

NEWSLETTER

HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast

by Maura Cahill
Breakfast Speaker Coordinator

The next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast is scheduled for **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 8, 2012** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please mark this date on your calendar and plan to join us.

Our guest speaker will be **Mr. Eric Spates** who, along with beef cattle, farms about 985 acres producing grain, hay and straw near Poolesville in Montgomery County. He is a former chair of the MFB Young Farmers Committee, a LEAD Maryland Class III Fellow and a 2010 McCloy Fellow. Both fellowships involved some travel, the latter, a three week trip to Germany, to study urban planning, arts and German agriculture. We look forward to learning about some of his experiences while studying and traveling throughout Germany and Belgium.

The breakfast meeting on **March 8th** presents an excellent opportunity to learn more about LEAD Maryland and the McCloy Fellowship Programs. Don't miss out on hearing firsthand about this outstanding young farmer's experiences.

Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. and the program is scheduled from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. Please **RSVP by noon, Tuesday, March 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 speaker's part of the program normally concludes by about 9:00 a.m. We look forward to your presence on Thursday, **March 8**, at the next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

President's Message

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

Everything seems to be higher so far this year. Gas prices, grain prices, temperatures, seeds, milk prices, propane, hay, twine, you name it, they're all up. So what happens when some prices come down and others stay up? Be a little cautious, take care now, and save back a few dollars for when things do start coming back down. Seems that nothing last's forever, so let's enjoy it while it's here.

If the new Septic Bill passes, we will see our farm's value go down. If you have equity loans, they will lose some of their value due to the reduction of that value. The Farm Bureau will keep on trying to defeat that one. If the estate tax bill called "Family Farm Preservation Act of 2012" passes, the exemption level will go to \$5,000,000, but not without certain requirements. So, get ready for a real "roller coaster" ride of ups and downs.

OK, on now to some good news. I want to congratulate the Robert and Drew Stabler families on winning the "Maryland Hall of Fame" *Farmers of the Year Award for 2011*. Presentation was made at at the recent Maryland Ag Dinner. These brothers and their families farm mostly in Montgomery County and have done a fine job. They are well known in the Ag community for their hard work and their all-around community service. We wish them many more years of successful farming.

I want to recognize Rhonda Winkler for standing up for the U.S. flag in her town of Lisbon/Woodbine. If her efforts are successful, we will all

be able to fly our American flag in other traffic circles to show our troops that we are behind them as they risk their lives for us every day that they are away.

With the help of Warren Miller a bill has been introduced in the House of Delegates. Rhonda and Warren both testified in Annapolis to help get things on the way. Let's hope that they are successful in this patriotic endeavor. Let's cheer them on!

That same day, Farm Bureau and others went to Annapolis to visit with our legislators and to sit in on some of the other hearings being held that day. I hope that our presence shows the elected legislators that we do care and that we need them to represent us well when we cannot be there ourselves.

Some of us will travel to Washington DC on March 28th to meet with our senators and representatives to discuss new issues of this session, such as the Trade Agreements that were last year's discussion topics. I feel we had a part in getting Congress to see our side of those issues, and they voted favorably. Hopefully, we can have the same success this year.

As I write this message, it is a cold and windy day. But soon, the days will start getting a lot longer and the warmth of the sun will begin to warm both us and the earth. We will then see the green coming back into our surroundings. The ground will begin to dry out and we can once again get back onto our fields in preparation for planting and nurturing our crops. We can all be thankful that we live in such a place as Howard County, where we can enjoy winters that are not all that cold, and summers that are not all that hot and friends that come from all walks of life.

We will always have problems from time to time, learning to live with each other, but if we concentrate on the solutions more than the problems themselves, then we will succeed in living together as harmonious neighbors.

So, remember what I always say. "Keep your plow in the ground. We're all pulling for you".

Legislative Dinner Howard County Farm Bureau

The Annual Howard County Farm Bureau Legislative Dinner will be held Thursday, **April 26, 2012, 7:00 p.m.**, at Lisbon Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall, Lisbon, MD. A fried chicken dinner will be served by the Ladies Auxiliary at \$15.00 per person.

We are inviting the County Executive, the County Council members and our State Senators and Delegates and Congressman to discuss with us current matters relating to legislation and government on a local, state and national level. This meeting provides Farm Bureau members with an excellent opportunity to meet their legislators and discuss issues of importance to them.

Please let Merhlyn Barnes know by **April 19th** if you plan to attend. (410-489-4465).

Mid-Atlantic Farmers Offer Free Groceries for a Year!

source: **MFB Hotline #2**

Salisbury, Md. (JAN. 25, 2012) Whoever said there's no such thing as a free lunch has never met a Mid-Atlantic farmer. In fact, they are offering the chance for residents of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. to win a free breakfast, lunch and dinner by way of free groceries for an entire year.

Residents of the three states and Washington, D.C., can now register for a chance at one of four grand prizes of Free Groceries for a Year!* courtesy of a group of Mid-Atlantic farmers, at www.FarmersFeedUS.org. Upon visiting the site, consumers register by meeting a Mid-Atlantic farmer through a short video that shows how they produce safe, nutritious and affordable food. Consumers can register with each of the 10 featured farmers daily through April 3, the end of the 90-day program.

Enter the Sweepstakes at www.FarmersFeedUS.org

The Farmers Feed US website features chicken, corn, dairy, egg, grain, hog, mushroom, soybean, vegetable and watermelon farmers from across the state, each sharing information about their farm and their family. In addition to guiding visitors through their registration for free groceries, each farmer also offers a brief online tour of their farm.

Featured farmers include:

Chip Councill, grain and vegetable farmer, Cordova, Md.

Mike Harrison, soybean farmer, Woodbine, Md.

Jordan Calloway, watermelon farmer, Mardela Springs, Md.

Carla Blackwell-McKinney, mushroom farmer, Toughkenamon, Pa.

Brian Krieder, soybean farmer, Lebanon, Pa.

Doreen Shearer, hog farmer, Mount Joy, Pa.

Ted Esbenshade, egg farmer, Marietta, Pa.

Jay Baxter, soybean farmer, Georgetown, Del.

Jesse Vanderwende, chicken farmer, Bridgeville, Del.

Burli Hopkins, dairy farmer, Lewes, Del.

As Mid-Atlantic farmers, are thrilled to offer free groceries for a year to the consumers of our states, said Chip Councill, a grain and vegetable farmer from Cordova, Maryland, who is a featured farmer on FarmersFeedUS.org. This is an opportunity for us to share what we produce with consumers of the region and to let them know we share their values - taking care of our families, taking care of our animals and land and giving back to our communities.

Over the course of the 90-day campaign, consumers throughout the state will also see and hear from these farmers as they are featured in television advertising and on Facebook and Twitter. Additional sweepstakes

prizes include Free Chicken for a Year! (\$520 value) from Perdue Farms and Free Ice Cream for a Year! (\$250 value) from Turkey Hill Dairy.

Supporting Mid-Atlantic agriculture groups include the Delaware Soybean Board, Maryland Soybean Board, Pennsylvania Soybean Board, Maryland Grain Producers Utilization Board, Pennsylvania Pork Board, Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association, Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit, Perdue Farms, Delaware Farm Bureau, Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., Delaware Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Turkey Hill Dairy.

*Based on Food Marketing Institute figures, a \$5,000 value.

UME Invasive Updates
from the
Maryland Invasives Species Council
by: **Mary Kay Malinoski, David L. Clement,**
Karen Rane, and Nevin Dawson in Branching
Out, Vol. 19, No. 3, 2011

Emerald Ash Borer quarantine reminder: All of the Maryland counties west of the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay are quarantined for this pest. Do not move firewood to the Eastern Shore! Here is a link to the Maryland Department of Agriculture's emerald ash borer page for detailed regulatory information: www.mda.state.md.us/plants-pests/eab/.

For detailed information, photos, and links visit the Home and Garden Information Center's EAB web page at:

<http://hgic.umd.edu/content/emeraldAshBorer.cfm>

MDA is still interested in reports of EAB, especially in the quarantine area, where the monitoring program no longer receives federal funding. Please report possible detections via the Home and Garden Information Center's toll-free number: 1-800-342-2507 or via the "Send a Question" form on the HGIC web site at: <http://hgic.umd.edu/faq/sendAQuestion.cfm>

Japanese Stiltgrass: Japanese stiltgrass is an important invasive species in forested settings where it covers the forest floor and chokes out native understory and overstory regeneration. There have been reports of Japanese stiltgrass dieback from a foliar blight in West Virginia. We would like to document this disease in Maryland. If anyone has samples in Maryland please send them to Karen Rane at the University of Maryland Plant Clinic at www.plantclinic.umd.edu

Mile-a-Minute Weed Biocontrol : The release of mile-a-minute (MaM) weed weevil—(*Rhinoncomimus latipes* Korotyaev) by Bob Trumbule (MDA, biocontrol and weed management) began in 2007, and the weevil has become established in every release site. There has been significant (90 to 100%) reduction of the weed at release sites of MaM weevil. There are reports that the weevil is moving on its own 3-4 miles in one year. MDA is concentrating release strategies on outlying areas where MaM weed is known to occur.

Learn how to decide whether to release this biocontrol pest at a given site by contacting Bob Trumbule (rtrumbule@rcn.com). He will visit to see if the weevil is already present. Weevils are reared in MD and NJ. APHIS continues to fund the rear and release program.

For more information, visit the University of Delaware's Biological Control of Mile-a-Minute Weed site:

<http://ag.udel.edu/enwc/research/biocontrol/mileaminute.htm>.

New Extension Manuals

by **Stanton Gill**

UM Extension Specialist

We have just released two new Extension Manuals for the horticulture industry. These manuals have all of the disease, insects, fertility management and cultural management recommendations for greenhouse growers and nursery growers. Both of these publications were a joint effort between University of Maryland Extension, Cornell University

Extension, North Carolina State Extension and Virginia Extension.

The manuals are entitled Total Plant Management for Herbaceous Perennials and the second publication is entitled Total Plant Management for Greenhouse Management. The authors include Stanton Gill, Karen Rane, Andrew Ristvey, Chuck Schuster, Joyce Latimer, Deborah Smith-Fiola, Brian Wipsker, Andy Senesac, and Suzanne Klick.

Each manual is over 300 pages in length. We have printed copies available at CMREC and you can call or email me at Sgill@umd.edu for information on how to order printed copies. It is also posted to the IPMNET web page at www.IPMNET.umd.edu under publications. You can download it as PDF.

2012 Maryland-Delaware Sheep Shearing School

For Beginning Shearers, March 23 & 24, 2012, Ridgely Thompson Farm, 1942 Uniontown Road, Westminster, MD 21157, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

All registrations must be made in advance accompanied by an \$80.00 per person fee. Checks should be made payable to: Carroll County Extension Advisory Council (**CCEAC**). Deadline: March 19, 2012, Mail registration to: David L. Greene, 2014 White Hall Road, White Hall, MD 21161-9712). Minimum Age is 16 years.

You need to bring: Lunch including drinks (no facilities for lunch are close by), comfortable clothes and shoes, gloves, and a body with the strength and willingness to learn to shear sheep. Shearing machines will be provided.

You Will Learn: the New Zealand method of shearing sheep, how to adjust and care for hand-held shearing machines, how to set and adjust blades on these shearing machines, how to properly handle wool after shearing. (NOTE: We **do not** teach blade shearing).

The school is open to anyone in Maryland, Delaware and surrounding states who want to learn

to shear sheep. Each registrant will receive an ASI Shearing Notebook and instructional DVD.

Instructors: David L. Greene, Principal Agent Emeritus, University of Maryland Extension-Carroll County (greelamb@gmail.com), Richard A. Barczewski, Animal Science Professor, Delaware State University, Dover, DE, Aaron Geiman, Agriculture Teacher at North Carroll High School.

For more information and a registration form, go to our web site at carroll.umd.edu.

Source: David L. Greene, Principal Agent Emeritus, University of Maryland Extension-Carroll County

Food for Profit

source: **Ginger S. Myers**

A state-wide entrepreneurship training program customized to meet the needs of local food entrepreneurs.

Have you ever been told that your favorite homemade bread, or salsa, is "good enough to sell?" Do you have additional fruit or vegetables from your farm or home garden that you would like to make into a commercial product?

Food for Profit is a one day workshop designed to help you work through the maze of local and state regulations, food safety issues, and business management concepts that all must be considered in setting up a commercial food service.

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

9:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m.

Washington County Agricultural Education Center
7303 Sharpsburg Pike (building door #4), Boonsboro,
MD 21713

Requires a \$40.00 per person registration fee which includes conference materials and lunch.

Pre-payment and registration are required. Please register at: <http://www.cvent.com/events/food-for-profit-boonsboro-md/event-summary-2f5017328de64a9699cb18a568a9d4b8.aspx>

or call (877) 489-1398

If you have any questions concerning this program, please contact Ginger S. Myers, University of Maryland Extension Marketing Specialist at (301) 432-2767 x338 or email gsmyers@umd.edu.

Maryland— America in Miniature

by **Delegate Gail Bates**

We all read and hear daily about the Federal Debt. Our President has put forth a \$3.8 trillion election year budget that imposes \$1.5 trillion in tax increases on “wealthier” Americans. The O’Malley Brown Administration has introduced a similar \$36 billion budget that includes \$1 billion in tax increases on all Marylanders, including those “less wealthier”.

Income tax increases proposed include phasing out the exemptions and itemized deductions for Marylanders with adjusted gross income of over \$100,000 Single (\$200,000 Joint). Also included to balance the FY 2013 budget is a new tax on internet downloads (the Amazon & iTunes tax), tax on cigars and precious metal.

Not included in the budget, but revealed in the State of the State is “repeal of the sales tax exemption” for gasoline – translated imposing higher taxes on gasoline – phased in at 2% per year for three years. At \$3.50 per gallon, that will be 21 cents more per gallon (6 cents more than his original proposal) when phased in. He claims there will be a break if gas prices get too high. Since he hasn’t driven himself in more than a decade, I wonder how he would know what that is.

The Bay Restoration Fee (Flush Tax) is scheduled to be doubled for those of us on septic systems and will be assessed based on water usage for those on public water. Withdrawals from this fund to balance the budget in 2010, 2011 and 2012 (\$290million), those funds not being used as promised is the reason for the fee increases.

Speaking of septics, the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (Septic Bill)

will insert the Maryland Department of the Environment into the residential subdivision process. Tied closely with Plan Maryland, this bill potentially devalues agricultural land, with the fiscal note stating "Local government revenues decrease to the extent that the collection of special taxes and fees associated with the development, sale, or value of new residential property decreases." This is an extreme overreach of state government, making "smart growth" under Gov. Glendening look mild by comparison.

