

# NEWSLETTER

## HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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### Howard County Agri-Business

#### Breakfast

by Maura Cahill

#### **Breakfast Program Coordinator**

The next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast is scheduled for **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 9, 2014** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please plan to join us.

Our guest speaker will be *Mr. Joseph R. Blouin, Senior Sales Representative for Experient Health* of Randallstown, MD. Mr. Blouin has been asked to discuss some of the options available for us regarding Health Insurance and how we might proceed if our insurance should be cancelled. With all of the controversy and uncertainty surrounding implementation of the Affordable Care Act (or Obama Care), this session should provide an excellent opportunity for attendees to ask questions and hopefully get the right answers.

Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. and the program is scheduled for 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. Please **RSVP by noon, Tuesday, January**

**7<sup>th</sup>** 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 program normally concludes by about 9:00 a.m. we hope to see you on Thursday, **January 9<sup>th</sup>** at the next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

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### Message to Members

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

We got through another Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in Ocean City. The snowy weather for our travel was a bit tricky but we managed to have a well attended convention.

Policy discussions went well and the biggest topic was on the selling of raw milk. We decided not to support raw milk sales in Maryland.

A new president was elected, Chuck Fry from Frederick County. He is a dairy farmer in

Tuscarora with 200 cows and they operate Rocky Point Creamery. When you travel to Leesburg, his farm is on the left just before the bridge into Virginia, 2 miles on the right.

Our new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-president is Wayne Stafford from Cecil County and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-president is John Draper. Our new District Director is Joe Kuhn. Jay Rhine is our District Director starting his 2<sup>nd</sup> year and was elected to the Executive Committee for 2014.

I want to thank Pat Langenfelder for doing a great job during her term as president. I also want to thank Jim Steele for his service as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President I am sure both of them will continue to help by serving on committees and boards in the future. I also want to thank Tom Hartsock for serving as our District Director for the past year; he and Jay did an excellent job for us.

I would like to extend congratulations to Andy Bauer. He was the Howard County's selection to compete in the National Skill-a-thon contest. (See Maryland Skillathon Team Competes elsewhere in this Newsletter.) Andy won 7<sup>th</sup> place as an individual and the Maryland Team placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. It is great to know that here in Howard County we have a great group of kids who are knowledgeable about Agriculture. Congratulations to Andy and all of the Maryland Team.

Your Board of Directors has started an Ag. Scholarship program and a Sponsorship program for Adult and Young Riders. We are working on other youth programs that will help kids in 4-H and Farm Bureau so that their parents don't have to pay for additional cost for their kids participating in Agricultural activities. We will keep you posted.

The Board of Directors has also voted to

change the Agri-Breakfast Program. We are aware that, because of timing, many of you cannot make it to our Breakfast Meetings and have the opportunity to hear to some really good speakers. We have decided that, beginning with the next breakfast meeting season (September, 2014 to May, 2015), we will try scheduling "breakfast" in the evening. We will have breakfast food served for a quick dinner and then have our speaker's presentation. We will plan to start at 7:00 pm and try to end by 8:00 pm. Hopefully that will enable many more people to attend, to enjoy a nice meal, hear our scheduled speaker, and enjoy a short visit with their neighbors.

As many of you know, the farmers and ranchers in Wyoming and South Dakota suffered a freak blizzard that killed thousands of cattle and horses. The Farmers and Ranchers from Montana have been donating cattle to help replenish some of those lost herds. We as farmers and ranchers and rural Americans are to be commended for our willingness to help when the need is there. I just want to thank all that have been part of that effort.

Hopefully we will have a Farm Bill by the time you get this newsletter. The deadline for doing this was the 1<sup>st</sup> and then the programs that help us all to provide affordable food and sustainable agriculture across this country will be in place.

Like I always say " keep your plow in the ground, we're all pulling for you."

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### **Central Maryland Agronomy Day**

Plan to join us at the Urbana Fire Hall on February 26<sup>th</sup> for updates on weeds, insects, diseases, nutrient management and other

agronomy-related topics. Registration begins at 8:30. Participation in this meeting will satisfy the full 4 credits of recertification training required by individuals certified as Private Pesticide Applicators and 5 of the 8 credits required for Commercial Pesticide Applicators in Category 1A (Agricultural Plant). It will also satisfy the requirements for 2 Maryland Agricultural Nutrient Management continuing education credits (good for holders of the Nutrient Applicator Vouchers and Farmers Certified to write their own nutrient management plans, but not nutrient management consultants.)

A \$15 registration fee is being charged to help offset the cost of lunch. Payment will be collected at the door, but we do need a firm lunch count, so call 301-600-3576 before February 19<sup>th</sup> to register.

