

Howard County Issues

Volume 1 Issue 3 Fall 2007

A Publication from Howard County Independent Voters

Efficient Voting, or Threat to Democracy

From Ross Goldstein, Deputy Administrator
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What is the brief history, did we have paper trails in the past? If so, why was it ok to abandon them and now restore them?

Prior to the implementation of the uniform statewide direct recording electronic voting system, Maryland used a variety of different voting systems – some of which had paper trails and some did not. The paper based systems included 19 counties that used optical scan voting systems and Montgomery County that used a punch card voting system. The paperless voting

systems included the lever voting machines used by Allegany, Dorchester and Prince George's Counties and a direct recording electronic (DRE) voting system used by Baltimore City.

After the 2000 Presidential Election and all of the controversy over the Florida results, many states, including Maryland, began to take a careful look at their voting systems. Maryland convened a study commission that looked at available voting technology. Remember that the focus immediately following the Florida election was usability – not security. The lesson from the Florida election was that usability was critically important. The two most significant usability issues that mired the Florida election were:

1. A confusing punch card ballot that led some voters to mistakenly vote for Buchanan when they intended to vote for Gore; and
2. Voters not accurately casting their ballots by failing to fully punch through the card (thereby leaving a hanging chad).

Accordingly, the commission recommended moving to a uniform statewide voting system. The commission also recommended a touch screen DRE voting systems due to its accuracy, ease of use, and ability for voters with disabilities to vote independently.

The move to the new DRE voting system has proven successful. Voters make very few mistakes on this voting system since the system either

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From Delegate Liz Bobo
And Lloyd Knowles

What is the brief history, did we have paper trails in the past? If so, why was it ok to abandon them and now restore them?

We may not have given a lot of thought to having paper trails for voting in the past; we primarily used paper prior to the application of technology advances. But as we do more and more electronically it has become an issue. Six years ago, following the Florida debacle that swept in President Bush, the Congress released scads of federal money for the states to ³upgrade² their voting systems. Maryland was one of the first to jump on the bandwagon. The decision was made in Annapolis to obtain Diebold electronic voting machines. Frankly we just weren't thinking that we were doing away with the ability to do an independent recount. It's been discovered in many states that there are problems with electronic machines, the major one being that there is no way to cross-check the results of an election.

Over the past few years, concerns were raised in Annapolis. Several years ago, Liz sponsored a bill that would mandate a paper trail. It passed the House, but failed in the Senate the first time around. State Senator Kasemeyer took on the cause, and with the same bill, was able to pass it through the Senate and into law, though now it's a matter of whether it'll be funded.

What is the level of concern?

We are supportive of technology and realize that no matter what system we're using, we're always going to have glitches; things happen even to the space shuttle. Almost all of the serious objectors to the use of the electronic vote tallying machines are concerned with problems that are not detectable. The voting machines freeze, paper jams and those are things that will happen no matter what. But the main concern is that no one knows or can know with 100% certainty if there are bugs in the software; subtle but serious problems could be undetectable. The Diebold software is very closely guarded, not open-source, and constantly changing.

Professor Ruben of Johns Hopkins is widely regarded as an expert in this area, and performed an experiment with several groups of postgraduate candidate computer experts.



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Popular Vote Minimizes Impact of Small States



From Tom D'Asto

Al Gore should have been president, just like Grover Cleveland, and Andrew Jackson, and Rutherford Hayes, and so on... Were there any more? I don't even care! Every time the winner of the popular vote loses the election, Reformers rise up and attempt to change one of the greatest institutions any nation has ever created.

I never fully understood the Electoral College (EC). Why did it exist? Is it really fair? Who could have dreamt up such a scheme? And then I read an article by Will Hively in Discover magazine, the November 1996 issue. I still have the article today and, I admit, I will use it exclusively, quoting from it often, to convey the merits of the Electoral College.

Most people were never taught the real need for the EC. James Madison was the chief architect of the EC. Madison's goal was to protect the citizen "against the tyranny that arises in true democracies" – protecting the minority from the majority. A majority's power threatens the rights, the property, and sometimes the lives of the minority. Madison stated in The Federalist Papers (Number X), "a well-constructed Union [must] break and control the violence of faction [especially] the superior force of an... overbearing majority."

The number of EC votes is equal to the number of Congressional seats in Congress, that is, the sum of seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate for a total of 538 EC votes (note that D.C. gets three EC votes). Thus, Maryland enjoys one vote from each of eight Congressional districts plus 1 vote for each Senator for a total of 10 EC votes.

If you don't know why the U.S. Senate exists, then you'll never understand the Electoral Collage.

The House of Representatives is comprised of elected officials from each state proportionally distributed to the states according to their own populations. Without the voice of the Senate, the most popular states would set national policy. Wonderful if you live in California, New York, or Texas and not so great if you call Vermont, Delaware, or even Maryland home. The solution was the Senate, which is comprised of two Senators from each state regardless of landmass, resources, or population. The Senate gives even the smallest states equal voice on national policy. This philosophy extends to the EC and gives the smaller states a fairer chance at determining the outcome of Presidential elections.

Now before we go any further, the States decide how electors are chosen and originally most states selected the slate of electors by popular vote. At times, that caused multi-party slates. Because of this, most states enacted laws to give all the state's EC votes to that state's popular vote winner. In my opinion, this single act by Reformers solidified the 2-party system we have today. No third, fourth, or fifth party will have the strength to make a difference under this modern-day EC system.

Think of an election in terms of voting power – each citizens voting power not the power of the majority. The goal of an election should be to give each voter

the "largest equal share of national voting power possible. Here's a classic example of equal voting power: under a tyranny, everyone's power is equal to zero. Clearly, equality alone is not enough. In a democracy, individuals become less vulnerable to tyranny as the voting power increases."

If you were one of three voters in the nation, your vote would decide an election 50% of the time. That is an enormous amount of voting power. However, as the nation gets larger your voting power decreases in a popular vote scenario.

Alan Natapoff, a MIT physicist, is the subject of the Discover article I referenced earlier. He took on the challenge of determining the importance of districting the electorate, basing his work on probabilities of any single voter determining the outcome of a national election. I can't repeat all the examples given in the article, but if you can't believe a MIT physicist on probabilities, than whom can you believe?

Natapoff says, "If the law of averages has got an edge it's going to tell in the long run. And so the idea is not to allow any very large elections if you are a voter. Unless the contest is perfectly even, you want to keep the size of the elections small [to increase your voting power]." He admits that districting doesn't help in dead-even contests with voters acting the same all over the country (like most anti-EC theories assume), but it does help in a realistic, uneven contest.

Sports fans understand this principle in championship series. The contest becomes more equal, and the underdog has a better chance, when a team has to win more games (districts), not just score more points (votes) in the series. Ask any Pirates fan about the 1960 World Series against the Yankees: the Yankees outscored the Pirates 55 to 27 yet still LOST the series 3 games to 4. Should the Pirates really have been the champs? This isn't the only World Series example that proves this point, but I prefer it more because of the outcome.

Summarizing Natapoff's work, he found that districted voting schemes could either increase or decrease voting power depending on the closeness of the race. "He found the crossover point interesting. For a nation of 135 voters, that point is right around a 55-45 percent split in voter preference between two candidates. In any contest closer than this, voters would have more power in a simple, direct election (popular vote). In any contest more lopsided than this, they would be better off (have more voting power) voting by districts."

For smaller voting nations the gap must be wider before districting will help. For example, for a 9-voter nation the voter preference would need to be greater than 66.6-33.3 percent between candidate A and B. In the opposite scenario, "...as the number of voters gets larger, the crossover point moves closer to 50-50... For a nation of millions of voters, the gap between candidates must be razor-thin for districting not to help."

What Natapoff is stating is that the EC yields the greatest possible voting power for the individual citizen. And, therefore, dropping out of the EC (as Maryland has essentially done if enough misinformed state legislatures follow our lead) will greatly diminish our voting power. Will that eventually lead to tyranny?

One more item of interest Natapoff discovered: in close elections, voters in larger states would end up with more voting power, in lopsided elections, voters in smaller states would. The EC forces, over time, fair representation of all states in the Oval office.

(Liz Bobo on Paper Trails continued from Page 1)

One team placed a bug in the computer and hid it, changing the result of the election in a meaningful way, then Professor Ruben gave the problem to the other group, and none found the bug, though they were very highly skilled and trained computer experts.

What has happened which prompts support for paper trails?

There are a number of things that have turned up which are untraceable. There have been an accumulation of inconsistencies that people have noticed and cannot be concretely verified. When machines were first used in Alabama, a Democratic Senator came up for re-election and all polls immediately prior to the election, and almost all exit polls said he would win by several percentage points, but the results showed a loss. A reported incidence where something like 10,000 votes showed up in the output of the machines, but only 3,000 people showed up to vote. There are hundreds of these kinds of anecdotal stories showing up on the internet. In many cases it would be impossible to recapture the intention of the voters.

What are the priority reasons that paper trails for citizen voting records are important, or not important?

One of the most precious rights we have as US citizens is our right to vote for our elected officials and whenever there are questions about the validity of our basic rights, this raises substantial questions. In this case there are a lot of questions.

Do you know anything about the Diebold Company?

Diebold is/was stationed in Ohio, and in the past the head of that company has publicly promised that he would guarantee that he'll carry Ohio for President Bush. The Diebold president didn't make use of the term 'machines' as the method of carrying Ohio, but his 'guarantee' is a matter of public record.

Are there any constitution impacts, or impact to voters regarding paper trails?

Voters value the capability to have as much voice in who is elected, whether a voter is a janitor or CEO, on election day they are both having same impact.

Is it expensive to implement paper trails? Who pays?

It's not expensive to implement paper trails. Estimates confirm that it could be done in low millions of dollars for Maryland. In fact, some say it could be done cheaper than the cost of merely maintaining existing Diebold machines. Hopefully we're currently looking at discontinuing the Diebold machines, which could be converted to computers for schools. We would go with any of the optical scan machines thus providing a verifiable paper trail.

What is the basis of your position, in addition to the above?

We believe there's nothing more fundamental to a democracy than people being able to rely on their votes being counted as they cast them. We don't think they can rely on that with the machines that we have now.

(Ross Goldstein on Paper Trails continued from Page 1)

doesn't allow them to make mistakes (such as not allowing an over vote in a contest) or warns them of mistakes (such as alerting them if they did not cast a vote in a contest). The system has also allowed voters with visual impairments to vote completely independently for the first time.

Seriousness of concern:

People who are opposed to the DRE voting system cite a variety of security concerns. These concerns are serious and the State Board of Elections has treated them as such.

All voting systems used in Maryland must be reviewed by an independent testing authority and meet the voting system standards established by the former Federal Election Commission and now the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. <http://www.eac.gov/voting%20systems/voting-system-certification/2005-vvsg>) Part of this review is a source code review.

If the voting system meets the standards, the State receives the executable code directly from the independent testing authority, not the vendor. A "hash" of the software is created and compared with the code on file with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and loaded onto each voting unit in the State. (We also compare the "hash" against NIST's library after an election.) An independent validation and verification team participates in the software loading process, and there are strict care, custody and control procedures in place during this process.

In Maryland, this office prepares the ballots used on all voting units in the State. Once the ballots are complete, we provide the ballots to the local boards of elections to load on the voting units. During this process, staff members from the local boards of elections vote scripted ballots on all voting units to verify that the votes entered equal the votes recorded and counted.

After the testing is complete, all test votes are erased, and the voting units are set for election day. Numbered tamper tape is placed over the keyhole protecting the memory card, and the voting unit case is sealed with a numbered seal. Until they are delivered to the polling place, the units are stored in a locked warehouse with access only by staff of the local boards of elections. On election morning, the election judges compare the numbers on the seal number on the voting unit case and the tamper tape number with the numbers on the opening forms. If these numbers do not match, the voting unit is not used.

During election day, the election judges monitor the voting units to ensure that there is no unauthorized access. Election judges verify that the tamper tape continues to cover the keyhole and that the tamper tape is not "voided" and verify that the number of Voter Authority Cards (the receipt-like paper voters sign when checking in to vote) with the number of votes cast on the voting unit. This verification will immediately alert the election judges if a voting unit has more votes cast than voters who voted on it.

Also on election day, this office conducts parallel testing on randomly selected voting units. Parallel testing is a best practice recognized by computer scientists across the country and is a method of testing an electronic voting unit by producing an independent set of results that can be compared against the results produced by the voting unit. (Before election day, election officials in every county conducted parallel tests on units prepared for the election.) Parallel test-

What is going on in the Maryland State Legislature?



From David C. Stark

Is there anybody else in the state of Maryland who is as incensed as I am over the latest outrage by the Maryland House of Delegates? In their zeal to spite President Bush and redress the perceived flaw in our voting process, the House of Delegates today just passed a bill that violates the Constitution of the

United States AND the Constitution of the State of Maryland, taking all the Electoral Votes from the State of Maryland and throwing them to the winner of the National Popular Vote.

Notice, I did not say the popular vote of the state of Maryland, but the NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE.

Mr. and Mrs. and Ms. Voting Citizen of Maryland, you have just been disenfranchised -- your vote NO LONGER COUNTS!

In their zeal to ensure that President Bush can never be elected again, they have decided that the voters of the state of Maryland do not matter -- only the national popular vote. That means that, using the example of the election of 1980, even if Maryland votes overwhelmingly to elect George McGovern as the next President of the United States, the Electoral votes would go to Richard Nixon (who won the popular vote by a large margin). Even if Maryland votes overwhelmingly for Jimmy Carter, our Electoral votes go exclusively to Ronald Reagan.

Think of the ramifications of this outrage. New York City has about 2.5 million more people than the entire state of Maryland -- so the vote of New York City means more than the entire state of Maryland, when it comes to our electoral vote in the next Presidential election! Los Angeles and Chicago combined have about 1 million more people than the entire state of Maryland -- their votes will count more than Maryland's votes.

And if those cities can out vote the entire state of Maryland, how much effort do you think the candidates will put into campaigning in Maryland, or listening to our concerns?

The beauty of the Electoral College system in the United States is that it forces the candidates to consider the smaller states. It removes the tyranny of the majority, and gives the "little guy" a voice in Government. And our legislators just voted to remove that protection from us!

Write or call your representatives today, and express your outrage at this unconstitutional travesty. If we don't, there will be no point in going to the polls in Maryland -- your vote will no longer matter.

...how much effort
[will] the candidates
put into Maryland?

Editor's Note: We realize that this publication presents the writing contributions of two voters who are opposed to using the popular vote to elect US Presidents, and no contributions from those who supported this bill in the Maryland legislature. However, over the course of several weeks, eight attempts were made to contact one elected representative who voted for the bill to circumvent the electoral college. In all, three elected representatives who either voted for the bill, or were thought of support the bill were contacted, and no responses occurred.

We continue to make every effort to provide readers with all sides of issues.

****PUBLIC INVITED****

**NEXT HOWARD COUNTY INDEPENDENT
VOTER MEETING
OCTOBER 23, 2007, 7PM, MILLER LIBRARY**

Guest Speaker from the Board of Elections

Contact Bill Chesnutt at billchesnutt@mac.com or
Mona Brinegar at mona@howardcountyissue.org for
further information, including the speaker and topics.

Summary of previous meeting: We had an informal meeting on September 18. During this meeting we discussed the outlook for local and national issues as well as what we wanted for our loosely formed and diverse group.

ATTENTION ADVERTISERS!!!

Current circulation is 10,000 and ad rates are very reasonable. This publication is produced quarterly, currently delivering 10,000 copies to homes, six Howard County Libraries, various retail locations, Columbia Village Centers, and neighborhoods. Circulation is increasing, and we have plans to continue increasing our numbers.

Call or email for our lowest advertising rates:
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COMMENTARY

From K. Stevens on Howard County Issues Voting Record publication (summer 2007, available on howardcountyissues.org)

There were a few specific bills that I did not notice in your listing [in the Summer 2007 issue] and I'd like to bring some of them to your attention.

Here are three bills that had floor votes in both bodies:
HB10, providing for the automatic expungement of police records for all persons released without being charged, passed the House 130-9 and the Senate 47-0. It was signed into law. Among those voting no were Delegates Miller, DeBoy, and Bates. All others in the delegation voted yes.

SB488, permitting voter registration by those no longer serving a sentence for conviction of a felony, passed the Senate 28-19 and the House 78-60. It too was signed into law. In the Senate, Robey voted yes and Kittleman and Kasemeyer voted no. In the House, Turner, Pendergrass, Guzzone, and Bobo voted yes and Miller, DeBoy, and Bates voted no. Delegate Malone was absent.

SB739, entitled the Legislative Scholarships Integrity Act of 2007, passed the Senate 39-8 and, as amended, by the House 101-35. It never got back to the Senate floor for possible concurrence. In the Senate, Robey and Kittleman voted yes and Kasemeyer voted no. In the House, Miller and Bates voted no and everyone else in the delegation voted yes.

Here are three more bills that, like the public financing of campaigns bill (SB546) that you listed, received floor votes only in one body or the other:

SB193, which would have established that custodial interrogations of a defendant being prosecuted for a crime of violence are presumed involuntary unless an electronic recording is made of the interrogation, failed on the Senate floor 18-29. All three Howard County Senators were among the 29 voting no.

HB6, which would have exempted Maryland high school graduates who were children of resident illegal immigrants from paying nonresident level tuition charges at state colleges, passed the House 81-57. Delegates Turner, Pendergrass, Guzzone, and Bobo voted yes and Delegates Miller, DeBoy, and Bates voted no. Delegate Malone was absent.

HB475, entitled the Public School Construction Assistance Act of 2007, passed the House 101-35. Delegates Turner, Pendergrass, Guzzone, and Bobo voted yes and Delegates Miller, Malone, DeBoy, and Bates voted no.

It's possible to learn even more about legislators by looking at the bills they introduce, how they vote on various bills in their committee, and how they vote on amendments to bills on the floor. Anyway, thanks for what you did provide as a public service.

A National Non-Partisan Group from Mona Brinegar

The Committee for a Unified Independent Party (CUIP) is a national group of Independents who contacted me recently to participate in a telephone survey. The questions were interesting, and at times fell short of the scientific bar.

I haven't joined this group for various reasons, but if you have, we'd really like to hear about some positive experiences to balance the below expression of my contact with the CUIP.

After receiving several phone calls and mail, which included their very nicely packaged magazine, I remain skeptical. Independents are not a political party and if a party is born out of the Independent movement it would be much smaller than the Unaffiliated/ Independent registrants, as not all Independents agree on the issues. How a group so closely tied to Independents could miss this important point is a bit telling. Independents do not neatly follow a set of prescribed positions on issues. The CUIP group and its leader too often take positions that in no way reflect my own beliefs.

In addition having the above unrealistic goal, CUIP is inattentive to the credibility issue. Anyone seeking to lead Independents must be credible as we've suffered enough following the Ross Perot business. When phoning Unaffiliated registrants, CUIP should provide a call-back number or some method of reaching the organization and it's members. Also, knowing the number of members who have joined would be a way to gauge whether or not CUIP is growing.

In my own experience, this is another disappointing group attempting to organize independent people into a single philosophy based on what currently does not work.

Howard County Issues

Join our growing group of volunteers for a great experience in publications and grass roots politics!

Contact BillChesnutt@mac.com

Listen to voters on the issues from across the country, including Howard County callers at 90.1 FM starting at 7am daily on C-Span's Washington Journal, or at www.c-span.org.

Reader commentary is welcomed.
Email mona@howardcountyissues.org

Tea Party in Columbia
From Michael Cornell
River Hill Representative, Columbia Council
Board of Directors, Columbia Association

The larger issue of Downtown development and revitalization is still with us. In public hearings, lawsuits, blogs, email campaigns, newspaper articles. Development debate - seems it’s everywhere. While I have my own opinions on individual aspects, like the Tower, I’m not here to share them with you. What I would like to address – and hear from you about – is a more broad-based issue that permeates so much of public discourse and politics today: corporate influence. Or more specifically, corporate personhood.

Thanks to a Supreme Court ruling in the late 1800’s, the American judicial system not only recognizes corporations as individuals, but also grants them the rights of individuals. While protections under the 14th amendment against unreasonable search and seizure may make perfect sense, even to the hard-line anti-corporatist, corporate rights also include free speech in the form of political campaign donations.

When we look at local issues, such as downtown development, the debate is between not only growth and sustainability, but also between individuals and corporate interests of developers. In politics today – at almost every level – the voice heard is often whoseever’s campaign contribution is the loudest.

If you don’t believe the influence of corporations is directly related to the amount of money flowing into campaign war chests, simply observe that many corporations often donate to candidates in opposing parties running for the same office. Corporations don’t bet on a winner - they guarantee themselves a winner. Further, corporate lobbyists ensure corporate donations are a sound investment for the corporation. Could be why some of the largest corporate donors include health insurance companies, defense contractors and real estate developers.

We are starting to hear more about this in the national presidential debates – at least when democratic candidates are on stage. In some places in the country, citizens – individuals – are taking action to remove corporate political influence from local elections. This past year, Humboldt County, in California, became the latest, and largest, jurisdiction to abolish the legal doctrine known as “corporate personhood.”

The measure effectively bans corporate campaign donations.

The Political action committee, the Humboldt Coalition for Community Rights, was the main driver behind Measure T, as in “Tea.” Their primary outreach tool was a tea bag that reminded voters of the proud history of the Boston Tea Party as an act of rebellion against the most powerful corporation of the day, and called for a modern-day Tea Party of their own. According to spokesperson: “Like the populists of the 19th-century agrarian movement, we believe that genuine change cannot be imposed from the top down. It must proceed from the ground up, and the battles must be waged in local communities.”

I urge all citizens to read up on Downtown development. Find out how

UNITY 08
From Mona Brinegar

Unity 08 was supposed to provide a method of gauging the level of citizen interest in voting for US Presidents without the voting machine problems, without delegates in the Electoral College, and absent party influence. The organization would use technology to circumvent obstacles and tradition in true USA-adopted methodology akin to protesting Church ownership of the Christian Bible. That was my understanding.

But I’m sensing that Unity 08 is not the answer.

Each time I visit the website for Unity 08, I come away frustrated. The latest source of puzzlement is their creating a “dream ticket” in which anyone can go online and vote. My questions go unanswered: Can anyone in another county with internet access vote? How many participants have voted? Who did participants vote for? And the last straw: Why must selections be made from different parties for the running mate?

That last question represents a thread that runs throughout the Unity 08 concept and may be the primary basis for its future demise. The growing Independent registrant population does not want to be corralled into voting based on political party. This fact is so fundamental that I am having trouble believing the Unity 08 people have missed this important point.

The Unity 08 entry into the national political scene was a burst of energy with national press coverage, repeatedly, and over the course of months. The organization had every opportunity to make the most of this exposure, but failed on every front, often claiming to be bi-partisan and missing the non-partisan bent of the fastest growing group of voters in the country.

I continue to receive email from Unity 08 which is one-way communication because it’s been difficult to get direct answers to direct questions. In fact, the organizers don’t seem to be aware of the logical questions left hanging like an incomplete thought. Unless the Unity 08 leaders make fundamental changes that include lifting restrictions on parties and relaxing the rhetoric on the two parties, I predict a withering away of interest.

And what a waste of opportunity.

your quality of life may be impacted – for good or for ill. Let your elected officials know how you feel. Get involved so your interests are heard and accounted for. You want the Tower? Fine. But let’s have the Tower because residents want the Tower.

Regardless of your position on downtown development, the War in Iraq, or affordable health insurance, I suspect you want decisions made on behalf of the voters – not those making large campaign contributions. As a citizen of Columbia and Howard County, wouldn’t you feel better voting for candidates who represent you – the voter?

Perhaps Howard County needs its own Tea Party!

High Energy Prices Got You Down? Global Warming Keeping You Up at Night?

With the recent BG&E rate increase and the alarm of climate change, you can beat either or both with our series of energy saving and environmentally friendly ideas! This is the fist in a series of easy to implement tips to keep you from getting an energy headache!

Heating & Insulation: Warm your home, not the climate!

Tweaking your heating

Most households can achieve significant cuts in their CO emissions and their utility bills just by making a few adjustments to the way they use their existing heating set-up. Here are some good ways to get started.

- **Turn it down** Reducing your heating and hot water temperatures by just a small amount can make a disproportionate difference to your energy consumption. You may find you sleep better, too. For rooms, try 66–68° and throw on a sweater. Each degree you lose will reduce CO emissions (and \$20–40 on your bills) each year. As for hot water, aim for 120–140°.
- **Keep your tank warm** If you have an poorly insulated hot water tank, be sure to equip it with an insulating jacket. For just a few dollars, this could reduce the energy required to heat your water by 25–45%.
- **Heat rooms not walls** Put foil reflectors behind radiators to reflect heat back into the room. You can make your own, but you'll get better results buying them off the shelf.
- **Close the curtains** Draw the curtains at dusk, before the warmth starts to escape.
- **Don't heat empty spaces** Efficient heating controls – especially those that let you specify the temperature of individual rooms, or program different temperatures for different times of day – can take a significant chunk out of your energy demands. Also look into thermostatic radiator valves, which allow you to control each room's temperature automatically.

Delegation Chairs Selected for 2008 General Assembly Session

Members of the Howard County Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly have selected **Del-egate Elizabeth Bobo** as the House Delegation Chair and **Senator Edward Kasemeyer** as the Senate Delegation Chair for the 2008 Maryland General Assembly.

The term begins on July 1, 2007.

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Benefits Connections

The Goshen Hounds Celebrate 50 Years of Foxchasing

This year marks the fiftieth season of the Goshen Hounds’ pursuit of “Sir Charles” across the Montgomery County countryside. The Goshen Hounds Hunt Club was established in 1957 from an original nucleus of members from Master Thomas Mott’s Redland Hunt.

At the time of Goshen’s founding, a young foxhunter who had started with the neighboring Iron Bridge Hounds before moving to Redland, Stanley Stabler, joined Goshen and later was persuaded to become Joint Master. Master Stabler served in that capacity until his death in 1999. His years with the club greatly influenced its character: Goshen enjoys a fine hunting tradition and attracts congenial members who truly enjoy the sport.

Much of the early work of establishing the hunt was done by Master William Carl, with Goshen’s first huntsman, Frank Fraley, and Frank’s cousin, Joe, whipper-in. Tragically, Master Carl died a year after the hunt was established. At this critical point in the club’s early days, several members contacted Mar-rian Curran, Sr., who at the time was Master of his own Indian Spring Hunt. Master “Pop” Curran was persuaded to accept the joint mastership at Goshen with Master Stabler and served in that capacity from 1959 to 1969.

Goshen fields a level pack of mostly red-and-white purebred American Foxhounds. The original pack was drawn from the Bywater hound line of Virginia, with breeding assistance from such vener-ated houndsmen as Joe Hutton and Everett Wagner.

The pack recently has been infused with blood from Orange County, Bull Run, Potomac, and Tryon, and is competitive on the benches as well as in the field.

For the 2007-2008 season, Goshen’s hounds will again be hunted by Mr. Robert Taylor, who comes to us from his native Ireland by way of Australia. Mr. Taylor, the son of an outstanding hunts- man, Jack, who served for several years as the club’s kennel huntsman, brings to Goshen the hunting acumen of one born to the sport and the horsemanship typical of his countrymen. He will be hunt- ing Goshen’s hounds for the 14th season. The hard work of Robert and many others in the off-season gives promise of outstand- ing hunting this year.

The Goshen Hounds Foxhunting Club hails from Olney, Maryland, maintaining a long and colorful Maryland tradition. The club hunts a pack of 20 couple (or 40) American Foxhounds.

Foxhunting in America dates back to Colonial Days: Our first president, George Washington, was an avid foxhunter. Today, there are more than 170 organized fox- hunts in North America, in 35 states and in Canada. Maryland is home to 8 recognized packs.

The Goshen Hounds, established in 1957, hunt across Upper Montgomery County. Their American foxhounds hunt red and gray fox; but, depending on

... the emphasis is on the chase rather than the kill. A successful hunt ends when the fox enters a hole in the ground.



From top left to bottom right:

Tom Pardoe, MFH, & Karen Jones, Tom Conley, Dr. Charles Mess, Sally Conley, Pam Stabler Velisek, Mr. & Mrs. Hansen Watkins, Ex-MFH, Artist Frankie Pardoe Carol Cumming, Karen Jones, Hansen Watkins, Ex-MFH, Charles Norman Shaf-fer, Esq. & Irving Abb, Esq., Sandra Crane Smith, Irving Abb, Mary & Gordon Kirwan, Charles Smith

location, some hunts chase coyote or even bobcat. While originally most clubs were comprised of farmers and landowners, today foxhunters come from almost every walk of life.

Guided by the Master of Foxhounds, field members are mounted spectators who watch the hounds chase their quarry.

Hounds are bred to stay together as a pack, and for stamina. They must have a keen sense of smell and a good voice. The hounds receive their commands from the huntsman through the use of his horn and voice and the position of he and his horse.

Over the years, North American foxhunting has evolved its own distinct flavor. The most obvious difference from hunting in England is that here, the emphasis is on the chase rather than the kill. A successful hunt ends when the fox enters a hole in the ground, called an “earth, ” and hounds are rewarded with praise from the huntsman. More often, hounds lose the scent. Either way, the fox gets away to be chased another day.



Hunting gear, which has changed little since foxhunting began, is based on practicality. The heavy boots and breeches protect riders from branches and brambles. The hard hat serves as a crash helmet. Heavy wool coats are almost waterproof. The stock tie, fas-tened with a plain gold safety pin, can serve as a bandage for rider, hound or horse in case of an accident. In general, gentle- men members wear scarlet coats and ladies wear black.

Whether they “ride to hunt” or “hunt to ride,” foxhunters enjoy the thrill of gal- loping across the countryside to meet fences, ditches and streams—and especially, the sight and music of the huntsman’s horn and a pack of hounds “gone away” in full cry.

Benefits Connection



Promoting the Differences We Each Can Make

A group of local citizens in Howard County have banded together to start a grassroots movement to educate citizens regarding Global Warming. Not just the dangers, but what each person and family can do at a very personal level. From using CFL's instead of incandescent lightbulbs, driving more fuel efficient vehicles, to recycling and getting behind green legislation, this group believes you don't have to be a Hollywood media darling to make a difference. Known as the Climate Change Initiative of Howard County, members of the group are starting discussion circles in villages, religious centers and businesses around the county. Whether or not you believe in climate change, by reducing your carbon footprint - your impact on the environment - you can cut your energy costs dramatically. Members recently gather for the Live Earth Telecast at a member's home. Everyone in attendance learned how, and pledged, to reduce their impact on the environment. Those who are interested in joining a circle or starting your own discussion group should contact Betsy Singer at elizabethsinger446@hotmail.com.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS ...

Shadow Block Productions Hlts the Stage with Oliver!

This fall, Charles Dicken’s beloved charactor, Oliver Twist, is being brought to the stage in the musical Oliver! The streets of London are being recreated at the Drama Learning Center in Columbia, the new home for Shadow Block Productions.

In this musical adaptation, Oliver is an orphan who runs away from an orphanage and hooks up with a group of boys including the Artful Dodger, who are trained to be pickpockets, by an elderly mentor, Fagin. Wrongly accused of a theft he meets a more kindly gentleman who takes him in, to the concern of one of Fagin’s old pupils, the violent Bill Sykes. In the middle is Nancy, Sykes’ girl whom Oliver has come to trust.

Memorable tunes include “Where is Love?”, “Consider Yourself” and “Food, Glorius Food!”

Directed by Columbia resident Conni Ross, the show’s proceeds benefit the Shadow Block Production Company.

Editorial: Family Priorities
Mona Brinegar, Editor, Howard County Issues

I walked into the office of a colleague this week to let her know that we had compiled the County Planning Board votes and would be publishing soon. I knew she was following an issue that will affect her neighborhood, and was very interested in the outcome.

My colleague intended to attend the meeting in which the Planning Board would discuss her issue. While she placed Board meeting date and time on her calendar, her daughter told her - at the last minute - she needed several dozen cupcakes for school the next morning.

We all know how this ended. Family obligations prevailed and her daughter confidently showed up for school the next day with the requisite contribution.

Sometimes referred to as disenfranchised, disconnected, and disinterested, in reality, voters care very much about what is happening in government; electing others to represent their interests. However, we have a growing sense that citizen concerns are not priorities for most political leaders who are instead influenced by powerful influential forces.

When government doesn’t work for citizens, people try to organize. Today in Howard County, we have an amazing number of citizen groups working hard to be heard. Beyond the citizen groups are the people who have priorities that preclude attendance, for example, at planning board or zoning board meetings that often last until 1 a.m. I believe citizens should not have to attend these meetings in order to be heard. Most citizens who have priorities, as the mother referenced above, rely on their elected representatives. We shouldn’t have to choose between family obligations and attendance at meetings to try and enforce representation. Even when we do attend, we still are not heard. Therefore, we have a

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growing number of citizen groups.

What will it take for government to begin to represent citizens instead of special interests? It will take an informed and courageous citizenry. To the extent that Howard County Issues can provide a service to further this goal of electing those who will represent us, we will continue to publish.

And we will watch - and inform - the citizenry about local and state political leaders who do work for citizens. We have some inspirational leaders that we must keep in office.

If you’d like to volunteer for Howard County Issues, please contact Mona Brinegar at mona@howardcountyissues.org

Howard County Planning Board Votes 2007 Source: <http://www.co.ho.md.us/dpz/archives.htm>

PB#	ISSUE	CitaraManis	Dombrowski	Grabowski	Rosenbaum	Alexander, Jr.
ASDP-76-008	Soisson Property - request for approval to allow construction of front porch in Owen Brown	Y	Y	A	Y	N/A
SDP-07-030	Trotter Pines - request approval for construction of 4 single family detached on property zoned R-ED	Y	Y	A	Y	N/A
SDP-06-102	Church address 7410 Grace Dr., request approval for the construction of a church building, parking lot	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
DP-07-087	Stevens Forest and Oliver Place - Oakland Mills - request approval of a construction plan office/ retail/ restaurant	Y	Y	Y	Y	N/A
SDP-07-056	Stanford Overlook - reduction in setback along Rt 175 for 4-story office building	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
ZRA-87	Club Pooche - request to allow pet grooming in the M-1 zoning district	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
ZRA-90	Housing (awaiting clarification on internet site)	A	N	Y	Y	N/V
PB380	Weller Property - request approval of preliminary plan for 7 single family detached homes in R-ED (residential: environmental)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
FDP-117-A-II	Wegmans - to clarify that large full service food stores are permitted use under Criteria Item 7D "Employment Center-Industrial Land use Areas"	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

CONTACT INFORMATION:
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

Marsha McLaughlin, Director
3430 Court House DriveEllicott City, MD 21043
410-313-2350
mmclaughlin@howardcountymd.gov



MISSION:
Our mission is to create collaborative, innovative plans and implement strategies that effectively address growth and redevelopment challenges. DPZ seeks to enhance Howard County’s high quality of life, prosperity, and stewardship of our natural and cultural resources.

County Councilmember Greg Fox on the Maryland Horse Park Location Selection



What would be the benefits for locating the Maryland Horse Farm in Howard County? West County? Columbia residents? Laurel?

The benefits to all residents I believe are the same. It will help preserve land, both the land for the horse park and other land that will now be worth keeping agricultural to support the horse park. It will increase our tax revenues through increased tourism and business, from restaurants to hotels to any number of support businesses. Further, it will give residents another form of entertainment and recreation making Howard County a more desirable and healthy place to live. With that said, we still have to find the right site, engage the community and determine if we can find something that provides the benefits without a high degree of sacrifice.

Why was Howard County not considered as a location for the Maryland Horse Farm during the first round of evaluations?

Good question. The best I can tell is it just didn't make it on anyone's radar screen. Most people I talked to didn't know about it until after the submissions.

How did the decision to include Howard as a possible location come about this time?

First, no decision has been made. Hopefully, there will be a decision shortly just to look at its feasibility for Howard County. As far as why it is even being considered now...First, Dr. Michael Erskine brought the idea to me. Then, as I was putting some meetings together to better understand it and bring other community leaders into the fold, I saw that Harford County had renewed its efforts and formed a task force. I feared we would get too far behind and that there was even a possibility that the State would just go to another bidder rather than consider a new bidder. Therefore, I thought it imperative to get something moving and put the State on notice of our potential interest. We might not find a fit in Howard County. We just don't want to look back at what could have been without making a conscious decision either way.

What are Howard's location possibilities?

Everything is on the table. As I understand it they want 500 to 1000 acres of property that is contiguous and preferably with the same ownership. The specific site that Dr. Erskine had in mind is the University of Maryland Ag Center. While there are many benefits to that site, it is not the only site that should or will be considered. Further, it would require the University's blessing.

Instead of placing hundreds of homes on Doughoregan Manor, could the Historic location be considered?

Anything is possible. However, with any site interest of the current ownership, potential land value and access will always be a major hurdle.

Editor's Note: Greg Fox represents Howard council district 5 in the West County, and is one Fox wanted on Maryland Horse Farms.

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Howard County Council Votes 2007 Source: http://www.co.ho.md.us/CountyCouncil/CC_Archive_Bills.htm

Bill #	ISSUE	Ball	Fox	Sigaty	Terrasa	Watson
CB15-2007	Lease renewals for 8510 High Ridge Rd, Ellicott City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB16-2007	Requires signs to have an alphanumeric code which would identify the case in Land Use cases	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB17-2007	Incorporate Mangione Turf Valley property into the Metropolitan District	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB18-2007	Incorporate Nicholas and Mary Mangione Marriottsville property into Metropolitan District	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB19-2007	Incorporate Nicholas and Mary Mangione Marriottsville property into Metropolitan District	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB20-2007	Howard County authorization to borrow up to 114,095,678 for projects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB21-2007	Howard County authorization to borrow up to 13,000,000 for systemic renovations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB22-2007	Howard County authorization to borrow up tgo 35,042,022 for road and intersection improvement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB23-2007	Howard County authorization to borrow up to 43,428,243 for water and sewer projects	"passed"				
CB24-2007	Howard County authorization to borrow up to 52,330,000 for debt service, sewer projects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB25-2007	Adopting current expense budget and capital budget for 7/2007 - 6/2008	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB26-2007	requires certain water and sewer connections be made by licensed utility contractor	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB27-2007	Allowing for the use of reclaimed water system and other items regarding reclaimed water service and systems	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB28-2007	Modify the criteria for setting fire tax rates and generally relating to fire taxes	withdrawn				
CB29-2007 - ZRA77	Establish Conditional Use on RC and RR zoning districts relating to Age Restricted Housing	N	N	N	N	N
CB30-2007 - ZRA80	Requiring Conditional Use petitions held within 5 mile radius of subject property	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB31-2007	Pre-submission community meetings be held within 5 mile radius of subject property	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB32-2007	Property Tax credit for certain owner-occupied residential real property jointly owned by an individual and the Howard County Housing Commission	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB33-2007	Adding certain positions to the list of executive exempt positions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB34-2007	Adding the position of Chief of Staff and Executive Assistant II, descriptions, other positions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
ENRCB35-2007	Amending the pay plan, establishing pay rates for certain employees	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB36-2007	Empower Howard County to borrow 1,200,000 for Mt.Hebron	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB37-2007	Installment purchase of 166.33 acres for maximum \$6,653,200 from Calvin Murray in Mt. Airy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB38-2007	Amending Howard County Zoning regulations to require single family conditional uses in R-ED and R-12 zoning districts established on lots at least 16,000 square feet in area	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
CB40-2007	Amend the pay plan for Police Lieutenants and Captains, Sergeants	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB41-2007	Collective Bargaining for International Union of Police Associations, multi-year agreement with local 86	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB42-2007	Collective Bargaining for International Union of Police Associations, multi-year agreement with local 107	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB43-2007	Collective Bargaining for International Union of Police Associations, multi-year agreement with local 112	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB44-2007	Collective Bargaining for International Association of Firefighters, multi-year agreement with local 20	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB45-2007	Collective Bargaining for AFL-CIO, multi-year agreement with local 3080	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB46-2007	Collective Bargaining for AFL-CIO, multi-year agreement with local 3085	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB47-2007	Requires certain buildings to achieve standards relating to energy efficiency and environmental design	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB48-2007	Allowing a certain number of allocatins for green neighborhoods and green standards	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB49-2007	Property Tax credit for certain high performance buildings	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB50-2007	Supplementing bills for certain capital projects (see website for details)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB51-2007	Requiring minimum wage for employees of certain contractors	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
CB52-2007	Providing for declaration of impasse concerning employment issues, providing for an arbitrator, providing County Council not bound by certain actions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB53-2007	Adopting Certain National Codes as the Fire Prevention Code for Howard County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB54-2007	Approving multi-year agreement between Howard County and Comcast Cable	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB55-2007	Amending certain recruitment bonuses	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB56-2007	Amending definitions related to disability issues in the Howard County Code	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

GOVERNMENT AND ITS PEOPLE

From Angela Beltram

Numerous questionable decisions were made by the Howard County government that forced the citizens to wonder whether the government is attuned to the needs and desires of its citizenry.

For example, the CompLite legislation which required the County Council to “reconsider” 38 properties that were not thoroughly reviewed during the legal Comprehensive Zoning Plan. Whether the “extension” of this process was legal or not has not been determined. But what was clear is that of the 38 properties that were to be “reconsidered”, the Church on St. Johns Lane was never before the public during that time.

The Council rezoned 28 acres so that a “Mega-Church” could be built without the public review that is required by every other church in Howard County. The proposal is for an additional 95,000 square foot building (most modern grocery stores are 65,000); 800 parking spaces, (Mt. He-

bron High has 450); and 41 – 600 square foot classrooms. All of this on a two-lane road.

It took over 7000 signatures to place the issue of CompLite on the ballot for the public to vote up or down. However, another government body – the election board chose not to support our position in court.

It is now in court, but the County Government is fighting us all the way and it is costing us \$1000’s to make the county adhere to its own laws. Will we be able to continue? Only through donations from citizens who have signed our petition or support our position can we go on.

The County will continue to fight us. The developers have deep pockets and will do anything to be able to continue to have their way with County Government.

Will you help us?

Angela Beltram can be reached at angie@angienet.com



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Shavings for Stalls (Bulk & Bag(no walnut or cherry shavings!)	5 foot cotton Lead Shanks	3-4" Elasticon Tape
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(Ross Goldstein on Paper Trails continued from Page 3)

ing starts at 7:00 a.m., and voting continues until 8:00 p.m. when polls closed across the State. All of these parallel tests confirmed the 100% accuracy of the voting system.

What are the priority reasons that paper trails for citizen voting records are important, or not important?

At this point we need to define what is meant by the term ‘paper trail’. Advocates want voter verified paper trail. The current system can produce paper records now, but it’s not voter verified. I would also point out that while paper trails can offer a level of security, they are not the only way of providing security

Are there any constitutional impacts, or impact to voters regarding paper trails?

As far as legal impacts are concerned, there is a lawsuit that was filed by a blind voter in Baltimore County. The suit involved the inaccessibility of the optical scan voting system used at that time. The suit was administratively closed when the DRE voting system was implemented since the new system is able to accommodate visually impaired voters. There is the possibility of that suit being reopened if the disability community does not feel that the new system is sufficiently accessible. The law mandating the use of the new optical scan system also requires the use of a ballot marking device that will assist voters with disabilities in voting independently. Whether this is a sufficient and acceptable solution for disabled voters remains to be seen.

Is it expensive to implement paper trails? Who pays?

We’re not sure about the exact cost of implementing paper trails. Obviously there is a cost, but how much is under debate. The policy from the Maryland legislature is that this item is important and so regarding the cost, we’ll have to wait and see. Regarding the company, Diebold may be named Premier now. The voting system division based in TX. Diebold Inc. is in Ohio.

e-mail: info@elections.state.md.us
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web: www.electionsmaryland.com

Editors Note: For further information on Maryland Elections, please visit an article on “Officials Probing Possible Theft of Voting Software in Md.” at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/19/AR2006101901818_pf.html



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We are actively looking for writing contributions, send your thoughts to mona@howardcountyissues.org. We're currently accumulating contributions on school related items, legislature voting records, and various other issues. But as always, any writing contribution is appreciated in this publication that connects citizens and government.

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