

NEWSLETTER

HOWARD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

VOL. 14, NO. 4

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Congratulations to Rebecca Hamilton,

Miss Howard County Farm Bureau 2005! Chosen from among seven outstanding contestants at the Howard County Fair on Sunday, August 7, 2005, Rebecca is anxiously looking forward to serving as our county's spokeswoman for agriculture. (We regret that photograph(s) and more details were not available in time to be included in this issue. This information is scheduled to be published in the November issue of the *Newsletter*.)

Announcing - Howard County Farm Bureau's New Web Site.

Howard County Farm Bureau has gone "high tech". Our organization now has a new and exciting web site where you can access all sorts of valuable ag-related information, at any time. Just switch on your computer, tap into the world wide web, and go to www.howardfarmbureau.org.

This new information-packed web site contains, for example, colorful and detailed pages covering Farm Bureau History, Current Farm Bureau Policy, Benefits to Members, Calendar of Future Events, Links to other Agriculturally Related Organizations, and – even this Howard County Farm Bureau Newsletter, including the current as well as some past issues.

Go to www.howardfarmbureau.org real soon and discover for yourself just what this new web site has to offer. Also, let us know what you think. Comments and suggestions would be welcome.

Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast. The first Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast for the 2005-2006 season will meet at **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 8, 2005.** The location, as usual, is the Dining Hall at the Howard County Fair Grounds. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us.

Our guest speaker will be Mr. Robert Dinsmore, Sr. of

Ceresville New Holland. An outstanding speaker, and having been involved for many years in the farm machinery business, Mr. Dinsmore will be discussing some interesting, and perhaps little known, historical information about the evolution of farm machinery. Think about it. How many evolutionary advances have taken place in the mechanization of agriculture just during your lifetime, or during your father's and your grandfather's lifetime? Today we have highly sophisticated tractors, tillage, planting and harvesting equipment. Yet, we are only a couple of generations removed from having to carry out many of these laborious routine chores by hand or with the more primitive assistance of horses, mules and oxen..

If you would like to reminisce with your friends and learn more about the evolution and mechanization of agriculture, don't miss this informative program. Bring your spouse, and/or a friend. Enjoy the food, the fellowship and the lively exchange of information. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 am and the program begins at 8:30 am.

Please RSVP by noon, Tuesday, September 6, by calling either Charlotte Mullinix, at (410) 489-4510 or Martha Clark at (410) 531-3455. The cost of the breakfast is \$8.00 per person, payable at the door.

The formal part of the program is expected to conclude by approximately 9:00 a.m., but you may stay longer if you wish. We look forward to greeting you on **September 8** at the next in this popular series of Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast meetings.

Farm Bureau President's Message. As of August 1st, 2005, Mark Zuzik, the Maryland Farm Bureau Administrator, has resigned. Mark was an energetic individual who did a good job putting Maryland Farm Bureau on sound financial footing. Under his tenure, Maryland Farm Bureau achieved significant growth. The executive committee is searching for a replacement and I feel sure the Bureau's day-to-day operation will carry on efficiently.

I attended the Maryland Agriculture Summit listening session in Frederick on August 1st. The purpose of the Summit is to find ways to make Maryland agriculture more economically viable. I am generally quite skeptical of this type of meeting, but this one did have a good turnout and a lot of good suggestions from the farmers.

While at the Howard County Fair, I picked up a copy of a classy new (at least to me) magazine called *Maryland Life*. I was surprised to see articles about two Howard County farm families.

The long article telling how the fairy tale characters from the Enchanted Forest were moved to Martha Ann Clark's petting zoo at Elioak Farm was interesting, as was the story about the Patrick family of Maple Dell Farm. This is the 64th consecutive year that Maple Dell cattle have been shown at the State Fair. The picture wasn't bad either.

The State Farm Bureau is struggling with the same issue we in Howard County have been, and still are – namely, how to have a vibrant agriculture future in the teeth of extremely high land prices.

The August 15th issue of *The Baltimore Sun* had a long article about the difficulty of maintaining agriculture in today's real estate market. Bill Boniface, Jr. was quoted as saying that it is a catch-22 situation. It is very difficult to find policies that will maximize present farmer's equity and give future farmers a fighting chance.

In regards to the county's new zoning proposal, it is my understanding that the original draft is being modified. The county's attempt to change the zoning in Western Howard County was motivated in large part by the state's threat to decertify our Farmland Preservation Program. It seems very strange to me that the State of Maryland sees fit to denigrate our excellent and award winning Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

Interesting Fact: A half-century ago a gallon of gasoline cost \$0.25 while a gallon of milk cost \$1.00. This statistic says a good deal about who is responsible for the prosperity that Americans enjoy.

— J. Philip Jones, President
Howard County Farm Bureau

University Open House Kicks Off Howard County Farm City Week. The University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) is hosting an Open House celebration at its Central Maryland Research and Education Center (CMREC) in Howard County on Saturday, September

17. The event, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (rain or shine), will kick off Howard County's Farm City Week celebration.

Numerous demonstrations, exhibits, and hands-on activities will give visitors of all ages a better understanding of what the college is, what its faculty and staff do, and how their work affects the lives of Maryland residents. Some highlights will include:

- A visit to the center's milking parlor
- Wagon tours of the facility
- A "hot tub" for plants
- The Grime Watch tent
- Creation of "grain art" at the Kids Growing with Grains exhibit
- Hatching baby chicks
- Plant clinic hosted by college personnel and trained volunteer Master Gardeners
- Availability of AGNR Academic Programs to discuss admissions, majors, scholarships, and financial aid
- And much more!

Join the fun, food, and festivities at CMREC. The facility is located at 4240 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042.

Women in Agriculture Forum.

When: Tuesday, November 15, 2005 8:30 AM - 3:15 PM.
Registration begins at 8:30 AM Program begins promptly at 9:00AM.

Where: Howard County Fairgrounds

Who: Farmers, growers, service providers, educators, and those who care about food, fiber and the viability of agriculture in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Why: An increasing number of women own or assist in the operation of profitable farms and ag-related businesses in Maryland. This daylong forum will recognize and validate their roles as producers and marketers. The program is designed to help meet the growing need for educational programs dedicated to women farmers.

What: Spend the day with people who share similar interests and concerns. Speakers and groups activities will focus on topics that are vital to the viability of all agricultural enterprises and to the quality of life for all Maryland farmers.

Sponsored by: Howard County Farm Bureau Women, Howard County Economic Development Authority & Maryland Cooperative Extension-Howard County Office.

Fostering a network of support for women involved in agriculture and rural communities.

The cost of the forum is \$20 per person. To register, please send a check made payable to HCEDA to: Ginger Myers, Howard County Economic Development Authority, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 500, Columbia, MD 21046.

Along with your check, please provide the following information: Name, Organization, Job Title, Address (City, State, Zip Code).

— Ginger S. Myers
Agriculture Marketing Specialist
Howard County Economic Development Authority

2004 - 2005 Conservation Accomplishments for Howard County. The Howard County Conservation District and the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service have been involved with a variety of conservation assistance and implementation within Howard County over the past year.

The installed conservation practices are fairly numerous for a small agricultural county such as Howard. They have been installed through several state and federal programs. At the state level, the Maryland Agricultural Conservation Cost Share Program (MACS) pays up to 87.5% of the cost of practice installation. The federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) provide from 50% to 75% of the cost of a practice, depending upon the program and conservation practice. For more information on how the District may be able to help on your farm, give us a call at 410-489-7987.

Conservation practices completed over the past fiscal year in Howard County include:

Ag waste Storage structures – 3
Fence projects – 5 (all involved fencing animals from streams)
Riparian buffers – 24 ac
Watering systems for animals – 3
Grade stabilization structures – 3
Filter strip – 1
Roof runoff management – 2
Grassed waterway – 3
Conservation cover – 10 ac of trees and 4 ac of warm season grass
Shallow water area for wildlife – 1
Diversion – 1
Underground outlet systems – 2

These practices were installed by 23 different farm operators on 25 separate parcels.

— Jim Myers, USDA-NRCS
District Conservationist
Howard SCD

Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation Golf Outing Fundraiser. Want to have a fun day and get a little exercise at the same time? Join MAEF supporters at the 10th Annual Golf Outing Fundraiser.

This year's event will be held on Monday, September 12, 2005 at Oakmont Green Golf Club in Hampstead, Maryland. New and experienced golfers alike are encouraged to participate. Lunch at noon will be followed by a 1 pm shotgun start. Fees include lunch, greens fees & cart, beverages, steak supper, prizes and awards. Hole sponsorships are also needed. All proceeds help to support MAEF's educational activities promoting the importance of agriculture.

To register, call the MAEF office at (410) 939-9030, or visit www.maefonline.com. We hope to see a lot of Howard County golfers joining us for a delightful experience.

— Martha Clark, Former President
Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation

Update from Annapolis. TEEN DRIVERS. In an effort to protect teen drivers, six new laws were passed, signed and will take effect October 1, 2005 that will apply to everyone who has a learner's permit or a provisional license.

To protect your teens, parents should share with their teens the following:

Five Quick Ways to Lose Your Driving Privileges:

- 1) Talk on your cell phone while driving
- 2) Drive with friends in your car
- 3) Don't wear your seat belt
- 4) Break curfew
- 5) Get a speeding ticket

For more details, and exceptions, visit the MVA web site at www.mvmaryland.com or call the MVA Customer Service Center at 1-800-950-1MVA (1682).

TAXES & BUDGET. The Governor has brought Maryland from a \$2 Billion structural deficit to a \$1 Billion surplus. As a result, we will be working hard this next session to reduce the State

portion of the Property Tax and, hopefully, reduce your tax burden in other ways.

In addition, I will again introduce the Howard County Aging in Place Act to provide a Real Estate Tax Credit (not just a deferral as passed by the County Council) for Howard County Seniors who have owned and lived in their homes for 20 years or more. The County is perfectly willing to spend money on senior housing and senior programs, it is only fair to give a tax break to seniors who choose to live in their own homes and age in place taking advantage of their own support systems without relying on Government.

NEW DISTRICT 9A OFFICE. Delegate Warren Miller and I have established a District Office in Glenwood. It is located in the office building across Route 97 from Glenwood Gardens. The address is:

3060 State Route 97
Suite 260
Glenwood, MD 21738

The office will be staffed by our assistants, Loretta and Ellen, on Monday and Wednesday from 9am to 5pm and other hours by appointment. We can be reached by phone at (410) 489-2364 (District Office), or at our Annapolis Office at (410) 841-3556.

You are cordially invited to the Grand Opening of our District Office on Tuesday, September 27th from 7-9pm. We are happy to serve you.

— Delegate Gail H. Bates, District 9A
Maryland House of Delegates

Pumpkin and Sweet Corn Twilight Meeting. Come see the 2005 Pumpkin Variety Trials, which include 14 varieties, many with powdery mildew tolerance. You can also see how they responded to two fungicide schemes: conventional and reduced risk. See how 10 different cover crop regimes affected pumpkin production, and hear a discussion of cover crops and pumpkin oedema. See what the kaolin material, Surround, looks like and how it can be used for cucumber beetles. Refresh your pumpkin disease identification skills.

Exciting new sweet corn possibilities, too! See the new fresh market Bt sweet corn hybrids and hear about control methods for non-Bt corn.

If you need special assistance to participate in this program, please contact Mrs. Carolyn Kulp at 410-313-2707 by September 15. A light dinner will be served.

Remember to Stockpile Fescue Starting Now. Stockpiled fescue provides high quality pasture for late fall and winter grazing with twice the sugar (energy) content of spring and summer pasture, high digestibility and high protein. Follow these simple steps to produce high quality stockpiled tall fescue:

1. Graze or mow the fescue down to 2 to 3 inches during early to mid-August. Essential to allow high quality regrowth.
2. Topdress with 50 to 80 lbs Nitrogen per acre during early to mid-August. Apply phosphorus, potassium and lime as recommended.
3. Keep livestock off this pasture until late fall for maximum stockpile production.
4. Where possible, stockpiled tall fescue fields should be strip grazed to minimize trampling and wastage.

— Source:
University of Kentucky Forage News
August, 2005

Supporting Alternative Agriculture. In March of this year I spoke at the Farm Bureau Agribusiness Breakfast about alternative agriculture. I focused on what alternatives might look like for Howard County. It might be new products, new markets, or new production systems. I also outlined some of the challenges that face farmers as they consider alternatives. Time, money, and energy are some of the big challenges. Afterwards, a few attendees approached me and expressed an idea along the lines of, "This isn't for me. I don't see what I can do." While some of these were older farmers who were looking to retire soon from the farm, others were not. As I said back in March, these alternatives are certainly not for everyone. But even if you aren't the one putting up the greenhouse, raising the goats, or selling the flowers, you might play a greater role than you realize.

Many farm businesses are some type of partnership. Maybe it's parents and children, spouses, or members of the same extended family. These partnerships often have set roles for each partner, and they often cross generational lines. Certain partners (often older) may have considerable influence over farm resources. This can range from finances and labor to decisions about which crops are planted in which fields. If one of your farm partners asks about starting something new, what is your answer? Can you help them find money for equipment for a new enterprise? Can you spare them from the regular business to learn about and start something new? What if they need some land to get started? You may not be the one starting the new business, but you can certainly make the way easier for you partners.

If you aren't farming with anyone, you can still influence the success of these alternative enterprises. Helping neighbors is one of the hallmarks of rural communities. While your combine won't help the nursery grower much, names of equipment dealers and suggestions for field crops on fallow land certainly would. Your knowledge of resources in the county can also be invaluable. And, you would, of course, want to invite them to join the Farm Bureau. The support of neighbors and other farmers can make a big difference during challenging times.

Significant business changes take time and energy—to evaluate, implement, and, most importantly, to become profitable. While new enterprises are not appropriate for everyone, you may have more influence over these changes than you think.

— Caragh B. Fitzgerald, Extension Educator
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Maryland Cooperative Extension
Howard County Office

Adjusting to Changing Times. Some of us are probably still holding to the popular notion that the only “real” agriculture here in what was once a very rural Howard County, continues to be what we have long defined as “traditional” agriculture. By traditional, we might envision a pleasant pastoral view of grazing cows perhaps, or maybe broad bucolic fields planted to uniformly spaced rows of gently waving corn, wheat and soybeans, or we might imagine more moderately rolling pastures or sweet-smelling fields of curing alfalfa or clover-timothy hay. But, in these modern times, now that we are well established on our journey into the 21st century, are these concepts of traditional agriculture still realistic?

With a few exceptions, a brief tour around the county should just as quickly convince us that those memorable visions stem largely from a bygone era. These nostalgic scenes do make beautiful memories. But, they are generally quite different from the real Howard County of today. In these times, intermingled with a rapidly spreading suburbia, we still see a little of the old, but mostly we observe a variety of new forms of alternative agriculture quickly spreading over the landscape. There are nurseries and greenhouses, for instance, producing seedling trees, shrubs and flowering plants. There are neat fields of cultivated turf where lawns and athletic fields are being “pre-fabricated” to grace the many new homes, businesses, parks and playing fields that are being built around the county. There are successful pick-your-own farms where the customer can pay for the enjoyment of personally harvesting his/her own fresh *Howard County Grown* fruits and vegetables. And there are many other alternative forms of agriculture.

Reality demands that in order to succeed financially in today's

changing agricultural environment, farmers have had to make adjustments and often find alternative means of deriving an acceptable standard of living from the land. To succeed, these entrepreneurs have had to find often forward-looking, sometimes quite innovative ways of “harvesting” more income from their increasingly valuable land.

One important example of an alternative agriculture practice in Howard County is related in various ways to the increasing number of pleasure horses found in the County. According to the 2002 Maryland Equine Census, there are approximately 87,000 horses in Maryland. Sixty percent of them are kept for recreational purposes. Maryland has about 8 horses per square mile, more than double the horse density of Virginia or Kentucky.

The 2002 Equine Census also reported that Howard County had an equine inventory of 5,190 animals valued at \$61,265,000. These animals were at 1,200 locations involving 11,200 acres and 2,200 people. Many of these sites are in the form of stables that are open to the public. Some of these facilities offer riding lessons as well as board animals. Since not every horse owner has adequate space available at his/her private residence to house his/her horse(s), there is a great demand for these stables and the services they offer.

There are many such facilities in the county. But one typical operation that deserves our attention is Merry Acres Farm located on Triadelphia Road near Glenelg. Until just a few year ago, the owner, Howie Feaga, was a successful dairy farmer (as were his parents before him). But when the price of milk dropped to a level that was equal to or less than the cost of production, Howie realized that he needed to make some changes in his operation if he were to remain in business. Selling the farm, like so many of his neighbors had already done, was not an option for him. Howie loved farming too much to take that route if he could work out a satisfactory alternative.

After much serious consideration and research into the developing market potential, he concluded that there were some viable opportunities for him to consider in the horse-boarding business. Since his 100+ acre farm bordered several hundred additional acres of undeveloped county parkland, land that would be ideal for bridle paths, he decided about ten years ago to sell his milking herd of Holstein dairy cows and “test the water” of the horse-boarding business. Word spread rapidly among the equine community and before long he had all of his newly constructed horse stalls rented out. As demand for more stalls increased, he quickly acted to construct a second barn, this one about three times the size of the first. He received commitments from horse owners for full occupancy well before construction of the second horse barn was completed.

With the future demand for stall space still appearing to be highly favorable, Howie Feaga, in the fall of 2004, decided to expand

his facilities again. He installed over a mile and a half of new pasture paddock fencing. He then researched, planned and built a third barn, this time a really large one containing 21 more horse stalls, tack room, shower, and a spacious, 160 foot by 84 foot indoor riding arena. (See photograph on page 9 of this Newsletter.) The latter features a state-of-the-art dust control system and a two-level visitor observation deck. Adequate lighting has been provided for nighttime activities. In the spring of 2005, the boarders at Merry Acres Farm began moving into this magnificent new facility. If needed for future expansion, the building contains adequate space for another seven horse stalls.

Howie Feaga, a longtime member of the Howard County Farm Bureau and a former member of the Board of Directors, is successfully "adjusting to changing times". He has demonstrated that with imagination, research, hard work, and a good sense of business management, it is possible to make a successful transition from the traditional, a conventional dairy farm operation in this case, to the innovative, a potentially profitable alternative form of agriculture.

The successful alternative form of agriculture that Howie Feaga chose is now a modern, state-of-the-art stable offering numerous riding trails and the boarding and caring of animals for some of the growing number of his Howard County neighbors, people who enjoy owning and riding pleasure horses. Howard County Farm Bureau congratulates Howie Feaga on the bold way that he is facing the future and wishes Merry Acres Farm continued success.

— Allan Bandel
Newsletter Editor

Medicaid Update. Medicaid – or medical welfare – payment for nursing home care is a hot topic of late. Nearly weekly this writer will hear from clients seeking to qualify themselves or a loved one for Medicaid. Because of the high cost of care and the unpredictability of the total outlay, they look for a way to quantify the need and limit exposure to this potentially devastating expense.

Sometimes they are truly destitute, or sometimes the cost of care would leave his or her spouse destitute. These are the kind of folks for which Medicaid was designed.

But sometimes they are moderately or even very well-off, and are seeking to shelter their estate and preserve an inheritance. While there is nothing wrong with these values and goals, our government has sought to build fences around the Medicaid program to eliminate the diversion of limited welfare funds to the intended recipients.

In order to ensure that welfare monies are spent on the poor, Congress has enacted laws to prevent artificial impoverishment – and thus artificial qualification for Medicaid – through strategic transfers of assets. The laws penalize transfers by disallowing Medicaid coverage for nursing home care after an applicant has made a transfer, usually a gift to a child or other loved one, in order to qualify.

In order to allow people to go about their affairs without constantly worrying about qualification for Medicaid, however, the laws have been limited in their applicability. Penalties only apply to transfers relatively close to the date of application for Medicaid. This allows folks to make usual gifts on special occasions, but seeks to limit gifts meant specifically to impoverish and qualify.

When these laws were enacted, transfers within thirty months of the application for Medicaid would cause disqualification, starting on the month of the transfer, for a number of months calculated as the amount of the transfer divided by three thousand dollars, the private pay cost of care at that time. With amendments, the "lookback" period has been extended to thirty-six months, and the denominator of the fraction increased to \$4,300. The lookback period for a transfer to trust is sixty months.

Enterprising financial professionals and attorneys have not failed to notice that one can still make transfers, as long as one makes the transfer beyond the lookback period. Thus, this writer's clients often request help in transferring assets to children or trusts so that they can qualify for Medicaid after the lookback period has run.

A practical problem with the approach is that the hopeful future Medicaid recipient must usually end up really, truly poor for this tactic to work. Most of this writer's clients retort that "I haven't worked all my life to be poor. I'd rather take my chances."

Federal and state budgets are straining. According to a recent NPR report, more than seventy percent of Medicaid spending is for the elderly and disabled. More than sixty percent of long-term care in nursing homes is paid for by Medicaid.

No one knows what our elected representatives will do. What is certain, however, is that unless someone provides a radically new approach to the problem or its solution, the costs will continue to escalate faster than the growth in the economy.

Increasing taxes or printing money so the government can afford to pay for increased costs of care will depress economic growth in the long run – and, besides, "the government" doesn't have any money. It's all your money and mine that "the government" spends. While the taxpayers are generally content to pay for long-term care for the poor, they are reluctant to pay for the same thing so that the middle-class can leave a larger

inheritance to their children. Thus, Congress will have to pay for ever-more-expensive care with no new dollars in the budget.

To further restrict transfers, Congress is considering changing the rules. As reported in this column several months ago (November 19, 2004), proposals to extend the lookback period to seventy-two months, begin the disqualification period on the date of application (instead of the date of transfer as under current law) and to decrease the denominator for the disqualification period fraction to the Medicaid pay rate (approximately half of the current fraction) have been bandied about.

Simultaneously, Congress and the States are encouraging people to take responsibility for the cost of their own care through offering tax breaks for long-term care insurance, both at the time of purchase and upon receipt of benefits. Thus, while directing us toward a private-industry solution, the government is increasing the penalties for voluntary impoverishment – the classic “carrot and stick.” This does not seem to bode well for those hoping for an expansion of governmental programs.

Many financial professionals can provide information on and illustrations for long-term care insurance. The February 16, 2005 column in this space provided guidelines for selecting a policy. Work with your financial professional to construct a policy that will meet your needs and fit within your budget. Take the worry out of long-term care.

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2005

- Sep 7 **Pasture Walk.** Horizon Organic Dairy, 11471 Augustine Herman Hwy, Kennedyville, MD*
- Sep 8 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 am. Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. (Read more details on page 1 of this Newsletter.)
- Sep 10 **Horse Pasture Walk.** 9:30 am to noon. Howard County. Location: To be announced.*
- Sep 12 **Annual MAEF Golf Outing.** Oakmont Greens, Hampstead, MD. Contact MAEF at (410) 939-9030.

- Sep 12 **Agricultural Land Preservation Board.** Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. Contact: Joy Levy. (410) 313-5407.
- Sep 17 **University of Maryland Central Maryland Research and Education Center Open House.** 4240 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD.*
- Sep 19 **Horse Pasture Walk.** 9:30 am to 12 noon. Location to be announced.*
- Sep 22 **Greenhouse Growers Appreciation Day.** For information, call 1-800-248-2818.*
- Sep 24 **Pasture Walk.** Gamagrass, stockpiling fescue, beef. 1 to 3 pm. Clark Aist Farm, 11701 Van Brady Road, Prince George’s County, MD. Contact: Lydia Donovan at lydia.donovan@md.usda.gov, or (443) 482-2907.*
- Sep 24-25 **Farm Heritage Days.** The Hebb Farm (Across Rt. 144 from the Howard County Fairgrounds), West Friendship, MD.*
- Sep 17-Oct 2 **Farm-City Celebration.** For information on sponsorship and a schedule of events, please contact Ginger Myers at (410) 313-6500.
- Sep 28 **Pumpkin and Sweet Corn Twilight Tour.** 5 to 7 pm. (Light dinner included). See descriptive article in this Newsletter. Wye Research and Education Center, Queenstown, MD.*
- Oct 6 **Annual Howard County Farm Bureau Business Meeting.** Adoption of Resolutions, Election of Officers, Open to the Public. 7:30 pm., 4-H Building, Howard County Fairgrounds. West Friendship, MD.
- Oct 6 **Better Nursery Container Production Seminar.** Audience: Nursery owners using container production. Location: Edrich Farms Nursery, 9700 Old Court Road, Baltimore, MD. Info: (301) 596-9413, www.agnr.umd.edu/IPMNET *
- Oct 15 **Animal Fiber Expo.** Western Maryland Research and Education Center, Keedysville, MD.*
- Oct 18 **Pasture Walk - Stockpiling Fescue, Mountain Grazing of Cattle.** Walk - 9 to 12 noon, pasture planning work session - 1 to 3 pm. Allegany County. Carl Robinette Farm, Hout Lane NE, Flintstone, MD. Contact: Lydia Donovan at lydia.donovan@md.usda.gov, or (443) 482-2907.*

- Oct 26 **Beginning Farmer Series.** Wednesday evenings, 7 to 9:30 pm. Howard County MCE Office, Ellicott City, MD. Contact: Howard MCE at (410) 313-2707 or Howard County Economic Development Authority at (410) 313-6500.*
- Nov **Annual Howard County Farm Bureau Banquet.** Date and place to be announced in letter to membership.
- Nov 2 **New Private Pesticide Applicator Training.** (New Applicators). 10 am to 12 noon. Frederick County MCE, (301) 631-3576.*
- Nov 2&3 **Mid-Atlantic Vegetable Workers Conference.** Howard Johnson's Hotel and Conference Center. Newark, DE.*
- Nov 5 **Small Farm Conference.** University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Princess Anne, MD.*
- Nov 9 **Private Pesticide Applicator Re-certification.** 1 to 3 pm. Frederick County MCE, (301) 631-3576.*
- Nov 9 **New Private Pesticide Applicator EXAM. (New applicators)** 10 am. Frederick County MCE, (301) 631-3576.*
- Nov 9-10 **Herbaceous Perennial 2-Day Production Conference.** Contact: Hank Doong, (301) 937-4166.
- Nov 10 **Howard County Agri-Business Breakfast.** 8:00 am. Dining Hall, Howard County Fairgrounds. West Friendship, MD.
- Nov 15 **Women in Agriculture Conference.** Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, MD. Contact: Howard County Economic Development Authority. (410) 313-6500 or Howard County MCE, (410) 313-2707.*
- Nov 17 **Nutrient Applicator Voucher Training & Re-certification.** 10 am to 12 noon and 1 to 3 pm. (2 hours, attend one session only). Frederick County MCE, (301) 631-3576.*
- Nov 29 **Greenhouse Bedding Plant and Potted Plant Production Training.** Audience: Greenhouse growers. Location: University of MD Cooperative Extension Office, Talbot County, Easton, MD.

Info: Shannon Potter (410) 822-1244 or Suzanne Klick (301) 596-9413.*

- Dec 6 **Pasture Walk.** Stockpiling fescue, winter grazing. 9 am to 12 noon. Bill Poffenberger Farm, 6000 Mondell Road, Sharpsburg, MD.*
- Dec 6 **Pasture Planning Workshop.** 1 to 3 pm. Washington County MCE. Contact: Lydia Donovan at lydia.donovan@md.usda.gov, or (443) 482-2907.*
- Dec 16 **Nursery Pest Management Conference.** Audience: Landscape managers, nursery managers, grounds maintenance, lawn maintenance managers and certified pesticide applicators for landscape, ponds and nurseries. Location: Carroll Community College, Westminster, MD. Info: (301) 596-9413 or www.agnr.umd.edu/IPMNET. **Counts toward re-certification for category III, ponds, weeds, industrial weed and private applicators pesticide license renewal.**

*[NOTE] Unless otherwise indicated, contact Caragh Fitzgerald, Maryland Cooperative Extension — Howard County, (410) 313-2707 for more information. **Many programs require pre-registration and/or a fee.** For programs sponsored by Maryland Cooperative Extension, if you need special assistance to participate, please contact the person indicated at least two weeks in advance of the event.

Something to Think About.

"There is no better demonstration of faith than a man planting seed in a field."

As the farmers toured the corn research plots, the experiment station agronomist said, "What we're breeding for is a dwarf corn with short stalks and smaller ears closer to the ground."

When the agronomist paused, a sand-hill farmer blurted out, "Shucks, professor, you don't have to breed for that. I've been growing corn like that all my life.

— from: *Country Chuckles, Cracks & Knee-Slappers*
Edited by Mike Lessiter



Perched on a slight knoll at Merry Acres Farm and overlooking a small portion of the mile and a half of new paddock fencing is Howie Feaga's recently completed enclosed riding arena and its attached modern horse stall facility located on Walt-Anne Drive off Triadelphia Road near Glenelg, MD. (Refer to article beginning on page 5.)