

### Dates to Remember

- **National Rural Development Partnership Conference**, April 1-4, in Washington, D.C.
- **Maryland Economic Development Association Annual Meeting**, June 3-5, in Rocky Gap.
- **Maryland Municipal League Convention**, June 25-27, in Ocean City.
- **Maryland Association of Counties Summer Conference**, Aug. 15-18, in Ocean City.

# FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

Jan./Feb./Mar. 2000  
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Maryland's Rural Development Council

## We've started a newsletter!

We at the FORVM have created this quarterly newsletter in order to keep our stakeholders up to date on the latest issues and policy developments affecting rural communities throughout Maryland as well as the activities sponsored by the FORVM.

The FORVM is the state rural development council, and our mission is to build a bright future for Rural Maryland by bringing people together to address its unique concerns. People in all levels of government, non-profit agencies, the private sector, academia, and various rural-serving entities all serve on our Board and Working Committees.

We are non-partisan and non-discriminatory and work to build consen-

sus. Our four major goals are:

- To enable citizens in rural communities to achieve success in employment and to have access to quality, affordable health care, and other services.
- To preserve agriculture and other natural resource-based industries as an integral part of Maryland's rural economy and culture.
- To advocate for a manageable regulatory process and reasonable and effective compliance.
- To address the impact of changing conditions on the environment, heritage and economic well being of Rural Marylanders.

We have seen some good suc-

cesses in our first few years of operation, but we have plans to see many more in the years ahead. This newsletter is one attempt to make sure that rural interests know we're here, ready to build partnerships, research policy, work with our local, state and federal officials, and to develop meaningful, workable solutions to challenging problems. We have also updated our website so that we may communicate with you more often. Visit us often at: [www.ruralforvm.state.md.us](http://www.ruralforvm.state.md.us)

Membership in the FORVM is free and open to Maryland residents interested in rural concerns. For more information about becoming a member, or to request a copy of our Annual Report, see our website or call us at 410-767-4779.

*Several members of the General Assembly participated in the Statewide Rural Town Hall Meeting, held as part of the Annual Rural Development & Health Care Summit in October. They were (from right) Senator Mac Middleton, Delegate Louise Snodgrass, House Speaker Casper R. Taylor Jr., Delegate John Wood and Delegate Samuel Linton. FORVM Chair William Eckman is on the left.*



### Comments heard at the Summit . . . .

**"The government belongs to you. We [rural legislators] cannot be effective unless we hear from you. You must stand up, speak out and talk with us and continue to do so constantly."**

-- Delegate Louise Snodgrass

**"The more you can come together to cooperate through organizations like the FORVM for Rural Maryland, the better chance you have of being heard."**

-- Senator Mac Middleton

Newsletter

# Committee Update

## FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

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### FORVM's new Working Committee on Housing identifies issues

In October, the FORVM created the Housing and Community Development Working Committee -- its fifth Working Committee so far. During its inaugural meeting, interested parties in the housing field from around the State met to brainstorm ideas and determine where they can help rural communities without duplicating efforts of other agencies. During its first meeting, the committee identified several issues important to rural communities.

Committee members are now in the process of prioritizing the items they

are willing to work on.

Committee Chair Duane Yoder, president of the Garrett County Community Action Committee and former chair of the FORVM, said he expects the full committee to meet about twice a year, but that working subcommittees would meet more frequently to address specific issues. Membership on the committee is voluntary and open to any interested parties, whether or not they are members of the FORVM. **Anyone interested in working on any of these issues is invited to contact Duane Yoder at 301-334-9431.**

### Working Committees need you!

The FORVM's Executive Board approved the creation of Working Committees last year to more effectively address the plethora of public policy issues affecting Rural Maryland. These problem-addressing committees are made up of Executive Board members, interested rural citizens, and officials from affected government agencies, advocacy groups and academia.

Committees study issues that affect rural areas and work toward solutions without duplicating the efforts of other agencies or organizations. Ultimately, the committees provide information, suggestions, and recommended positions on issues that impact Rural Maryland. Other committees, in addition to the Housing and Community Development Committee (see above) are:

- **The Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Committee.** Issue areas include farming, fisheries, forestry and mineral extraction.
- **Infrastructure Working Committee.** Issue areas include transportation, water, wastewater, and solid waste facilities.
- **Health Care Working Committee.** Issue areas include improving access to quality, affordable health care services and medical transportation.
- **The Microenterprise Council of Maryland** (see page 7) is a non-profit organization formed in early 2000 as a collaborative effort by a number of rural and urban organizations. This support network addresses the special needs of very small businesses in Maryland.

**If you are interested in serving on a committee, please call the FORVM at 410-767-6531.** You do not have to be a member of the FORVM to participate.

### In Brief. Rural Summit another success

The FORVM again joined forces with the **Maryland Rural Health Association** and the **State Office of Rural Health** to sponsor the third annual Maryland Rural Development and Health Care Summit.

Held in October in Solomons, the Summit provided an opportunity for rural leaders, government officials, advocates and citizens to come together to exchange information about the issues that affect them.



This year, about 150 people representing most of Maryland's rural counties attended the Summit. Twenty-four agencies and organizations set up exhibits and more than 30 speakers participated in 14 events over two and half days. Those events included four plenary sessions, eight concurrent sessions, several business/annual meetings, an Awards Luncheon (see page 4) and a networking dinner. Among the speakers were five members of the General Assembly, including the Speaker of the House. *(Look for the Starburst at top for stories about Summit activities.)*

### Thanks to our sponsors!

We would like to thank the more than two dozen organizations who contributed financially to help make the Summit another success. We especially want to thank our major sponsors **Allegheny Energy, Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, and the Town of Hurlock** for their generous contributions.

## Aging in Rural Maryland:

### Working-age rural population shrinks as number of elderly increase

During the next 20 years, the senior population in Maryland will grow faster than the younger population, leaving fewer and fewer working-age people to support the frail and the ill. The trend will be significantly worse in rural communities.

This from James Macgill, Deputy Secretary on Aging, who spoke at the Rural Health Care and Development Summit in October to encourage rural leaders to join his department in looking for solutions.

“It’s not a question of whether there are too many old people, but whether there will be enough young ones to take care of them,” said Macgill.

The statewide trend indicates that, by the year 2020, there will be 7.5 working-age people (ages 20 to 55) for every person over age 75. (Currently, the ratio is 10:1.) In Maryland’s rural communities, however, there will only be 3.8 working-age people for each senior citizen.

“When talking demographics, it’s easy to frighten people, but there is increasing concern about the rural elderly,” he said.

Macgill reported that he expects the 2000 Census to show that most of the state’s senior population will move to, or continue to live in, suburban areas and will likely have the health and social services they need available. Because most funding for social and health service programs is based on population, the rural

elderly will not have the same level of service, if they have service at all.

“We have to be concerned about everyone else (outside the suburbs), not because of disability and poverty but because they will be dependent on other people and social services,” he said. “If you have a growing, aging, disabled population and a shrinking younger population, you have a problem.”

Rural communities – with their

**“It’s not a question of whether there are too many old people, but whether there will be enough young ones to take care of them.”**

James Macgill, Deputy Secretary on Aging

remote locations and small tax bases — already have problems taking care of their elderly. Service organizations already feel the strain. Some rural areas have no managed care or assisted living organizations, and they will continue to have problems recruiting people qualified to dispense such services.

The Maryland Department of Aging has already begun looking for solutions, but substantial work lies ahead. Macgill appealed to rural organizations interested in the rural elderly to join the effort to find a way to ensure that rural communities have the resources they need to care for their aging parents and grandparents.

“We need a plan for addressing the problems of the rural elderly,” he said.



### Dependency factors

The charts below shows the number of working-age people for each elderly citizen (over age 75) in each Maryland county today and in 20 years. This is called the the “dependency ratio.”

County	2000
Howard	20.61
Charles	18.47
Prince Geo.	16.52
Calvert	14.62
Harford	13.67
Anne Arundel	13.10
Frederick	12.37
St. Mary’s	11.97
Cecil	11.70
Carroll	10.69
Montgomery	10.27
<b>State Average</b>	<b>10.16</b>
Queen Anne’s	8.72
Wicomico	8.20
Somerset	7.74
Baltimore City	7.61
Caroline	7.41
Washington	7.26
Garrett	7.25
Baltimore Co.	7.11
Worcester	6.14
Kent	5.87
Dorchester	5.68
Allegany	4.81
Talbot	4.58

County	2020
Charles	10.98
Calvert	9.95
Howard	9.51
Frederick	9.43
Cecil	9.00
Prince Geo.	9.00
St. Mary’s	8.51
Anne Arundel	8.36
Somerset	8.22
Baltimore City	8.10
Harford	7.59
<b>State Average</b>	<b>7.49</b>
Wicomico	7.47
Carroll	7.15
Montgomery	7.11
Caroline	6.78
Washington	5.91
Queen Anne’s	5.81
Baltimore Co.	5.74
Garrett	5.07
Dorchester	4.91
Kent	4.42
Allegany	4.26
Worcester	4.01
Talbot	3.78



## Rural Award Winners 2000:

### Rural organizations honored for making a difference

Each year, individuals and organizations throughout the State are nominated for rural development awards, which are sponsored by The FORVM, the State Office of Rural Health and the Maryland Rural Health Association. More applications were received this year than ever before. FORVM Second Vice Chair Dr. Nan Booth chaired the awards committee this year and helped present the awards during the Maryland Rural Development & Health Care Summit in October.

**Outstanding Rural Health Practitioner:**  
*Ila V. Shah, M.D., St. Mary's County*

In 1974, with 600 to 700 births a year, St. Mary's County had no pediatrician. That's when Dr. Shah arrived to fill the gap, eventually convincing six other pediatricians to locate to Southern Maryland. Her entire career has been devoted to children's health issues. She has been recognized by the U.S. Congress and Maryland Senate, as well as by Rotary International for her dedicated work.

**Outstanding Rural Health Program:**  
*St. Mary's County Health Department Dental Care Program*

St. Mary's Health Department's program to improving access to dental care for pregnant women and children has increased participation from two dentists in May 2000 to 17 dentists in Sep-



FORVM Chair William Eckman (left) and MRHA Chair Jake Frego (center) present award to Dr. Ila Shah (right) for her career-long dedication to children's healthcare.

tember. Since the program began, more than 425 appointments have been made and provider satisfaction remains high.

**Co-Winner - Outstanding Rural Community Development Program:**  
*Christmas in April, St. Mary's County*

The St. Mary's affiliate of Christmas in April, a national volunteer organization that rehabilitates homes of low-income elderly and disabled people at no cost, has repaired more than 346 homes and eight nonprofit facilities in ten years. Some 16,700 volunteers completed more than \$1.7 million in repairs.

**Co-Winner - Outstanding Rural Community Development Achievement:**  
*Garrett County Community Action Committee -- Overlook North Project*

The Overlook North Project increased the supply of decent affordable housing for low-income households and revitalized a low-income neighborhood. The project razed old rental units and constructed a 60-unit townhouse complex and child development center. The site contains lots for single-family homes.

**Outstanding Rural Health Achievement:**  
*Frederick County Health Department Mental Health Program*

Frederick County is one of five public health offices to maintain a mental health program in a department setting. The transition from a grant program to a fee-for-service program was made

without any patients losing coverage or being forced to make a difficult transition to another counselor. The program received an Outstanding Service Award from the Secretary of Health in 1999.

**Outstanding Rural Economic Development Achievement:**  
*Howard County Economic Development Authority*

The Howard County Economic Development Authority initiated a "Howard County Grown" logo that identifies locally grown ag products in retail outlets and community events, helping to build brand recognition and instilling a sense of pride among local producers.

**Outstanding Legislator of the Year**



State Senator Mac Middleton (center) accepts Outstanding Legislator of the Year Award from FORVM Chair William Eckman (right) and MRHA Chair Jake Frego (left). Sen. Middleton successfully sponsored three bills during the 2000 Session of the General Assembly that were particularly important to rural communities.

## **In Brief . . .** *On the National Front*

### **Maryland Senators Sponsor NRDP Bill**

Bipartisan legislation to formally restructure the decade-old National Rural Development Partnership was introduced in the U.S. Senate near the end of the last Congressional term. Both of Maryland's U.S. Senators -- Barbara Mikulski and Paul Sarbanes -- co-sponsored S. 3175 which was championed by lead sponsors Larry Craig (R-Idaho) and Kent Conrad (D-North Dakota). Altogether, 30 Senators signed on to the bill. This legislation is expected to be reintroduced in both the U.S. House and Senate next month.

### **Maryland Congressmen join Rural Caucus**

Maryland U.S. Representatives Wayne Gilchrest (District 1), Steve Hoyer (District 5) and Albert Wynn (District 4) have joined the new Congressional Rural Caucus (CRC), a bipartisan coalition of Congress members, committed to helping rural America build stronger, more prosperous futures for current and future generations. The CRC has 143 members, representing nearly every state.

### **McHenry elected to national leadership job**

FORVM Executive Director Steve McHenry was recently elected Vice Chair of the Partners for Rural America, a national nonprofit organization that provides support for state rural development councils. McHenry also recently attended a special conference -- hosted by the Rural Policy Research Institute, NADO, NATAT and NACo -- with a diverse group of rural stakeholders from around the country to begin crafting an integrated national rural policy.

# FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

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## **18 rural-serving organizations recommended to receive grants**

Eighteen rural-serving nonprofit agencies have been recommended to receive nearly \$350,000 in grants which were made available this year through the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund Act of 2000.

The General Assembly created the fund last Session to increase the overall capacity of rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges to meet a multitude of rural development challenges. Award winners represent programs involving such efforts as innovative ag product marketing, rural leadership training, instructional materials, and technical assistance offerings for rural communities.

Grants will likely be administered by the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Agriculture (MDA), and the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED). The FORVM supported the legislation creating this fund. The grant review board was composed of FORVM Executive Director Stephen McHenry, DBED Assistant Secretary Vernon Thompson, DNR Forest Service Director Jim Mallow, and MDA Assistant Secretary Brad Powers.

These grants are expected to increase opportunities for rural nonprofits to establish public and private partnerships and obtain non-State funding. The Board of Public Works must approve these awards in February.

#### **Grants to be administered by the Department of Agriculture for Agricultural Education Programs: \$171,000**

- Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation
- LEAD Maryland: Maryland's Ag Leadership Development Program
- Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts/MD Envirothon Program
- Carroll Community College / Agriculture Advanced Technology Center
- Garrett Community College / Alternative Agriculture ATC
- Delmarva Advisory Council/Delmarva Agribusiness Council
- The Chesapeake Fields Institute
- Future Harvest, Inc. / A Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture
- Maryland Organic Food & Farming Assn.

#### **Grants to be administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development for a Variety of Rural Development Activities: \$138,000.**

- Maryland Rural Development Corporation / Rural Community Assistance Program
- Maryland Rural Water Assn
- Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
- Maryland Rural Health Assn.
- Maryland Center for Community Development

#### **Grants to be administered by the Department of Natural Resources for Forestry Education and Rural Fire Suppression Programs: \$38,000.**

- Maryland Forests Assn.
- Maryland Eastern Shore RC&D Council
- Southern Maryland RC&D Council
- Western Maryland RC&D Council

*"There was no physical way to get it across the Bay Bridge and into the Eastern Shore counties with the budget we had."*

*-- Preston Dillard,  
Maryland Department of  
Management and Budget*

### Net.Work Maryland and the Eastern Shore **Fiberoptics & the problem connecting the State**

One day, not too far from now, Maryland will have a backbone – one big fiber optic cable running past its mountains and mega-malls, connecting every community, every hospital, school and government agency.

Summit  
2000

As envisioned by the General Assembly, Net.Work.Maryland will provide the technological backbone the State needs to stay on the cutting edge.

The backbone, which is under construction and will take \$60 million and five years to complete, will help keep and lure technology companies to Maryland. It will connect a variety of state networks that already exist, like Sailor, and keep them current and make them faster. It will provide access to the "digital information highway" and expand economic development opportunities for every community. It will bring materials from libraries and research institutions around the world to Maryland schools and colleges while keeping the in-state institutions wired together. It will link up and open up the medical resources of Johns Hopkins University, the National Institutes of Health and the University of Maryland to rural health departments and physicians across the state. This backbone is a piece of infrastructure as important to economic development, health care, education and all other quality-of-life areas as telephone service, sewer connections, and radio and television broadcasts.

The problem with making the vision a reality is that there is no way to get that big, necessary, expensive backbone across the Chesapeake Bay to the largely rural Eastern Shore for a price the State can afford. (The fiber backbone in Central and Western Maryland is cur-

rently being constructed.)

"The engineering report to the General Assembly last year determined that there was no physical way to get it across the Bay Bridge and into the Eastern Shore counties with the budget we had," said Preston Dillard, Deputy Chief Information Officer for the State Department of Management and Budget, who spoke at the Rural Development Summit last October. "They had to look at alternatives, such as leasing services from local carriers."

And that further complicates the problem because the State isn't quite sure how much of a partnership it can form with a private company without giving that company an unfair advantage over its competitors. The State has created a task force and hired lawyers to study the Federal Telecommunications Act to see what kind of partnership it can develop with local carriers to expand the backbone to the Eastern Shore.

TEDCO -- Maryland's Technology Development Corporation, is working with Net.Work.Maryland to develop a statewide technology strategy and to assess the economic potential of Network Maryland, according to TEDCO Presi-

dent Dr. Phillip Singerman, who spoke at the Summit. TEDCO will also help determine what it will take to allow local hook-ups to the network, referred to as "the last mile." TEDCO is also working on technology research and development on business incubator projects. The FORVM will be watching.

For more information about Net.Work.Maryland, see: [www.usmh.usmd.edu/tfhsn/plan18-a.html](http://www.usmh.usmd.edu/tfhsn/plan18-a.html)

#### **Speaker voices support**

Maryland House Speaker Casper Taylor Jr., the primary speaker at the **Statewide Town Hall Meeting**, answered questions on a variety of topics by those in attendance.

The Speaker expressed his support for creating a cabinet level department on tourism so that the State could "realize its potential as a tourism destination."

Many rural communities would benefit from more tourism activity, he said.

He also expressed support for investing one-half of one percent of State pension funds to help pay for infrastructure needs, including Net.Work.Maryland, the high-speed internet backbone currently under construction.

*Three Harry S. Truman Fellows assigned to the National Rural Development Partnership in Washington, D.C. provided invaluable staff help at this year's Rural Summit. From left, Kimberly Jones, Helen Huarca and Leslie Medema.*



*"The Microenterprise Council will provide training and knowledge as well as advocacy for microenterprises throughout the state. With funding and leadership in place, we're ready to provide a new level of service to our small businesses."*

**-- Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend**

### Microenterprise Council of Maryland:

## One year old and already on the move

"Do the math and you find that about half the businesses in Maryland are microenterprises," said Maryland's Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend in her keynote address to the first Annual Meeting of the Microenterprise Council of Maryland – a year-old nonprofit organization the FORVM helped create.

Microenterprises – businesses with fewer than five employees — are already a large and still emerging sector of the state's economy. These enterprises need the same kind of assistance and training that larger businesses need to succeed. Yet few organizations are set up to help the very small entrepreneur.

Enter the Microenterprise Council of Maryland – a statewide network of practitioners, lenders and intermediary organizations that provide outreach, education and training to very small entrepreneurs, many of them homebased, some of them disabled, most of them disadvantaged by the size of their business and its inability to access traditional business services, including



*Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend at the MCM's First Annual Meeting*

loans for start-up funding.

"With funding and leadership in place, we're ready to provide a new level of service to our small businesses," said the Lt. Governor. "I want to thank those of you who worked so hard to get to this day. We're expecting wonderful things."

The Lt. Governor's strong support was instrumental in securing the \$185,000 allocated by the State to support operations of the MCM and to create a microenterprise demonstration project.

"Microenterprise is changing the culture," she said. "Microenterprise says everyone can be a master of their own fate. It says you can do what you want to do. You are on the cutting edge. We in government are paying attention to what's going on and we want to know

what we can do to help."

In Maryland, 97 percent of all businesses are small or minority owned businesses, and 65 percent of those are microenterprises.

"It's wonderful when we can bring a company like Closet Maid to Western Maryland, along with its hundreds of jobs, but these very small businesses can have an even bigger impact on rural and urban areas," she said. "And let's not forget: many companies like Microsoft and Hewlett Packard were once microenterprises."

More than 90 people attended the first meeting, including Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development Secretary David Iannucci and Maryland Department of Agriculture Secretary Designate Hagner Mister.



*MCM Board Member Sylvia Quinton of Svitland Families Life and Les Hall of the Department of Business and Economic Development chat during MCM meeting.*

#### **MCM hires Executive Director**

Mikal McCartney has recently been hired to be the MCM's first Executive Director. Prior to joining MCM, she served as vice president for community and economic development for the Garrett County Community Action Committee where she directed the Garrett MicroWorks Program.

"Mikal brings solid experience and enthusiasm to this position and we feel lucky to have her on board at such a critical time," said MCM Chairman (and FORVM Executive Director) Steve McHenry.



# In Brief



# FORVM FOR RURAL MARYLAND

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## **Resource-Based Industries Task Force Authority needs one more year of study**

To remain viable into the future, Maryland's resource-based industries need a financing and technical assistance authority designed specifically for them; however, to develop this authority appropriately, the State Task Force on Resource-Based Industry needs the General Assembly to extend its charge another year. This is one recommendation of the State Task Force on Resource-Based Industry, which submitted its interim report in January 2000.

The task force recommended that the Maryland Food Center Authority (MFCA), a state agency, become that central authority and establish these needed financial and technical assistance programs. The MFCA develops, owns, operates, and maintains facilities for food distribution. It also has statewide jurisdiction, the authority to issue bonds, and extensive project management experience. Under the proposal, MFCA would manage the new program; provide grants and loans; and develop and

maintain a technical assistance network.

In addition, the task force plans to work with DEBD over the summer to see if its financing program can be made to work better for the agriculture, forestry and seafood industries. And finally, state and local planners will be asked to include agriculture and resource-based industries in their economic development plans.

The General Assembly created the task force last year after the FORVM's Agriculture and Natural Resources Working Committee recommended that the General Assembly establish a task force to examine these issues. The task force, co-chaired by Sen. Mac Middleton and Del. Charles McClellan, met several times last fall.

## **Board elections held**

FORVM Chairman William Eckman, Mayor of LaPlata, was re-elected to a second term as chair during the FORVM's Annual Business Meeting in October. In addition, Valerie Connelly was elected first vice chair and Dr. Nan Booth was elected second vice chair. Ten of the 36 FORVM board members were also elected during the Annual Meeting.

For a complete listing of board members and contact addresses, see our redesigned website. (*See below*)

## **Grain Producers Ready to Talk**

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) has developed a "Speakers Bureau" to inform the non-farming public about the importance of agriculture in Maryland. Twenty- to 30-minute slide presentations that cover a wide range of general agricultural topics are available to nonprofit/service organizations. For more information, contact Celeste Pyper at 410-819-0414.

## **Our new website is on-line & current**

The FORVM's redesigned website is now up and running. We will be updating it regularly with news, committee meeting schedules and other information. It will also contain reference materials, like Membership Applications and Board Member listings. Please check the site frequently and let us know what you think.

[www.ruralforvm.state.md.us](http://www.ruralforvm.state.md.us)

### **The FORVM for Rural Maryland**

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# TO: