

# FRONT PAGE

Newsletter of the *Carroll County  
Land Trust*; March 2013 edition.

*Edmund R. "Ned" Cueman, Editor*

## ATTENTION!

\*\*\***HOLD THE DATE**\*\*\*

Wednesday, April 17, 2013

### **MEMBERS ANNUAL MEETING**

**6:45 P.M.** Meet & Greet

**7:00 P.M.** Invocation & Buffet Meal

**Place:** County Extension Office Bldg.  
(end of Smith Ave.) Westminster, MD

#### **Agenda:**

- + Short Business Meeting
- + Commissioners Landowner Recognitions
- + Ag Land Preservation Program Update
- + Potential Positive Program Indicators

See **RSVP** form enclosed if planning to attend)

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### 2013 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Members' Annual Contribution Slip is enclosed along with notice above of the upcoming Annual Meeting. Please don't forget to make your **annual tax deductible contribution** for **2013**. As always, your contribution is vital to helping the Carroll County Land Trust carry out its **mission** of helping to permanently preserve Carroll County's agricultural land. **Many thanks!**

### **More on the Annual Meeting Program**

At the March meeting of the CCLT Board of Directors, the upcoming Program for the Annual Meeting was discussed. It was determined that the Program include a presentation revealing insights or opportunities that appear to be on the horizon as a result of the County's steadfast and long term commitment to permanently preserving its agricultural land. This monumental endeavor is now in its 33<sup>rd</sup> year and the CCLT Board believes that the dividends to the County may be potentially huge. *Quantifying* these dividends, whether in dollars or by other measures, is something the County Ag Preservation Office hopes to be able to do. Most all counties in Maryland, including Carroll, are being challenged and currently overwhelmed by federal and State government mandates directed at meeting clean water standards for the Chesapeake Bay. These mandates cost landowners and taxpayers money. It will be important for the permanent land preservation *accomplished* in this county to be properly credited and factored into any '*real world accounting*' under these mandates directed at meeting clean water standards for the Chesapeake Bay. Ralph Robertson, Program Administrator, and Deborah Bowers, Preservation Specialist have graciously agreed to work on this presentation for the Annual Meeting program.

### **Happy Birthday—we're 22 years old! Thanks to our members!!**

As a local 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, the Carroll County Land Trust operates financially from (over)

individual contributions of its members and any sponsors. While it does not receive any operating funding from any government, it has been dedicated from its inception in 1991 to the present, to doing everything it can to help the County reach its goal of 100,000 acres of permanently preserved farmland. Along with the Carroll County Farm Bureau and the Grange, the Carroll County Land Trust serves as an advocate for the importance of permanent farmland preservation. It provides technical assistance without cost to eligible landowners volunteering to permanently preserve their land and will serve as a grantee and custodian of the easement either solely, or jointly with Carroll County, the Maryland Environmental Trust, or Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.

This past year the Trust received two (2) additional *donated* conservation easements, one from Gary and Dorothy Saville in Bachman Valley, and one from William and Linda Gray near Beaver Run outside Westminster.

### **USDA Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program**

The Land Trust is still in the process of determining whether to apply for easement funds from USDA's Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). As noted in previous newsletters, the Trust was successful in securing grant funds in prior years from USDA in excess of \$1.5 million dollars to match and leverage available county funds for the purchase of farm preservation easements in Carroll County. Program and funding requirements have been and are the issues that will determine renewed participation.

### **“Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012” Last year’s Senate Bill 236**

This law is now on the books. As reported last year in *Front Page*, the law is about limiting septic systems in rural areas, increasing requirements and specifications for installing permitted septic systems (which operate with significantly higher maintenance costs). The ramifications of this law remain to be seen; particularly the effect on preservation programs which result in permanent preservation easements by landowners who voluntarily forego pursuing subdivision development (equity) in exchange for purchase of their development rights. If there is little or no equity to exchange, experience to date suggests it is unlikely there will be any incentive for landowners to place a permanent easement on their land, unless they simply desire to do so. Such landowners are few and far between. For that reason, the CCLT developed the County Property Tax Credit for a *donated* easement which the County Commissioners adopted several years ago; i.e. to provide some incentive to landowners to do so and to secure additional permanent easements at a relatively minimal cost to the county when compared to the cost of a purchased permanent easement.

### ***BEQUESTS***

For those who wish to remember the Carroll County Land Trust in their wills, the following form is suggested:

*I give and bequest to the Carroll County Land Trust, Inc., for its general purpose the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_.*

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