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The Villager

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association

Volume 37, No. 3

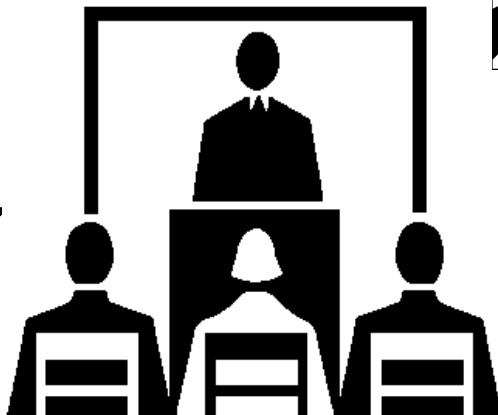
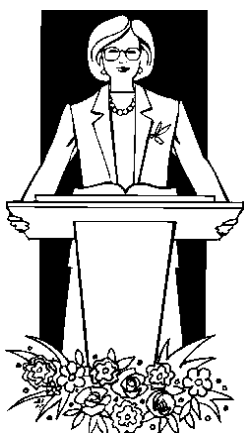
P. O. Box 222, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035

September-October 2010

Meet and hear the candidates Wednesday, October 20, 2010, 7:00 pm Southern High School Auditorium Solomons Island Road, Harwood, MD

DACA and the Harwood Civic Association will sponsor a forum in which you can meet the candidates running for office in the November 2 elections. The candidates elected by the voters of their respective parties in the September 14 primary election are invited to meet the voters of South County. Primary election winners for the following offices are invited to attend: County Executive, County Council District 7, State Senate District 30, House of Delegates District 30s and 33A. In Senate District 33 and House District 33B all the candidates are Republicans and the winner will have been decided by the primary election.

Those in contention are invited to present themselves and their reasons for seeking these offices. Each candidate will speak for five minutes and will have up to five minutes to answer questions. You may ask questions of concern to your neighborhood, your community, your county, and your state regarding present and future governance. You should not miss this opportunity.



DACA members and their contributions

Welcome new members Chad and Rebecca Bickel, and thanks to Jan and Herb Sheppard for this gift membership.

Thanks to Mildred Anderson, Bill and Ebbie Bickford, Warren and Julia Bussler, Andrew and Jerri Falk, Chris and Barbara Jedrey, Nick Kemp and Kay Osburnsen, Donna McCutcheon, Daniel and Barbara O'Donnell, the Scrivener family, Gene Way, and Ben and Barbara Zellin for their contributions to DACA in addition to renewing their dues.

Thanks for keeping us informed about our community.

B.Z.

Interest: History of our area.

G.W.

Being informed of local crimes; problems with mail delivery to wrong house and mail theft. New business at 214 and Patuxent River Road. Activities at old Nike site.

L. G.

Keep up the good work! We always look forward to the next edition of the *Villager*!

J. & L. P.

This E-newsletter is super! Great reading...and informative about the beavers....Of course people want to fight the furry little things! But the education the newsletter provided is invaluable in helping us all to understand the importance of a beaver's role in the ecosystem...and the article should dissuade anyone with thoughts of "relocating" them either by transporting them to a new location or "getting rid" of them. Davidsonville can be an ecological model village. The history lesson on All Hallows was terrific, too. E.M.

. . . And the pictures are in color!

More from the U.S. Postal Service

As the US Postal Service in its wisdom continues making more demands on bulk mailers – the *Villager* is probably the least of these – the editor will buckle down and begin the process of feeding your email addresses into the computer to send it more quickly to readers and reduce stress on the human body. Not this issue, but maybe in 2011!

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School and traffic

Everyone knows by now that school started August 23 and all the little darlings are on the roads, mostly on school bus. Davidsonville Elementary starts at 9:15; the children are to arrive no earlier than 9:00 am. School ends at 3:45 and the buses are on the road shortly after that. Please be attentive when you are driving, especially during these rush hours.

School will be closed on October 15 for the Maryland State Education Association Convention which all teachers are expected to attend. October 29 is the end of the first marking period and all pupils will be sent home two hours early, so watch for the buses and the children on the road at a different time.

After talking with DES PTO President Amy Richardson, DACA board member Rick Hughes told the Executive Committee about a new program called Watchdogs, a program to encourage men and fathers to participate in school volunteer activities – mentoring, visiting, tutoring – jobs currently almost entirely done by women and mothers. Its premise is that young students need men role models as well. The committee voted that DACA should commit up to \$500 toward start-up costs to provide promotional materials for this program at Davidsonville Elementary. Rick will represent DACA to the DES PTO.

After so many years of increasing traffic and accidents on Davidsonville Road, and so many requests from residents and from DACA, the State Highway Administration agreed to restudy the traffic statistics on #424. Bea Poulin, our South County Community Representative to the County Executive, reported it was the result of another incident: a member of Union Memorial Methodist Church was rear-ended while trying to turn into the churchyard on Davidsonville Road.

During the summer of 2007 the Cental Avenue Bridge over the Patuxent was closed and drivers enjoyed the safety of a full stop signal light at Governors Bridge. Drivers and residents were very pleased to be able to turn onto and out of Governors Bridge Road with less risk to life and vehicle. Interrupting the constant flow of rush hour traffic enabled cars to make safer turns the entire length of the road. After the bridge was reopened, SHA followed national one-size-fits-all guidelines and returned the stop light to a blinker.

DACA will write to SHA to request that they restore the full service signal at Governors Bridge Road with the aim of slowing traffic; also to consider mowing on property in the public right-of-way. You can send messages to Lee Starkoff, lstarkoff@sha.state.md.us.



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**All Hallows' Chapel reached 150 years: Parishioners celebrated!
Rain did not dampen their spirits**

All Hallows' Parish, Davidsonville's oldest church, celebrated the 150th anniversary of their "new" chapel with a special service and historic memories of the era in which it was built. The Chapel, built in 1860, is the Gothic Revival brick church located at 864 Central Avenue in the village.

On September 12th, the worship service, adapted from the Book of Common Prayer used in 1860, concluded with a photograph of the entire congregation standing or seated in the nave. The photo will adorn the cover of the Parish's new picture directory. Luncheon was served in a tent on the property of Lester and Jeannette Brown adjoining the Chapel grounds. Mrs. Brown's father, Paul Davis, was an honorary and honored member of All Hallows. During and after lunch the choir performed popular songs of the Civil War era and a silent auction of lovely gifts was enthusiastically received. The children enjoyed craft-making and other entertainments.

Commemorative events to which the public is invited will be scheduled over the following months. On **October 3rd**, the Parish will hold the dedication of its newly commissioned and hand-crafted mechanical action organ at the 1730 Brick Church on Solomons

Island Road. On **October 10th**, historian Will Mumford will enlighten us with a talk about how the Civil War affected residents of Anne Arundel County.

On **Sunday, October 24th**, the Parish will hold its annual Blessing of the Animals, 3:00 pm at th Chapel. Bring your well behaved, leashed or crated darlings for a blessing and special treats provided by Parish Hospitality.

The Parish holds services every Sunday morning at eight o'clock in the Chapel on Central Avenue with Holy Eucharist and sermon; at ten o'clock in the Brick Church on Solomons Island Road, Holy Eucharist with sermon and choral music. All are cordially invited to worship at either service.



Notes on Ivory
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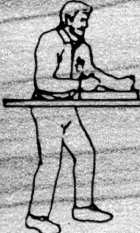


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Environmental fall-out

The good:

Clean Currents, a clean energy generation provider that uses wind power, was an exhibitor at DACA’s March 18 Green Expo. At the Expo, four Davidsonville residents signed up with Clean Currents to learn about a different source of energy for their homes.

Now Clean Currents is offering special fixed price contracts for fifty percent and 100 percent wind power, at rates comparable to BGE’s rates (generation and transmission only, average 10.9 cents) for dirty coal. To make a good deal even better, if you mention “Davidsonville” when you sign up, Clean Currents will donate ten dollars to the Davidsonville community association.

For more information, contact customer service at gogreen@cleancurrents.com or 301-754-0430, ext. 3. You can visit www.cleancurrents.com/index.php/Wind-Power-Overview.

Anne Arundel County celebrated the twenty year anniversary of **Quiet Waters Park** on September 4th. Quiet Waters is a crown jewel in the county’s park system, proving the wisdom of County Executive Jim Lighthizer’s vision to preserve the 400 acres of waterfront open space on the Annapolis Neck Peninsula.

Not so good:

Ed Woods reported that the beavers were removed from the area of Flat Creek and the water level dropped about five feet, which now allows stormwater and sediment to flush faster into South River.

In the County Executive’s September newsletter, Mr. Leopold sent this message to Anne Arundel residents:


We must ban fly ash disposal

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is considering new oversight of fly ash disposal. He has submitted testimony on this issue and took action to ban disposal in Anne Arundel County for the past three years. Now a new site is proposed for Baltimore on the northern border of Anne Arundel County. Please contact the EPA and tell them you oppose dumping fly ash in our area. You can send an e-mail to rcradocket@epa.gov.

The north end of Anne Arundel is the most densely populated area of the county. Homes in Odenton already have wells contaminated by fly ash dumps. It makes no sense to bring in more fly ash and think it’s okay because it’s on the other side of a line drawn in the water.

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Pick it up!

If you're tired of dodging dog poop while strolling through the park or in your community's common area, you may want your association to install a pet waste station. Even if you manage to avoid stepping in it, you ought to know that when it rains, pet poop bacteria drains into our creeks and rivers. Pet waste is a major source of pollution to Anne Arundel County waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

Everyone knows you should pick up after your pet. It is against the law to leave pet litter on public or community property. Environmental scientists can distinguish between wild animal droppings and domestic animal feces. Pet waste stations usually supply biodegradable plastic bags and a receptacle in which to deposit them.

To publicize your pet waste station, this sign is available for free to communities who install one. The signs can be acquired through the Watershed Stewards Academy of Anne Arundel County. For information about pet waste stations, to acquire a sign for your community, or for other information about how to improve AA County watersheds, contact Lara Mulvaney lmulvaney@aacps.org, 410-222-3822.



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DACA to publish our local history

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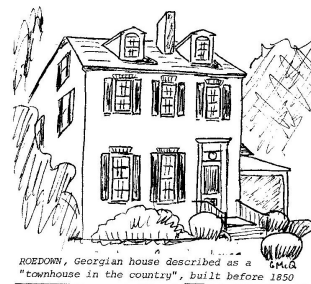
Over the past 37 years, the Villager has produced many articles, stories, and memoirs of significant people, places, and events in Davidsonville. DACA's Executive Committee decided that it is time to collect them into a bound book to be available for sale to DACA members and the public. We have interviews with prominent citizens as well as not-so-prominent residents who have provided fascinating stories about times past and pastimes in and around the community.

Villager has already published memoirs of Ben Watkins, Norma Carpenter, Thomas Mayr, and Oscar Grimes, Sr.; stories of historic homes at Mount Airy, Idlewilde, Bridge Hill; early and recent multi-generational families: Maren Duvall of Middle Plantation, James Davidson and his son Thomas, the Steuarts of Dodon, several branches of Townshends; and the old churches; social and political events: schools, jousting tournaments, racing, and a brush up against the federal government.

With technology now available to scan old *Villagers* and make them readable and editable, this project can move along much faster than the editor's first thought of re-keying everything into her computer. Chris Rizek and Will Biddle offered to work on this aspect of the project.

Starting on page 9 of this issue is a typical story from our oral tradition. Some of the facts can be verified from written records, but portions of it exist only in this memoir of the gentlemen who lived and remembered, and talked about them.

We invite you to email your pictures and signed stories to gailenright1@gmail.com.



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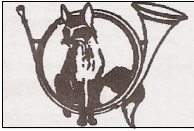
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9-11 Memorial

Anne Arundel County is one of a number of local jurisdictions around the country to erect a memorial of the 9-11 attacks as a tribute to local first responders who died in the line of duty. The design is centered around two 2,000 pound steel beams from the World Trade Center, placed at the Millersville Police and Fire Headquarters. Local contracting companies contributed labor and materials to construct the memorial at no cost to taxpayers.

Fund raising from private sources for the 9-11 Memorial includes the sale of inscribed bricks for the "Hero's Path" at the site. DACA will contribute \$350 for a 16"x16" brick. Trees, benches, and informational plaques are also available for dedications. For more information or to make a contribution to the memorial, please contact www.annearundelartscouncil.org.

Notice of coming events

The Davidsonville Ruritan Christmas program will take place on **Sunday, December 12** at the Ruritan Club on Davidsonville Road. Chris Rizek will head the joint DACA-Ruritan committee to plan it. Ed Woods will bring Santa Claus in on a fire engine.

Plans will soon be under way for DACA's **Green Expo 2011**. Save the Saturday nearest St. Patrick's Day for the green event, March 19th. Volunteers are eagerly invited to help organize this show. Call Will Biddle at 410-798-6719, or send an email to willbiddle@verizon.net to offer your help.



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More local history: The post offices and the stores

Oscar Grimes, Sr., Thomas Mayr, William W. Neall, Sr., Jack Scible, and Benjamin Watkins III told Gail Enright about these places and events. The story first appeared in the Villager, April-May 1978.

Since the first settlement here, the Davidsonville area has been served by a good many country stores. The earliest known was the trading post operated by Maren Duvall at Middle Plantation in the late 1600s. The actual location of the building which housed his store is not far from the cloverleaf where Davidsonville Road crosses Route #50. One of Duvall's many activities as agent for the proprietary governor was to pay bounties to the killers of dangerous animals, including the now-extinct Eastern Gray Wolf.

As the years passed, stores sprang up wherever people lived, and close enough to be within walking

distance of their homes, almost as shopping centers spring up today, only minutes apart by car.

The Davidsonville post office was established February 1, 1830, with the appointment of Thomas Davidson as the first postmaster. He built his home (now 746 Central Avenue) in 1835. Since the store is reputed to have begun in the 1830s, it is logical to guess that Mr. Davidson operated the post office *(Next page please)*

THIS SUMMER

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The post offices and the stores, (from page 9)

out of the store on the opposite corner. An extremely active citizen, he was one of the founders of the Davidsonville United Methodist Church which was built on land he sold to the congregation for that purpose. When the first Arundel Free School (at what is now Lavall) in Rutland sought funds to pay for a new well, Mr. Davidson led the list of subscribers with a contribution of ten dollars.

Queen Anne was a major trading center on the Patuxent in the 1820s, where the warehouse of Hodges and Daingerfield served as a supply center for the stores in Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties. Farther up the river, stores were located at both the Prince George's and the Anne Arundel sides at the Governor's Bridge. The storekeeper on the Anne Arundel side was named Nicholson. Both sides of the South River were served by ships landing at either end of the ferry crossing at Taylorsville (Riva).

For a time, Michael King kept a store in the **blacksmith shop** on Central Avenue next to the yellow house (856 Central Avenue) which antedated All Hallows' Chapel. Later on, it was occupied by an upholsterer who kept his shop there. The building was demolished in the 20th century and All Hallows' Parish acquired the land to annex to the Chapel property. Next door, (#856), Sellman Suitt operated a **gasoline-powered mill** to grind corn into meal; this lasted from before World War I until the 1930s. Sometime before the Civil War a store was located on the corner of **Central Avenue and Riva Road**.

Perhaps a clue to the size and versatility of Davidsonville stores and their owners lies in the story told by Ben Watkins about George King. He was a blacksmith who emigrated from Germany before the Civil War and made his home next to the Patuxent River in the area of the Annapolis Sand and Gravel company. From there he walked all the way to **Taylorsville** to purchase a half barrel of flour and walked all the way home, carrying it on his back, and stopped only once to rest.

Back at the Davidsonville post office, Thomas Davidson was succeeded by Richard Hardesty (1833), Thomas Hardesty (1839), Dr. Benjamin Watkins, the first of that name (1840), Samuel Berry (1842), and Nicholas Duvall (1842). The population growth in the surrounding areas caused the U.S. Post Office to establish a post (Next page, please)



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The post offices and the stores, (from page 10) office in 1849 to serve the **Governor's Bridge-Rutland** area. After the Civil War the name was changed from Governor's Bridge to Rutland and it continued in use until 1908.


In 1852, Miss Elizabeth Duvall became the first postmistress at Davidsonville and held that position for ten years; in 1862 the second Thomas Davidson took over, followed by Walter Snyder (1868) and Edward Mills (1870). Thomas Talbott, the village blacksmith, served as postmaster from 1870 until 1885. It was he who built the three homes Central Avenue, (844 Hegge-Callahan; 846 Suitt; and 856 Yellow House) around 1855 for Thomas Davidson's farm employees. He was followed in the post office by Daniel Woodward (1855), Jane Davidson (1889), and William Ditty (1900). Mr. Ditty ran the post office out of his home on the Sands Road, now called Patuxent River Road.

At the turn of the 20th century, Ernest Davidson owned and operated the Davidsonville Store. Among his customers were Indians who lived nearby. When they

were short of cash, they bartered their goods for merchandise. Jack Scible collects Indian artifacts; he found a heavy, dished-out grinding stone in the store's attic; Paul Davis told him the Indians used it with a stone pestle to grind their corn and other grain into meal.

Ernest married Mary Owens, who was called Miss Molly and they lived in an apartment at the rear of the store. Miss Molly took piano lessons from Miss Nora Watkins; lessons and recitals were conducted on the piano next door in the first All Hallows Parish Hall, which was replaced by a larger hall on the same site in 1922. One day when a thunderstorm blew up, Ernest hurried out to bring in the laundry off the clothesline. A bolt of lightning struck the nearby locust tree and sent it crashing down on him and he died. His widow, Miss Molly, continued operating the store and was appointed postmistress on April 11, 1910. Her parrot, Polly, flew freely about the store, greeting customers and mooching handouts except when he was banished to the apartment.

Miss Molly hired Irving King, a 19-year-old who lived across the street in the house now used by Homestead Gardens, and he did not *(Next page please)*



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The post offices and the stores, (from page 11)
 want to become a farmer. Eventually he took over the entire business and was appointed postmaster in 1917.

The first automobiles began to appear in 1911 and 1912. As they proliferated, a larger parking area was required for the store. Sometime after 1925, Mr. King had the building moved back about 15 feet farther from the road and into the corner of the Methodist cemetery. This made room for the installation of gasoline tanks. While he managed the expanding business of the store, his wife Nettie operated the post office. Mr. King served 37 years, longer than any other postmaster in Davidsonville.

Ben Watkins told Gail that a poker club of local gentlemen held regularly scheduled card games in the room over the store.

It was 1948 when William W. Neall, Sr., took charge of the post office. He had bought the store from the Maryland Tobacco Growers Association in 1946, and in 1950 he was confirmed as postmaster. His wife Doris handled the post office while he managed the store, now named the Davidsonville Supply Company. It was a true general store, retailing local farm produce, harness, horse feed, seeds, work clothes, and the usual staples. His son, Bill, Jr., took on the store business in 1977 and modernized it as the *(Next page please)*



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The post offices and the stores, (from page 12) required a different variety of products. Billy retailed locally produced meats, including country hams.

In 1974 Helen Williams took over as postmistress and continued with the post office in its new, and current location across the road. Within the narrow confines of the corner lot, post office expansions had increased the size of the building to its limits, necessitating a new location for an adequate facility. The current post office was built in 1978.

The corner store has been at the heart of Davidsonville ever since the village began. When Davidsonville was only a road crossing, it was marked by a store. Because of its location, the Davidsonville Supply Company has survived the passage of time which has done away with its rivals. The store, the churches, and the neighboring houses are what contributed to the

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Londontowne Symphony Orchestra

Sunday, October 24, 3:00 p.m. \$15.00

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On Sunday, October 24, the LSO will present *An Interlude of Romantic Music* at 3:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, 333 Dubois Road, Annapolis, MD 21401. Tickets are \$15.

Future concerts include Ibert's *Flute Concerto* on January 30, Brahms's *Requiem* on April 10, with the Queen Anne's Chorale, and Saint-Saens's *Piano Concerto* on June 12. Please consider attending the performances of this local orchestra. For more information please go to their website at www.londontownesympphonyorchestra.org or write to Londontowne Symphony Orchestra, P.O.Box 926, Edgewater, MD 21037

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The South County Concert Association began its 35th season with *The Great American Song Book* on September 21, 2010 at Southern High School. It was a theatrical Broadway-style production with creative sets, colorful costumes and clever choreography. Eight talented singers and dancers will perform with a jazz trio in bringing to life America's favorite songs from *The Wizard of Oz*, Motown, the Temptations and the Supremes, Rogers and Hammerstein and Gershwin. The program is free to subscribers of the South County Concert Association and the Anne Arundel Community Concert Association. General admission is \$20 per person at the door. For additional information contact Betty Knupp at 410-956-4881 or visit us at www.southcountyconcerts.org for the continuing schedule of programs.



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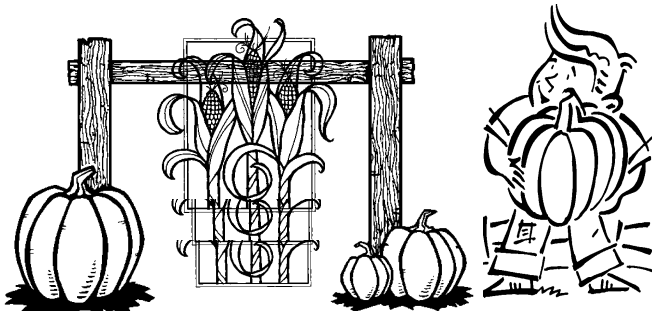
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