



The Queen Anne's Chronicle

CELEBRATING QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

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INFORMING THE CITIZENS

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY INSPIRES

What is it about Queen Anne's County and the Eastern Shore that attracts artists?

- Is it the always interesting, yet constantly changing, quality of light on our landscape of marshes and waterways, fields and forests?
- Is it the shapes of watermen's boats and sailboats, or the shapes of the traditional architecture of our small towns and farm houses?
- Is it the people and animals that interact with this landscape and become somehow specially ours?

We see and respond to these remarkable sights, but then the light changes or we move along. It is our artists who capture the fleeting images for us, so we can return to them and linger with their interest, their beauty, their wonder.

Queen Anne's County inspires many artists, and they respond in a wide variety of media including jewelry, ceramics, photography, cloth, pastels, water color, acrylics, oil, charcoal, and other visual media.

Our local artists are well supported by three arts organizations in QAC (that the *Chronicle* knows of), and by a number of galleries here in Queen Anne's County, as well as in neighboring Chestertown, Easton, and Annapolis.

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Photo Credit - Sara Linda Poly



Photo Credit - Nancy Tankersley

Artists come to Queen Anne's County from all over to paint our fields and farms, forests and open skies. Above, painters set up their easels to capture the interaction of light and landscape on a local farm.

CITIZENS SPEAK OUT - ON SCHOOLS BUDGET

The annual budget hearings each spring provide an opportunity, not routinely available, for citizens to express their views - in public, on camera, and at a pre-announced time - before the Commissioners take action on a proposal. Accordingly, the *Chronicle* thought it would be informative to look in on at least one of these hearings and see what the citizens were talking about.

We arbitrarily chose the first of the hearings, held at Bayside Elementary on Kent Island on May 20. As you can read in this article, it turned out to be overwhelmingly about the Board of Education's FY 2014 budget request presented to the County Commissioners at their April 30 meeting (see Commissioners' Meetings in this issue).

The hearing lasted about an hour and twenty minutes and can be viewed in its entirety on our indispensable QACTV's Public Meetings On The Web, as can the other two budget hearings on the following days in Centreville (13 speakers) and in Sudlersville (31 speakers). We note the time each speaker began so that interested readers can go conveniently to the QACTV tape for their full statements.

Deborah Mason (13:05): Speaking as

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EMPLOYMENT ON THE SHORE - APRIL 2013

	Labor force	Employed	Unemployed	
			Number	Rate
CAROLINE	16,380	15,122	1,258	7.7%
TALBOT	18,305	17,007	1,298	7.1%
KENT	10,695	9,933	762	7.1%
QUEEN ANNE'S	27,891	26,251	1,640	5.9%

■ Maryland Unemployment Rate: 6.5% ■ National Unemployment Rate: 7.5%

Source: <http://www.bls.gov/bls/unemployment.htm>

EGRWSS EDDM

Non-Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Baltimore, MD
Permit #1



Corsica River

Oil on linen board

"It is the greatest challenge to me to try and capture the spirit and feel of the places I visit with my box of colors, brushes and canvas. Standing there, out in the wind, the sun, even the bugs . . . You are IN your painting and you just go for it . . . trusting your eye, trusting your instincts, hoping all the things you've learned ride with you . . . and if you're lucky, a plein air painting is born."

Lani Browning has been a plein air oil painter for over twenty five years. One of ten plein air painters invited to paint at the Forbes family *Chateau de Balleroy* in Normandy France, she has also been a juried artist in the "Paint Annapolis" and "Plein Air Easton" competitions.

In 2008, as a member of The Washington Society of Landscape Painters, Lani embarked on a partnership with The Nature Conservancy for an exciting and rewarding project in which the artists painted the sanctuaries established to preserve rare and endangered species and ecosystems in the Maryland, Virginia and Washington DC area. In 2009, another partnership was formed with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, culminating in an exhibition at the University of Maryland University College in 2010.

Selected exhibitions of her paintings have been shown in Easton at the South Street Gallery, where she is a juried member artist, and at the Academy Art Museum; at the Art League Gallery and the Atheneum (Fine Arts Association of Virginia) in Alexandria; at the Maryland Hall of the Arts in Annapolis; and at galleries in Washington and New York.

Lani will have a show at Adkins Arboretum from August 5 through September 27. She also shows with the Washington Society of Landscape Painters. As the archivist for this historic Society, she is currently working on a book about Society members dating back to 1913.

Lani finds the Eastern Shore a place of peace and beauty and loves living in Queen Anne's County (her previous home was near Tyson's Corner, VA). Her website www.lanibrowning.com contains a gallery of her work.

Queen Anne's Co. Inspires, continued from Page 1

This issue highlights a few of the County's very successful recognized artists and the organizations that promote and support the large number of talented artists who call Queen Anne's County home. The artists and examples of their work are spread throughout our pages.

Supportive Arts Organizations

Our County has truly vibrant arts organizations. Full of activities, projects and opportunities, they are not-for-profits that thrive due to their energetic and dedicated volunteers and the support of local businesses and other non-profits.

THE QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL – A STATE-DESIGNATED ARTS COUNCIL



Home: 206 South Commerce Street, Centreville, in an 1829 building that was formerly a church. Gallery and performance space; classroom space; meeting and office space

Website: www.arts4u.info

Email: arts4u@arts4u.info

Phone: 410.758.2520

Executive Director: Darcey Schoeninger

Board of Directors: 10 members

Membership: around 350; 20% are artists, primarily visual.

Hours: June through August – Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. September through May – Tuesday through Friday

9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The QAC Arts Council stages art shows, special events and performances; offers workshops and classes; provides grants to schools and organizations for artistic programming; provides artist-in-residence programs in schools, scholarships to high school students, a free summer concert series, "The Heck with the Malls" at Christmas, and artisan fairs; displays art work for purchase; and refers QAC artists to shows outside our County to help build resumes.

By Maryland law, every county has a designated Arts Council which receives some State funding in the form of a block grant based in part on population. The Arts Council is also supported by additional grants, fund raisers, membership dues, classes and workshop revenues, merchandise sales, concerts, local government and non-profit organizations, local businesses, special events, facility rental, sponsorships, partnerships, and volunteer efforts.

KENT ISLAND FEDERATION OF ARTS – 50 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR!



Home: 405 Main Street, Stevensville – a 100 year-old Victorian house with five gallery rooms, gift shop, office and class space

Website: www.kifa.us

Phone: 410.643.7424

Email: info@kifa.us

Administrator: Ellen Sullivan

Board of Directors: 12 members

Membership: around 240, one-third to one-half are artists

Gallery Hours: Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Saturday, 1-4 p.m. (Docents available Wednesday-Saturday 1-4 p.m.)

The Kent Island Federation of Arts (KIFA) stages 12 art shows a year (some judged), including a *Children's Showcase* in March; provides classes and workshops held at the KIFA building and other locations in the community; supports a gift shop at the Gallery selling local artists' works; displays artists' work in local medical buildings and at QAC Exploration Center; and stages events including the very successful *Gardens by Sea* garden tour with plein air painters held annually in June.

KIFA is supported by membership dues, grants, fund-raisers; classes and workshop revenues and gallery fees; in-kind donations from friends and local businesses; merchandise sales; and special events, sponsorships, partnerships, and volunteer efforts.

ARTISTS ROUND TABLE (ART EAST)

Meeting place: Kent Island Library

Phone: 410.643.9075 or 410.604.0557

Executive Director: Wendy Woodham

Founder: Maureen Bannon

Membership: 48

Meeting times: Last Tuesday of each month, 9:30- 11:30 a.m., plus other planned outings

ART East is a place for artists of all media to network, critique, exchange ideas and support each other. Monthly meetings frequently have speakers, focused discussion, or demonstrations. Members take trips to galleries and artists' studios. ART East stages an exhibit every two years, and its members frequently exhibit in other venues. An organization founded by artists, for artists, and about artists, ART East is supported by the minimal dues (\$10.) paid by its members and by their volunteer efforts.

FARM STANDS – WE HAVE WHAT CITY-DWELLERS CRAVE

Our farmers' faithful efforts and Queen Anne's County's "brown gold" -- its wonderfully productive soil -- are once again rewarding us with tasty, locally-grown produce.

One of the good things about farm stands, in addition to their very fresh produce, is that they're usually a family operation, so you get to know the family that runs the stand. And you may run into neighbors or friends who are also coming by for some freshly-picked corn or tomatoes. So, quite often, your stop for produce becomes a pleasant time for a visit as well!

We have listed all the farm stands, farmers' markets, and wineries/vineyards that we know of, and we offer our apologies to any we have omitted.

LOCAL PRODUCE STANDS.

PICK YOUR OWN FARMS, VINEYARDS & WINERIES

ARNOLD FARMS

219 Double Creek Road
Chestertown
410.778.4833
Home grown vegetables
Tues-Sun, 10-6

BENGUSTA MARKET

1214 Barclay Road, Barclay
410.758.3583
Vegetables and melons –
home grown
Fri-Sun, 10-5

CASCIA VINEYARDS

1200 Thompson Creek Road
Stevensville
410.604.2127
Tasting Room
Sat-Sun, 12-4

CASSINELLI WINERY AND VINEYARD

3830 Church Hill Road
(Route 213)
www.cassinelliwinery.com
Pick your own plums,
peaches, apples, pears
End of June-October
Tasting Room Sat-Sun, 12-5

CENTREVILLE FARMERS' MARKET

Court House Square
Centreville
Local farmers have stands
Wed 3-7, Sat 9-1

FARMER JOHN'S

324 Romancoke Road
Stevensville
410.643.CORN
Local produce in season
Mon-Sat 9-7; Sun 9-6

GODFREY'S FARM

302 Leager Road

Sudlersville

www.godfreysfarm.com

Farm stand and pick
your own
Large variety of home grown
fruit and vegetables.
Mon-Fri 7-6; Sat-Sun, 7-5

KENT FORT FARM

135 Eastern Lane
Stevensville
410.643.1650
Home-grown produce,
U-Pick peaches, blackberries
Wed & Fri 9-2; Sat 9-4;
Sun 10-4
Peach Festival Aug 3, 10-4

KENT ISLAND FARMERS' MARKET

Christ Episcopal Church
830 Romancoke Road,
Stevensville
www.kentislandfarmersmarket.com
Wide variety of fruit,
vegetables, dairy products,
meat, chicken, baked goods,
etc., some organic
Thursdays, 3:30-6:30 year
around, except Thanksgiving
(on Tues. before)

LOWERY'S PRODUCE

1908 Main Street, Chester
410.643.4557
Home grown and local
produce
7 days a week, 9-7

MASON FARMS MARKET

1905 Ruthsburg Road
(Route 304), Queen Anne
www.masonsheritage.com
Home grown and local fruit,
vegetables, baked goods,

dairy products

Wed-Mon 10-6, closed Tues

PERKINS PRODUCE & FLOWERS

301 Wright's Neck Road
Centreville, off Route 18
Local produce
Mon-Fri (except Tues)
10-5:30; Sat 9-5; Sun 9-4

TILMON'S ISLAND WINERY

755 Millington Road
Sudlersville
443.480.5021
Wine from grapes grown
within 20 miles of winery
Tasting Sat 12-5

TOMAHAWK FARMS

213 at Windy Acres Farm
Lane, 6 miles north of
Centreville
443.829.7776
Vegetables, flowers, breads &
Bakery items
Daily during daylight hours

WHITE MARSH ACRES

515 White Marsh Road,
Centreville
www.whitemarshorchard.com
410.490.6137

Pick your own peaches,
nectarines, plums, apples,
pears, blackberries
Daylight hours, July on

WHITE PINES FARM

213 & White Pines Lane
Church Hill
410.490.1369
Wide variety of home-grown
produce
7 days a week, 10-6



Field of Play 40"x 48"

Oil on board

Marcy Dunn Ramsey says she has loved to paint since childhood, when she delighted in painting alongside her artist mother. As an adult, she has met with success as an art teacher, commercial artist, and illustrator. She says her move 26 years ago to a home in northern Queen Anne's County on the Chester River had a huge impact on her painting.

She describes being drawn to the Chester, and then, not satisfied, wanting to be ever nearer to the River to see and experience it up close. At times when the light is so often dramatic -- early morning or late afternoon -- Marcy goes out in her kayak to photograph whatever strikes her about the river. Back in her studio, in the process of drawing and painting, she sees echoing shapes, contrasts, tensions, elements she didn't see earlier.

Marcy writes: "The eloquent gestures of looping, twisted reeds, the intersections in a stand of marsh grass, the staccato shapes of dark and light stalks, or the muted forms of submerged leaves act as elements in a language of secret signs that if deciphered might initiate the viewer to a new level of comprehension. The tension between the marsh's vital chaos and the serene flatness of the reflective surface of the water is also mysterious, like Alice's looking glass, and draws the viewer into it and under its spell."

Marcy sees her beloved Chester River as a life-blood, as irreplaceable and vulnerable. Her devotion to the River also expresses itself in her commitment to the Chester River Association, an advocacy organization for the health of the Chester River and the living resources it supports, where she currently serves as President of the Board of Directors.

A very successful artist, Marcy has had many shows and won many prizes, as well as illustrating over 25 children's books by popular authors including Matt Christopher and Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.

The Carla Massoni Gallery in Chestertown carries her work. You can see more of Marcy's paintings by visiting the Gallery's website or Marcy's own website, www.marcydundramsey.com

AUGUST = FAIR + FUN

Local produce and handmade goods, lots of livestock, mighty farm equipment, a carnival atmosphere with rides and games, good country food and music, contests of every kind, young farmers showing and sleeping by their animals -- it's the Queen Anne's County Fair!

This always-interesting, always-fun event will take place for the 71st year from August 12 through 17 at the 4-H Park on Route 18 between Centreville and Queenstown. Don't miss it -- and don't miss visiting the Museum of Eastern Shore Life, right there on the Fairgrounds.

The Museum is a fascinating look back into earlier times and ways of doing things. A special thanks to those who spend so much time and effort to make our County Fair -- and the Museum of Eastern Shore Life -- enriching and enjoyable for all!



Great Blue Heron Platter

Stoneware

Jean Higgins trained in design, earned a BFA and MS from Syracuse University, and taught at Cornell University for six years. Jean had been primarily making and exhibiting pottery in New York when she moved to Queen Anne's County in 1989.

Waiting for her new pottery studio to be completed, Jean painted. She found that her new Queen Anne's County home greatly influenced her work, and she gradually merged the disciplines of pottery and painting, determined to design pieces unique to the Chesapeake Bay region. The abundant wildlife and animals on her farm became her models.

Jean is a photographer and illustrator as well as a potter who works in porcelain and clay. Today, many homes on the Shore and elsewhere display and use Jean's work. (In fact, an American chef used Jean's serving pieces in an international competition in Paris.) In 1996 she created commemorative plates for the U.S., Israeli, and Syrian delegations gathered on Maryland's Eastern Shore. In 1997, Jean completed illustrations for Dr. James R. Rooney's update of his classic text, *The Lame Horse*.

Jean's work can be found in collections across the U.S., and in Great Britain, France, Germany, the Middle East, Australia, and Japan. She displays and sells her creations at numerous locations and events, including the QAC Arts Council's "The Heck with the Malls" and the Centreville Rotary's "Artisans Festival." You can see more of her work on her website, www.glenelm.net.

The Queen Anne's Chronicle

**The Queen Anne's Chronicle is published by
Queen Anne's Conservation Association.**

Chris Pupke – Chairman of the Board

Jay Falstad – Executive Director

Mary Campbell – Editor

Queen Anne's Conservation Association (QACA), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, is the Eastern Shore's oldest conservation organization. Its mission is to promote stewardship of Queen Anne's County's natural resources and to protect its rural character and small towns while encouraging the management of prudent and sustainable growth.

Queen Anne's Conservation Association

P.O. Box 157 | Centreville, MD 21617 | www.QACA.org

COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS

Here are selected items summarized from the approved minutes and QACTV coverage of the County Commissioners' meetings.

April 9, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Agreed to award, Commissioner Olds opposed, a contract for the design of a building in the new **County Complex** to accommodate the Planning & Zoning Department, the Board of Elections and the State's Attorney offices.
- Approved, on submission by Economic Development and Tourism Director Rossing, the Queen Anne's County Arts Council in Centreville as a State/County Visitor/Welcome Center.
- Approved, on submission by Human Resources Director Churchill, a three-year wellness incentives program for County employees.
- Adopted **amendments to the FY 2013 Budget** to (1) recognize a \$750K federal grant to expand the Queen Anne's County Christian Assistance shelter and (2) assign \$1M of unallocated FY 2011 bond proceeds to fund design and engineering of the new County Complex project.
- Appointed four members to the new Economic Development Incentive Fund Commission (created in late 2012 to invest in existing businesses and attract new business): Dieter Scherer, Michael Whitehill, Anne MacKinnon Welsh, and Midgett Parker, Jr.
- Designated April as "The Month of the Young Child in Queen Anne's County."
- Met with the Governor's Bay Cabinet (Secretaries Hall, MDP; Summers, MDE; Griffin, DNR; Hance, MDA) to discuss possible State funding support for options, presented by County staff, to correct **failing septic systems on Southern Kent Island** and help achieve nitrogen pollution reductions required of the County by the Bay clean-up effort; heard Secretaries Summers and Hall suggest that State and County technical staff meet to examine options that might "solve the existing problem without creating new problems", such as "foster[ing] a whole lot more development down there" (see Summers at 95:10, 100:19; Hall at 103:00).
- Heard four persons speak at Press and Public Comment, principally on Southern Kent Island Sewer.

April 16, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Approved a letter to Dr. Carol Williamson transmitting questions concerning the Board of Education's FY2014 Operating Budget Request.
- Discussed financial and operating arrangements at Conquest Beach.
- Conducted, upon presentation by Budget & Finance Director Seeman, a review of **FY2014 Proposed Capital Projects**, including:
 - 67 projects in 2014 totaling \$42 million, of which the largest will be the Stevensville Middle School Renovations (\$11.4 million), County Complex (\$6 million), Public Safety Radio System Upgrade (\$3.2 million), and Health and Athletic Facility at Chesapeake College (QAC share = \$2.2 million out of \$8 million total);
 - cost of these capital projects will be financed principally by \$29M in bond sales in 2014; and
 - the **Six-Year Capital Improvement Program** (FY 2014 – FY 2019) contemplates a total of \$155 million in capital expenditures over the period, with \$89 million in borrowing, of which the largest single item would be a new high school under consideration for FY 2016.
- Heard no public testimony at Press and Public Comment.

April 23, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Agreed to sign a letter expressing the County's intent to continue participating in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Matching Funds Program for land preservation.
- Appointed Candice Darling of the QAC Department of Housing and Community Services to a 3-year term on the Regional Behavioral Health Advisory Committee.
- Submitted the names C. MacNair Speed and Mark Cascia to the Governor for his consideration for appointment to the QAC Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board.
- Issued a proclamation, written by Mrs. Dawn Kelly's 2nd Grade Class at Matapeake Elementary, designating "Caring" as the Character Counts! Pillar for May.
- Heard a report from Mary Margaret Revell Goodwin, Chair of the QAC War of 1812 Committee, on the multiple signs being unveiled currently and in the coming months to mark events in the 1813 "Chesapeake Campaign" in Queen Anne's County.

NOTICING NATURE

By JANE SCOTT

Noticing nature is an art, one few of us truly master. Every year, fawns are born at the edge of fields, birds nest above town sidewalks and caterpillars turn into butterflies – all unseen and unrecorded. Only when we are hit between the eyes, so to speak, by the sight of an eagle floating on the wind, an osprey snatching a fish from the river, or a flash of orange oriole in the elm tree, do we sit up and take notice. Otherwise, it all takes place without us.

As always at this time of year, I am impressed at how clever birds are at hiding their nests. I usually find them only by accident, like the catbird in the azalea that I startled into flight while trimming a hedge, or the chickadee I saw visiting the pipe of an abandoned boatlift.

Noticing Spiders

Once, emerging from the back door on a summer morning, I noticed a large, circular spider web in the hedge. Beaded with drops of silver dew, it gleamed in the morning sunlight. The large yellow and black spider that lurked at the edge was a variety of orb weaver called *Argiope aurantia*. Of course, she had been there all along, molting her skins and weaving her web under my very nose. I simply never noticed.

I know that it was a “she” because in spiderdom, the females do all the work. They not only out-spin the males, out-weigh and even out-hunt them, they may also eat them for dinner! They are also far more handsome than their pale, brown skinny mates.

Instead of getting on with my daily round, I should have stuck around to watch. That’s the way it was done in the old days. If you believe what you read, naturalists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries spent hours recording what went on in their gardens.

I like to imagine a spectacled Victorian gentleman, perhaps balanced on a shooting stick, peering at my spider while she spun; noting in his journal how she anchored lines of silk to build the scaffolding; how she laid in the spokes of the wheel and wove in the sticky thread that would snare her meal. How long would he have had to sit there before a grasshopper hit the net and he could record how she rushed in to bind it in a silken shroud? Nowadays, this sort of patient watching is done by a nature photographer with a strong telephoto lens or a camera with an automatic trip wire that blindly records wildlife events for him to edit afterward. (That is, after all, how we found the bear here a year or so ago.)

Knowing How to Notice

The truth is, most of us could learn to see more effectively if we knew what to look for, and when. The ones that are really good at this, of course, are the specialists: the botanist who knows from long experience where and when to find rare orchids in bloom; the birder who can identify birds by their songs; the waterman who knows the best stretch of river for his nets or pots.

Most of us, however, are not skilled professionals, but people who simply love the out-of-doors. Some wise man once said that to see something new today, follow the same path as yesterday –

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Captain's Houses in Centreville

Watercolor

Sally Clark is regarded by many as Queen Anne’s County’s unofficial “Official Artist”. She paints, both on commission and for the love of it, many local scenes, public and commercial buildings, and homes in Queen Anne’s County. She has worked on murals at Bayside Elementary and Stevensville Middle School as well as in private homes and businesses. She designed the Centreville seal and numerous logos, and has painted notecards of Centreville scenes.

Over the years, Sally has taught art to hundreds of Queen Anne’s County students and adults in our public schools, at Gunston School, and through classes at the QAC Arts Council and the Kent Island Federation of Arts.

Sally grew up in Tennessee where her love and talent for art were nourished by taking classes on Saturdays and during summers at the local Academy of Arts. She majored in Art at Rhodes College, studied in France, and then earned her teaching credentials. After her marriage, she began teaching art in Prince Georges County and in 1970 moved to Centreville, her husband John’s hometown, where she continued teaching art in our schools for the next 26 years.

An accomplished draftsman and watercolorist, Sally loves working in a wide variety of media and likes to let her imagination explore different ways of looking at and realizing objects. Many of her pictures are whimsical – as is some of her painted furniture. She shows her work at the Arts Council, KIFA, and in public buildings, as well as at the Artists’ Gallery in Chestertown where she is an original partner. The gallery’s website, www.theartistsgalleryctown.com, displays some of her works.

Commissioners’ Meetings, *continued from Page 4*

- Met, as required annually by State law, with the Commissioners of Centreville and other QAC municipalities to discuss **County-Town “set-off” arrangements** to reflect the fact that citizens in the incorporated towns, which have been growing in population, pay property taxes to the County to fund some services that are provided to them by the Town rather than the County, and for which they pay additional taxes to the Town.
- Heard representatives of the developer K. Hovnanian (a) describe changes in the proposed Four Seasons project to reduce wetlands impacts and (b) request support from the Commissioners for the developer’s wetlands license application to the State Board of Public Works.
- Heard 10 persons speak at Press and Public Comment, 8 of them on the subject of Four Seasons.

April 30, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Conducted a workshop on the **Board of Education’s FY 2014 Budget Request**, at which School Superintendent Williamson presented the following points:
 - Funding per pupil in QAC is the lowest in the State (funding is 54% County, 37% State, 9% federal and other);
 - BOE’s two top priorities are restoring teacher/staff compensation and keeping class sizes small;
 - School employees have had no COLA increases since FY 2010 and no step increases since FY 2011, while having 6 furlough days in FY 2012;
 - BOE requests an increase in County funding of \$6.1 million, of which \$4.4 million is for salary increases and 29 new teaching/support positions, while the remaining \$1.7 million is for contracted services (e.g. buses), school supplies, and other charges.

- Heard two persons speak at Press and Public Comment, the first (Barbara Obert) calling for the Commissioners to consider the trade-offs between spending on projects like a YMCA versus spending on QAC’s schools, and the second (Suzanne Hogan) raising the issue of QAC teachers not feeling that they are valued by the Commissioners.

May 7, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Continued, for the first 69 minutes of the meeting, the discussion with BOE representatives concerning the budget request for schools for FY 2014.
- Received from BOE President Tinelli a deed for the old Sudlersville Middle School.
- Discussed the previous day’s meeting with MDE and MDP officials concerning **SKI Sewer**, where, Commissioner President Arentz reported, the State officials indicated that a low-interest

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Solid on Point

Acrylic on board

Jonathan Shaw was born in Sheffield, England. He trained as an architectural draftsman – training that is evident in his love of accurate detail. At a show of his work in New York, he met his future wife, Anne Habberton, when she bought one of his paintings. He moved to New York and then, eleven years ago, they moved to her family’s farm here in Queen Anne’s County.

Jon says he paints with “just about anything that sticks”, and he finds ample subject matter on their preserved 450-acre farm. He is a horseman who breeds Paso Fino horses and a master falconer, so it is not surprising that his subject matter includes horses and birds of prey, as well as songbirds, fish, and butterflies. The landscapes he paints at his farm most often include some form of local wildlife. It is not unusual to come across Jon, demonstrating his art at a local festival, with a falcon perched on one arm while he paints the bird with his other hand.

Jon has shown his work in New York at gun manufacturers Beretta, Holland & Holland, and Orvis. More locally, he exhibits in the Artists’ Gallery in Chestertown and the Hardcastle Galleries in Delaware, as well as in shows in Talbot, Queen Anne’s, and Kent Counties. Jon also gives art classes, often bringing one of his falcons for a model.

Jon and Anne often host groups of plein air painters who come from all over the U.S. to paint the woods, fields, ponds and open space on their beautiful working Queen Anne’s County farm.

Jon’s email address is jshawwildlifeart@gmail.com.

Citizens Speak Out, *continued from Page 1*

homeowner, parent, business owner, and master teacher with 17 years experience being paid in the \$40,000 range, Ms. Mason called on the Commissioners to support the BOE budget request. Teachers, she said, do not get paid vacations or paid days off, and \$6 per year per student for school supplies is totally inadequate.

Elaine McNeil (17:00): A parent, grandparent and teacher at QACHS, Ms. McNeil said that we are starting to lose teachers to surrounding counties; one of her best friends is leaving this year for the Talbot County school system.

Amanda Ensor (20:00): As QAC Teacher of the Year teaching 4th grade at Church Hill Elementary, Ms. Ensor stated that she had had the opportunity to travel the State and was upset to see how far behind QAC schools are in so many ways due to lack of funding. She singled out needs in curriculum transition, STEM implementation, technology, full staffing, and professional development.

John Schrecongost, KIHS Principal and **Kelly Ruby**, KIHS Guidance Chair (21:40): KIHS is in the Newsweek top 200 public schools in the nation, but unless KIHS gets an additional science teacher, there will be three science classes with labs with 36, 39 and 39 students, which is actually unsafe; without an additional math teacher, there will be math classes of 32 and 34.

