

SUGARLOAF NEWSLETTER FROM JIM CHOUKAS-BRADLEY

June 2012

I have just completed my first month as the new President of the Sugarloaf Citizens Association (SCA), and I love what I see. It is an honor to represent and lead this wonderful organization that I have loved since my first association with it 25 years ago. It is a privilege to work to help protect the environment and the quality of life in our beautiful Agricultural Reserve and Sugarloaf Country.

As I assume the reins of SCA, I find an organization that is strong, committed, nimble, tuned in, and dedicated, with a growing membership that is representative of the diverse perspectives of the residents of the Sugarloaf area, all of whom love it and understand the need to protect this treasure that benefits all of the people of Montgomery County and the surrounding areas.

The Sugarloaf Citizens Association has been an advocate for the protection of the rural character of Sugarloaf Country since 1973, almost 40 years ago. Under the stewardship of our outgoing President, Anne Sturm, SCA has continued to thrive and has grown in important ways. Her shoes will be impossible to fill, but I vow to do my best to follow in her footsteps. As immediate Past President, Anne remains a member of SCA's Executive Committee, and I will rely heavily upon her for advice and counsel. The same is true of the Association's other officers who, like me, were elected or re-elected at SCA's Annual Meeting on April 28: Vice President Dick Hill, Treasurer Chris Kendrick, and Secretary Linda Pepe, whose contributions will continue to be profound.

They and the other members of SCA's Board of Directors were elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting held at SCA's headquarters at Linden Farm on Martinsburg Road on April 28. The Annual meeting was very well attended and was by all accounts a great success. County Council member Craig Rice was the keynote speaker. Council members Phil Andrews and Mark Elrich also attended and participated in excellent discussions of some of the issues and challenges we face in the Agricultural Reserve, both today and as we look to the future.

SCA's Annual Plant Swap, held at Linden Farm on May 12 under the leadership of Board Member and Land Committee Chair Ellen Gordon, was also a great success.

On May 21 I had the honor of presenting SCA's awards to students from Poolesville High School's Global Ecology Magnet Program, under the leadership of Joyce Bailey, whose environmental research projects were selected for special recognition by SCA's panel of judges: Linda Pepe, Anne Sturm, Stan Fisher, and Chet Anderson. The SCA awards were part of an awards program led by the Izaak Walton League at its beautiful headquarters on West Willard Road. SCA awards went to the following Global Ecology students:

Jennifer Price, *Your Horse Just Might Have a Parasite*. The results of this research contribute to equine health management and pasture and soil conservation.

Karthik Ganesuni, *Comparison between Vernal and Permanent Ponds in Hardwood Deciduous Forest of the Mid-Atlantic*. The results of this research are relevant to protecting permanent ponds in hardwood forests to promote diversity in pond-based life.

Amy Defnet and **Rebekah Miller**, *Adopt-A-Tree with Freshmen*. This project served to both ensure the health of the trees on the Poolesville High School campus and educate freshmen about their care.

Tariq Beidleman and **Jordan Psaltakis**, *American vs Chinese Chestnut Tree Genetic Variants and Growth*. This research is detailed and significantly contributes to the work of the American Chestnut Foundation in their efforts to restore the American Chestnut tree.

Alexander Pike, *American Chestnut Test plots and Demonstration Orchard*. This demonstration orchard resulted from a partnership with a builder/developer and created a visible and accessible educational opportunity for the users of a residential park.

Carrie Cheung, *Green Wall Field*. This research will help protect the integrity of buildings and reduce energy consumption while encouraging insect diversity in vine plantings near buildings.

Anna Clayton and **Sophia Stypeck**, *Victory Garden and Rainscapes*. This project provided many new native plants for Montgomery County and important rainscapes to control damaging run off.

Project Wild students **William Cartwright, Megan Connaughton, Jonique Lyles & Patricia Maloney, Lindsey Newingham, Beth Rosenbaum and Alexandra Robbins**. Project Wild is a widely used conservation and environmental education program for K-12. Sugarloaf Citizens Association recognizes that environmental education needs to start early and continue throughout life, and this year's review committee were impressed with all of the Project Wild seniors who taught environmental units in various MCPS schools. Sugarloaf honored the Project Wild Students of 2012 with a gift of one hundred dollars to the Global Ecology Magnet to support future Project Wild student projects.

I will be reaching out to many of you in the Agricultural Reserve community for input, insight, and involvement in the coming weeks and months. Should any of you wish to contact me, I would welcome talking with you. Please feel free to send me an email at jchoukasbradley@mbolaw.com, or call me at SCA's office number, (301) 349-4889, or on my cell phone, (202) 297-9241.

Jim Choukas-Bradley, President
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association