The budget continues the trend of transferring dollars from special purpose funds to balance the state budget, then requiring fee increases to replenish the funds. In addition, debt continues to grow as bonds are sold to free up dollars to expand spending. We are nearly at our debt capacity and these actions will severely constrain future capital expenditures.

Couple all this with the "investments" in "green" energy and off shore wind power, another venture capital program and state dollars to bring university research to market and Maryland is adopting the same "spend to improve the economy" approach our President is pushing. The Washington Times noted "Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley may be more skilled at implementing President Obama's agenda than the White House itself."

And so we are back to my title, Maryland, America in Miniature.

Executor 101
So You're an Executor
 by **Timothy S. Barkley, Sr.**
JD, CFP, CSA
Attorney at Law

You have just been notified that you are the executor of your uncle's will - the uncle whose funeral you attended yesterday. Or, he didn't die yet, but he confided that fact at the latest family gathering on the occasion of your parents' golden anniversary. Or, perhaps you're the uncle trying to decide who should receive that signal honor, as you rewrite your will after the death of your son - or write your will for the

first time, figuring that now that you're retired, it's time to plan for what happens when you die.

Whatever your circumstance, well-laid plans "gang aft apleigh," as the Bard wrote. Your plans, and the plans of your loved ones, can be torn asunder by the choice of the wrong person to carry out those plans.

An executor is a fiduciary, someone who is charged with what has been called the highest obligation known to law, the obligation faithfully to put aside one's own needs and desires and scrupulously uphold the interests of another. A parent has the same duty to a child, and an adult child to a parent - and an attorney to a client.

An executor has myriad duties, and should be chosen carefully. Executing a will is not an honor to be bestowed, but a job to be assigned. Folks writing wills often confuse these issues. The job is challenging and must be attended to scrupulously for many months, even years, and will burden your choice with administrative and interpersonal complications that must be faithfully and carefully unraveled.

An executor, then, must be a person or entity that can "stick to it" for a long period, can lay aside her own interests, and can confront creditors and disappointed beneficiaries. An executor must have administrative acumen - at the very least, her own affairs should be in order, and she should reconcile her checkbook every month. An executor must not only faithfully discharge the duties of the office, but must also account for that administration. If she cannot account for her daily life, she will likely find it difficult to account for the administration of your affairs after your death.

An executor must marshal the assets of the deceased person - the "decedent" - administer those assets, inventory them and account for the administration of the estate, and distribute assets. She must report to the Court and the taxing authorities, and shoulder personal liability for her discharge of her duties. She is entitled to reimbursement of expenses and compensation for her efforts, but only if there are sufficient assets to make payment.

Because serving as an executor can be a full-time job for several weeks after the death of the decedent, and a long-term part-time job thereafter, some folks choose a professional fiduciary, such as a lawyer, bank or accountant to handle their affairs after their death. Most people, however, choose family members as their executor, and expect them to consult with professionals as the need arises. Often, then, a trusted child or other relative will serve as executor and the family attorney will prepare the necessary paperwork for the executor's signature.

Whatever your choice, be sure that you have chosen carefully, and that your executor is fit for the job. And if you have been chosen, attend carefully to the charge laid before you.

Next time: *Executor 102: What Do I Do Now?*

Harvesting Small Grains

by Allan Bandel

Harvesting small grains, such as wheat, barley, oats, etc., before the small family farm-sized combine became popular, was a major annual event. Threshing was very labor intensive and required an exceptional amount of prior planning. High on that list was arranging for friends, neighbors and relatives to be a part of the threshing crew. Consequently, nearly everyone in the community eventually became involved. Having their own crops to harvest as well, farmers relied heavily upon their friends and neighbors for assistance at this critical time. They worked collectively to get the job done. Many crew members followed the threshing rig from farm to farm until all of the threshing in the community was finished.

In the 1940's, there were two custom threshermen operating in our part of Howard County. One of them was Mr. Edward R. Frank, Sr. whose small farm was located about 2½ miles east of ours on Triadelphia Road. The Franks used a big dark green 1927 J.I. Case cross-motor tractor to pull their Case threshing machine from one farm to the next. This tractor was also used to power the thresher via a long flat belt stretched firmly between pulleys on the tractor and the thresher.



A vintage J.I. Case threshing machine belt powered by a tractor that is located out of the photo to the left. Bundles of wheat were being threshed in a demonstration at the Howard County Fair. The goal was to show how threshing was done 50 or more years ago in rural Howard County. At far right, the straw was blown into a pile beside the old stationary “wire-tie” baler. The threshed grain was collected at the bagger unit in right foreground. August 2, 2008.

When new, the Frank family's tractor was equipped with steel wheels. The steel cleats were soon replaced with solid rubber “tires”. But, the hard-riding solid rubber “tires” were eventually replaced with wide rims that accommodated large pneumatic rubber tires. These tires were much softer riding and had a bar tread design for improved traction. The spokes of the rear wheels were cut down to accommodate rims for the pneumatic tires. Regular highway truck tires replaced steel wheels on the front.