Suzanne Hogan (25:10): Ms. Hogan asked the Commissioners to “stop starving our schools”, having allowed QAC per pupil expenditures to drop to the lowest level of any county in the State. The Commissioners should provide the requested funds to keep class sizes small and reverse the Pre-K and K cuts that have so damaged school readiness.

Linda Austin (28:43): As a parent, a business owner, and a realtor who is “asked day-in, day-out about our schools”, Ms. Austin asserted that the QAC school system is “a good steward of our dollars” and a good investment, returning to the community \$1.20 for every \$1.00 spent on education. With respect to inadequate funds for school supplies (now only \$200

per classroom), she observed that it was hard to solicit voluntary contributions for these when the County has a budget surplus.

Vera Wolski (32:08): Ms. Wolski of Stevensville stated that teachers have been taking from their own pockets to provide what has not been provided, in order to continue to give an excellent education to their students. It is time to support the BOE budget, because we will start losing experienced teachers.

Bill Faust (34:10): On behalf of the Fire and EMS Commission, Chairman Faust stated that it had been a pleasure working with Commissioners for the past two years and that Fire and EMS can live with a flat-line budget as long as they don’t get cut.

Nancy Krem (34:45): Centreville Middle language arts teacher Krem stated that teachers typically spend 10-20+ hours a week above their contracted 37 ½ hours. If she spends 15 minutes grading each of her 99 students’ essays, that is 24.75 hours per week, far exceeding the 5 “planning hours” that teachers are allotted. Overall, Ms. Krem calculated that the County’s 580 teachers give free time to their students worth more than \$1.5 million per year (assuming 10 extra hours per week valued at the minimum wage rate of \$7.25).

Inga Solomon (38:10): A Matapeake Middle PTSA member, Ms. Solomon came to QAC 17 years ago because of our excellent schools with small class sizes – something now threatened at Matapeake Middle, unless additional teachers are hired, because of the size of the incoming 6th grade class.

Julia George (40:30): Ms. George, a nurse at Matapeake Middle, emphasized the importance of the school health budget, as indicated by the 76,472 health room visits by QAC students in 2011-12. Once one goes through all the step increases available for a position (7 in her case), the COLA becomes the only way for one’s salary to stay competitive and cover rising living costs.

Beverly Kelley (44:05): Retired USCG Captain and BOE Member Kelley asked for full funding of the BOE budget request and thanked the Commissioners for allowing the one-time \$1,000 payment for teachers and administrators from excess

funds in a health care reserve.

Lynn Dohler (46:30): As a pre-K teacher at KIE, Ms. Dohler said that in a time when young families and their children are under financial and other kinds of stress, we must provide a quality education to those facing these challenges.

Kathy Boomer (48:50): Having moved here in 2004 in large part because of the schools, Dr. Boomer noted the ultra-competitive nature of the job market and expressed concern over classroom size in the lower grades, lack of classroom resources, the condition of facilities, and lack of staff for activities such as art and recess.

John McKim (50:45): KIHS physics teacher McKim, noting that the Commissioners had set aside \$5 million from the budget surplus for a County Complex, observed that the “complex of education” needed to be re-enforced.

Carol Williamson (52:20): Dr. Williamson, Superintendent of Schools, stated that the FY 2014 budget request is based on two top priorities: (1) giving teachers and staff a raise, since there have been no COLAs or step increases over the past three years; and (2) hiring additional teachers so that class sizes can be kept as small as possible. QAC schools have less staff, fewer classroom materials, and less technology than schools in other counties in the State.

Kim Calvert (56:10): Ms. Calvert, Stevensville, criticized “the majority” of County citizens for rejecting both the anti-terrorism training facility in Ruthsburg and big box stores and for failing to build the SKI sewer pipeline. She said that the resulting lack of jobs and home sales will increase property taxes to the point where we will be the highest-taxed county in the State.

Julie Fitzgerald (60:10): Ms. Fitzgerald stated that some \$4.5 million had been taken away from education two years ago, and now \$5 million is being put aside for capital projects. What capital project, she asked, is more important than fully funding the education of our children?

continued on Page 7

Citizens Speak Out, *continued from Page 6*

Kevin Klochek [sp?] (61:00): This Chester parent of a kindergartener praised the child's teacher but expressed concern over the size of the class and noted that teachers are going across the bridge for better salaries.

Rosemary Lee (62:32): Ms. Lee, parent of two QAC students, said she feared our losing top-notch teachers because of better pay opportunities elsewhere.

Amy Waskey (64:40): A QAC native, as was her father, Ms. Waskey after 7 years of teaching is earning about what she did in her second year. She and her husband, owner of a small online business, will have to leave the county she loves in order to be able to afford to start a family.

Carol Fordonski (66:30): Former County Commissioner Fordonski stressed the sacrifices teachers are making and called for full funding of the BOE budget as submitted.

Curtis George (68:30): A teacher here for 20 years, Mr. George is now back to earning what he did 7 years ago, while teaching 152 students each day. He believes that experienced science teachers now coming across the Bridge to teach here will stay home for \$7,000 to \$10,000 higher salaries, and we will not be able to replace them.

Vito Tinelli (71:50): BOE President Tinelli talked about the large number of County residents directly impacted by the school system: 8,000 students, 14,000 parents, 1,000 teachers/staff. Next year the schools will begin implementing a new K-12 curriculum mandated by the State. The BOE budget calls for some 27 or 28 new positions to keep class sizes manageable.

