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The Villager

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association

Volume 37, No. 4 P. O. Box 222, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035 November-December 2010

The holiday season is upon us. Greet it Davidsonville-style!

C O M M U N I T Y

Thanksgiving SERVICE



Thanksgiving Eve

Wednesday, November 24, 7:00 p.m.

All Hallows Chapel

864 Central Avenue

Members and guests of the four oldest churches in Davidsonville will give thanks together. Come meet and greet your neighbors in an old-fashioned traditional service with members of All Hallows Episcopal, Holy Family Roman Catholic, Davidsonville United Methodist, and Union Memorial Methodist Church. Then on Thursday you can be thankful as you celebrate turkey day and football with a clear conscience.

MESSIAH SING-IN

Sunday, November 28, 4:00 p.m.

at Saint James Church, Lothian

5757 Solomons Island Road

(below the traffic circle).

Welcome the Christmas season the Sunday after Thanksgiving with J. F. Handel's *Messiah* oratorio. Bring your music and sing with the chorus, or bring your ears and enjoy the enthusiasm and skill of experienced amateurs. The soloists are always excellent.

Davidsonville Ruritan Christmas

Sunday, December 12, 5:00 pm

Ruritan Club, 3355 Davidsonville Road

DACA and the Davidsonville Ruritan Club invite all the young at heart to (somewhat near) the 50th community celebration of the Christmas season. Come enjoy an hour of community spirit with your neighbors and hear the children sing at the Ruritan Club.



Join your neighbors in opening the Davidsonville Christmas season and lighting the Ruritan's indoor Christmas tree. Davidsonville Elementary School's Chorus, Holiday Band and Strings Orchestra will perform music of the season. Santa Claus will arrive in a fire engine to distribute goodies to children of all ages. Refreshments will be provided by DACA and the Ruritan Club.



DACA members and their contributions

Welcome new readers Bill and Lisa Glasgow and thanks to his parents, Bill and Patty Glasgow, for this gift membership as well as their generous continuing support of DACA.

Thanks to Bo and Sandi Newport and Barbara and Robert Trotter for their gifts to DACA in addition to renewing their dues.

We love Davidsonville and think the *Villager* keeps us informed, and the history is always great reading. P.G.

Adventures with Email

Many thanks to the good folks who received and opened their October emails from Gail Enright, gailenright1@verizon.net. First I sent the September-October *Villager* to only a few whose email addresses were in my computer from other communications. After entering all the email addresses I had, I sent a notice of the October 20 Candidates' Forum to 89 DACA members whose addresses were correct.

Many thanks to Martin Eгна for his patient advice on how to send email with blind copies (bcc) to maintain

privacy for the recipients. Then to test whether it worked, I sent a notice in the week before All Hallows' Blessing of the Animals on October 24, and was most gratified to learn that the email addresses do remain secure from discovery and intrusive misuse, at least by normal methods and from average users like me. Two other readers expressed their concern about letting their addresses be shown, and to them I apologize again. Three readers actually paid compliments for my effort with technology new to me.

My next project is to learn to send the *Villager* and other important between-the-issues items from DACA's e-mail address info@daca-md.org. Of about 350 paper copies that I mail each issue, maybe 90 (email addresses) is not a bad number, but after my last adventure with the post office over bulk mailing, I am eager to send as many as possible by email and, if necessary, send the rest by regular first class mail. It will save wear and tear on my car, my body, and my nerves. So, PLEASE, when you send in your dues, please include your email address. The message will come addressed to "You" and your address will not be visible or available to any other recipient. *Gail Enright, Editor*

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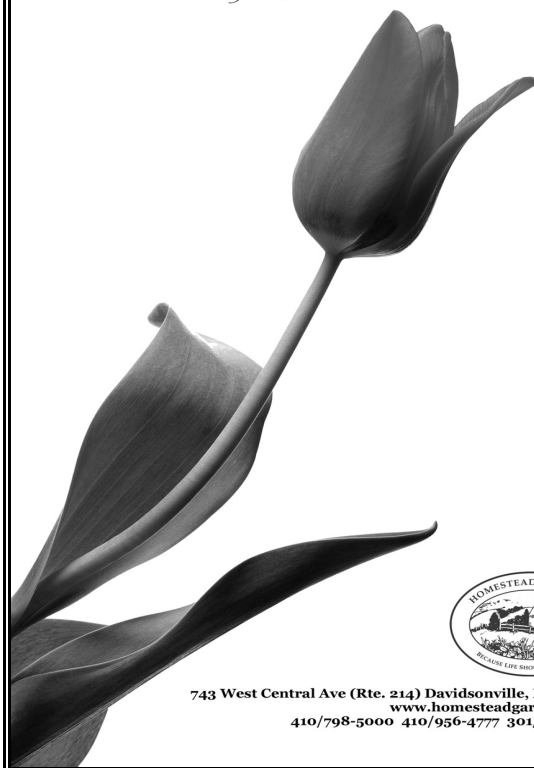
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South County's Candidates Forum was Excellent!

By now the election is history, and DACA thanks all the candidates who participated in the Candidates Forum sponsored by DACA, Harwood Civic Association, Galesville Community Association, and Mayo Civic Association.

The participants were candidates for County Executive: Republican incumbent John Leopold, and challengers Joanna Conti, Democrat, and Mike Shay, Green Party; Dr. Ron Elfenbein, Republican for District 30 for the Maryland Senate; for District 30 Maryland House of Delegates, incumbent Republicans Ron George and Herb McMillan and Democratic incumbent Virginia Clagett, and challengers Republican Seth Howard and Democrat Judd Legum; for District 33A House of Delegates incumbent Republican Tony McConkey and challengers Republican Cathy Vitale and Democrat Madonna Brennan; and, of greatest local interest, the candidates to represent South County – District 7 – on the County Council, Republican Jerry Walker and Democrat Torrey Jacobsen.

The discussion was very informative and helped the voters reach a decision or to confirm a decision already made.

Congratulations to the victors in the election and best wishes for success in other endeavors to all who offered themselves as public servants. Many thanks as well to the many volunteers from all four organizations and the candidates' staff members who helped make this event happen. Tony Gamboa of the Harwood Civic Association emceed the forum and presented questions from the audience to the candidates. Mike Lofton is a past president and current member of the HCA board. Jan Moury, an American Sign Language interpreter, signed the speech for the deaf in the audience.




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DACA seeks volunteers

Congratulations to DACA member Jerry Walker on his election to South County's District Seven seat on the County Council. The Davidsonville Area will continue to be well represented as it was by Ed Reilly and Tricia Johnson in the past term. Many thanks to Tricia for filling the seat vacated by Ed when he was appointed to the State Senate. Congratulations to Ed on his election to a full term in that position.

Now, halfway through DACA's year of June 2010 to May 2011, the Executive Committee has three vacancies. We were very sorry to accept Carmen Constable's resignation as she must assume additional responsibilities to her family; her term would be completed in June 2011. We surely will miss Jerry, who resigned at the end of his term in June 2010. Andrew Turner's term would continue until June 2012; he wrote the following note, which includes good reasons to serve on the Executive Committee.

"It has been an honor to serve on the Executive Committee. We have a wonderful group of people committed to the betterment of our community, and it is deeply gratifying to be a part of that mission. However, my growing family and work obligations have ... prevented me from attending recent meetings. I don't see those circumstances changing in the near future

I remain committed to the principles of our mission statement, of course, and look forward to being able to devote more time to our civic interests in the future (and hopefully returning to the Committee one day).

Please convey to the Committee my sincere appreciation for the opportunity to be a part of DACA, and for their service."

Therefore, DACA needs and invites a volunteer to serve from now until June 2011, and two for the term ending June 2012. Meetings are the first Thursday of each month, 8:00 pm in Ford Hall at the DFRC.

Green Expo Volunteers!

If you would like to learn more about DACA, please join in on a short-term project. We will need help with Green Expo 2011 scheduled for March 19, 2011, at Riva Trace Baptist Church on Central Avenue. Green Expo will need the greatest number of workers on the day it occurs, and help will be needed in the days and weeks in advance. Please call Lara Mulvaney at 410-956-4451 or send her an email at lara_mulvaney@yahoo.com to learn more about how you can participate in this exciting venture. Last year's Expo was a smashing success and a ton of fun!



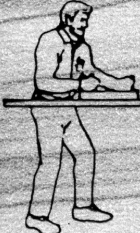
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In the spirit of sharing

At its November meeting, DACA's Executive Committee members voted unanimously to repeat the contributions of last year to eight churches located in Davidsonville: Union Memorial United Methodist; South River Bible Church; Riva Trace Baptist; Holy Family Roman Catholic, Grace Evangelical Presbyterian, Davidsonville United Methodist, Chesapeake Community, and All Hallows' Episcopal. The money is to be used to help needy people living in Anne Arundel County. The churches welcome donations from the general community as well as from their members. Such donations are tax deductible to the donor under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

DACA thanks the many members who have made contributions to the civic association in addition to renewing their annual dues, as well as to those who buy advertising space in the *Villager*. DACA is a (501)(c)(4) organization that seeks to affect legislation on issues and, as such, donors may not claim contributions as charitable deductions. Advertisers may take deductions for their ads as a cost of doing business.

As a small nonprofit organization with a small treasury, DACA has never been required to file a tax return. In 2007 the law was changed to require nonprofits to file if they receive more than \$25,000 per year, but most groups never received any notification. The penalty for failure to file for three years would be loss of their tax-exempt status. DACA learned of the change in regulations upon receiving form letters from two CPAs offering to help us remain tax exempt, for a fee, of course. DACA's income is nowhere near that amount; the entire treasury is under \$25,000. Chris Rizek researched the issue and learned that DACA needed only to answer eight questions on-line from the IRS (which he did), to avoid delinquency in filing and loss of its tax-exempt status for failure to file returns.



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For communities: Forest Conservancy Board announces 2011 grant program

The Anne Arundel County Forest Conservancy District Board has grants for home owners associations. HOAs and community associations with open space in their area are eligible to apply for up to \$500 in grant funds to use for managing the open space in their communities. Projects such as tree planting, riparian buffer establishment, invasive weed control, and slope stabilization projects are eligible. Grants are awarded continuously, first come, first served order, or as long as funds last. The Forestry Board will meet every other month starting in February. To be considered, the application must be received by the first of the month prior to the meeting, starting December 1, 2010.

Forms and guidelines (most important!) can be found at the web site <http://www.aafb.sailorsite.net/CommunityTreePlantingGrant.pdf>. For more information, call Bud Reaves at 410-222-7441, or by email ipreav00@aacounty.org.

Interested communities can partner with the Watershed Master Stewardship program. Contact Lara Mulvaney at lara.mulvaney@yahoo.com.

For individuals: Get your flu shots now!

Weekly walk-in clinics will continue into December. The County Health Services Building on Harry S Truman Parkway will offer flu on November 17 from 1:00 until 4:00 pm and from 5:00 until 7:00 pm, and on December 9 from 9:00 am until noon and from 1:00 until 4:00 pm.

Help them protect you!

In this season of Thanksgiving, show your thanks to your local fire fighters. Support the Riva Volunteer Fire Department and the Arundel VFD . These two companies help protect the wide area known as Davidsonville. They will not call you on the phone to solicit your money. Send your check to Riva VFD, PO Box 602, Riva, MD 21140 or to Arundel VFD, PO Box 3310, Crofton, MD 21114.



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**A happy message from our South County
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Good news - the road improvement project along State roads Rt 214 - Central Avenue and Rt 468 - Muddy Creek Road has begun. These state roads will be improved with local impact fees and will take approximately one year to build. The project will add one continuous westbound lane on MD 214, a dedicated right turn lane for eastbound MD 214 onto MD 468 southbound, two left turn lanes for northbound MD 468 on to westbound MD 214, and one left turn lane from westbound MD 214 onto southbound MD 468. A reminder that local groups and individuals using that southeast corner at Rt 468/Rt 214 to advertise their events should refrain from posting banners, signs, etc. on that corner as all signs will be removed immediately as construction is underway. Anyone who has signs there now should remove them if they intend to keep them for future use.

Bea Poulin



**Yes!
Regular curbside
trash and
recycling collection
except
Thanksgiving Day and
Christmas Day**



The Department of Public Works, Waste Management Services will not provide curbside collection of recycling, yard waste, and trash on Thanksgiving Day, November 24, or Christmas Day, December 25. The Millersville Landfill and Resource Recovery Facility, the Millersville Convenience Center, Glen Burnie Convenience Center and the Sudley Convenience Center will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, December 23, December 24, and December 25.

County Offices will be closed on November 24 for a County Furlough/Service Reduction Day, and November 25 and 26 for the Thanksgiving Holidays.

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History Progressing

The *Villager* editor got busy and dug through 35 years of old issues to pull out the history stories produced over the years. Especially in the earliest years starting in 1975, many older residents who knew and remembered a lot of events gave me lots of stories, some previously published but more, obscure local lore. In the early years they were typed on an IBM Selectric typewriter, until at some point in the late 1980s DACA decided that the secretary/*Villager* editor had to use a computer for word processing. I finally learned to save those *Villagers* on five-inch floppy discs – no longer readable in a newer computer even if they were not corrupted by time. Later issues were saved on three-inch floppies, which my current laptop cannot accept. I maintained an Index of *Villager* articles from 1974 through 1997, at which point many issues were saved on the hard drive of my

old PC, since replaced several times.

About ten years' worth were copied to the new lap top, but sadly corrupted by time and numerous transfers. Now, newer technology has come to the rescue. Will Biddle has scanned several *Villagers* to a format that can be edited on the screen. I now have about a dozen history pieces ready to be entered in a book. They will be placed in more-or-less chronological order, organized by people, places, and events. Once the book is complete, it will be available for sale to those who want to know what happened in this geographical location before we got here.

We invite you to share your pictures and signed stories. Please mail them to DACA, PO Box 222, Davidsonville, MD 21035 or by email to gailenright1@gmail.com or info@daca-md.org.

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PGPD Investigate a Series of Vandalisms in the Lanham, Largo, Kettering, and Bowie Areas

The Prince George's County Police Department is seeking information in reference to a large number of vandalisms that have recently occurred in the past month. The suspects caused damage to numerous vehicles by shooting out the windows with a BB gun.

All citizens in these areas are asked to contact the Prince George's County Police Department if they observe any kind of suspicious activity. A patrol officer will respond to investigate.

Anyone with information about this case is asked to call the Prince George's County Police Department. Callers wishing to remain anonymous may call Crime

Solvers at 1-866-411 TIPS (8477) or text "PGPD plus your message" to CRIMES (274637) on your cell phone or to <http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/police/> and submit a tip online.

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Birdsville, past tense

Reprinted from *Villager*, August-September 1995

Norma Carpenter saved a news clipping from the Baltimore Sun Magazine, December 16, 1962, one of a series on old Maryland communities. The author, Ralph Reppert, interviewed Richard B. Tucker, who recalled much of the local history. His son, Charles R. Tucker, gave the Villager editor additional information.

According to the memories of conversations with even older residents, Birdsville was settled in colonial times. A man named Bird was thought to have come across the Bay in a dugout, bringing with him his few belongings and his native Indian bride. They built a cabin near the Rhode River. Other settlers followed and the families intermarried. By the time the original grandchildren were grown, there were enough Birds in the area to give the community its name.

Birdsville extended along what is now Solomons Island Road, from north of Brick Church Road and South River Clubhouse Road, and included properties of the Steuart tract [which became Dodon], All Hallows' Brick Church, Obligation, Larking Hill and Larkin's Hundred. In 1653, 400 acres on the west side of Solomons Island Road were granted by King Charles II to Thomas Bessinton. Later records show that the east side from South River Clubhouse Road to Fiddlers Hill Road was owned by the family of Richard Dove, who sold it in the mid-1940s.

In the early 1900s, Birdsville was a thriving close-knit community of fewer than 30 tobacco farmers and their families, among them the Boyles, Doves, Duvalls, Herseys, Knightons, Owenses, Prices, and Tuckers. Birdsville had its own post office on Birdsville Road and its school was on the corner of Birdsville Road and Solomons Island Road.

Travelers to Annapolis from Solomons Island passed through Birdsville on a winding road that had been a woodland trail. Near the intersection of Old Birdsville Road and Solomons Island Road two stores served the community. At the top of Birdsville Hill the storekeeper was Hezekiah Best. He sold everything from notions and yard goods to work clothes, tools, traps and groceries. Outside the store in winter he kept a barrel of hard cider that would "knock your hat off." (Please go to page 11)



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Birdsville past, from page 10

Charles T. Tucker owned two merchant schooners in the late 19th century. As roads were built and improved, he saw that the Bay would cease to be the principal trade route. He sold the boats and, with his brother-in-law Charles (Dick) Dove, purchased and ran a general store under the name of Dove & Tucker. It originally sat on the first Birdsville Road. When that Birdsville Road was improved to the present Old Birdsville Road [“present” being after 1970], they picked up the building and moved the store so they would continue to be in the path of traffic.

Richard Tucker owned a grist mill. Well into the 20th century, farmers hauled their grain by horse drawn wagon to be ground into flour. The flour was sold at the Dove & Tucker store along with salt-cured meat. They also owned a pond where they cut ice in winter and packed it in sawdust in an icehouse. As long as the ice held out, they were able to store and sell fresh meat. Joseph Norfolk operated the local blacksmith shop.

Mr. Price, whose descendants still live on Birdsville Road, owned the sawmill. The area once was a source of excellent hard woods – chestnut, hickory, oak – making it home to countless squirrels, quail, and rabbits – a hunter’s larder. When they ran out of ammunition, they could pick up enough chestnuts to buy more shotgun shells. When the chestnut trees died off, farmers used the wood to build snake fences, taking pride in the ability to build a fence that even a baby pig could not wiggle through.

Near Best’s store was a huge hollow chestnut tree that was used as a polling place. On Election Day, voters stepped inside the tree, marked their ballots and dropped them in a box. That polling booth has gone the way of

all chestnut trees.

Another landmark was the Birdsville Oak, sixty feet high with a spread of nearly 100 feet. The trunk was more than six feet in diameter. Lightning finished the job that old age started and it died before the 1960s, with no trace of it visible for the past thirty years.

The post office closed during World War I. The last postmaster was Ad Bivins. Best’s store closed not long afterward. Dove & Tucker closed with the death of Charles T. Tucker in 1919. Richard Tucker reopened it shortly after and stayed in business until 1927.

By the 1960s, tobacco was no longer king, and many residents worked in Annapolis and Upper Marlborough. All that was left of the old community were a few weather-beaten barns built with chestnut planks. By then tobacco was only a whiff in the air, supplanted by the fastest-growing crop: many new homes whose owners commute to Washington, Annapolis, and the suburbs. In 2010, Bill Grimes at Hilldale Farm on Birdsville Road still raises a crop of tobacco for the memories.

On November 7, 2007, Emma Bird Mitchell, a baby girl descendant of the Bird family, was baptized at All Hallows’ Brick Church.

Gail Enright

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From the web site of the Patuxent Riverkeeper: Dive Teams Find History in the Patuxent

Beneath the waters made murky by recent heavy rains, archaeologists are uncovering remnants of the dramatic events preceding the bloody four-hour Battle of Bladensburg during the War of 1812. Archaeologists from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), the US Navy (USN) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) are surveying for a War of 1812 shipwreck in the shallows of the Patuxent River upstream from Pig Point (now Bristol), near Upper Marlboro in Prince George's County.

With high-tech equipment, archaeologists are

mapping an underwater area thought to be the resting place of the USS Scorpion or another War of 1812 vessel that was deliberately sunk or "scuttled" to prevent British capture and use against American forces. First the teams used a magnetometer, an instrument that detects metal objects such as cannons and anchors, to locate the general area of the wreck. Archaeologists then used a more precise piece of equipment called a hydroprobe, which pinpoints the wreck location using a linear series of one inch diameter jets of water to further delineate the site. *(Next page please)*




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Barney's fleet?*(From page 13)*

Underwater archaeologists are now excavating two, six- by ten-foot test units in an attempt to identify what part of the shipwreck they are on. Over the next two years, scientists will continue their testing of the site to help direct the placement of a coffer dam in 2012. The cofferdam, a temporary watertight enclosure, will allow the archaeologists to excavate the wreck as a dry site. The information gleaned from the excavation will be incorporated into the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Byway as America commemorates the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. These findings will further supplement Maryland's extensive contributions to the international celebration, estimated to draw hundreds of thousands of visitors to Maryland

and generate more than \$1 billion in tourism spending over the 32-month bicentennial period.

The search for the USS Scorpion is partially funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program, which funds non-traditional, community-based transportation-related projects. The Governor determines which projects qualify for funding based on need and potential benefit to the public. The Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration oversees the federal program, which has awarded more than \$185 million for 232 projects in Maryland since the TEP program began in 1991.

For more information go to the Scorpion web site at: <http://www.scorpionarchaeology.blogspot.com/>.

(August 2010)

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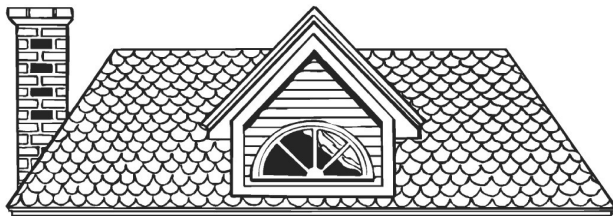
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Londontowne Symphony Orchestra gets its own home stage

After several years of performing in different halls, the Edgewater-based Londontowne Symphony has a permanent performance venue at South River High School. Under the direction of Dr. Anna Binneweg, now in her third full season as Music Director and Conductor, the orchestra shows the results of her passion for music. The players are current and retired professional and military band musicians, recent graduates from college music programs, and accomplished community performers. A select number of advanced high school students also play with the LSO.

The next performance will be *Vive la France* on January 30, 2011, at South River High School. For more information please go to their website at www.londontownesyphonyorchestra.org or write to Londontowne Symphony Orchestra, P. O. Box 926, Edgewater, MD 21037.



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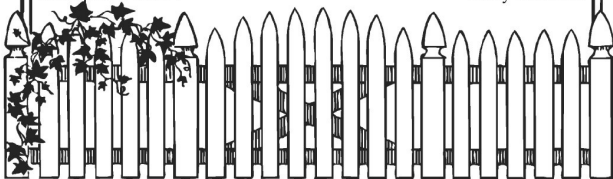
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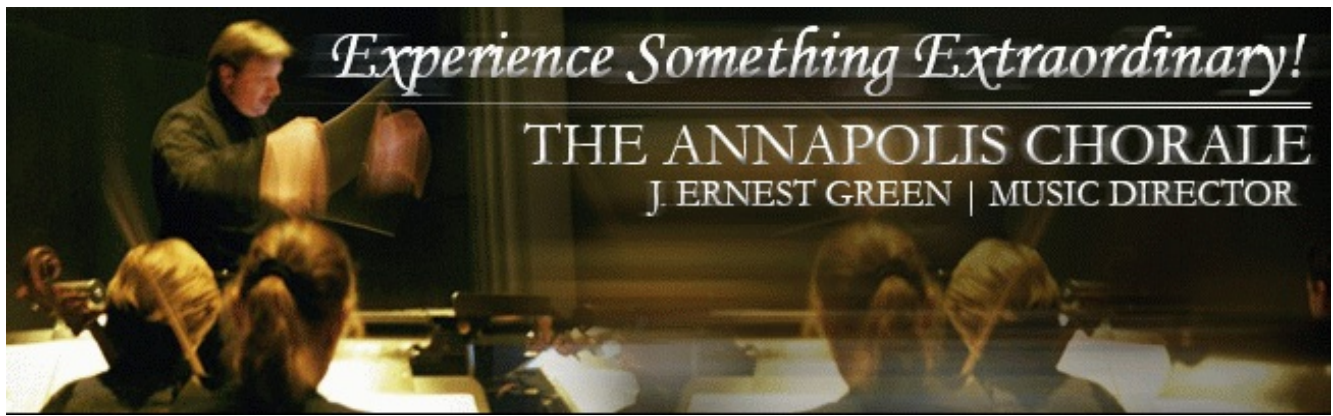


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