

FRONT PAGE

Newsletter of the *Carroll County
Land Trust*; March 2016 edition.

Edmund R. "Ned" Cueman, Editor

ATTENTION!

*****HOLD THAT DATE*****

Wednesday Eve, April 20, 2016

MEMBERS ANNUAL MEETING for 25th year

6:45 P.M. Meet & Greet

7:00 P.M. Invocation & Buffet Meal

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

Program Agenda:

- + Very Short Business Meeting
- + Commissioners' Landowner Recognitions
- + Ag Land Preservation Update—
Agri-Culture of Permanence
Continues Gaining Momentum!
- + Fundraising Raffle (new!)

See **RSVP** form enclosed if planning to
attend the Annual Meeting

2016 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Members: your **Annual Contribution Slip** is enclosed along with this notice of the upcoming Annual Meeting. Please don't forget to make your **annual tax deductible contribution** for 2016. As always, your contribution is vital to helping the Carroll County Land Trust carry out its **mission** of helping to

permanently preserve 100,000 acres of Carroll County's agricultural land.

Many, many thanks and God bless!

New this Year at the Annual Meeting: Fundraising Raffle

Several really good raffle items have been generously donated by local farmers, clubs, businesses, and artists. Tickets will be available for \$1 each or 5 for \$6. All monies received from the raffle will be dedicated to the Carroll County Land Trust's mission of securing additional land preservation easements in Carroll County toward the 100,000 acre goal.

More March Madness and Annual Meeting Program Thoughts

As noted last year in the March edition of *Front Page*, our Annual meeting in April co-insides with the NCAA college basketball teams across the nation striving to succeed and make it to the 'Final Four' and so it is with Carroll County which accepted a challenge in 1980—even more daunting-- **to succeed in permanently preserving 100,000 acres of its agricultural land base, and its agricultural industry for future generations before it was too late to do so.** The main difference is that for Carroll County, the timeline to succeed is not a single season, but a generation of seasons --the 'longest of hauls' requiring steadfast determination and continuous financial commitment.

Carroll County's Ag Preservation Program is now in its 36th year and is closing in on 70,000 acres of land permanently preserved with **68,031**

(over)

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(March Madness—continued)

acres (as of 12/31/15), thanks to all the farm landowners who have **voluntarily elected** to permanently preserve their farmland, and the **citizens and taxpayers of Carroll County strongly supporting the effort**. Equally as important are the **nine (9) consecutive County Commissioners Boards who have made the necessary financial commitment to accomplish this goal as a critical top county priority which indirectly transcends and influences the well being of Carroll county citizens and other county priorities including education, health, infrastructure, economic development and more.**

County Property Tax Credit and the ‘Remaining Portion’ Initiative

This new CCLT initiative to generate additional land preservation acres to add to the County’s total is underway. **Three (3) new donated easements have been recorded placing an additional 54 acres under easement** over the last year on remainder properties—**all contiguous to preserved farmland**. More are in the pipeline. However because these donated easements typically involve securing mortgage subordinations from lenders holding mortgages including home equity loans, the technical expenses for the Trust in dealing with some lenders has significantly increased. As a result, the CCLT Board of Directors instituted a special appeal to the membership for a supplemental tax deductible contribution for 2015 resulting in an additional \$1,300 of funds which were gratefully received. In addition the Board is working on

developing a corporate sponsorship roster, considering some cost sharing of easement expenses with grantors of donated easements, developing other fund raising activities, and seeking an operating grant from the Maryland Environmental Trust from the Janice Hollmann grant fund. In the past, being able to provide technical assistance without expense to landowners donating easements on their land has been a real incentive. The other real incentive is the County Property Tax Credit for those who donate a permanent preservation easement to a qualifying organization such as the CCLT. These “remainder” properties are not entitled to additional residential lots by zoning and recorded plat stipulations, and not eligible for the purchase of development rights under the County Land Preservation Program. However, many of these “remainder” properties throughout the County are eligible for the County Property Tax Credit when a **donated preservation easement** has been granted by the landowner **and these properties are important pieces of the puzzle to achieve a critical mass of permanently preserved agricultural land base**, on which the farming industry can survive and prosper into the distant future.

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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