The hearing concluded with brief, noncommittal remarks by the County Commissioners, beginning at 75:35 and ending at 80:08.

PLANNING COMMISSION CONTINUES CONSIDERATION OF "ROADBLOCKS" TO 2010 COMP PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

• May Meeting

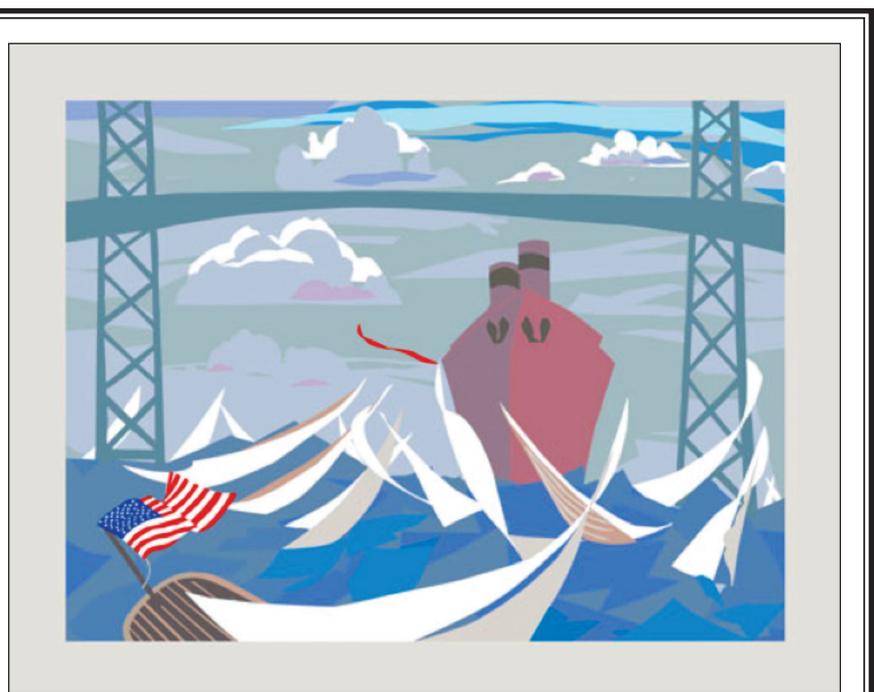
Responding to instructions from the Commission at its previous meeting, Principal Planner Spinelli led a presentation of options available to stimulate residential growth in towns, and to compensate farmland owners for loss of development rights, in the wake of the downzoning of the County's agricultural land accomplished by the State-enacted Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (also known as SB 236, the Septics Bill). Under that legislation, counties are now severely restricted in their ability to allow rural sprawl subdivisions, something QAC has long allowed and facilitated, contrary to State "Smart Growth" policy.

Spinelli first presented analyses from the 2010 Comp Plan showing that (1) the County's four designated Growth Areas – Chester, Stevensville, Kent Narrows, and Grasonville – have sufficient undeveloped land in them to accommodate over 2,000 new residential units and (2) six County incorporated towns have planned annexation areas around them with the capacity to accommodate over 9,000 additional residential units. (*Chronicle* Note: For comparison, the total number of dwelling units in the County now is around 20,000.)

In theory, it could be made a condition of developing these new units – which would all be in Growth Areas where new growth is supposed to occur – that the developers would have to purchase some number of development rights from owners of farmland. Implementing this requirement would provide compensation to the farmland owner for the State-imposed loss of his former opportunity to sell his development rights to rural sprawl developers seeking to build the maximum number of houses on an agricultural parcel.

But in reality, Chairman Waterman pointed out, imposing such a requirement is unacceptable to the municipalities, which want developers to spend extra dollars on town infrastructure (sewer, roads), not pay money to farmland owners. Further, Spinelli explained, in the County's Growth Areas, under present law developers can already build as densely as they find to be commercially attractive, so that they have no need to buy in more development rights from farmland owners.

Spinelli noted that a way to change the incentives in County Growth Areas would be to require developers to build to a certain minimum density (like 6 units per acre instead of the 2-3 per acre that they have preferred) and then further require that they could achieve the higher density only by buying in farmers' development rights. She and the Chairman both agreed, however, that requiring



Chop on the Chesapeake

Limited edition giclee print

Nancy Hammond loves the water and the varied and abundant life it supports. Chesapeake scenes, dogs, children, birds, and boats are among her subjects.

A student at the Rhode Island School of Design with a major in painting, she turned to silkscreened prints to capture her vision of the Chesapeake Bay, its people and environs. She also designs images for scarves and ties, jewelry, placemats, clothing, and even crystal bowls. Her limited edition silkscreens and giclees (digital prints using archival inks color-matched to the original work) are produced on archival paper.

When Nancy's studio was in Annapolis, her much sought-after limited edition annual Chesapeake lithograph poster brought people who would camp out in the cold, just to make sure they could purchase a print of it.

Nancy Hammond's current studio where she paints and designs is a part of her Queen Anne's County home. Full of light – and paint and painted paper – this studio is where she still creates her Annual Chesapeake Poster as well as many other works of art.

Nancy's work has been exhibited in the Baltimore Museum of Art and Maryland Institute of Art. In Centreville, she maintains a gallery displaying and selling items such as scarves and jewelry, as well as her own silkscreen and giclee prints. Her website, www.nancyhammondedititions.com also shows of many of her works, organized by categories, most of which are available for purchase.

developers to build more rather than fewer units was a step unlikely to sit well, as shown by the past efforts of citizens and County leaders to reduce the unit count in some of the major developments (e.g. Gibson's Grant).

Director Cohoon participated with Spinelli in a comprehensive discussion of what other counties have done to change their zoning laws in response to the 2012 legislation. The only three Eastern Shore counties to respond proactively have been Kent, Talbot and Somerset – which is unsurprising, said Spinelli, since at an earlier time these counties, unlike QAC, had on their own moved to prevent rural sprawl through protective agricultural zoning. The various responses of these and other counties were carefully examined in exchanges between staff and Commissioners to see if there were any opportunities after the 2012 legislation to allow more residential development in QAC's rural areas, with the conclusion being that there were probably very few such opportunities.

At the conclusion of a protracted discussion (which began at 102:08 and continued for over 100 minutes), the staff was tasked with going back to work on specific growth-promoting strategies, primarily focused on how to encourage projects, especially denser ones, in the County's Growth Areas and municipalities. These ideas were to be brought forward for discussion at the next meeting.

Noticing Nature, continued from Page 5

which is another way of saying keep your eyes open and your senses alert. If you take the same walk every day, you become not only tuned in to daily changes, but you may also find that the animals are as much creatures of habit as we are.

That is to say, once you have seen the owl, you may find him in the same vine-draped tree again. The deer that jumps out of a certain thicket will lie there another day, the kingfisher will appear near the pond, and the hawk will perch on the roadside wires. Once this simple truth is known, each walk becomes a comforting return as much as a voyage of discovery. I have a friend who took a picture of the same scene on his way to work every day for a whole year and found at the end that he had chronicled the slow turning of the seasons in intimate detail.

Noticing by Not Paying Attention

So, is noticing nature a matter of focusing your attention? Of course it is, but oddly, the opposite can also be true. Sometimes, to see the momentary flash of a tanager, the glint of minnows, or a frog just before he jumps, you have to stop paying attention! This is the sort of event that never takes place when you are looking, but in those relaxed, almost Zen-like moments when your mind is pleasantly drifting.

Only then do you become acutely aware of a leaping fish, hear the high-pitched whine of the cicadas, or see goldfinches bouncing across the sky. Often it is but a glimpse in the corner of your eye that reveals a hummingbird's darting flight, or a bumblebee probing in the clover.

Annie Dillard in her book, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, writes that the secret of such seeing is a pearl of very great price – a secret that may be found yet never be sought.

Jane Scott, a writer and illustrator, is the author of Between Ocean and Bay: A Natural History of Delmarva (Centreville, MD: Tidewater Publishers, 1991), and Field and Forest, A Guide to Native Landscapes for Gardeners and Naturalist (Blackburn Press, 2002), as well as other works. She traces her roots in Delaware back to the 1730's and now lives on the Eastern Shore.



Photo Credits – David Godfrey

Large and colorful, **argiope spiders** are commonly seen hanging upside down in webs with zig-zag bands. An orb spider has poor vision and locates its snagged, struggling prey by the vibrations it makes in the web. The spider uses its first legs to rotate the prey while their fourth legs pull silk from their spinnerets and wrap the prey in it. The argiope then bites the prey and carries it to the center of the web, or off to a corner of it, to be eaten.

Commissioners' Meetings, continued from Page 5

loan might be available based on "Plan D" (service to the 1,512 existing homes, plus 593 less environmentally-sensitive vacant lots).

- Heard no public testimony at Press and Public Comment.

May 14, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Heard a report from Chief of Engineering Scarborough on draft **FEMA Floodplain Maps** that may change the flood plain status and flood insurance rates of many QAC properties, and decided to post the maps on the County website (see QUICK LINKS), with those affected having until July 3, 2013 to appeal.



Photo Credit – Tomahawk Farms

- Adopted the Parks and Rec Advisory Board's recommendation to retain ownership of the Centreville Marina/Landing and not to transfer it to the Town at this time.

- Received a **Financial Review** from Budget & Finance Director Seeman, including a 5-year forecast projecting annual deficits of \$3.8 - \$4.7 million for FY 2015-2017.

- Heard a comprehensive community services update from Department of Aging Director Willis, in which she noted the upcoming adverse impact of the federal sequester on services, such as home-delivered meals, provided to some 2000 QAC seniors.

- Received an update from Economic Development and Tourism Director Rossing, during which the Commissioners discussed creating a citizen advisory committee for the Blue Heron Golf Course.

- Agreed to commit County matching funds to MALPF for ag land easement acquisitions, with the result that the total funds available for easement acquisition would be approximately \$3,300,000.

- Agreed, on a motion made by Commissioner Olds, seconded by Commissioner Dumenil, Commissioners Dunmyer and Simmons opposed, to sign a letter advising the Maryland Board of Public Works that "the County Commissioners support the **Four Seasons** project and . . . respectfully request that the BPW approve the wetland license application".

- Heard no public testimony at Press and Public Comment.

May 20-22, 2013. The Commissioners:

- Held three hearings on the proposed FY 2014 budget (see separate article in this issue on the May 20 hearing), including, on May 21, the proposed increase in the **property tax rate** to \$0.8687 per \$100 of taxable assessed value, or 2.2¢ higher than the current rate, in order to generate the same property tax revenue next year under circumstances of declining assessments.

Note to readers: The Chronicle's summer schedule has left this issue a little farther behind than usual in reporting on the highlights of the County Commissioners' Meetings and the Planning Commission's monthly sessions. We'll catch up in our next issue in early September.

JULY: GOING OUT AT NIGHT

When I heard the learn'd astronomer . . . where
he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

– Walt Whitman

AUGUST: SUMMER SUN

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the firmament shows his handiwork . . .
In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun;
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.
It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again;
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

– Psalm 19: 1, 5-6 (BCP)



A Calendar Of Verses