Most of the Frank family accompanied the thresher when it was on the road – Mr. Frank, Sr., and his sons and daughters (Ed Jr, Burgoyne, Eileen and even the youngest daughter, then teen-aged Mable). They were all actively involved.

I remember that some of the local farmers expressed high words of praise for young Mable because of her skills at helping to maintain the thresher and adjusting it for maximum efficiency. Proper adjustment was necessary to minimize grain losses. It was critical that the sieves, screens, and air flow from the all-important fan, as well as many other factors, be set precisely. Otherwise, if not properly adjusted, the threshed grain could

either be contaminated with an unacceptable amount of chaff, or threshed grain could be blown out the “tail end” of the thresher and lost, mixed in with the straw and chaff.

The other threshing machine available in our area was owned by Mr. Ellis Richardson whose small farm was located just north of Dayton on Rt. 32 (now Ten Oaks Road). A part of his property is now occupied by the new Dayton Oaks Elementary School.

Mr. Richardson pulled his thresher with a big yellow Minneapolis-Moline tractor, also on pneumatic rubber tires. I do not know the model designation of his tractor. But, I do remember that it was considered big (at the time), perhaps the 56 horsepower Model “G”, or one similar to it. Like the Franks’ Case tractor, it was of a standard four-wheel configuration. I also do not recall the brand or the size of the Richardson’s thresher.

At various times, we utilized the services of both of these custom operators, depending upon which one was available when our wheat and barley were ready for threshing.

The neighborhood farm women also had to work hard as a team to organize and feed the customarily large threshing crew. They usually prepared much of the huge required amounts of food several days in advance of the threshing crew’s arrival, especially the wide selection of desserts, such as pies and cakes.

Besides requiring a lot of hard work, threshing day was also a huge social event for all those involved. In more recent years, with the advent of the grain combine, harvesting and meal preparation became easier and required much less labor.

Even though the combine offered a higher level of efficiency, something was lost as a result when neighbors no longer needed to work as closely together. With the demise of the threshing crews, people tended to become less dependent upon one another. Subsequently, they saw less of one another because of the reduced need for working together and thus they tended to drift further apart. Even though there was more time available for socializing after the threshing crews disappeared, there was less socializing among neighbors during the work day.

The first step in the threshing process was cutting the standing grain. The binder, or reaper, cut the stalks and automatically made small bundles, tying them together with binder twine. This step was carried out while the grain heads were still not fully mature, or were on the “tough” side. The grain and straw were still too “green” to thresh. If cut when completely dried and mature, then some of the grain would “shatter”, or separate from the head before it made it to the thresher, resulting in much of the grain being lost.

The grain binder, usually pulled by a team of three horses or a small tractor, cut a six to eight-foot swath. The binder used a special light-weight twine to automatically tie the stalks into small manageable bundles. A field crew followed the binder on foot and, after gathering eight to ten bundles, set them up in a “shock”. Arranged with the cut stalk ends on the ground and the heads standing up high so moving air could dry them, with the weather cooperating, the grain heads and straw could finish drying in the shock. To complete the shock, two bundles were fanned out over the top to form a cap. Properly arranged, the cap helped the shock to shed most of the rain that might fall.

On the Bandel farm, the shocks remained in the field until threshing time. But on some neighboring farms, if there was space in the barn, the shocks were hauled in to clear the field for re-planting, or perhaps so that a late stubble crop of hay could be harvested. Red clover and timothy were often over-seeded into standing grain the previous February or March. If a good “stubble crop” of hay was made, then two crops were harvested in one year from the same field. This practice was known as double-cropping.

It was sometimes not too surprising (but always exciting) to discover a blacksnake hiding under one of the shocks as they were loaded onto wagons for hauling to the thresher or the barn. Such unexpected finds always provided a little excitement and good natured kidding as workers scrambled in an effort to avoid the snake. Some even jumped off of the wagon in their haste to get away from the snake.

Since there were only two threshing machines in the neighborhood, farmers had to be patient and take their turn at scheduling their threshing day. When threshing day finally arrived for our farm, the custom operator would set up his machine in an open field near our barn. To operate efficiently, the machine had to be leveled. This was accomplished by blocking up the low side of the machine. If needed, holes were dug out on the thresher's high side to lower those wheels into.

Horse or tractor-drawn wagons brought the bundles of wheat or barley in from the field and to the thresher. Driving the wagon up close to the throat of the noisy machine, the bundles were then pitched, one at a time, onto the thresher's moving feeder table. Typically, a two or three-pronged pitch fork was used for this task, always making sure that the grain heads went into the thresher first. Sharp knives attached to the thresher's flashing, rapidly moving feeder tines, cut the twine holding the bundles together and quickly pulled the loose grain bundles into the throat of the thresher.

The bundles of grain were fed into the rapidly spinning cylinder where it was forced through the narrow space between the cylinder bars and the concaves. The loosened grain dropped down through a series of various sized sieves and was collected near the bottom of the thresher. An auger then moved the grain to an elevator which carried it to the top of the thresher where it was ultimately fed into the bagger below. Most late model threshers were equipped with a secondary elevator which collected that grain needing further separation from straw and chaff. This elevator recycled the chaff and grain back again through the sifting screens.

The threshed grain was collected in a sack at the side of the thresher. We normally used burlap sacks that had been collected over time as we purchased chicken and cow feed. The thresher was equipped with a gravity-activated measuring mechanism located at the top of the machine's final grain elevator. When the half-bushel hopper was full, it automatically dumped the grain into a long sloping galvanized metal pipe that funneled the grain by gravity to the bagger mechanism on the ground below. Since each "dump" released approximately a half bushel of grain, the bagger operator had to remain alert, counting the

number of half-bushel "dumps" so that the sack didn't overflow.

The simple bagger mechanism consisted of a metal pipe which was split into two delivery spouts at the end. Two bags could then be attached at the same time, one on each "leg" of the delivery chute. When one bag was full, the bagger operator shifted a baffle inside the "Y" section so that the grain would be diverted from the full bag to the empty one. This provided time to enable the operator to remove the full bag and tie it closed with a short length of twine. An empty bag was then attached to replace the full one. This process was repeated again and again until all of the grain had been threshed.

An experienced person operating the bagger often tied the bags with the well-known and reliable "*Miller's Knot*". This "knot", which did not appear to be much of a knot at all, was a close relative of the Clove Hitch which most Boy Scouts eventually mastered when earning their knot tying merit badge. Unfortunately, because of the relatively short period of time that we used a thresher or a combine equipped with a bagger, I never became expert at tying a "*Miller's Knot*".

In the hands of an expert, the *Miller's Knot* reliably secured the bag's open end with a couple of quick twists of heavy string around the sack. The finished knot ended with a loose end cleverly tucked neatly under one of those twists. It was a very efficient method to tie a bag of grain. If executed properly, with little effort, it quickly did the job and did not slip. Another advantage was that the "*Miller's Knot*" could be released quickly by simply pulling on the string's "tucked in" loose end. There was no hard knot to struggle untying, or failing that, to cut it. Proper use of the "*Miller's Knot*" allowed the string to be saved for use another day.

At the back end of the machine, the bright yellow straw was propelled away from the thresher by a strong air blast. The straw was blown through a large diameter movable metal pipe and finally directed into a neat pile on the ground. The growing stack of straw was known as a "rick". A favorite job sometimes was that of operating this

delivery spout, swinging it from side to side, or cranking it up and down, whatever was required to form a neat, perfectly formed, straw “rick”.

Rather than feeding the wheat crop to our cattle, it - was usually sold off the farm as a cash crop. Our barley though, was elevated by hand to an overhead storage bin in the barn. Later, it was re-bagged and hauled to a feed mill where it was ground by means of a hammer mill. Finally, at the mill, the barley was mixed with ground corn and other ingredients to make feed for the dairy cows and chickens. Some of the other ingredients, most of which had to be purchased, included wheat bran, soybean oil meal, molasses, a mineral mix, etc.

The loose straw was carried by hand into the barn as needed for bedding the cows. Before we started the practice of baling our straw, we had to move the straw manually using a large oversized pitch fork that was made just for that purpose.

Some of the custom thresher operators also provided a stationary wire-tie baler that was available if the farmer wanted his straw pressed into bales. The Frank Family owned a Bar Harbor baler manufactured by the Frick Company. I do not recall that we used their stationary baler very many times, probably because of the additional cost and our straw was almost always used right on the farm. The baler required at least three or even four more men to operate -- one or more to feed it, two to tie the bales with wire, and another person to carry the bales away and stack them. The stationary wire-tie baler was most useful for farmers who sold their straw off the farm as another cash crop.

Although we never threshed this way, some of our neighbors chose to move their shocked grain out of the field and store it in the barn until the thresher arrived in the fall or early winter. The threshing machine would then be set up on the barn floor driveway between the two hay mows so that the grain bundles could be tossed into the thresher from the mow. The straw was blown out the back of the bank barn making a straw stack in the barnyard below. Some farm barracks were also used in this way. The bank barn of one of the neighbors still shows evidence of once upon a time being used in this way. The ends of the mows still bulge out slightly

from the weight of the heavy wheat bundles stored there many years ago.

With mixed emotions, the once traditional threshing days came to an end with the introduction of the modern small-farm grain combine. The term “combine” evolved from the fact that this machine “combined” the functions of two machines – the grain binder and the thresher. With the arrival of the combine, harvesting small grains became much less labor intensive. But, it could still be a very dirty and unpleasant job, especially for the person who had the job of riding on that machine to operate the bagger.

As innocent kids, we thought that riding on the combine and operating the bagger was really going to be a “neat” job. What fun that was going to be. But that opinion lasted only until we discovered just how dirty and uncomfortable that job really was. Convincing us just how unpleasant that job could be did not require very much time riding on that dusty machine. Happily, by about the early to mid-1950s, that little problem also largely went away for us kids with the disappearance of the combine’s bagger platform and its welcome replacement by the bulk grain tank.

When the larger self-propelled grain combines became popular, the small-grain harvesting crew shrank from the 12 to 15 field hands required for threshing down to just two persons, the combine operator and a truck or tractor driver to haul grain away from the combine and off to a nearby storage facility.

And of course, the hard work by the women involved in preparing food and feeding that huge threshing crew of yesteryear also went away. But also with it went much of the socializing that occurred between neighbors at threshing time. A whole way of life disappeared. Many folks today never experienced the satisfaction and sweat associated with harvesting small grains. For those that did and want to bring back a few of those “dusty” memories, they can participate in the occasional threshing demonstration, or refer to history books for narratives such as this.

Upcoming Events
Lisbon Volunteer Fire Company

- Mar 11 March Pancake Breakfast.
- Mar 15 March Spaghetti Dinner
- Apr 1 Palm Sunday Chicken & Ham Dinner
- Apr 8 April Pancake Breakfast

All events will be held at the Lisbon Volunteer Fire Company Social Hall, Lisbon, MD. For more information, please contact the Lisbon Volunteer Fire Company at (410) 489-4646.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2012

- Feb 25 **2012 Maryland Dairy Convention.** Frederick County Fairgrounds, Building #9, Frederick, MD.
- Feb 28 **Estate Planning Web Conference.** 9:30 to 12:30 pm. Contact: (410) 386-2760.
- Feb 28 **Food for Profit.** For local food entrepreneurs. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Washington County Agricultural Education Center, 7303 Sharpsburg Pike, Boonsboro, MD. Contact: (877) 489-1398.
- Mar 1 **Pasture Renovation & Maintenance Equine Short Course Series.** 7 to 9 pm, Harford County Extension Office, 2335 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill MD. Contact: (410) 638-3255 or meagher@umd.edu.
- Mar 6 **Estate Planning Web Conference.** 9:30 to 12:30 pm. Library at Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Ag Center, Westminster, MD 21157. Contact: (410) 386-2760.
- Mar 7 **Pesticide Applicator Optional Training.** 10:00 am to Noon, Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Ag Center, Westminster, MD. Contact: (410) 386-2760.
- Mar 7 **Private Pesticide Applicator Training & Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon, Training. 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, Recertification. Contact: (301) 600-3577. Location: 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick, MD.
- Mar 8 **Pasture Renovation & Maintenance Equine Short Course Series.** 7 to 9 pm, Harford County Extension Office, 2335 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill MD. Contact: (410) 638-3255 or meagher@umd.edu.
- Mar 8 **Howard County Farm Bureau Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 to 9:00 am. Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD.
- Mar 10 **Small Flock Poultry Workshop.** TBD.
- Mar 13 **Estate Planning Web Conference.** 9:30 to 12:30 pm. Library at Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Ag Center, Westminster, MD 21157. Contact: (410) 386-2760.
- Mar 14 **Pesticide Applicator Test.** 10:00 am to Noon, Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Ag Center, Westminster, MD. Contact: (410) 386-2760.
- Mar 14 **Pesticide Applicator Test.** 10:00 am to noon, Contact: (301) 600-3577. Location: 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick, MD.
- Mar 15 **Pasture Renovation & Maintenance Equine Short Course Series.** 7 to 9 pm, Harford County Extension Office, 2335 Rock Spring Road, Forest Hill MD. Contact: (410) 638-3255 or meagher@umd.edu.
- Mar 21 **Nutrient Management Certified Consultants/Farmers Recertification.** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Contact: (301) 600-

3577. Location: 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick, MD.

Mar 23 **Longaberger Basket Bingo to Benefit Howard County 4-H All Stars.** Doors open 5:30 pm, Bingo starts 7:00 pm. Mt. Airy Fireman's Activity Bldg., Twin Arch Road, Mt. Airy, MD. Tickets: Marjie at (301) 829-1449 or Martin at (443) 472-8276.

Mar 23-24 **2012 Maryland-Delaware Beginning Sheep Shearing School.** 9:30 to 3:30 pm, Ridgely Thompson Farm, 1942 Uniontown Road, Westminster, MD, 21157. For details, see article in this newsletter.

Mar 24 **Small Flock Poultry Workshop.** TBD.

Mar 27 **Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training & Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon, or 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Contact: (301) 600-3577. Location: 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick, MD.

Mar 31 **Small Flock Poultry Workshop.** TBD.

Apr 4 to May 9

Beginning a Successful Small Farm. Wednesdays from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. University of Maryland Extension, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Registration fee - \$15.00. Contact: Terry E. Poole at (301) 600-3577 or tepoole@umd.edu.

Apr 26 **Howard County Farm Bureau Legislative Dinner.** 7:00 p.m., Lisbon Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall, Lisbon, MD. \$15.00 per person. Contact by April 19th Merhlyn Barnes at (410) 489-4465.

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



Demonstrating the old fashioned way in which straw was once baled after the grain had been threshed out using a vintage stationary "wire-tie" baler. This labor-intensive process required an abundance of "energetic" helpers who did not mind hard work and being exposed to thick clouds of irritating dust from the blowing wheat, barley, oats or rye straw. This photo was made during a threshing and baling demonstration held in August, 2004 at the Howard County Fair (back at a time when there was still plenty of open space available on the fairgrounds to accommodate working educational exhibits such as this).

Kristen Parris Eventing

A Deck Above Farm



International Three Day Eventer

Key Accomplishments

- ❖ 2011 – Ranked 36th/39th on USEF Breeders/Owners Board respectively
- ❖ 2011 – No Halo Here received USEA Blue Ribbon award at Preliminary level
- ❖ 2011 – No Halo Here received USEA silver medal at Preliminary level
- ❖ 2011 – Lord Ivanhoe received USEA Blue Ribbon award at Training level
- ❖ 2011 – Lord Ivanhoe received USEA gold/silver medals at Training /silver at Novice
- ❖ 2011 – Won Preliminary Championship at Virginia HT aboard No Halo Here
- ❖ 2011 – Won Area II Training 3-Day aboard Lord Ivanhoe – finished on best score of 29
- ❖ 2001 – Won CIC* at Fair Hill aboard No Halo Here – finished on dressage score of 51
- ❖ 2010 – Completed CIC* aboard No Halo Here – awarded Best presented (17th/42)
- ❖ 2010 – No Halo Here received a USEA bronze medal at the Preliminary Level
- ❖ 2010 – Lord Ivanhoe received a USEA silver medal at the Beginner Novice Level
- ❖ 2010 – Lord Ivanhoe received USEA gold and silver medals at the Novice Level
- ❖ Donates her expertise to Pony Club by sponsoring various clinics at A Deck Above Farm
- ❖ Teaches and mentors young riders and trains competition horses for 3-Day Eventing
- ❖ Professional status with the USEA /USEF and member of the Professional Riders Organization



Kristen and Lord Ivanhoe

Thank you to the Howard County Farm Bureau for your sponsorship!

- ❖ Will compete in approximately 30 USEA Area II/III events during the course of the 2012 season
- ❖ Will compete in 2-3 national and international events at the CCI*, CCI** and CIC levels.
- ❖ Advertises via her own website, KPEventing.com, & blog, www.kpeventing.blogspot.com, banners and logos on horse gear, riding gear and trailer.
- ❖ Promotes the products she uses on her website, KPEventing.com including horse tack, feed and supplements.

Kristen's Competition Horses

No Halo Here, "Briley" is a 2002 TB/QH/WB out of Bayberry sired by Alexander. Briley was bred by Kristen, and is now an up and coming upper level event horse successfully competing at the Preliminary level, winning his first CIC* at Fair Hill International in spring of 2011 on their dressage score and took the blue at the Preliminary Championships in the fall of 2011 in Lexington, VA. Kristen and Briley received 2 medals in 2011, a silver at Training and a bronze at Preliminary along with the USEA Blue Ribbon award at the Preliminary level. This pair will move up to Intermediate in the Spring.



Lord Ivanhoe, "Ivan" is a 2005 Irish Sport Horse out of Escapade, and sired by Mine Lord Prince. Ivan competed the majority of the 2011 season at Training level, placing in all events but two. Ivan capped off the season by winning the Area II, 3-Day Training Event at Waredaca with the best score of all 3 Divisions at 29! Ivan and Kristen received 3 medals in 2011 including a silver and gold at Training and a silver at Novice along with the USEA Blue Ribbon award at Training. This pair will move up to Preliminary in the Spring.



Spring Competition Schedule for 2012

- ❖ March 2012- Combined Test @ Sporting Days in Aiken, SC- No Halo Here @ Preliminary & Lord Ivanhoe @ Training
- ❖ March 2012- Full Gallop Farm Horse Trial in Aiken, SC- No Halo Here @ Preliminary & Lord Ivanhoe @ Training
- ❖ March 2012- Southern Pines Horse Trial in Raeford, NC- No Halo Here @ Preliminary & Lord Ivanhoe @ Training
- ❖ April 2012- Fair Hill International Horse Trial in Elkton, MD- No Halo Here @ Intermediate & Lord Ivanhoe @ Preliminary
- ❖ May 2012- MCTA Horse Trial in Cockeysville, MD- No Halo Here @ Intermediate & Lord Ivanhoe @ Preliminary
- ❖ May 2012- Virginia Horse Trial in Lexington, VA- No Halo Here @ Intermediate & Lord Ivanhoe @ Preliminary

"While Kristen is a soft and lovely rider, she is also effective and clear in her communication. It is obvious that she has done all the work with her horses as she has formed a great partnership with them."

Lynn Symansky
Pam Am Gold Medalist, Pan American Games, 2011