

*Dorchester  
Citizens  
For  
Planned  
Growth*



# DCPG NEWSLETTER

## Winter 2016

### **Letter from the President - January**

Winter greetings to members and friends of DCPG! Once again we want to thank you for all your valuable support in 2015. As we approach our annual general membership meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup> the DCPG board has been busy maintaining connections with several issues which pertain to the quality of life here in Dorchester.

Phase one of the cooperative storm water demonstration project is solidly underway at the Sailwinds Park Visitor Center on the Choptank River in Cambridge. Pet waste stations have been installed at two locations in the Park, a demonstration rain garden has been landscaped and planted, and the framing is up for the demonstration pavilion. Builders Ted and Ben Boettger have scheduled a roof raising day for the building for January 25, weather permitting. Boettger Woodworks will coordinate this next phase of construction with DCPG volunteer laborers and we hope to have the building largely finished by the end of January. While we have been working to complete phase one of this project, DCPG board member Diane Miller has been meeting with Amanda Fenstermaker of The Dorchester County Tourism Department to plan

for phase two, which will include two much larger rain gardens to filter water entering the Choptank, as well as a living shoreline restoration between the Visitor Center and the base of the Choptank River bridge. Once completed, this project will both help enhance water quality in the river and present beautiful and sustainable landscape improvements to visitors and local residents alike.

DCPG water quality monitors and board members continue to advocate for the necessity of reducing further degradation of the Transquaking River here in Dorchester. Signs on the lower river already warn against the presence of toxic algae and threats to swimmers. You may recall that the old animal waste rendering plant located near Higgins Mill Pond has been taken over by a Corporation called Valley Protein which has submitted an application to Maryland Department of the Environment to quadruple the water usage of the plant in association with the planned exponential increase in size of the Delmarva chicken industry. The plants location and increased wastewater outfall could not be more threatening to the sensitive and already imperiled Transquaking. DCPG has attended a preliminary informational hearing on the project and requested a further public hearing on the

application in order to stress the importance of preventing further pollution. At the same time, residents of Somerset County are raising concerns about threats to public health from breathing the air associated with the super sizing of chicken houses. It would seem that further expansion of this industry should wait until problems associated with the waste stream – both the manure output and the offal from slaughtered birds – have been shown to be under control.

As the struggle to implement the pollution reduction targets of the Bay Cleanup program continues, a new strategy of selling “pollution credits” has emerged. Basically, this program would allow farmers who have implemented best management practices on their land to be financially rewarded for their good stewardship by other farmers, industries, or municipalities that have been unable or unwilling to meet their targets. This would save taxpayer money since government would not be paying the farmers directly, but would act as a sort of middleman for a private transaction. This is a complicated proposal which is still being hashed out in terms of its potential benefits for individuals and the bay. DCPG board member and environmental stalwart Richard Ball has attended a lengthy meeting on this concept and promises to keep our board members informed of any progress.

DCPG is a small and primarily volunteer organization that works hard to keep its members educated and informed about issues that affect our quality of life here in Dorchester. These issues seem to grow both more numerous and more complex each year. We sincerely appreciate all your support of our efforts and look forward to talking to you personally at the general membership meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Fred C. Pomeroy

Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth P.O. Box 576 Cambridge, MD 21613



## **2016 Environmental Legislative Preview**

The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Preservation Maryland and the Maryland League of Conservation Voters sponsored a 2016 legislative preview session at the Eastern Shore Conservation Center in Easton on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Discussion centered on restoring funding to many environmental and open space programs that saw reductions to their programs in past years.

Sen. Addie Eckardt, R-37-Mid-shore, Delegate Johnny Mautz, R-37B, and Delegate Jeff Ghrist, R-36, each discussed what they see as priorities for the upcoming year. Topics included budget appropriations, the economy, energy, health care, and education in the forefront. They talked about their impressions of how Maryland will move forward in 2016 to bring back and improve programs without creating a deficit.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Maryland League of Conservation Voters, and Eastern Shore Land Conservancy each made presentations on their upcoming agendas and legislation to watch for throughout the upcoming year. There were several bills that could have a direct impact on the Bay and water quality.

Alan Girard, Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) talked about an upcoming bill that would require chicken companies (integrators) to dispose of chicken manure in an environmentally responsible manner. This would remove the burden from the farmers, who are currently responsible for the waste. Farmers would still have first dibs, but above what can be used under approved nutrient management plan would become the responsibility of the integrator. This bill could help reduce phosphorous pollution in the Bay, especially from the Eastern Shore where chicken production is a major agricultural product. Similar bills have been opposed in the past.

Ben Alexandro, Maryland League of Conservation Voters (MLCV), talked about several bills for 2016. The first was a bill to help educate the public on Neonicotinoids, a class of pesticides that have been linked to bee colony collapse. Recent studies have shown this pesticide has an adverse effect on brain development in unborn children and is also effecting juvenile blue crab populations. The bill would require a permit to sell these pesticides and would also require educational labeling to warn consumers.

Ben also discussed a plastic bag ban and a bottle bill. The plastic bag ban would stop retailers from distributing plastic bags and would also impose a fee on paper bags that would be used to help offset the cost of the more expensive paper bags with excess revenues going to litter clean-up and neighborhood greening projects. Similar bills have been proposed in the past but were unsuccessful. Both of these bills have the

potential to greatly reduce trash that is carried to our tributaries, creeks and the Bay.

Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act must be renewed in 2016. MLCV hopes to see stricter reductions with a proposed 40% reduction by 2040 and increasing Maryland's renewable energy portfolio to 25% by 2020.

Diane Miller

## **DCPG welcomes new board member**

Diane Miller, Cambridge resident, joined the DCPG Board in November 2015. Diane works full-time as a Restoration Ecologist at Environmental Concern Inc. in St Michaels. She has lived and worked on the Eastern Shore for 12 years in the field of wetland restoration and was formerly a member of the Choptank Trib Team (now disbanded), helping with stream clean-up efforts with Project Clean Stream, river paddle/trash pick-ups, and Wade-In events. Diane is a UME-Master Gardener in Dorchester County and enjoys gardening, kayaking, home DIY, and stained glass.



*The following DCPG members joined or renewed their membership at or above the \$50 level:  
Thank You!*

Miriam and Willem Zijp  
Peter C Paul  
Dr. and Mrs. Buczek  
Richard Balling  
Patti and Porter Hopkins  
Mr. and Mrs. William Giese  
Kathy Gordon and Bill Farver  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bright  
Kathy and Brian Manicke  
Margaret and George Anzalone  
Judd Vickers and Greg Barto  
Mr. and Mrs. Jon E. Ingersoll  
Lexine Lowe and Fred Pomeroy  
Beth Ann and Jim Lynch  
Diane Stoecker  
Margaret and Douglas Worrall  
Richard Ball  
Kalla Kvalnes and Tom Fisher  
Donna Stotts  
Mr. and Mrs. W. Marshall Rickert  
George and Jackie Radcliffe  
Matt and Michele Whitbeck  
Judith Stribling  
Donna and Wayne Towers  
Catherine McCulley  
Barbara Hale  
Libby Handley Nagel  
Bruce Robson  
Erica and Charles Kropp  
Wolf and Charlotte Hehn  
Patricia Comella  
Mike Pretl

## **DCPG 9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Featuring Keynote Speaker

**Greg Farley** is a Professor of Biology and the first Director of the Center for Leadership in Environmental Education (CLEEn) at Chesapeake College

Presentation of 2016 Environmental Stewardship Award

**Libby Nagel** is this year's recipient

Local experts will provide brief updates on issues of relevance to Dorchester County.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR and BE SURE TO JOIN US!**

**Dorchester County Historical Society**

**Sunday, January 31st from 3-5pm**

Dorchester County Historical Society, 1003 Greenway Drive, Cambridge  
Parking on Greenway Drive and LaGrange Ave  
Refreshments

**Join Us!**

**Friday, February 26th**

**This Changes Everything**

**Film**

**By Naomi Klein**

**Wild and Scenic Film Festival**

Chesapeake College Wye Mills

Free/Doors open at 5:30pm