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**Jim Myers**  
**“New” District Conservationist**  
**in Howard SCD**

Hello, everyone. First of all, I would like to reintroduce myself to Howard County. I am an *ol’* Pennsylvania farm boy who grew up on a dairy farm in York County. I am an Agronomy graduate of Penn State University. But, I still understand the concept of a *Terrapin*.

I am now in my 27<sup>th</sup> year of working with farmers and landowners through the Soil Conservation Service, now Natural Resources Conservation Service, and hereafter known as NRCS. I spent my first 12 years with that agency in several field offices in Pennsylvania. I came to Howard County in 2001 and worked here until May 2009. Then, I detoured to Frederick County for just over four years. Now, upon the recent retirement of

J. G. Warfield, I am back here to serve Howard and Montgomery Counties as the District Conservationist. I look forward to working in Howard County once again.

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**The District**  
**and Conservation Planning**  
by **Jim Myers, USDA-NRCS**  
**District Conservationist**  
**Howard SCD**

One of the primary roles of conservation districts, including the Howard Soil Conservation District, is to provide conservation planning assistance to farmers and other land managers. With the help of USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, district office employees give technical assistance in conservation planning and design of best management practices.

The conservation plan reflects a person’s decisions about the management of the natural resources for the farm or land being managed. The plan’s main aim is to balance the economic or other needs of the owner/operator with the needs of the natural environment in such a way that not only is a quality environment maintained, but the ability to produce crops and livestock is enhanced.

A conservation plan includes the following:

1. Producer or landowner objectives and goals.
2. Aerial photograph of the farm and fields.
3. Soils maps, descriptions, and capabilities of the soils (including yield potential).
4. List of treatment decisions.
5. Schedule of conservation practice implementation.
6. Location of the conservation practices.

7. Information sheets about the specific conservation practices for your acreage.
8. Plan of operation and maintenance needs of conservation practices.

In the planning process, the planner and producer/manager will discuss alternatives for a particular resource problem or challenge. Consideration in the planning process is given for the effect of the proposed practices on neighbors, the local watershed, and aquifers. The practice must be “practical” for the site and the producers/land manager’s ability to manage it. Ability to manage may include: 1) A person’s time can be limited, especially in areas like central Maryland where many work away from the farm. 2) For certain conservation practices, the success of the practice may take a series of trial and error for the producer/landowner.

Such things as converting from conventional tillage to no-till crop farming or converting to a rotational grazing system that optimizes production are practice types that can be more complicated since so many natural processes can affect them.

Follow-up assistance is provided by the district office to check on the continued maintenance and success of the conservation practices. These conservation plans are done without a need for a producer/landowner to be involved with a government farm program. If someone wants to know how to better manage the land’s resources, a conservation plan can be developed.

For more information about managing the natural resources on your land, contact the Howard Soil Conservation District at 410-489-7987, or stop by and visit us at the District Office in the Lisbon Shopping Center.

### **Youth Tractor Safety Program**

The National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operations Certification Program Training enables young workers to obtain Hazardous Occupation Order in Agriculture certification, which is required for youth 14 and 15 years of age who wish to work as a hired employee for someone other than a parent or legal guardian, and operate a farm tractor that is 20 hp or greater. Training and certification is highly recommended for ALL farm and equipment-operating youth, even if they will only be working for a parent.

Training this year is being offered in Carroll County beginning in January and Washington County beginning in April. Contact the Carroll County Extension Office at 410-386-2760 or the Washington County Extension Office at 301-791-1304 for registration information. Frederick County will offer the training in 2015.

Training is also being offered March 7-9, 2014 at the Redden State Forest and Education Center, Georgetown, DE. This is a cooperative effort between the University of Maryland Extension and the University of Delaware. For further information on registration and fees, please contact Chris Johnston at 410-758-0166 or Sharon Pahlman at 410-479-4030.

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### **Maryland 4-H Skillathon Team Competes**

The Maryland 4-H State Skillathon Team competed at the Tony Dobrosky Memorial Stockman’s Contest on Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, at the 2013 Keystone International Livestock Expo in Harrisburg, PA. The team consists of 4-Her’s Andy Bauer from Howard County,

Aaron Lantz from Garrett County, Aislinn Latham from Frederick County and Caitlin Olejnik from Charles County. The team is coached by Lauren Mohler and Jeanne Herbert, both from Charles County.

The contest consisted of twelve classes – swine judging, beef judging, sheep judging, hay judging, meat judging, identification of livestock breeds, identification of equipment, identification of feeds, identification of meats, a livestock management quiz, a quality assurance quiz and a wildcard quiz. The five highest placing contestants based on overall score were interviewed by a committee of three officials experienced in beef, sheep and swine production. Contestants were asked questions about management, health, showing and current problems concerning the livestock industry. The interview evaluated the contestant's ability to give a presentation and to assess their knowledge of the livestock industry.

The team did extremely well at the contest. As a team they placed 1<sup>st</sup> in Identification, 1<sup>st</sup> in Meats, 1<sup>st</sup> in Management and 1<sup>st</sup> Overall. As individuals, Andy Bauer placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in Identification, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Management and 3<sup>rd</sup> Overall, Aaron placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in Meats, 3<sup>rd</sup> in Management and 2<sup>nd</sup> Overall, Aislinn placed 1<sup>st</sup> in Identification, 1<sup>st</sup> in Management and 1<sup>st</sup> Overall, and Caitlin placed 4<sup>th</sup> in Identification, 1<sup>st</sup> in Meats and 6<sup>th</sup> Overall.

The team also traveled to Louisville, KY, in mid-November where they competed in the National 4-H Livestock Skillathon at the 2013 North American International Livestock Expo. The contest consisted of six individual classes – livestock equipment identification, livestock breed identification, retail meat cut identification, hay and wool judging class,

quality assurance and an overall livestock industry quiz – as well as five team classes – quality assurance, meat and carcass evaluation, livestock performance and marketing evaluation, animal breeding evaluation, and livestock feed identification.

Once again, the team did extremely well in the contest. As a team, they placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in Identification, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Quality Assurance 5<sup>th</sup> in Evaluation and 3<sup>rd</sup> Overall. As individuals, Andy Bauer placed 9<sup>th</sup> in Identification, 7<sup>th</sup> in Evaluation and 7<sup>th</sup> Overall; Aaron placed 8<sup>th</sup> in Quality Assurance and 19<sup>th</sup> Overall; Aislinn placed 6<sup>th</sup> in Identification, 4<sup>th</sup> in Quality Assurance and 18<sup>th</sup> Overall; and Caitlin placed 26<sup>th</sup> Overall.

Congratulations to Andy, Aaron, Aislinn and Caitlin for a great job representing Maryland 4-H!

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### **Maryland Public Television** **Airs a New Series**

Season one of Maryland Farm & Harvest made its debut on Maryland Public Television (MPT) on Tuesday, November 19 at 7 p.m. Maryland Farm & Harvest puts a human face on Maryland agriculture, telling the stories of the people who grow the state's food and fiber. From locations statewide, the series chronicles the successes of and the challenges to the state's No. 1 industry. The show is hosted by Joanne Clendining, a veteran actress and the owner/operator of a family farm.

The November 19<sup>th</sup> premiere episode featured:

- Trey Hill of Kent County, a large-scale grain farmer who is all about technology, sustainable agriculture and working with local environmental groups.

- Terri Wolf-King of Dorchester County, a prominent grain and poultry grower, who has rebuilt her life and farm after a tragic fire claimed the lives of both her husband and son.
- The Palmyra Dairy Farm of Hagerstown in Washington County. Run by the Shank and Creek families, two fifth-generation dairy families, Palmyra Dairy Farm sells elite cow genetics in the form of embryos across the nation and in 11 countries.

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**Appointment of New  
University of Maryland  
AGNR Extension Director**

According to a recent press release from the office of the AGNR Dean, Dr. Cheng-I Wei, Dr. Stephen Wright has been appointed to the position of Associate Dean/Associate Director of University of Maryland Extension, effective January 30, 2014.

Dr. Wright comes to us from Ohio State University Extension where he held the position of Regional Director and Associate Department Chair of Extension. His experiences have well prepared him for this leadership role in University of Maryland Extension.

As Regional Director, he has had oversight of 29 counties and has worked collaboratively with the OSU Extension administrative team and Extension employees, numerous advisory committee members, volunteer stakeholders, public officials, and other community leaders and volunteers.

In addition, his position as Associate

Department Chair has given him experience with the promotion and tenure process, which will be invaluable to UME tenured and tenure track faculty.

Dr. Wright is truly coming back home. He not only is a “pure” UMD alum – completing his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. at this University, but he also grew up in Baltimore giving him familiarity with both UMD and the state. His wife is Dean of the Conservatory/Deputy Director of Johns Hopkins Peabody Institute – another connection to the State of Maryland.

Please join Dr. Wei in welcoming Dr. Wright to AGNR’s administrative team for UME and in giving him support as he assumes this challenging position.

Dr. Wright assumes the position held by Dr. Dan Kugler who did an excellent job serving as Acting Associate Dean/Associate Director of UME since August 2012, following the departure of Dr. Nick Place.

During the past year, Dr Kugler has shown dedication in leading UME and has been a positive representative of AGNR at many meetings, events, and with groups around the state.

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**Agricultural Land Preservation  
Program Accepting Applications**

by Joy Levy

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

The Howard County Agricultural Land Preservation Program (ALPP) is currently accepting applications, and will be for the foreseeable future.

Unlike previous “batches”, where there was a set application period. Changes earlier this year to the law governing the ALPP have made the process more accessible by creating an ongoing enrollment arrangement.

Another significant change concerns the minimum acreage eligibility criteria. Any parcel over 20 acres is now eligible to apply, whereas previously, parcels between 20-50 acres had to be adjacent to land that was already protected.

The effect of these changes is to ensure that more property owners will have the opportunity to sell an agricultural easement to the County. By eliminating the batching process, there will no longer be competition between farmers for limited funding.

Since the County Executive opened the ALPP in the spring of 2013, approximately 30 property owners have requested that their properties be scored. The scoring system determines the price the County is willing to pay for an easement, and is based on ten main criteria that determine the property’s value as agricultural land. Of those who requested scoring, eight have applied to the ALPP and are in various stages of acquisition.

Application materials are available by contacting Joy Levy, ALPP Program Administrator at 410-313-4382 or [jlevy@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jlevy@howardcountymd.gov).

Several forms and fact sheets make up the application packet. Please be advised that a non-refundable application fee in the amount of \$200 must accompany any application.

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## **Comprehensive Rezoning Process Completed**

by Joy Levy

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

The Howard County Council recently approved the County’s once-a-decade comprehensive rezoning package, which includes both zoning map amendments and an overhaul of the Zoning Regulations text.

This effort followed on the heels of the completion and passage of PlanHoward2030, the recent update to the County’s master plan and the document that will guide how, where and when the county grows for the next twenty years. The comprehensive rezoning process was executed in light of the Plan’s goals and updated to reflect current priorities.

Relevant to the agricultural community was the very thorough examination given to the regulations that govern the two main zoning districts in the Rural West, the RC (Rural Conservation) and the RR (Rural Residential). The Zoning Regulations control many aspects of how land is used, including permitted uses and the density at which land may be subdivided. The County did not make any changes that affected subdivision density.

The focus of the comprehensive rezoning effort in the Rural West was on permitted uses of the land, with special consideration given to providing additional flexibility to the farming community. This was done to assist farmers desiring to innovate or diversify their operations to increase profitability. There were several public meetings held during the drafting process to engage residents in the Rural West so that staff could learn their most

pressing issues and concerns, which were then incorporated into the draft.

A common thread throughout many of the changes was providing increased protection and stability for agricultural operations. The definition of “farming” was broadened to include normal day to day practices, not specifically mentioned previously, that can sometimes be issues of contention with non-farm neighbors, such as the transportation and application of fertilizers and pesticides, and the operation of farm machinery. The permitting process for uses related to farming that require a permit became less difficult, so that now, once the permit has been approved, it is valid indefinitely, unless the farmer is proposing to make significant changes to the operation. Previously, the property owner had to apply for permit renewal every three years, regardless. New uses, such as Community Supported Agricultural and Food Hubs, were added to the list of uses allowed by permit, to reflect current practices and anticipated trends.

An entirely new section was added to the Zoning Regulations to make them more “user friendly” for the owners of land encumbered by a preservation easement. This section specifically addresses the different types of preservation easements, the types of uses allowed on each, and the various conditions under which those uses are permitted. Previously, this information was scattered throughout the document, or, in the case of agricultural easements purchased by the County, only specifically addressed in a separate policy document. Now, an owner of easement land will be able to refer to the new section and get all of the information needed about permitted uses in one place.

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## **Nuptials**

by **Timothy S. Barkley, Sr.**

**JD, CFP, CSA**

**Attorney at Law**

It was Susan on the phone: “Can we get together? I need you to look at a paper my fiancé gave me.”

She came to the office with a large envelope in hand. “My boyfriend finally asked me to marry him. Then he gave me this and said I had to have a lawyer look at it. It's a prenup.”

“When are you tying the knot?”

“Oh, not for awhile, but he said he wanted me to think about this before we got too far down the road. I told him I didn't want his stuff and didn't need a legal paper, but he said his lawyer told him I needed to sign this and have my lawyer look at it before I do. Do you do this kind of thing?”

“Absolutely. I just finished writing one for another client. And another guy brought his prenup to the office when we were working on his will, said I had to be sure I followed what it said.

“What's he trying to protect?”

“He's got money from his parents, and he's 51% shareholder of the family business. He says his mom made him promise to get a prenup before he got married.”

“Not uncommon, especially in this day and age when more marriages end in divorce than don't.”

“I tried to read it, but it's long and just a bunch of legal mumbo-jumbo. Why can't it just be

simple – you know, 'you keep your stuff and I keep mine'?"

"Well, you see, when you sign a pre-nup you're giving up legal rights. For it to do what it's supposed to do, you have to know what you're giving up, and you have to do so voluntarily.

"You're giving up four main rights: the right to division of family assets, the right to a share of his estate, the right to control his estate as his Personal Representative, and the right to the spousal share of his retirement money.

"Each of these rights requires that you knowingly and voluntarily waive them. And it's important to put them in writing. That way when people aren't remembering so well, they can point to the paper to remind themselves and the other."

"What happens if I don't have a lawyer look at it?"

"It's not that it's illegal if you don't, but if you don't have a lawyer advise you, then his lawyer will be afraid that you'll claim that you didn't know what you were signing, didn't understand it, or were coerced to sign. If you have a lawyer, it's hard for you to say any of that."

"So if I want to be mean, I could just refuse to have you read it?"

"Maybe you could also find another husband. How important is this to him?"

"It's pretty important. That's what's held us up."

"Well, it's up to you. Would you really want to force the issue?"

"I guess not. I do want to marry the guy, but I wish it didn't have to be all legal and stuffy. Is there anything else I need to do?"

"After we've been through this, we'll need to talk about your will and other papers. That can be done now or after you're married.

"Let me look through this and get back to you. I can scan this in so you can take it with you, and send you an email with my thoughts, and then you can decide whether we need to get back together."

"Thanks."

"No problem. If you haven't gotten an email from me by the end of next week, call me . . ."

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**The Anatomy**  
**of a Farm Tractor Accident**  
by **Allan Bandel**

According to 2010 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, the construction industry reported the **highest number** of fatal job-related injuries that year. But, the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting group reported **by far**, the **highest rate** of **fatal work-related injuries** in 2010.

A few years ago, a close neighbor of ours, a good Howard County farmer, very nearly became a part of those frightening statistics. It was on a hot July afternoon in 1955 when our neighbor was involved in a non-fatal, but nevertheless serious, farm tractor accident. His tractor unexpectedly rolled over, trapping him beneath it. Fortunately, he survived. But, fate

can be fickle. The outcome could have just as easily gone the other way, adding another statistic to these appalling data.

Our neighbor was operating his small John Deere model “MT” tractor with a JD No. 5 rear-mounted sicklebar mower. Although small by today’s standards, this handy little tricycle-configured tractor was ideal for light-duty jobs such as mowing, raking and cultivating. It was only a few years old in 1955 and in A-1 working order at the beginning of that fateful July day.

I remember that it was uncomfortably hot and humid that afternoon. Dad and I were busy servicing our own mower and hay conditioner. Because of the heat, we had retreated to the shade of a huge old maple tree near the house. Except for the normal sounds of the cows contentedly resting in the shade of the loafing barn and the clucking of Mother’s flock of laying hens in the nearby chicken house, it was just another quiet, but hot, summer afternoon. The calm was suddenly shattered by the slamming of the house’s back door. In a rush, Mother came running out with the news that a tractor accident had occurred nearby and our help was needed.

She had received a frantic telephone message from the wife of one of our neighbors that alerted her to the emergency. Assistance was needed right away to help rescue the driver, who, still alive, was trapped beneath his overturned tractor. He was injured and in distress. Help was urgently needed.

Through no fault of his own, our neighbor’s late 1940s era tractor was not equipped with an emergency roll-over protective structure (ROPS) which might have helped. In fact, those devices to protect tractor operators in an

accidental roll-over were not invented until the 1960s. Referred to as “Roll-Gard”, the first commercial ROPS was offered by Deere and Company in 1966. The patent rights and engineering data for their unique two-post design were soon donated to the public domain and the design quickly became an industry standard.

Our unfortunate neighbor had been “clipping” a pasture on one of his more steeply sloping fields. Pasture clipping was a traditional summer job, often carried out during the slack period following the last corn cultivation and between hay making and small grain harvest. It was a good pasture management tool for weed control and also spreading cattle droppings.

Seated on the tractor’s black cushion seat, the driver’s legs were extended forward almost horizontally, the same as on many similar tractors of that era. Consequently, his seated position was not a good one to be in for making a quick emergency exit. When the tractor rolled over, **completely upside down**, our neighbor was awkwardly pinned in a confined space between the overturned tractor and the hard, unforgiving pasture sod. He now found himself upside down between the steering wheel and the seat. His inverted body was partially supporting that heavy overturned tractor.

With only a few rescuers on site, the first responders had been unable to free the driver. Now, increasingly fearful for him, they realized that they needed a lot more help, and soon!

Immediately after receiving that emergency telephone message, Dad and I jumped into our pickup truck and were soon speeding along the county road toward the accident scene. Our route was via the neighbor’s half-mile-long unpaved, and somewhat rough farm lane. At

the barnyard, we had to negotiate our way through two heavy wood board gates. We were delayed some because those gates had to be opened and closed after us to prevent the dairy cows from straying from the barnyard and thus creating another problem. Finally, we arrived at the accident. The victim, still trapped beneath the tractor, was suffering considerably now because of the weight of the tractor pressing down upon him.

It was obvious what had caused the accident. One of the tractor's rear wheels had rolled over a large boulder that was partially hidden beneath a thick layer of honeysuckle vines. Combined with the boulder's size, the tractor's forward speed, and the steepness of the hillside, the tractor had suddenly flipped, **not on its side, but completely upside down!**

We also discovered that the only support now preventing the tractor's full weight from crushing the victim was the mower's sturdy, steel sicklebar blade which was now twisted into a sharp angle beneath the tractor. With the weight of the tractor pressing on the severely bent blade, the weakening steel continued to slowly bend. The question was, "how much longer could that sturdy steel blade withstand this kind of punishment before it reached a critical point of no return, complete failure, allowing the full weight of the tractor to come down on the trapped driver?"

Made from a high-quality steel, the seven-foot blade now served as the only support for the tractor. Obviously, there was no way to know if it would support the tractor's weight indefinitely. As the blade continued bending, the tractor settled lower, increasing the pressure on the victim, pressing him even more firmly against the unforgiving sod. It

was becoming increasingly more difficult now for the victim to breathe. Initially, the bent blade offered some support. But with time, the increased pressure applied by the heavy tractor was making it more difficult for him to breathe.

As if there weren't already enough problems, the tractor's 6-volt battery, now suspended upside down over the trapped driver, was leaking battery acid. This caused him even more discomfort. Fortunately, two roofing contractors had joined in the rescue effort and had brought the proper-sized wrenches to the scene. They "saved the day" by removing the troublesome leaking battery.

Unlike emergency services today, there were no fire stations nearby equipped with publicly funded ambulances and staffed with full-time EMS technicians. The alternative was to summon a local neighborhood family physician. Telephoning his office, fortunately, found him at his desk. He immediately quit what he was doing and hurried the several miles to the accident scene. His intent was to apply first aid and also try to ease the victim's discomfort.

Dad recalled that in the doctor's haste to drive through those two barnyard gates, he just narrowly missed rolling over Dad's foot. From the physician's viewpoint, Dad just didn't react fast enough opening those gates. To speed things up, he shouted for Dad to just "Drop the 'damn' gate and get out of the way". Dad jumped clear just as the doctor gunned his motor and "bulldozed" the wooden gate fully open. This left a nasty scratch and a small dent in the right front fender of the doctor's brand new Chevy sedan. With rear wheels spinning wildly, his car threw up a thick cloud of dust interspersed with small stones as he sped out across the open field.

Would first responders today, at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, unhesitatingly demonstrate as much compassion for an injured friend that they would unhesitatingly inflict damage to their brand new personal automobile as did this dedicated family physician on that fateful day? I would hope so if the situation called for it. But most likely, the vehicle involved today would very likely be a publicly owned ambulance manned by paid professional EMS technicians. It is unlikely that a personal vehicle would now be involved.

Times were quite different back in the 1950s when Howard County was still mostly rural and everyone essentially belonged to one big “family” of friends and neighbors, most of whom were farmers. Back then, people personally knew most of their neighbors and were more familiar with the risks that they faced on a daily basis. They were expected to look out for one another, especially in an emergency.

Back at the accident scene, in an attempt to help protect the trapped driver from the overturned tractor’s unrelenting weight, a heavy flatbed truck was brought to the scene and wedged firmly against the tractor’s rear wheel, hoping that this would stop, or slow, the tractor’s descent. Unfortunately, this effort failed because the truck’s dual rear tires lost traction and slid on the green grass. Hence, the tractor continued its relentless downward movement, crushing the driver more firmly against the unforgiving turf.

A heavy-duty tow truck, one normally used for moving large disabled trucks and buses and thus was hefty enough to lift the tractor, had been summoned from a garage in Ellicott City. But its arrival had been delayed for some yet unknown reason. Only after it arrived, in a

cloud of dust, did we learn that the speeding tow truck had been stopped by the Howard County Police. Only after the tow truck driver explained that he was on an emergency mission did the police alter their decision, quickly activate their emergency lights and siren, and then escorted the tow truck the rest of the way to its destination.

About the time that it became evident that little more could be done until the tow truck arrived, Dad spotted a large free-standing boulder nearby, but over in an adjacent field. He reasoned that the rock might be of a perfect size and shape to support the tractor’s rear tire, stopping its downward movement. This rock, weighing perhaps 150 to 175 pounds more or less, was lying about 25 to 30 feet away.

The rock was also on the far side of a forbidding four-foot, five-strand, barbed wire fence. The fence was new, so was in very good condition. It would not be possible to simply stretch the wires apart and pass the rock through or under them. The rock must go over the fence. But, this was not just any small rock. It was big – and it appeared to be relatively heavy.

The rock measured about three feet long and was about a foot in diameter. From it’s size, Dad concluded that if we could roll it under the tractor’s rear wheel, it might support the tractor’s weight, perhaps “buying some time” until the tow truck arrived. Dad looked at me, then frantically urged me to, “Go get it!”

Excited, with adrenalin surging through my veins, and without really thinking about what I was doing, and how much that rock might actually weigh, I climbed over the fence without getting snagged on the sharp barbed wire. I picked that rock up with both arms,

lifted it high, and then literally **tossed it** over the fence. Dad rolled that heavy boulder under the rear tractor tire where fortunately it served its purpose just as he had predicted. It supported the tractor's weight until the tow truck could lift it enough to free the trapped driver.

Once the injured driver had been carefully extricated, he was placed on a stretcher and transported to the hospital in the local Volunteer Fire Department's brand new, bright red, Chevrolet ambulance. The 5<sup>th</sup> District VFD had only recently acquired that new fully equipped ambulance, one of the first fire department ambulances in the county. Emergency medical services were at last coming to rural Howard County.

Once the day's excitement had declined, it was decided that we should remove that heavy rock from the open pasture and return it to the spot where it had been found originally, across the fence and under the nearby shade tree where it would not become a dangerous obstacle in the future. We did not plan to leave it out where it might cause another accident.

To our astonishment though, when we attempted to lift it, that darned rock had "***gained weight***" and was now too heavy for any of us to lift. It was the same rock that, previously without thinking, I had so "effortlessly" hoisted to shoulder height and tossed over the fence. But now, less than an hour later, it had become so heavy that the best any of us could do was just **roll** it out of the way – and roll it very slowly, at that.

I suspect that we have all heard tales about times when average people had performed apparently extraordinary feats under stressful emergency conditions. These "amazing feats"

were attributed to increased adrenaline generated by excitement in an emergency. I can attest that at least one of those tales is absolutely true because I personally experienced it on that hot July day in 1955.

Postscript: Fortunately, our neighbor was very lucky and survived this tractor accident. His injuries were found to be less than life threatening. In spite of being unable to sleep well for some time thereafter, he was not seriously injured in that freakish accident. He survived, and a little wiser now, aside from a few bruises and muscle stiffness perhaps, he eventually fully recovered to repair and drive his little tractor and mower another day.

Other than suffering from a broken muffler and a bent steering wheel, even the tractor luckily survived that day relatively unscathed.

There is a really important lesson to be learned here. Always **be careful when operating equipment!** Keep shields in place and take very seriously all of those Safety Warnings that are printed in conspicuous places on farm equipment. Those warnings are placed there for an important reason and should not be ignored or taken for granted.

**DO NOT ignore safety warnings!** Farming is a great way of life. But, it is also still a potentially dangerous occupation. As stated previously, in 2010, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that of all occupations, the combined Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting Industries had the highest **rate** of fatal injuries. In 2010, this group reported **27.9 fatalities per 100,000 workers**. This is significantly more than for Mining (**19.8** fatalities per 100,000 workers) and for the Construction Industry group which accounted for just **9.8** fatalities per 100,000 workers.

**Calendar of Events**  
**2014**

- Jan 9 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 to 9:00 am, Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds, Fairground Road, West Friendship, MD
- Jan 12-15 **American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting and Convention.** San Antonio, TX.
- Jan 18 **Mid-Atlantic Small Flock Poultry Mini Expo.** 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Chesapeake College, Eastern Shore Higher Education Center, 1000 College Circle, Wye Mills, MD 21679. Contact: [sbarnes6@umd.edu](mailto:sbarnes6@umd.edu) for info.
- Jan 27 **Agricultural Land Preservation Board.** 7:30 pm, Howard County Fair Office, West Friendship, MD.
- Feb 5 **Private Applicator Certification Training.** 10 to noon, Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Agriculture Center, Westminster, MD 21157. Contact: (410) 386-2760 to register.
- Feb 8 **Mid-Atlantic Small Flock Poultry Mini Expo.** 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Montgomery County Extension Office, 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, MD. Contact: [sbarnes6@umd.edu](mailto:sbarnes6@umd.edu) for info.
- Feb 12 **Private Applicator Certification Exam.** 10 to noon, Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Agriculture Center, Westminster, MD 21157. Contact: (410) 386-2760 to register.
- Feb 12 **Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification.** 10 to noon, Carroll County Extension Office, 700 Agriculture Center, Westminster, MD 21157. Contact: (410) 386-2760 to register.
- Feb 22 **Maryland Dairy Conference.** Francis Scott Key Holiday Inn, Frederick, MD.
- Feb 24 **Agricultural Land Preservation Board.** 7:30 pm, Howard County Fair Office, West Friendship, MD.
- Feb 26 **Central Maryland Agronomy Day.** 9:00 to 3:00. Registration begins at 8:30. Urbana Fire Hall. Call 301-600-3576 before February 19 to register. \$15.00 registration fee.
- Mar 5 **Private Applicator Training.** 10:00 to noon. Exam March 12 (10 am). Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.
- Private Applicator Recertification.** 1:00 to 3:00 pm.
- Mar 12 **Certified Nutrient Management Consultants / Farmers Recertification Meeting.** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.
- Mar 19 **Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training/Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.
- Mar 24 **Agricultural Land Preservation Board.** 7:30 pm, Howard County Fair

Office, West Friendship, MD.

Apr 3 - May 15

**Beginning a Successful Small Farm, Part 1 Short Course (7 classes).** 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

Sept 4 - Oct 16

**Beginning a Successful Small Farm Part II Short Course (7 classes).** 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

Oct 21 - Nov 12

**Nutrient Management Farmer Training Certification (7 classes) (may add 1 class).** 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

Nov 5 **Private Applicator Training.** 10:00

am to noon. Exam November 13 (10:00 am). Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

**Private Applicator Recertification.** 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

Nov 13 **Nutrient Applicators Voucher Training/Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Call Frederick County Extension Office for information 301-600-1594.

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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.

*In the Spirit of the Holiday Season, the Officers and Directors of the Howard County Farm Bureau and the Howard County Farm Bureau Women wish each and every one a very happy, safe, peaceful, healthy and prosperous New Year!*

**Maryland Farm Bureau 2014 Scholarship Application**  
**Deadline February 3, 2014**

The Maryland Farm Bureau will offer ten \$2,000.00 scholarships. Applicants must be high school seniors starting college in the fall of 2014 or full time college students at any community college or four-year institution. Applicants or their parents/guardians **MUST** be members of Maryland Farm Bureau. Seven of the scholarships will be offered to agricultural curriculum majors and three scholarships will be offered to non-agricultural or agricultural curriculum majors.

Selection will be made by a committee designated by Maryland Farm Bureau. To apply, students must return the attached application form with a current photo (which will be used in a recognition program and a press release recipient announcement as well as on the Farm Bureau Webpage) and an essay on:

*“WHAT DO YOU THINK AGRICULTURE IN MARYLAND WILL LOOK LIKE IN 2030 AND HOW CAN THE FARM BUREAU ORGANIZATION SUPPORT THOSE IN THE INDUSTRY?”*

The essay should not exceed two pages using minimum of a 12 point font size. **(NO identifying information for example, No College names, No 4-H club names, No town names, No county names etc.)** Any identifying information appearing in the essay would disqualify the application. The selection committee will evaluate each essay anonymously. No student can receive this scholarship more than four times.

Maryland Farm Bureau **MUST** receive applications and photos by 4:00pm February 13, 2014. Applications and photos should be emailed to [Scholarship@mdfarmbureau.com](mailto:Scholarship@mdfarmbureau.com) , a confirmation email will be sent upon receipt of the scholarship application. Scholarships will be awarded to winning applicants in conjunction with High School graduation programs or prior to the beginning of the fall semester. The winner’s scholarship check will be made out to the student **and** the college. The committee reserves the right to interview scholarship applicants if they feel it necessary for determination of winners. Family members of MFB Staff and Officers are ineligible.

Direct completed applications with a current photo and any questions by email [Scholarship@mdfarmbureau.com](mailto:Scholarship@mdfarmbureau.com)

**Maryland Farm Bureau Scholarship Application**

**Deadline: February 3, 2014**

Name:

Home Address:

City: State: Zip:

Telephone: College Phone:

Date of Birth: Parents/Guardians:

County of Farm Bureau Membership: Membership number:

High School:

Date of Graduation: High School GPA:

Name of College:

College Billing Address:

City: State: Zip:

Student ID # Social Security #

Year in College: College GPA:

Major:

List Three References

Name: Address: Phone:

Name: Address: Phone:

Name: Address: Phone: