

FRONT PAGE

October 2001 edition; Newsletter of the Carroll County Land Trust

September 11, 2001

Atrocities of that fateful day will remain with us for a long time to come. For the families, and friends of families, who lost loved ones, we hope and pray they will receive divine comfort, strength and support. The remarkable support given by people of good will everywhere, gives hope, confidence and resolve for conquering such evil.

Membership on the Increase

As a result of outreach efforts, membership in the Trust has significantly increased. The roll now carries nearly 100 members. The increase is a direct result of a bulk mailing appeal to the Finksburg Postal Area where 20 new members joined the Trust. A subsequent mailing to the Sykesville-Eldersburg-Freedom Postal Area resulted in 26 additional new members. In addition, many others while declining membership, also contributed financially to the efforts of the Trust as a result of these mailing appeals. The Trust is very grateful to all contributors. A similar mailing to families in the Mt. Airy Postal Area this coming Spring is planned. This will coincide with the upcoming 2002 annual contributions of members of the Carroll County Land Trust this Spring.

Marian Nash

Easement Donation

The Carroll County Land Trust and the Maryland Environmental Trust have been the joint recipients of a donated conservation easement on 34 acres of farmland owned by Marian Nash, in Manchester. The farmland which will now be permanently preserved will make a lasting contribution to the Town and its environs. Located at the corner of Water Tank Rd. and Miller Station Rd., this highly visible and highly productive farmland adjoins the Town's Christmas Tree Park. The easement donation is pending approval by the Board of Public Works in Annapolis and will be the first in Carroll County to qualify for **Maryland's new income tax credit, in addition to the County's new property tax credit.** (See articles below)

New State Income Tax Credit

Property owners who qualify and donate conservation easements to the Maryland Environmental Trust or Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation may be eligible to take up to 70% of the value of the donation. The maximum credit allowed per year is \$5,000 against any state income tax liability with the ability to carry any excess forward for up to 15 years, in addition to any federal income tax deductions or County property tax deductions for donated easements.(Over)

NEW PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

In August, the County Commissioners of Carroll County enacted a major proposal of the Carroll County Land Trust. A new tax credit will apply beginning with the next tax year July 1, 2001. The new law provides that where a landowner donates a conservation easement to the Carroll County Land Trust, he or she is eligible to apply for a property tax credit on all the land under a donated easement--including the improved land of one homesite. Buildings, structures and other improvements are not eligible for the credit which is strictly confined to the tax on the land. The credit, an equity incentive, can be taken for 15 years. Land Trust directors anticipate the combined opportunity of this property tax credit and the new state income tax credit (described in the article above), will encourage eligible landowners to consider the equity benefits in donating a conservation easement. Members who know farm land owners interested in creating a conservation easement given these new tax benefits, can help by encouraging them to contact the Land Trust at: 410-848-8247 for more information.

USDA GRANT PENDING

The Trust is currently awaiting receipt of matching grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the amount of \$89,622. These funds would be added

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to County funds toward the purchase of a conservation easement on 139 acres of prime county farm owned by Deborah Gwynne. This is a major undertaking and effort of the CCLT to help secure available funds to put toward the continuing effort of preserving farmland in Carroll County. This project, is the third **purchased** easement the Trust has been involved in facilitating as well as serving as Grantee. The grant funds sought are appropriated under the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 and are earmarked for use by competing private non-profit 501c3 organizations such as the Carroll County Land Trust. **Front Page** will report on the outcome in our next edition of the newsletter.

COMMITTEES TO BE FORMED

With the increase in membership, the Directors are planning on creating a number of opportunities for members to help with the mission of the Trust by serving on committees to be formed. President Dave Grayson, with assistance of Board member directors George Grier and Donald Hoffman will help establish the new committees and their respective charges as well as assist with selection and appointment of members to the committees established.

Front Page will keep Carroll County Land Trust members posted on this initiative as it develops. The Board of Directors will be looking forward to the involvement of new members willing to help out by serving on Committees that will increase the Trust's effectiveness.