad was a charter member of, met regularly to take part in military drills and fire fighting exercises. These meetings took place on the grounds of the West Friendship Elementary School. Whether these patriotic civilian soldiers could have done much in the way of thwarting a full scale enemy attack, we fortunately never had to find out. But, in the minds of us kids at least, it was reassuring to know that the Minutemen, our neighbors, were nearby and ready if the worst should occur.

Most of us, including our parents and grand parents, had heard many sobering radio broadcasts and read newspaper accounts about German "U" Boats that had been sighted in nearby waters, patrolling just off the Atlantic Coast, sometimes even boldly surfacing. There were reports of merchant ships being torpedoed just off of New York City by stealthy German submarines, vessels that quietly stole away afterward, undetected. Americans were in constant fear of air raids and a hostile enemy invasion. These concerns were simply a fact of life for us all during those stressful years.

And there were threats on the west coast as well. It was a known fact that the Japanese had launched balloons carrying incendiary bombs from their warships in the Pacific. The Japanese intent was that these balloons would float eastward on prevailing wind currents, cross the rest of the Pacific Ocean to the U.S. west coast and perhaps even on beyond. Their evil intent was for the

incendiary bomb-laden balloons to strike west coast cities and other populated areas, causing fires and other destruction, thereby creating terror and general chaos among the civilian population.

Some of those balloons did make it over the ocean and across our western shoreline, most of them landing harmlessly on U.S. soil. Some were even found to be "booby trapped". Civilians, especially children, were sternly warned by the authorities that if they found a balloon, they were not to touch it because of the possibility that it would explode, most likely resulting in injury or death. Word of such episodes when a few of these incendiary balloons did reach our shores, was kept very quiet to prevent panic. Fortunately, most of the balloons landed harmlessly in forests and other poorly populated or unpopulated areas thereby causing little damage. Nevertheless, we were urged to be vigilant, to always keep our guard up and to be prepared for invasion, just in case.

Toward the end of the war, when it was concluded that there was no longer any real threat of invasion, there was subsequently no further need for the Maryland Minutemen, at least as citizen soldiers. But, the 17 local citizens who were charter members of Company 769 decided to keep on meeting anyhow. Since they had been trained in fire fighting techniques, and since there was no fire department in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Election District of Howard County, they decided to reorganize as a local volunteer fire company. At their last official meeting as Company 769 of the Maryland Minutemen, which took place on September 4, 1944, the West Friendship Volunteer Fire Company was "born".

Because of his association with the local Minutemen Company, Dad served for a short while in the early days of the new fire company as a fire-fighter and as a member of the organization's Board of Directors. But because of the distance between our farm on Triadelphia Road and the fire station in West Friendship at the intersection of Routes 32 and 144, there was no reasonable way that he could serve reliably in answering emergency fire calls. The distance was simply too great for him to always hear the siren and be able to respond to calls in a timely manner when there was an alarm. So the nucleus of members who remained active in building the new fire company were those who lived close to the firehouse. Dad eventually had to become an inactive member.

The first major item of business in 1944 for the new fire company was the acquisition of some fire fighting apparatus. Of top priority was the need for a fire truck. Believe it or not, for the sum of \$100.00, they purchased a 1928 Buick sedan from

Mr. Herbert Cross (1). They negotiated the option to pay it off within one year. Several skilled members of the newly organized fire company, using hand tools and their own labor, transformed the old heavy-duty Buick chassis into West Friendship's first fire engine.

The "new" fire engine carried a 100 gallon water tank donated by Oscar Streaker, Sr. and Son. A 500 gallon-per-minute OCD pump was acquired from the Office of Civil Defense. The truck remained in service from 1944 until 1946. Initially, the old Buick fire truck was not equipped with a cab. But, for an additional \$10.00 investment, the firemen were able to purchase a wooden cab from Mr. William Gardner.

In 1946, the West Friendship Volunteer Fire Department purchased a new International truck chassis, a model K-6. Once again, the members hand-built a much larger and more modern pumper apparatus on the new chassis. The old Buick fire truck was not scrapped though. It was soon sold to the Howard County Farm Bureau, Inc. for the sum of \$190. Members of the Farm Bureau converted the old fire fighting apparatus into a spray truck.

After the Howard County Farm Bureau purchased the old Buick fire engine, some of their mechanically gifted members installed a brand new commercial sprayer on it. The cost was \$449.10 (quite a sum in those days) plus another \$10.24 for freight paid to the B&O Railroad.

The Farm Bureau used this equipment for a number of years for fly control, spraying DDT in and around Farm Bureau members' dairy barns, chicken houses, hog pens, etc. The "new" spray truck was also used to apply insecticides on certain crops and along fence rows where it was needed to help in the control of troublesome insects such as mosquitoes and the very destructive Japanese Beetle. This project provided a valuable service to members because back in those days, mosquitoes continued to be a very serious health hazard and Japanese Beetles were extremely destructive, accounting for many thousands of dollars annually in losses on certain important crops.

From a recently discovered expense statement in the Howard County Farm Bureau records covering the period December 1, 1945 to November 30, 1946, it was learned that the fee paid to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to license the spray truck was \$10.26. Insurance on the truck and sprayer, paid to Mr. J. Frank Curtis, an Ellicott City Farm Bureau Insurance agent, was \$27.05.

And listen to this, membership dues to the Maryland Farm Bureau in 1946 was only \$2.00 per year per member. My, how times have changed.

Although reasonable people oppose war, sometimes it happens anyhow. Fortunately, there are frequently some beneficial things that develop in spite of the evils of war. In our case locally, the wartime formation of Company 769 of the Maryland Minutemen became the eventual nucleus for the organization of the West Friendship Volunteer Fire Department. The Fire Department was then instrumental in assisting the Howard County Farm Bureau in bringing about the means to provide some needed, very beneficial spraying services for crop and livestock housing in the farming community of rural Howard County, making our county a much better, more healthy place for us all.

Ref. (1). West Friendship Volunteer Firemen's Association, Inc. *The First Fifty* by the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year Book Committee. 1994.

---

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2009**

- Jan 13 **Introduction to Beef Production** series starts. Meetings in Baltimore and Harford Counties. 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Registration required. See article elsewhere in this newsletter for details.
- Jan 13-16 **Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference**. Atlantic City, NJ. Contact: Shannon Dill at 410-822-1244.
- Jan 14 **Farm Management Classes for Women (Annie's Project)**. Wednesday evenings, 8 sessions through March 4, 6 to 9 pm, Chesapeake College Economic Development Center, \$25 per person includes dinner and materials. For registration information, contact: Jenny Rhodes at 410-758-0166 or Shannon Dill at 410-822-1244.
- Jan 15-18 **Horse World Expo**. Maryland State Fairgrounds. Contact: Kristen Wilson at 301-596-9478. Timonium, MD.
- Jan 16-17 **Future Harvest – CASA's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**. "Connect Locally: Food, Farms and Community". NEW Frederick Holiday Inn and Conference Center, Frederick, MD. Marketing, Farming Economics, Grass-Based Systems, Sustainable Hay, Grain, Fruit,

Vegetable and Flower Production. For more information, visit [www.futureharvestcasa.org](http://www.futureharvestcasa.org).

- Jan 17 **Beekeeping 101**. 9:00 am - 12:00 noon on one Saturday per month through April plus one in late September. Wye Research and Education Center, Queenstown, MD. See notice elsewhere in this newsletter for more details.
- Jan 21 **Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training & Recertification**. 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Howard County Extension Office, Ellicott City, MD. To register, call 410-313-2707.
- Jan 26-  
Mar 23 **National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operations Certification Program Training**. 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., nine consecutive Monday evenings. Registration: call MCE Frederick County at 301-600-3576. See announcement elsewhere in this newsletter for details.
- Jan 27 **Farmer Training & Certification**. 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Montgomery County MCE, Derwood, MD. Contact: Jo Mercer at 410-841-5953.
- Jan 29 **Poultry Composting Short Course & Demonstration**. 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Poultry Research Center, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Princess Anne, MD. Contact: 301-405-1198 or e-mail [tscites@umd.edu](mailto:tscites@umd.edu).
- Jan 29 **Farm Financial Planning & Marketing Workshop**. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. 410-386-2760.
- Jan 30 **Central Maryland Vegetable Growers Meeting**. Friendly Farm Restaurant, Upperco, MD. 8:15 am to 3:30 pm. Cost: \$15 prepaid, \$20 at the door. Participants can get both Maryland Pesticide Recertification and Nutrient Applicator Voucher renewal at this program.
- Feb 2 **Field Crop Open Forum**. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. 410-386-2760.
- Feb 4-25 **Winter Wednesday Lecture Series**. 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. Various topics. Frederick County Extension

Office. Contact: Terry Poole at 301-600-3577.

- Feb 5 **Maryland Agriculture Legislative Dinner**. 6:30 pm. Michael's 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Glen Burnie, MD. Contact: Gail Yeiser at 301-405-2434.
- Feb 10 **Pesticide Applicator Training**. 10:00 a.m. to noon. Room CC, Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. (410) 386-2760.
- Feb 11 **Pesticide Update or Recertification Class**. 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Howard County Extension Office, Ellicott City, MD. To register, call 410-313-2707.
- Feb 17 **Pesticide Applicator Test**. 10:00 a.m. to noon. Room CC, Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. 410-386-2760.
- Feb 17 **Howard County Beekeepers Short Course**. First of five Tuesday evening sessions. Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. See announcement elsewhere in this newsletter for details.
- Feb 18 **Maryland Nutrient Voucher Training/Renewal**. Baltimore County Extension Office, 1840 York Road, Suite J, Timonium, MD. New Voucher Training, 5:30 to 7:30. Renewal Training, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. 410-666-1022.
- Feb 19 Western Maryland Regional Fruit Grower Meeting. 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Western Maryland Research & Education Center, Keedysville, MD. WMREC. 301-432-2767.
- Feb 23 **Pesticide & Voucher Recertification**. 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Room CC, Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. (410) 386-2760.
- Feb 24 **Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification and New Certification Training**. Baltimore County Extension Office, 1840 York Rd., Suite J, Timonium, MD. (410) 666-1022.
- Feb 26 **Writing Your Own Farm Business Plan**. 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Howard County Extension Office, Ellicott City, MD. Registration required. \$80.00 fee. Call Kathy Zimmerman or Jill Joubert at 410-

313-6500. See announcement elsewhere in this newsletter for details.

- Feb 28 **Maryland Dairy Convention & Dairy Shrine Banquet.** Lynfield Event Complex, Frederick, MD.
- Mar 5 **Central Maryland Women in Ag Conference.** 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. Contact: Kathy Zimmerman at 410-313-6500.
- Mar 5-  
Apr 16 **Beginning a Small Farm - Part I.** Short Course (6 classes). 7 pm to 9 pm. (Howard County). Contact: Terry Poole at 301-600-3577.
- Mar 6&7 **Joint Maryland Cattlemen's Convention/Central Maryland Hat & Pasture Conference.** Hagerstown, MD.
- Mar 11 **Food Processing: Moving from Concept to Consumers.** 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Friendly Farm Restaurant, Upperco, MD. Contact: Ginger Myers at 301-432-2767. See article elsewhere in this newsletter for details.
- Mar 21 **Howard County – Iron Bridge Race Meet.** Pleasant Prospect Farm, 4389 Jennings Chapel Road, Brookeville, Maryland 20833. For more information and photos of prior race meets, please visit our website at [www.hcibhounds.com](http://www.hcibhounds.com).
- Mar 28 **Small Flock Poultry Workshop.** Carroll Community College, Rooms 154 - 157, Westminster, MD. Contact: 410-386-2760.
- Mar 30 **Advanced Agronomics Workshops: I. Herbicide Technology.** 6:00 to 9:00 pm, Anne Arundel County Extension Office, Glen Burnie, MD. For information, or to register, contact: Dave Myers, Anne Arundel Extension Office, at 410-222-6759.
- Apr 1-  
May 6 **Beginning a Small Farm - Part II.** Short Course (6 classes). 7 pm to 9 pm. Contact: Terry Poole at 301-600-3577.

Apr 28-  
May 12 **Basics of Forestry Short Course** (3 classes). 6 pm to 9 pm. Contact: Terry Poole at 301-600-3577.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

---

### **Something to Smile About**

The following quotes originate from a time when words were used with more ingenuity and eloquence, perhaps, than they generally are today. They are from an era when cleverness with words was still highly valued, when insults had class, and before a great portion of the English language was boiled down to some simple four-letter words.

- The following was said to be an exchange between Sir Winston Churchill and Lady Astor. She said, "If you were my husband, Winston, I'd give you poison." And he replied, "If you were my wife, I'd take it."

- Another interesting exchange with Lady Astor took place at a formal British party. She confronted the Prime Minister with the accusation, "Winston, you're drunk!" He replied, "Lady Astor, you're ugly. But by tomorrow morning, I'll be sober."

- When one of his new shows opened in London, George Bernard Shaw sent a note to Winston Churchill in which he said, "I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend... if you have one." Churchill replied, "Cannot possibly attend first night, but will attend second... if there is one."

And finally, here are a couple of other famous quotes attributed to Sir Winston Churchill –

- "He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices that I admire."

- "(He was) a modest little person, with much to be modest about."