

# The Emmitsburg Dispatch

VOL V, No. 16

News and Opinion in the service of Truth

AUGUST 17, 2006

## A local hero makes his final journey



- ROBERT A. ROSENSTEEL SR. / THE ROSENSTEEL STUDIO

A group of Marine pallbearers carry the casket of Lance Cpl. James W. Higgins Jr. from the Lynfield Event Complex building on Aug. 4. Two of the pallbearers, 1st Lt. Byron Owen and Sgt. Scott Martin, credit Higgins with saving their lives when their patrol in Iraq came under fire. Higgins was buried in Resthaven Memorial Gardens with full military honors.



**James Willard Higgins Jr.**  
June 2, 1984 – July 27, 2006

BY JAMES RADA JR.  
Thurmont News Editor  
jrada@thurmontdispatch.com

LEWISTOWN, Md. – They rode together for five months in a truck in the heat of western Iraq. On Aug 4, four Marines flew to Maryland from Camp Pendleton where they were recovering from combat injuries to walk with Lance Cpl. James W. Higgins Jr. on his final journey.

Higgins' former platoon commander, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Byron Owen said, "I watched his back and he watched mine."

*Semper fidelis.* Always faithful.

"I know he watches my back still from his post on high," said Owen.

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to change hands**

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**'Hero's Run' attracts 130+**

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## Board makes incorporation date official

BY RICHARD D. L. FULTON  
Emmitsburg News Editor  
rfulton@emmitsburgdispatch.com

EMMITSBURG, Md. –

The board of commissioners unanimously approved a resolution sponsored by Commissioner

William B. O'Neil Jr. to recognize the town's 1825 incorporation date at their Aug. 7 meeting, with little debate.

The resolution recognizes Jan. 13, 1825, as the "the only legal and official date in which the government was established

for the Town of Emmitsburg," and provides the town government with a way out of the multi-year debate over the town's founding date.

Board members had stated previously that they felt that town administrators should not become involved in "voting on history."

**Staff and historic society  
supported resolution**

The resolution calls for only the date of incorporation to appear on the town seal and "all official

-See **Incorporation** on page 3

## Celebrating 50 years – Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show

BY JAMES RADA JR.  
Thurmont News Editor  
jrada@thurmontdispatch.com

THURMONT, Md. – Fifty-four years ago, Emmitsburg began a community show that featured the agricultural and homemaking talents of the community.

"My wife and I used to go to the show and we thought it was nice," said Rodman Myers, president of the Thurmont and Emmitsburg Community Show committee. "We worked to get the Thurmont Grange and Thurmont FFA to start their own show.

The Thurmont Community

Show began in 1957 in the old Thurmont High School. Emmitsburg's last community show was in 1958, but when Catoctin High School opened in 1968, "We brought the community together for a combined show," Myers said.

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Thurmont and Emmitsburg Community Show. It is scheduled for Friday-Sunday, Sept. 8-10 at Catoctin High.

"Our show here is bigger than a lot of county fairs on the Eastern Shore," Myers said.

In 1974, the Catoctin FFA started the beef, sheep and swine

show with Robert Valentine, chairman, and William Baker, Ralph Zimmerman and Robert Meunier as auctioneers.

"We used to have the show on Friday night and Saturday, but when we added the beef, sheep and swine show we decided to add Sunday so more people could get to see what

we've got," said Myers.

The Thurmont and Emmitsburg Community Show is free to the 600-650 people who exhibit each year and compete for \$9,000 in premiums. That is a far cry from the \$75 the show received from the state

-See **50 years** on page 8

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Dispatch encourages its readers to express their thoughts and opinions about issues that appear in this publication or affect the community. Letters must be exclusive to the Dispatch and should be no longer than 300 words in length. They must be signed and include the writer's address and phone number for verification purposes. The Dispatch reserves the right to edit letters for content and space.

### “Liberal” is not a four-letter word

Commissioner Bruce Reeder recently described former Commissioner David Gray as a liberal and a taxer. This tells us more about Bruce Reeder than David Gray.

Among other ideas, “liberal” means “generous.” It is a dirty word only to the mean, cheap and greedy. It is misused in politics to appeal to the selfish instincts of the ignorant, who have no sense of community.

“Taxes are the price of civilization,” said Oliver Wendell Holmes. This may be somewhat of an exaggeration, but there is a kernel of truth. Government cannot provide

essential and civilizing services without them.

Of course, we all know that benefits must be paid for. Even Commissioner Reeder knows that. But he did not say what higher taxes Mr. Gray voted for, and whether he was being politically and fiscally responsible in doing so.

Obviously, in attempting to smear Mr. Gray, Commissioner Reeder unwittingly exposed himself.

- Harold C. Craig Jr.  
Emmitsburg

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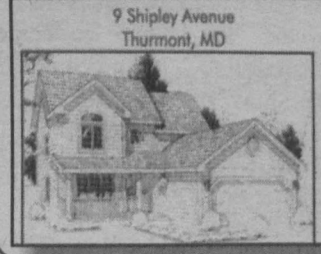
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### 100 Years Ago “In this place” From The Emmitsburg Chronicle

This column offers a regular look back at Emmitsburg through the eyes of The Emmitsburg Chronicle which first appeared on June 14, 1879, published by Samuel Motter. In 1909 the paper became known as The Weekly Chronicle. It continued regular publication, allowing for a 5-year hiatus during World War II, until February 9, 1977.

August 9, 1906

#### The New Trolley Road

As the directors of the W.F. and G. Railroad Company have decided to begin the actual construction of the trolley line from Frederick to Thurmont, it behooves the people living between Thurmont and Emmitsburg and the citizens of this particular town, to do all that lies in their power to hasten the completion of the road to this point.

The benefit to be derived by our town from such a road is inestimable and the innumerable advantages that will result from through traffic will be incalculable to those living near the line.

Usually one of the greatest obstacles to the construction of a trolley road is the indisposition of people to immediately grant rights of way through their property, and the inevitable result of such indisposition is future regret on the part of those who hesitate or refuse to grant such rights of way, by reason of the fact that in many cases the line, in consequence, is diverted from its original course, with a correspondent inconvenience and loss to the property owner.

It might be well for the farmers through whose lands the proposed survey runs, to reflect on this point with a view to facilitating and not hindering its progress.

We need the trolley and it is to our own interest to expedite its construction.

#### Enthusiastic Meeting

The men who attended the meeting, held last Tuesday evening in Firemen's Hall, to further the Town Hall project, came for business. All of those present subscribed in full to the limited number of shares purchasable on the first canvass.

Before the books were opened Mr. A. A. Horner was elected treasurer. It was then decided that the shares subscribed for should be payable only after the full number had been taken up. This business attended to, the books were opened and everyone present obligated himself for the full amount available.

The committee appointed some time ago to solicit

subscriptions, Messrs. Sterling Galt, Peter Burket, J.T. Gelwicks, Dr. D.E. Stone and A.A. Horner will, in the next few days, make a careful canvass of the town and while it is not expected that all of this stock will be taken up on the first solicitation yet it is anticipated that at least each family, at all able to subscribe will be represented on the first installment of stock issue.

#### More News of the Murder

Dr. D.E. Stone, of this place, made a very thorough examination of the remains of Edward Smith the man who was hot and killed on Wednesday afternoon, August 8<sup>th</sup>. He removed the lungs and heart of the victim and found that 160 shot had penetrated these organs, five of which had riddled his heart. Some of the shot also pierced his left eye and one was deeply imbedded in his throat. George Smith, the father of the dead man, who was first assaulted by Debold, was slightly injured by some stray shot which struck him in the right shoulder.

#### Fairfield Items

The storm of Sunday last was quite severe. Lightning killed a sow in Mr. Wm. Reed's orchard and injured the telephone wires in Mr. Wm. Reindollar's house.

Fairfield borough has 26 widows, 5 widowers and 8 persons who weigh over 200 pounds.

#### Eyler Case

The promised trial of William Eyler, indicted for the crime of murder, at the August term of the Adams County Court which convened last Monday, attracted not a few of our citizens to Gettysburg.

When court opened every seat was taken. After the prisoner had been brought in and the court had been called to order, attorney for the accused asked the court for a continuance of the case on the plea that three important witnesses, who reside in this state, were not at hand. These witnesses were Charles Wagerman, Bentley Brown and William Long. On account of the importance of the testimony these men could give, the court granted the prayer.



## New code enforcement car in service



-RICHARD D. L. FULTON / THE DISPATCH

Newly hired Emmitsburg parking code enforcer Joseph P. Kirchner stands beside the 2003 Ford Escort acquired by the town in July for \$9,700. The car will primarily be used while enforcing parking regulations, but may also be used for other official town duties.

# One more owner...tavern sold

BY RICHARD D. L. FULTON  
Emmitsburg News Editor  
rfulton@emmitsburgdispatch.com

EMMITSBURG, Md. – One More Tavern, co-owned by Larry and Shirley Little and Clarence and Bonnie Ohler, is under agreement of sale to co-owners of the Carriage House, with settlement expected in October.

Carriage House co-owners Robert Hance and Larry Shriner confirmed on Aug. 10 that they had entered into an agreement of sale to acquire the 135 Chesapeake Avenue restaurant.

One More Tavern would have begun its 12<sup>th</sup> year of business in February, according to Shirley Little.

Hance told *The Dispatch*, "We absolutely plan to keep it business as usual and maintain

the tradition they (the Littles and Ohlers) have created during the past 11 years. They've done such a wonderful job. We just hope to carry that on."

Once the settlement takes place, Hance said, the new owners will be implementing some improvements previously planned by Larry Little.

Hance further stated, "Every (One More Tavern) employee that wishes to stay is highly encouraging to do so. We hope as many as possible will remain."

Acquisition of the business by the Carriage House has been on the table for about six months, he said. Donald Briggs was the listing agent for the property.

## EEIP annexation contingent on agreement

EMMITSBURG, Md. – The annexation of nearly 40 acres of land needed to create Emmitsburg East Industrial Park (EEIP) Phase Two is now contingent on town staff creating an approvable annexation agreement, as decided at the Aug. 14 town meeting.

The land annexation would allow principal Sheridan "Dan" E. Reaver Jr. to develop the site into six tracts for predominantly warehouse light industrial use.

The county board of commissioners gave their go ahead May 8, indicating that the proposed annexation would conform to county plans.

- R. Fulton

## Incorporation

-Continued from page 1

representations (presumably including the town flag)."

When asked his opinion of the proposal, Town Manager David Haller said, "I think it (adoption of an incorporation date resolution) is a reasonable position."

Mayor James E. Hoover also favored the move, stating, "I agree with what is to be done here ... I think it is the right way to go." He noted that the Aug. 7 action was essentially the same as that agreed on by the board in 2003, which was not backed by a resolution at that time.

The move followed on the heels of a couple of town meetings where the founding date debate leaned toward heated exchange. The division was between accepting 1757, the year Samuel Emmit acquired the 2,250-acre Carrollsburg tract (a portion of which became Emmitsburg in part), as the founding date, or 1785, based on a deed, conveying 35 acres from Samuel Emmit to his

son William which refers to the proposal for a town bearing the name Emmitsburg.

Speaking at the Aug. 7 meeting, Emmitsburg Area Historical Society President Michael Hillman, said the historical society agreed with the incorporation date action by the board.

### Residents have many dates to celebrate

Passage of the resolution, however, does not prevent any individual or group in town from organizing an event celebrating whatever historic date they choose to commemorate, including any of

an array of founding or settlement-related dates.

"Leave it to the residents to decide what and when they will celebrate," O'Neil stated at the adoption meeting.

The board reiterated statements made previously that it would consider providing some financial support to any group or organization wishing to organize a celebratory event premised on town history.

Commissioner Glenn Blanchard moved to approve the resolution formally recognizing the town's incorporation date; Commissioner Joyce Rosensteel seconded the motion.

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**Publisher** .....  
Raymond Buchheister  
publisher@thedispach.us

**Managing Editor** .....  
Joyce M. Demmitt  
editor@thedispach.us

**News Editor - Emmitsburg** .....  
Richard D. L. Fulton  
rfulton@emmitsburgdispach.com

**News Editor - Thurmont** .....  
James Rada Jr.  
jrada@thurmontdispach.com

**Contributing Writers** .....  
Susan Allen, Nicole Belanger,  
William K. Reinker

**Column Writers** .....  
Becky Brown, Mary Ellen Cummings,  
William Meredith

**Advertising & Business Manager** ....  
Jennifer Buchheister  
jbuchheister@thedispach.us

**Advertising Sales Executive** .....  
Amberlee Ohlsen  
aohlsen@thedispach.us

**Advertising & Subscriptions** .....  
Lori Stromberg  
advertising@thedispach.us

**Advertising Design** .....  
Toya Warner

**Graphic Design** .....  
Shannon Cooley

**Webmaster** .....  
Wendy M. Shepherd

emmitsburgdispach.com  
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## EDITORIAL

# Honoring a soldier's dying wish

Thank you.  
What else can you say to a man who was willing to fight in a foreign land in the hopes that those he fought would not come to fight in his homeland?

Thank you.  
It doesn't seem to be enough when that same Marine gave his life in the fight.

I know I can say, "You won't be forgotten." Hopefully, all of you will say that as well. That's all Marine

Lance Cpl. James W. Higgins Jr. wanted: to be remembered.

That's so little to ask of us and the fact that he had to ask at all is sad. Higgins is not alone in his feeling. Other servicemen at Higgins' funeral on Aug. 4 noted the same.

These men and women work to keep us safe by risking their lives on a daily basis. When a single soldier dies, little is said. When a single soldier fails, it is

international news.

U.S. service men and women have built schools, roads, hospitals, water and sewer systems in Iraq. They enabled Iraqis to turn out in overwhelming numbers to vote in a new government. Iraqi civilians still die due to the fighting, however, the numbers are fewer than those who died in Saddam Hussein's rape and torture rooms.

For similar reasons, the worldwide media has praised the terrorist group Hezbollah. In Iraq, it's U.S. troops doing the good. The media acts as if the good acts don't matter there.

The lives of our service men and women are treated as little more than numbers by media and opponents to the war who seem to be waiting breathlessly for the death total to reach 3,000 dead service people in Iraq as they waited for 2,500 and 2,000 dead.

What does this say about us? So remember Lance Cpl. James Higgins Jr. He was not a number. He was a man; a man who loved his country. He was a hero and through his life and service, others have had a chance to live.

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TOWN NEWS

Town land wildlife plan would not end hunting

BY RICHARD D. L. FULTON
Emmitsburg News Editor
rfulton@emmitsburgdispatch.com

EMMITSBURG, Md. - A resolution to be considered at the Sept. 4 town meeting to suspend hunting and trapping on town land would not lead to efforts to stop hunting activities on town lands altogether, according to its sponsoring commissioner.

Resident Larry Little expressed concerns at the Aug. 7 town meeting that the proposal looked like an attempt to end hunting on town lands. Little added that hunting is a "long and proud industry" and generates hundreds of millions of dollars for Maryland.

However, Commissioner William B. O'Neil Jr., who informally presented the draft resolution to the board at the Aug. 7 meeting, told The Dispatch that the temporary moratorium on hunting and trapping was intended to give the town time to develop wildlife management practices to protect natural assets and human safety, including hunters, and was not a strategy to end hunting.

Use others' best management practices

O'Neil said he did not think developing the wildlife management area could drag on like the town's comprehensive plan work. What is required would mostly be adopting existing best management practices from other local and state governments and

tailoring them to Emmitsburg. Establishing wildlife management rules would be essentially a three-step process. First, there would be a temporary stay on town-issued hunting permits for town land (the proposed resolution). Second, the commissioners would need to adopt an ordinance declaring certain lands within the town as wildlife management areas subject to an approved set of wildlife management guidelines, the creation of which would be the third step in the process.

A number of stated objectives would ultimately be addressed by a wildlife management plan, including:

- Protection of a "sustainable and diverse wildlife population (in essence, assuring no native animal - including beavers - would be hunted to extermination);"
• Establishment of wildlife-dependent recreation areas (nature trails); and
• Protection of ecologically sensitive areas and threatened and endangered plants and animals.

O'Neil also proposed that any future guidelines include property boundary markers demarking town lands along with a review and evaluation of any existing no-fire (safety) zones, which are given to hunters when they apply for hunting permits. Fishing would not be covered under the moratorium

because of its low impact on ecology and safety.

Beavers and wayward shots inspired action

Recent public concerns over proposed plans by the town to exterminate the beaver population at Rainbow Lake and reports of shots fired from town property into private land prompted interest in establishing wildlife management areas.

Although administrators said the town did not intend to continue killing the beavers, the board of commissioners took measures to ensure that they would first approve any such proposal in the future.

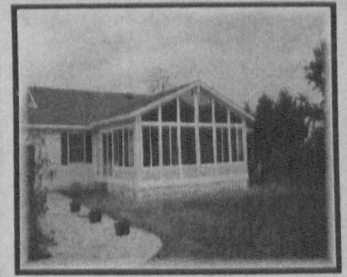
Both Catherine Forrence and her mother, Betsey, had stated at a town meeting that shots had been fired, apparently by hunters, from town land into property owned by Betsey Forrence.

O'Neil's plan would involve Maryland Department of Natural Resources in developing both safety strategies and providing wildlife management guidance.

Some prevention methods that might be used to protect property owners next to land where hunting is taking place could include well-marked boundaries and even berms to impede a hunter's line-of-sight, although they would not block those hunting from trees.

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-Benjamin Franklin

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## League closes out successful season


EMMITSBURG, Md. — The Emmitsburg Baseball and Softball League closed out its 2006 season with a picnic for players and family members July 16 at Memorial Park, which included the awarding of trophies by league President Brian Holt.

Winners included: Justin Reaver (boys t-ball); Ally Rippeon (girls t-ball); Kayla Umbel (girls 8 and under softball); Brianna Holt (girls 10 and under softball); Stephanie Andrew (girls 12 and under softball); David Shields Jr. (7-8 year-old boys); Justin Martin (9-10 year-old boys); Patrick Reaver (11-12 year-old boys); Ben Andrew (for 13-14 year-old boys); Sandy Umbel (women's division) and Carl Dixon (men's division).

The Emmitsburg Baseball and Softball League had a team place either in first or second place in each traveling league. The fall season will be open to children 9-12 years of age. Those interested in playing should contact Angie Welty (for ages 9-10) at (301) 447-3003, or Jeff Topper (for ages 11-12) at (301) 447-6653.

— R. Fulton

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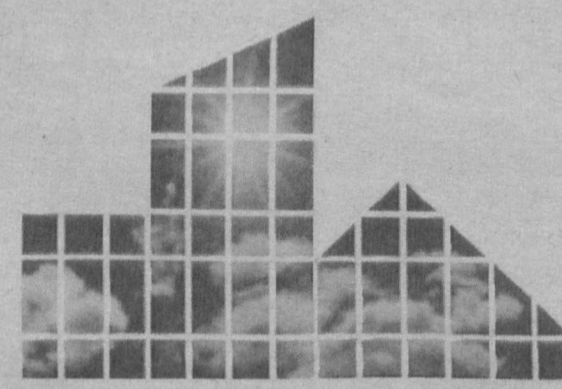
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—RICHARD D. L. FULTON / THE DISPATCH

## North Seton driver takes out two parked cars

Fire and rescue personnel look over the damage allegedly caused by a Waynesboro, Pa. driver who collided with a parked car Aug. 8, pushing it into a second parked car. Police said the driver, Albert Spottswood, 59, was traveling south on North Seton in his 2001 Chrysler (at right) when he crossed into the north-bound lane and caused the accident. A sheriff's office spokesperson said the collision may have been caused by a "medical emergency." Spottswood was transported to York Hospital.

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## REGIONAL NEWS

# Civil War Heritage Area certified

CROWNSVILLE, Md. — The Maryland Heritage Areas Authority granted certification to portions of Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties on July 13. Called the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, it is the 11<sup>th</sup> heritage area to be certified by the Maryland Heritage Areas Program, which offers grants, loans and tax incentives for the development of heritage tourism initiatives in the state.

In addition to certification, eight grants totaling more than \$300,000 were awarded to support heritage area operations and projects in each of the three counties.

Certification of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area follows seven years of work at the local level to document the region's Civil War heritage resources and proposed initiatives in a management plan, and enlist local jurisdictions in the program. The certified designation means that local historic sites, museums, educational programs, related marketing initiatives and projects to enhance visitor services are

eligible for state grants and other benefits of the Maryland Heritage Areas Program.

Funds were allocated for the following projects:

- Catocin Center for Regional Studies: \$46,000 to develop a Web site that is part of a larger project, "Crossroads of War: The Civil War and the Homefront in the Mid-Atlantic Border Region."

- City of Hagerstown: \$55,000 in capital funds to develop a Sidewalk Café District.

- City of Hagerstown: \$12,500 for visitor assistance and interpretation, including interpretive markers, directional signs, and banners.

- National Museum of Civil War Medicine: \$4,500 to support a lecture and concert series.

- Town of Boonsboro: \$50,000 to catalogue the collections of the Boonsboro Museum of History and for a feasibility study to guide the relocation of the collections to a new museum facility in the town

center / redevelopment area.

- City of Taneytown: \$52,800 in capital funds for streetscape enhancements.

- Catocin Aqueduct Restoration Fund: \$37,500 to support the development of collateral materials for the restoration drive; funds will also be used to pay a portion of the consulting fees for the restoration's structural design plan.

In addition to project grants, \$58,340 was awarded to support operating costs associated with the heritage area. The HCWHA will be managed under the auspices of the Tourism Council of Frederick County.

All grant awards must be matched dollar for dollar; 75 percent of the match must be cash and 25 percent may be in-kind donation of goods or services.

To learn more about the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, visit [www.heartofthecivilwar.org](http://www.heartofthecivilwar.org), or contact the director, Elizabeth Scott Shatto at (301) 644-4042, [lshatto@fredco-md.net](mailto:lshatto@fredco-md.net). —J. Rada



—RICHARD D. L. FULTON / THE DISPATCH

## Re-enactment unit hopes to restore battle flags

Reenactors with the 47th Virginia Infantry held a fundraiser Aug. 12-13 at the American Civil War Wax Museum in Gettysburg to help raise money to restore Confederate battle flags in the Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond. Unit member Sergeant Rick Miller explained period equipment to tourists while Captain Bill Russell (inset) holds a replica of one of the flags to be restored. Interested contributors can contact Russell at (757) 868-0938.

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**50th Anniversary**  
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**Community Show**



**50 Years**

-Continued from page 1

board during its first year.

The Maryland Agricultural Fair Board supplies premiums. Other expenses are held to a minimum because all the help for the show are volunteers.

Valentine, who is vice president of the committee, added, "The length of our show and the amount of activity you don't see in other shows in the county."

Over 2500 farm and garden, household, quilt, livestock, machinery and commercial displays can be seen during the show.

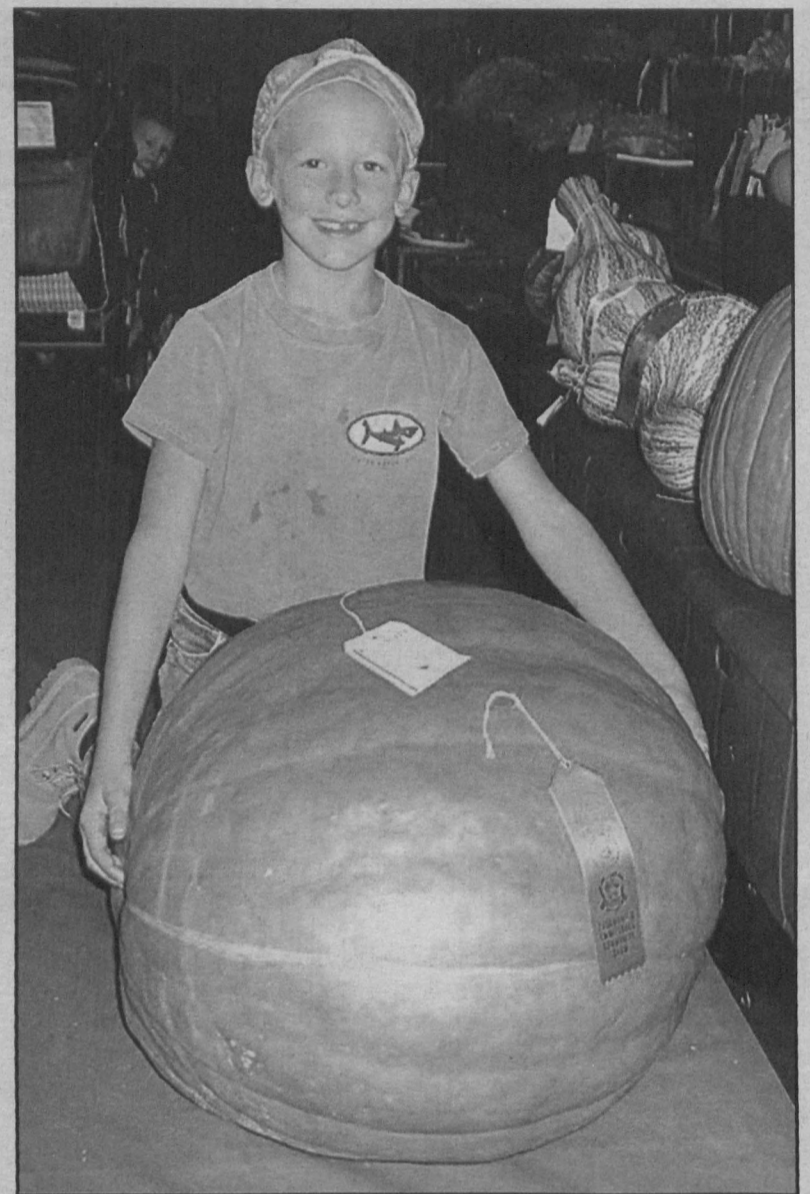
"We have been very, very fortunate with community support at the sale," said Valentine.

Between 7,000 and 9,000 people are expected to attend this year's community show.

Community Show booklets with the premium list are now available in area business locations and contain the rules and time of entry for exhibits.

The show is open to the public Friday, Sept. 8 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. At 7 p.m., the opening ceremony will begin in the auditorium with the massing of flags by community civic organizations. The program's highlight will be the announcement of the 2006-2007 Catoctin FFA Ambassador. The Community Show will honor the 50th anniversary of the Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show and recognize all former FFA Chapter Sweethearts and Ambassadors.

The show is sponsored by the



- File Photos by RAYMOND BUCHHEISTER / THE DISPATCH

**The Thurmont and Emmitsburg Community Show offers something for everyone. These 2005 photos highlight a martial arts demonstration, the log-cutting contest and the largest pumpkin in the show.**

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# Local Hero

-Continued from page 1

Hundreds of family, friends, classmates and servicemen turned out on an overcast Friday morning at the Lynfield Event Complex to say goodbye to Higgins.

"One week ago today, I woke up with a funny feeling. I didn't know what it was," said Marine Private James Michael Campbell.

What it was was that his best friend, Higgins, had been shot and killed in Al Anbar Province in Iraq on July 27. He was buried with full military honors at Resthaven Memorial Gardens on Aug. 4.

"My brother James was one of the bravest men I've ever known; one of the best men I've ever known, and he loved this country dearly," said Joseph Higgins during the funeral.

James Higgins Sr. called his oldest son "Majestic...he was regal in thought, mind, actions, the way he treated people and his view of the world."

But it may be the four Marines who rode with Cpl. Higgins in Iraq who will miss him the most. As Owen said, they are part of "a brotherhood that can't be explained outside of combat." Besides Owen, the other three are Sgt. Scott Martin, Cpl. Joshua Bates and Pfc. Phillip Grillo.

Though the Marine Corps had been reluctant to allow the four Marines to attend the service because they were listed as wounded, they worked with Deborah Higgins, James's mother, to get to Thurmont.

Why their insistence?

Some of them credit James Higgins for their being alive.

On April 25, three months before he would be killed, Higgins was driving in a line of trucks in Iraq when a 125-mm tank round exploded under the trucks.

"It engulfed the first two vehicles," Owen said. "Higgins was in the second vehicle." Owen was in the first vehicle.

Owen and many of the others in the first two trucks were wounded and knocked unconscious. The first



- ROBERT A. ROSENSTEEL SR. / THE ROSENSTEEL STUDIO

**U.S. Marines, including four who served with Lance Cpl. James Higgins Jr. in Iraq, try to comfort Higgins' mother Deborah Higgins of Thurmont at James Higgins' funeral on Aug. 4.**

vehicle was burning badly.

"You could see the fire from Baghdad and that was 30 miles away," Owen said.

"They said they heard the explosions, too," added Martin, who had been in the second vehicle.

Higgins was still conscious. He saw his comrades in danger and drove his burning truck into the "kill zone."

"He drove right up next to the truck and put himself between it and shielded them from enemy fire," Martin said.

He then helped get the wounded to safety and radioed for additional help.

"Because of James, we are here alive today," Owen said.

For his actions, Higgins received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Combat V (for valor).

Chaplain Commander Robert McGaha, who officiated at the funeral service, said Higgins followed the teachings of the Bible, which says, "Greater love has no man than this: that he lay down his life for his friends."

According to his fellow Marines, Higgins seemed to know this almost instinctively, for he did not shirk the duty and he did not hesitate from action.

"He will be remembered through stories that we tell our children and grandchildren," Joseph Higgins said.



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**About 30 members of the Patriot Guard were on hand at the funeral of Lance Cpl. James Higgins Jr. to provide an escort and honor guard for Higgins.**

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The large American flag at the Shamrock Restaurant on Route 15 flies at half-staff to honor Lance Cpl. James Higgins Jr., killed in Iraq on July 27.

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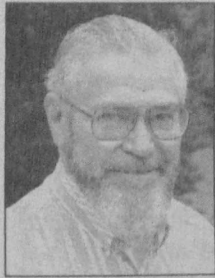
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# The (retired) Ecologist Doing something about the weather



BY BILL MEREDITH  
*Dispatch Columnist*

*"Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."  
... Mark Twain*

People who know such things tell us that children who have talent for mathematics show it early in life, and that regardless of how much talent you have, you reach your highest potential for learning and creativity in math at a fairly early age, probably by the early twenties.

In my case, I missed the boat on both counts; I was born without any special talent for mathematics, and I avoided the subject in high school and college as much as possible. But apparently the gene for mathematical talent is not connected to the one for interest in numbers; in spite of my computational ineptitude, at the age of 30 I found myself in a graduate program in ecology, a field dominated by mathematical models and statistics. So it came to pass that every spare minute in the summer and fall of 1966 was devoted to analyzing the results of my experiments.

In spite of my limited background, I found statistical data to be irresistibly fascinating. The problem was that in those days calculations had to be done by hand or with a desktop calculator

that sounded remarkably like a threshing machine. And the problem didn't go away when I finished graduate school; teaching, research and administrative tasks continued to flood my desk with columns of numbers to be interpreted. Eventually I was saved by Dan Brickson.

Brickson's name never became a household word, but he had an impact on my life because in 1979 he invented the computer spreadsheet. For me, that was a godsend; it enabled me to use the computer to do things my own brain was not capable of. Suddenly I found that projects like the one that took six months in 1966 could be done in a few days, and with greater accuracy. It made me more productive in the remainder of my career, and now in retirement it continues to entertain and educate.

A couple of years ago, for reasons I no longer remember, I started recording the daily temperatures from the Frederick newspaper on a spreadsheet in my computer. In one sense this is a sign that I have too much free time on my hands, for it has no useful purpose that I can think of; but it has been educational. In a smaller fraction of a second than I can imagine, the computer will draw a graph of the whole year's records. I was surprised to see from the graph that the highest average daytime temperature for this area is only 90 degrees, reached on July 20, and the average nighttime temperature reaches its low point

of only 24 degrees on January 24. Between these two values the graph rises and falls in a smooth line that mathematicians call a sine wave.

The actual daily temperatures are more interesting; they rise and fall in a jagged, irregular manner that looks random at first. However, a second look shows that there is a pattern involved. Temperatures will rise above the averages for several days and then drop below average for several more. After staring at the graph for a while, I realized that this reflected the passing of warm and cold fronts, as we see on the TV weather maps every evening. It was this kind of information that led Jacob Bjerknes to discover frontal systems some 75 years ago (he was a lot smarter... he did it without a computer).

All ecologists know that the survival of any living thing does not depend on average values that have been calculated over long periods of time; the extreme temperatures reached over short periods are what are important. For example, the recent heat wave was blamed for several deaths across the U. S., but on the days that the mercury reached 100 degrees here in Emmitsburg, the average temperature was only 88. Clearly, it wasn't the average temperature that killed people.

This is one of the reasons global warming is so hard for the public to understand. Heat waves have always happened nearly every year. I can remember working in the hayfields as a boy when the temperature was recorded at 100 or above, and the temperature in my grandmother's kitchen when she was canning

tomatoes on the coal stove regularly surpassed that level. It is easy to say we were tougher then, and we have grown soft by living in air-conditioned homes and workplaces, and to some extent that is true. But the fact remains that on a worldwide basis, climate is getting warmer.

The idea that carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels could absorb the sun's heat and raise global temperatures was proposed by a Swedish chemist, Svante Arrhenius, around 1900. No one took it seriously at first, but by the 1950s clear evidence of a connection had been found and the Greenhouse Effect was commonly mentioned in college textbooks. I learned of it in college, and included it in the first courses I taught. From the 1960s onward, weather instruments on satellites made it possible to measure solar energy, atmospheric gases and worldwide temperatures more accurately; and the more accurate the measurements were, the clearer the connection became. The last doubters in the scientific community had conceded defeat by about 10 years ago; scientific opinion now is virtually unanimous that global warming is real, and that human activities are responsible for it. Finally we have actually done something about the weather, and that old cynic, