

NEWSLETTER

HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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MARCH, 2014

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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, March 13, 2014** in the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fairgrounds. Please plan to join us.

Our guest speakers will be *Messrs. Roger D'Andre and Joe Foehrkolb*, representing **BFPE International**. Their presentation will be on VESDA which stands for **Very Early Smoke Detection Apparatus**. They claim that these systems now provide very early detection of fires in many high value areas throughout the world. Early detection allows responding personnel more time to control a fire before it causes serious damage. The speakers will explain in detail how the system works and why it is more effective than conventional smoke detectors..

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, March 11th** 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, **March 13th** at the next Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.

Message to Members

by **Howie Feaga, President**

Howard County Farm Bureau

As I take a few moments to write this report, the weather forecast is calling for 6 to 12 inches of snow. I for one am ready now for more moderate temperatures, which at this point would be very welcome to most of us I am sure.

We have made it past Ground Hog Day and historically, that day marks the half-way point for the feed supplies that we have on hand, such as hay, silage and grain. With the cold weather and no real change in sight, we may very well be looking at shortages in some of

those feed categories. It will be warming up soon, and I hope we can all make it through these next few months. We always have.

Well, we finally have a "Farm Bill", better known as the "Agricultural Act of 2014". There was lots of debate on this bill. At one point even, there was a splitting off from the rest of the bill of the "SNAP" portion, the part better known as the "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program", or more popularly, "Food Stamps". This is the portion of the bill which is really important to the people who really need help in putting food on their tables. I'm sure that temporarily leaving it out was a bit unsettling for them.

With both parts of the Farm Bill back together again, it gives the bill quite a different look now. The Farm Bill is different from the past, mostly changing, or should I say eliminating the subsidies that we have been receiving, and in it's stead, introducing a system of insurance that will serve as a safety net to help us in hard times. This change will save the tax payers \$23 billion. So we can truly say we are once again doing our part. That savings is from our side of the bill which represents only 15 percent of the total. Eighty percent of the bill is on the SNAP side of it. The Farm Bill will be in place for five years and hopefully the legislators will continue to work with our Farm Bureau leaders to make a good thing even better for all of us.

On the local front Maryland legislators introduced a "Chicken Tax Bill". They proposed imposing a tax of five cents per chick when they are received from the hatchery. The last I heard, that bill was killed. But, we will have to keep and "eye" on it.

They are still discussing increasing the

minimum wage, the Phosphorous Management Tool, labeling seeds from Genetically Modified Organisms (plants) and the range of trucks bearing the K-tag. We intend to stay ahead of these issues and any other agricultural related bills that may be introduced during this legislative session.

Several of your Howard County Board members attended the recent Ag Dinner. We were fortunate in being able to visit with some of our legislators first hand. The food served was all Maryland home grown and, of course, was very good. The Edwards family of Caroline County won the Maryland "Hall of Fame Farm Family" Award. The Edwards Family have a dairy operation on the Eastern Shore. Our heartiest congratulations to them.

The American Farm Bureau Federation convention in San Antonio TX was a great time for all who attended. We watched as our own Shelby Watson from Prince Georges' County; made it to the "Final Four" in the AFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet. She turned in a great performance. It was really nice to have a local young woman advance to that level. Howard County's own Michael Calkins represented Maryland in the AFBF YF&R Excellence in Agriculture competition. He gave it a valiant effort, but was not selected to compete beyond the first elimination. He turned in a great effort and we encourage him to try again next year. Congratulations to both of you, and thanks for all your hard work preparing to represent Maryland and doing it so well.

Please be careful in the snow. Warm days will be here soon and we will be getting busy with spring chores. So, as I always say, "Keep your plow in the ground. We're all pulling for you."

U.S House Passes Farm Bill

by: Jen Russell,
AgWeb.com Managing Editor

The farm bill took yet another step forward as the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill this morning with a 251-166 vote.

"I am pleased a majority of my House colleagues joined me in supporting a five-year, comprehensive farm bill. I appreciate the efforts of everyone who helped get us here," said House Ag Committee Chairman Frank Lucas. "This is legislation we can all be proud of because it fulfills the expectations the American people have of us."

"We are on the verge of achieving major reform," said Senate Ag Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow. "Today's House vote puts us one step closer to finally enacting a five-year farm bill that helps farmers and businesses create jobs across the country and saves taxpayers billions."

The farm bill, called the Agricultural Act of 2014, includes major spending reforms, including:

- The elimination of direct payments
- Improved crop insurance tools
- Reduced payment limits, tightened eligibility requirements and streamlined means tests
- A permanent livestock disaster assistance program
- Dairy policy reform with a new, voluntary livestock margin protection program, but no government-mandated supply controls
- Support for beginning farmers

The bill also includes about \$8 billion in food stamp cuts, as well as reforms to conservation

and land programs.

"I am hopeful this legislation will enjoy the same success when the Senate considers it, and I encourage the president to sign it quickly into law," Lucas said.

"It's now up to the Senate to take the final step," Stabenow said. "The Senate has twice passed the farm bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. I have no doubt we'll do it again, and show that it is possible to do something to reduce the deficit and boost the economy when people work across the aisle."

Maryland Energy Administration Grants

The Maryland Energy Administration is pleased to announce the continuation of its support targeting the agricultural sector. The [2014 Kathleen A.P. Mathias Agriculture Energy Efficiency Program](#) will award grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000 to assist with the costs of installing energy efficient technologies in farms and agricultural businesses. **Applications are due March 14, 2014.**

This year's program will:

- Fund energy efficiency projects with at least 20% energy savings, and
- Provide grants to cover up to 50% of the cost of energy efficiency upgrades after all other incentives have been applied.

Energy efficiency measures must be installed before October 31, 2014.

Technical assistance is available to help applicants estimate their project's energy savings, and to answer general application questions. Further program details are available on the [program website](#). Information on the results of the 2012-2013 program are available [here](#).

Questions about this program may be directed to MEA Program Managers Dean Fisher (Dean.Fisher@maryland.gov) and Alec Fields (Alec.Fields@maryland.gov).

Information for this announcement was provided by:

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**Goings on in the 2014
Maryland General Assembly**
by Delegate Gail Bates

Minimum Wage takes front & center. The Governor proposes to gradually raise the minimum wage in Maryland from the current \$7.25 per hour to the \$10.10 per hour the President is trumpeting. The Governor has enlisted a multitude of service providers to help lobby for the increase (The ARC of Maryland, Catholic Charities and many others). At lunch with one of the groups, they explained the importance of raising the minimum wage and I asked if it was for people they served. Their response was that it was for their own employees, to which I replied, then pay them more. The response they offered was that the State would not

reimburse for higher pay.

A multitude of studies indicate that when jobs are artificially priced higher than the value of the service, jobs are either combined or outright eliminated. A recent article noted that technology becomes more cost effective than hiring costly employees, again with starter jobs eliminated. We have seen self checkout in a variety of stores as both a convenience and a cost saving measure.

From a recent study:

1. minimum wages reduce employment opportunities for less-skilled workers, especially those who are most directly affected by the minimum wage;
2. because employment and hours decline among those whose wages are most affected by minimum increases, a higher minimum wage tends to reduce rather than to increase the earnings of the lower-skills individuals;
3. minimum wages do not, on net, reduce poverty or otherwise help low-income families, but primarily redistribute income among low-income families and may increase poverty; and
4. minimum wages appear to have adverse longer-term effects on wages and earnings, in part because they hinder the acquisition of human capital.

Proponents cite the difficulty in keeping a family of four on \$7.25 per hour, which tugs at the heart strings until one realizes that most earning minimum wage are under age 25 and the jobs are starter jobs which help young people learn job skills that lead them to much higher wages. It will be interesting to see what emerges from the committee.

In addition to the bills to raise the minimum wage, another bill was heard which would enable the counties and Baltimore City to set their own minimum wage, just as has already been done by Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. This would allow the local jurisdictions to react to the economy of their region, rather than have a "one-size fits all" which could be detrimental to jurisdictions with troubled economies.

Collective Bargaining for Community College employees. We had a lengthy hearing regarding a bill to allow Community College personnel to unionize (which will include the "Fair Share" mandatory dues even for employees who do not wish to join a union). Citing governance boards to work out employment concerns and workplace conditions, a much higher cost for students (the State has limited its spending for Community Colleges for the last several years), radically changing the culture in the colleges and various other concerns, CC Presidents opposed the bill. Montgomery County, Prince Georges and Baltimore already have such a provision. It is an election year and many depend on union funding and help in campaigns, so it will be interesting to see what happens.

Teachers of the Year Honored. Each year, the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly honor teachers from each County and Baltimore City as outstanding teachers of the year. Howard County's teacher was George McGurl, a science teacher at Burleigh Manor Middle School. We have so many outstanding teachers in Howard County that to be selected as the County teacher of the year is a real honor. Thanks, George, for the amazing work that you do!

State Health Exchange Still Dysfunctional.

The first bill passed by both chambers this session was an Emergency Bill to cover people who tried to enroll for insurance coverage through the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange, but were not able to enroll due to technical difficulties.

By all accounts, the launch of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (to implement the Affordable Care Act) has been a dismal failure leaving Maryland citizens uncertain as to whether or not they have health insurance. The on-line exchange was launched October 1, followed by serious technical errors. Although many of the problems have been fixed, Marylanders continue to have difficulty navigating the system and actually purchasing required health insurance. As a result of the negative press and the continued failures, **SB134 - Maryland Health Insurance Plan - Access for Bridge Eligible Individuals** was introduced and subsequently passed by both the Senate and House as Emergency legislation.

What does the bill do? It proposes a fix for people who say they tried to get coverage through the Exchange, but were unsuccessful due to problems with the system.

How many people will this cover and how much will it cost the taxpayers of Maryland?

According to the Administration, the total number of individuals who have attempted to obtain insurance through MHBE for coverage effective January 1, 2014, and were unsuccessful in enrolling is unknown and could range from several hundred to several thousand. Some of these individuals may have been found eligible for Medicaid or obtained coverage on their own directly through a carrier. Others may be willing to wait for coverage that begins February 1 or later. A subset of those that qualify as bridge eligible,

those who are already having or anticipate medical expenses in January, will be most likely to seek retroactive coverage through MHIP. The Administration estimates that between 200 and 5,000 individuals may actually enroll in MHIP under the bill at a cost of between \$5.0 million and \$10.0 million.

Is this remedy limited to people who were unsuccessful during the period from Oct. 1 thru Dec. 31? No, language in the bill authorizes the MHIP board to extend enrollment of bridge eligible individuals beyond March 31, 2014, if the board determines that such individuals continue to be unsuccessful in enrolling through MHBE. The board must notify specified committees of the General Assembly and the Department of Legislative Services of any such extension within 15 days after it has been approved. In addition, the bill remains in effect until 2015, should there be further problems.

Task Force to Assess Risk to Maryland Economy of Heavy Reliance on the Federal Government. The Task Force would study Federal Funding in Maryland to assess the level of risk to our budget and to our economy related to our extremely heavy reliance on Federal funding. In addition they would do an assessment of the risk related to either level funding or reductions in funding, and make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly's budget committees regarding methods to reduce the State's dependency on federal funding, avoid or minimize the risk of a reduction in federal funding, and prepare for and respond to any reduction in federal funding.

We need this study as a result of Federal budget dysfunction, Federal debt at astronomical levels (**approaching \$18**

Trillion Dollars), use of continuing resolutions for spending instead of passing a budget, use of sequester and unpredictability of Federal funds, it is essential that we examine the risk to Maryland taxpayers of our reliance on what may be reduced levels of Federal dollars on both the Maryland budget and the Maryland economy.

Much like people and businesses do, we need to develop a risk assessment and a strategy to mitigate the short and long term impacts of level or lessening of Federal dollars. If we lived in a flood prone area, we would look for ways of mitigating the impact and since we rank 3rd after Virginia and Alaska in Federal spending per capita, any Federal reductions will likely have a disproportionate influence on our economy (per the Department of Legislative Services in a 2010 report).

The Task Force will be asked to develop a strategy to bring a more sustainable balance to the Maryland economy as Federal spending is increasingly constrained. That same Legislative Services report noted that Federal spending had been flat from 2004 through 2010, even though the Maryland programs supported by those funds have been growing. Preparation for a potential downturn would be prudent and would well serve Maryland taxpayers.

Bill to Allow Maryland Businesses to Benefit from Federal Expensing. I am again presenting a bill to re-couple business depreciation for Maryland with the rules at the Federal level. Having de-coupled several years ago, Maryland businesses are forced to keep two sets of books on their business property. This is an unnecessary inconvenience to business and makes no difference in tax amounts to Maryland (only in the timing of when the deduction takes place).

FSBO^{1/}
 by **Timothy S. Barkley, Sr.**
JD, CFP, CSA
Attorney at Law

Rick and the lawyer sat at the conference table. “I know it's not the usual thing, to move right after my wife has died, but I have a chance at a promotion at work if I transfer to the Dallas office. And my neighbor wants to buy the house so his daughter can live there. He wants his grandkids closer than Hagerstown.

“What do we need to do?”

The lawyer nodded. “You're right,” he affirmed, “it's usually better to wait at least a year, some say two years, after the death of a spouse, before making any drastic changes. Are you sure this is the best thing?”

“Yeah,” Ricky answered. “The wife and I had been talking about it before she died, and she's the one who found out that the neighbor wants to buy the house. I think the time is right. And my daughter says her husband is probably going to be transferred, too. He works for the same company I do, but in a different division.

“Do we need to use a Realtor®?”

“Realtors help out in three main ways. They help you get the property ready for sale and set a sale price; they market the property for you; and they provide you with the legal agreements for the sale.

“If you already have a buyer, we can usually work out the other two issues. Does the buyer want you to fix anything or change anything?”

“No, he says he'll buy 'as is.' The only thing is the price. How do I know how much to sell for?”

“That's the key issue. An appraiser can tell you what similar homes sold for locally in the last six months or year, but a Realtor® will often have a

better idea of what will actually sell in the neighborhood. If you were going to list the property and you asked for too much, you might scare away buyers; if you list for too little, you might not make as much as you could. But if you're not looking for a listing price as part of marketing the property, an appraisal can be helpful. And some Realtors® will provide you with a no-cost market analysis that can get you a good idea of what the property is worth.

“Do you want a referral? I have friends who are Realtors® and friends who are appraisers. I'll give you a few names ...

“Once you've set a price, download the 'Memorandum of Understanding' form from the Real Estate page on my website and visit with your neighbor. Go ahead and fill it out, and bring it back here.

“The next step is for me to create a contract for you. You can buy these online, but I think a custom-drafted contract is a better alternative. You're getting the benefit of professional advice, not just paperwork.

“I can turn around the contract in a few days. Your neighbor will want to review it, and maybe take it to his lawyer. There might be some changes, or 'addenda' to the contract.

“You should ask your neighbor for a prequalification or preapproval letter for the mortgage, if he's going to be applying for a mortgage. If he's not, you can ask for a copy of a statement from his bank or mutual fund company where he'll be getting the money. You want to be sure you're not tying up the property, taking it off the market, only to find out that he can't get his loan or fund the purchase.

“Once the contract is signed, your neighbor will probably want to inspect the house – his mortgage lender will probably require it. I usually give the buyer 30 days to do whatever inspections he wants.

“He might ask for repairs, or his lender might require them. We'll have to see what he wants or needs, and then we can decide who pays for it.

“Then we go to settlement. The buyer gets to choose the title company, but you can recommend one to him. I know a few in the area. Let me give you their info ...

“Any questions?”

“Nope, that sounds pretty thorough. Let me make some calls and I'll get back to you.”

“Thanks!”

(1/ FSBO For Sale By Owner)

Plowing for the First Time: a Youth's "Rite of Passage?"

by Allan Bandel

After John Deere, an innovative 19th century Vermont blacksmith, perfected his “ground-breaking” moldboard plow, a plow that quickly scoured free of certain problematic, sticky, difficult to turn, gumbo soils, moldboard plowing became more firmly accepted by U.S. farmers. Here locally, and until the no-till “revolution” came about in the 1970s, the popularity of the moldboard plow went mostly unchallenged well into the 1950s and 1960s. Until the mid-1970s, when no-till cropping became increasingly popular, the moldboard plow remained an essential tillage tool, a basic tool for seedbed preparation.

Throughout most of the “plow-tillage” era, plowing was a strenuous job, both physically and mentally. This was especially true when plowing required that someone follow behind a horse-drawn walking plow, stepping briskly

to keep up with the team, to physically guide the heavy plow so that it ran true in the furrow, and finally, to skillfully handle the reins of a powerful team of sometimes frisky horses.

Although labor-saving improvements in plow design evolved slowly over time, such as invention of the riding sulky plow, plowing remained hard work. To plow, one had to be physically fit, blessed with a strong back, powerful arms and broad shoulders. The plowman also needed to think clearly. These attributes were desirable even after the draft horses had been retired and the more primitive plows, parked in a fence row, or under a shade tree, or perhaps, displayed in a farm museum.

Although becoming somewhat less back-breaking with the passage of time, plowing nevertheless remained hard work, even after modern row-crop tractors came along. Certain physical and mental skills were still required. Even as late as the mid-20th century, plowing continued having a reputation for being a “heavy-duty” job, usually requiring a full-grown, physically mature, and preferably experienced, person. Because of the physical strength and mental ability needed, plowing continued for a long time to be primarily “a man’s job”. The work was considered simply too strenuous for members of the “fairer sex”, or for most young boys.

Considering plowing to be a “man’s job” might also have come about, at least partially, because it had simply “always been that way.” But, a more credible reason was that a walking plow, hitched behind a big frisky team of draft horses, required strength to control the horses as well as to keep the plow “in the ground”, especially when plowing rocky soils. Even under the most favorable soil conditions, the plow still had to be guided along the furrow,

and maintained at the proper depth. It was a demanding job preventing the heavy plow from straying off course and not always cutting a uniform furrow at its proper design width and depth.

Another reason for requiring a physically strong person behind the plow was that there was a reputation to be preserved here in producing a uniform, neatly plowed field, one that the owner could proudly brag on to his neighbors. Subsequently, plowing required skill, patience and experience. It was assumed that these skills best resided in the more experienced, more mature plowman. Personally, as with most other young farm boys, youth was against me for becoming a good plowman while still in my pre-teen years. My chance to plow had to wait for awhile. I had to meet the challenge by first “growing into the job”, both physically and mentally.

After our draft horses were retired, the first tractor that we plowed with was a 1940 John Deere model “B”. This was not a very large tractor by today’s standards. It was rated at only about 14 horsepower and was thus classified as a “2-plow” tractor. Although small, it provided a significant move upward for us because, when compared to our old, now retired, single-bottom walking plow, it immediately doubled our plowing capacity.

Our early tractor plows were of the older steel-wheeled trailing versions with two 12-inch bottoms. They were often of unknown origin. According to contemporary literature, Deere claimed that the model “B” would pull two-14's. But, the engineers who made those ratings apparently were not familiar with the heavy clay soils on many Howard County farms. Pulling two 12-inch bottoms through

an alfalfa sod on a heavy clay loam soil usually worked that “gutsy” little tractor, and its operator, to their physical limits.

The larger John Deere model “A” tractor that Dad purchased in 1948 was rated at 35 horsepower, a 2-3 plow tractor. According to advertising literature, the “A” was capable of handling two-16's. The new model “A” was more powerful than the older “B”. It was equipped with much larger rear tires and carried considerably more weight over the rear axle. So it could easily pull a larger plow. One of our neighbors pulled three-14's with his “A”. This must have been a hard load for the “A”, especially on heavy clay soils. So, we never attempted to pull more than the two-14's. Even this load proved to be demanding when plowing one of those heavy clay sods.

On the average though, the model “A” handled the two-14's with much more ease than the little “B” ever did with the two-12's. With either tractor, plowing an established sod, could be tough on the operator. There was a constant struggle with steering, especially if the hitch was not set up properly and aligned to prevent a bothersome side-draft. Alternately applying first one, then the other of the individual rear wheel brakes helped to minimize rear wheel slippage when traction was poor. The operator’s effort was focused mostly on using the brake of the “land side” wheel (the wheel on the unplowed side of the tractor).

Being a little higher than the furrow wheel, and often on a more slippery, grassy surface, the land-side rear tractor wheel was the one that most frequently lost traction. Its brake often had to be applied to transfer power, through the differential, to the wheel that had more traction.

Until later years, Dad always purchased used plow equipment, often at local farm auctions. Although sound mechanically, the paint and brand names were usually long gone by the time that they came into our possession. Our tractor plows could have been McCormick-Deering, John Deere, Oliver, Montgomery-Ward, or some other largely obscure brand. The brand name didn't really matter as long as the equipment was in sound working order and we could still acquire replacement shares and other consumable parts.

These early model plows were mechanically raised and lowered at the ends of the furrow. This action was accomplished by the tractor operator pulling hard on a long "trip rope" attached to a clutch mechanism on the plow's ground-driven mechanical lift. The near end of the plow's "trip" rope was attached to a convenient spot on the rear of the tractor seat just for this purpose.

To avoid damaging the plow if it struck a concealed underground rock, some plows (by design) were built to break loose from the tractor. But, if the "trip" rope was fastened too securely to the tractor seat, and if there was no "quick-release" mechanism built into the trip rope, the sudden rapid, and usually violent, jerk on the tractor seat often "broke the boredom" and provided some unwelcome excitement for the tractor driver.

This excitement was significantly enhanced if the tractor was equipped with a special patented "safety" attachment. Through a series of pulleys and a cable, the hand clutch was automatically disengaged when the plow suddenly came unhitched. The tractor often stopped so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that the driver could be thrown forward, and possibly even clear off the tractor seat if not holding on

tightly to the spring-loaded seat or to the steering wheel.

There was also the unexpected risk of the driver's right leg being painfully struck by the heavy hand clutch lever as it was violently disengaged. For obvious reasons, after too much of this painful excitement, we soon removed this novel "safety" attachment from the tractor and deposited it in the junk pile.

In the mid to late 1950's, Dad purchased a used, but much more modern, John Deere model 44-H plow. But, this happened well after my initial introduction to plowing. The 44-H was a trailer plow on two rubber tires. A small rear wheel that pressed against the furrow wall, a "rolling landside", was made of steel. This plow was of a modern truss frame design and had two 14-inch bottoms. It's depth adjustment and its raising and lowering functions were effortlessly controlled with a modern remote hydraulic cylinder. So, by the 1950s, the physical aspects of plowing were beginning to improve somewhat. But still, without power steering on the tractor, guiding and turning that heavy tractor at the end of the furrow remained a significant struggle.

In the 1940s and 1950s, plowing was still not easy or simple, even with a larger tractor and the convenience of hydraulics. A certain amount of muscle was still required just to maneuver that heavy tractor. Tractors equipped with power steering were still several years away. Steering and simultaneously raising and lowering the plow when crossing grass waterways or when turning at the ends of the field, still required strength and coordination.

Since plowing had always been considered a "man's job", I became increasingly excited as the time approached when I might handle a job

that would qualify me as a young “grown-up”. When at long last, that day arrived, and I was still barely a teenager, I was urged by my dad to “climb on the model “A”, take it out to the field and start plowing.” Excited, I was finally on my way to plowing for the first time. Admittedly, Dad first adjusted the plow for me, and then chose a field close to the barn where he could keep an eye on me. But, I didn’t really care. I was really plowing, and all on my own. I was doing a man’s job, and that was what was really important to me.

I knew that plowing was a responsible job, a job normally given only to a grown man, a person far more experienced and far more physically developed than I was. The two-bottom trailer-type plow of unknown origin that I used that day was still one of those older, somewhat crude, and more difficult to handle, steel-wheeled, trailer-type models equipped with a mechanical ground-driven lift. At the end of the day when I had finished plowing that field, I was totally exhausted. Yet I knew that I had completed a respectable job. I had achieved a great sense of personal satisfaction and accomplishment. I had done, an adult’s job that day, and subsequently, felt that I had finally, at long last, “truly arrived”.

Obviously, in addition to growing up, there is much more for a young inexperienced farm boy to learn before he can be “turned loose” to plow for the first time, especially when unsupervised. So when that day finally arrived for me, it was no less than a “milestone event” in my life. It was akin to a coming of age. I finally experienced that long sought “rite of passage”, an event that advanced me at last from childhood and over the threshold into young adulthood.

AGNR Open House 2014

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, October 11, for the 2014 College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) Open House. The Central Maryland Research and Education Center (CMREC), Clarksville Facility, located at 4240 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD, will again provide a beautiful backdrop for the event.

We had nearly 4,000 visitors at the 2013 Open House and hope you will take advantage of this great opportunity to show off the important work you are doing and how it is improving the lives of others.

Check out the AGNR Open House event page at: <http://aqnr.umd.edu/openhouse>

If you would like more information or are interested in providing an exhibit, please contact Carol Hill at carolann@umd.edu or 301-596-9330.

Calendar of Events 2014

Mar 5 **Private Applicator Training.** 10:00 to noon. Exam March 12 (10 am).Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577,

Private Applicator Recertification. 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Mar 7 **Fertilizer Turf Law Review Session and Test (Fee).** 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

New Midway Fire Hall, New Midway, MD.

Mar 8 **Mid-Atlantic Small Flock Poultry Mini Expo.** 9:00 to 3:00 pm. North Harford High School, 211 Pylesville Road, Pylesville, MD. Contact: sbarnes6@umd.edu for info.

Mar 12 **MFB Washington, D.C. Drive-In.** Buses leave from Salisbury and Frederick. Call 410-922-3426 for registration material.

Mar 12 **Certified Nutrient Management Farmer/Consultant Recertification Meeting.** 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577,

Mar 13 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 to 9:00 am, Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds, Fairground Road, West Friendship, MD

Mar 19 **Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training/Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577,

Mar 24 **Agricultural Land Preservation Board.** 7:30 pm, Howard County Fair Office, West Friendship, MD.

Mar 25 **Invasive Species Conference.** Baltimore Extension office, Cockysville, MD.

Apr 3 - May 15

Beginning a Successful Small Farm, Part 1 Short Course (7 classes). 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm, Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577 or email tepoole@umd.edu.

Apr 10

Annual Legislative Dinner, Howard County Farm Bureau. 7:00 pm, Lisbon Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall, Lisbon, MD.

Apr 18-19

Maryland-Delaware Sheep Shearing School. Ridgely Thompson Farm, 1942 Uniontown Road, Westminster, MD. Registration limited. Contact: David L. Greene, 2014 White Hall Rd, White Hall, MD 21161-9712. **Registration Deadline: April 14th.**

Apr 28

Junior Sheep & Wool Skillathon Preregistration Deadline. Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. **Contact:** Susan Schoenian via email at sschoen@umd.edu or via fax at (301) 432-4089.

May 3-4

Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival, Howard County Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairground Road, West Friendship, MD.

May 4

Junior Sheep & Wool Skillathon. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD.

Jun 29 **MGGA Field Day.** Afternoon through early evening. Tidal Creek Growers, Davidsonville, MD.

Sept 4 - Oct 16

Beginning a Successful Small Farm Part II Short Course (7 classes). 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577.

Oct 11 **AGNR Open House.** 10 am to 3 pm, University of MD Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Clarksville Facility. 4240 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD. For information: visit www.agnropenhouse.umd.edu

Oct 21 - Nov 12

Nutrient Management Farmer Training Certification (7 classes) (may add 1 class). 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577, or email tepoole@umd.edu.

Nov 5 **Private Applicator Training.** 10:00 am to noon. Exam November 13 (10:00 am).Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577, .

Nov 5 **Private Applicator Recertification.** 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577.

Nov 13 **Nutrient Applicators Voucher Training/Recertification.** 10:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Frederick County Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, MD. Call 301-600-3577.

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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.