

DEEP CREEK DISPATCH

Winter 2008

Newsletter of the
Property Owners' Association
of Deep Creek Lake, Incorporated

President's Message

This winter issue, like all previous winter issues, is being sent to all property owners within the lake watershed that we have on record. We hope you will find the newsletter informative. If you are not a member of the POA, I invite you to join our organization whose purpose "is to bring together the property owners of the Deep Creek Lake area to promote, preserve and protect the quality of life, environment, recreational opportunities, historic sites and historic areas, in, on and around Deep Creek Lake, Garrett County, Maryland."

Your Board of Directors has been, and continues to be, working diligently on three significant issues: Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs), Gypsy Moth Spraying and Wind Turbines installed on state forest land.

In November 2007 the POA gifted more than \$20,000 to the County Commissioners for the purchase of AEDs. All Sheriff's Deputies will be trained on the use of the AED and one of these life saving devices will be in each of the Sheriff's patrol vehicles. We are pleased to have made this gift to the citizens of Garrett county. Dispatch Editor Marge Mahood will write more about this later in this issue.

The Gypsy Moth will eat its way through our forests leaving devastation, unless effective spraying takes place this spring. Even though the governor and the county commissioners have allocated funding to spray the Gypsy Moth, it is very important that we all stay vigilant and not let the funding slip away. The newsletter will provide more information on this topic and to whom to write to express your concerns. The board of directors will soon be discussing how and to what extent the POA can financially contribute to the Gypsy Moth spray program to assure that all problem areas are sprayed.

A few weeks ago each of you received a letter regarding the leasing of state forest land for the purpose

of wind turbine installation. This matter is of utmost importance. Please avail yourself to the vast amount of public information on subject. The internet is full of information, lots of information, so much information that one's head literally spins trying to objectively understand both sides of the issue. No matter which way you feel, yes or no, on wind energy; that is not the issue. The issue is the leasing of state forest land for the installation of industrial wind turbines.

On the 30th and 31st of January, I testified at public hearings in Garrett County and Annapolis respectively, against the industrialization of state forest lands. Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Senator George Edwards, and the Garrett County Commissioners, have all stated opposition to the industrialization of state forest land. The Republican has done a wonderful job of capturing the essence of the January 30th meeting held at Garrett College. The Cumberland Times-News and Baltimore Sun, did a less than accurate job of reporting the public testimony.

Please, no matter what your opinion, make it be known. Even though the present proposal from U. S. Wind Force is for Meadow Mountain and Backbone Mountain, the issue to be decided is for all state lands.

The POA web site has a link to a DNR site where you can make your comments and see the comments of others. Our web site also contains my public testimony and links to The Republican and information the state presented at the two public meetings. The comment period ends March 3, 2008, so act quickly. (www.deepcreeklakepoa.com)

Three quick items in closing:

- 1) Remember to visit our website from time to time, as we post items of interest and importance and provide links to timely articles and informative websites.

- 2) POA members have never been shy when they have opinions or ideas and we encourage the commu-

nication. We have made every effort to reply to all notes and emails that we receive. Email is the easiest way for us to respond, so if you communicate via U. S. Mail, please give your email address.

3) The POA does not give your information to anyone or any organization.

Wishing each of you a snow-covered winter and an early and warm spring.

Scott

AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AEDs)

As Scott Johnson mentioned in the above letter, the Property Owners' Association of Deep Creek Lake (POA), whose membership of over 1,300 is composed of both Residential and Business Owners in the Deep Creek Lake region and all of Garrett County, announced in mid-November that it had made a gift of over \$20,000 to the Garrett County's Sheriff's Office that will be used to fund the purchase of 16 life-saving Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs). The gift was made as a tribute in memory of POA past-president Judge Frederick A. Thayer, one who did so much for Garrett County until his untimely death in February 2007.

Through the cooperation of Sheriff Gary Berkebile, Deputy John Frank and County Commissioners Ernie Gregg, Fred Holliday and Denny Glotfelty, the AEDs will now be placed in all the Sheriff's Office patrol cars that patrol the vast area of Garrett County. This new equipment will benefit all the residents of the county.

The County Commission has agreed to fund the maintenance expenses associated with the AED Units and it is hoped that through grant funding additional AED Units can be obtained for the entire Sheriff's Department Fleet. The training and retraining of the Sheriff's Deputy staff will be headed and coordinated by Deputy John Frank. The AEDs are scheduled to arrive by the end of February. Deputy John Frank will schedule training classes for each of the Sheriff's Deputies beginning in mid-March. By the end of March all Deputies will be trained.

GYPSY MOTHS

With spring just around the corner, the question of the Gypsy Moth infestation has raised concern

once again. Money to fund the spraying has been both negative and positive. The bad news is that the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service has withdrawn its promise to give landowners that have at least ten acres of forest land on their property about \$30.00 per acre for spraying. This has been a very disappointing development for these landowners as they were encouraged to sign up at Maryland field offices and fill out applications. Consequently, there is little hope of significant Federal funding for combating Gypsy Moths in Garrett County.

The positive news is that the state of Maryland is going to provide funding to spray. The state is in the process of allocating 3.5-4 million dollars for Gypsy Moth suppression in Maryland. Of this amount, Garrett County may receive 1.6-2 million dollars to spray between forty and forty-five thousand acres. The total for all of the state is one hundred thousand acres to be sprayed. It is evident that Garrett County has one of the biggest problems with the moth. The spraying will target residential areas and State lands. There is now no State or Federal funding in place for those owners who have ten or more acres of forest land. These property owners may want to go together to come up with totals of twenty plus acres which would make it possible for spraying to be done at a modest cost. A workshop addressing these issues was held on February 9th at Garrett College. At this time, the cost to spray is \$38.00 per acre. The Garrett County Office of the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension sponsored the workshop.

As of now, the Garrett County Commissioners have allocated \$70,000 to supplement the State's funding for spraying. The State and County allocations are subject to change if the situation changes. The Property Owners' Association Board will also be discussing co-op funding for spraying in the lake watershed. If you live in Maryland, but not in Garrett County, contact your own State Senators and Delegates urging them to support Gypsy Moth funding for Garrett County. If you live in Garrett County, contact george.edwards@senate.state.md.us and/or wendell.beitzel@house.state.md.us. urging continued support for Gypsy Moth suppression. If you have questions or need information, please contact the Extension Office at 301-334-6960 and to speak with either Willie Lantz or Sherry Frick. More information can be found at www.gcforest.sailorsite.net/ or the link provided by Property Owners' Association at www.deepcreeklakepoa.com.

WIND TURBINES

Early in December it was announced that the administration of Governor O'Malley was considering a request by Pennsylvania-based U.S. Wind Force to lease lands in the Potomac and Savage River State Forests. They are requesting to clear an estimated four hundred acres to construct up to one hundred forty-story tall wind turbines. The Department of Natural Resources scheduled two meetings in January so interested citizens could give their views either supporting or opposing the proposal.

Since that time there has been much discussion and debate on the issue. On January 14th, Scott Johnson sent a letter to all Deep Creek Lake property owners stating the position of the majority of the Board of Directors for the Property Owners' Association of Deep Creek Lake. He made it very clear that "a majority of the POA Board believe that while the installation of wind turbines may be appropriate in some areas, it is not compatible with the public's use and enjoyment of state forest land." Thus, for the POA Board, the issue is industrialization of state lands, which is inconsistent with the mission of Maryland State Forests, whose first two goals are (1) to restore, manage and protect Maryland's trees, forests, and forested ecosystems to sustain our natural resources and (2) to connect people with the land.

In discussing the issue, there appears to be increasing opposition to placing wind turbines on state land. As of late January and early February the Allegheny Highlands Conservancy, the Maryland Sierra Club, the Garrett County Board of Realtors, the Property Owners' Association of Deep Creek Lake, Inc., the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, and the Garrett County Commissioners, in addition to many other groups, have expressed opposition. State Senator George Edwards and Delegate Wendell Beitzel are also opposed.

The first meeting took place in auditorium of Garrett College on January 30th. Over three hundred people turned out to express their views. The vast majority voiced opposition to placing wind turbines on state land. Citing damage done to wildlife, questioning the efficiency of wind energy and the marring of the landscape in an area of natural beauty were some of the reasons for opposing the turbines. There were also questions as to why there was no attempt to locate the turbines further east in areas such as the Chesapeake Bay or Ocean City areas that have much stronger winds. Still another reason cited was

the decline of property values in areas that have wind energy. The second meeting took place in Annapolis on January 31st. Again, those opposing the wind turbines were in the overwhelming majority.

Written comments will be accepted until March 3rd. They may be sent to John R. Griffin, Secretary, Department of Natural Resources, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401. Comments will also be accepted at <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/sustainability/wpm/>. There is also a link provided by the Property Owners' Association at www.deepcreeklakepoa.com. If you haven't voiced your opinion yet, it is important that you do so. As soon as the public comment period is over the DNR has promised a decision. If the state decides to pursue this use and determines that commercial wind power generation may be an appropriate use of Maryland's public lands, the next step will be to conduct a detailed environmental, economic and community (local and regional) feasibility study, with particular attention to resource impacts. A competitive bidding process would be utilized for any public lands that meet the ultimate test of appropriateness.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

By now, property owners have received the 2008 property assessments. This year the reassessment schedule included the lake area properties **south** of the US 219 bridge. If the property is your principle residence a "yes" should appear in the box in the upper right-hand corner of page three below the "Principle Residence" designation. Many residential owner-occupied properties in Maryland receive the Homestead Tax Credit. It limits the assessment that your real estate taxes are based on. **Beginning this year, a one-time application is required to continue receiving the Homestead Tax Credit or start receiving the credit if you are eligible but not receiving the credit.** Applications were included with your assessment notice. If you did not receive an application or your primary residence has now changed to Garrett County and this is not reflected in the above-mentioned box, you may download an application form from the Department of Assessments and Taxation at www.dat.state.md.us. You may also call 410-767-2165 in the Baltimore metropolitan area or 1-866-650-8783 toll free from elsewhere in Maryland. Not applying for this credit may result in an increase in your real estate tax bill.

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2008 LAKE AREA CULTURAL EVENTS

The Spring issue of the Dispatch will contain the complete lake area cultural events schedule for 2008. For your advanced planning, listed below are some events currently scheduled through May.

GLAF (Call 301-387-3082 for Tickets and Information; Cost Adult/Student): **March 14th—The Ultimate Teen Talent Show**, Garrett College Auditorium, 8:00pm, \$7/\$7; **April 4th—International Ballet Theater**, Garrett College Auditorium, 7:30pm, \$17/\$7;

May 23rd—Morgan State University Choir, Garrett College Auditorium, 7:30pm, \$17/\$7.

OUR TOWN THEATRE (Call 301-334-5640 for Tickets and Information): **April 2nd to 5th** (8:00pm) and **April 6th** (2:00pm)—**The Cripple of Inishmaan**; **April 22nd to 26th** (8:00pm) and **April 27th** (2:00pm)—**Nickel and Dimed**; **May 14th to 17th** (8:00pm) and **May 18th** (2:00pm)—**Picasso at the Lapin Agile**. Tickets for Tuesday through Thursday and Sunday are \$5.00. Tickets for Friday and Saturday are \$8.00.

Property Owner's Association of
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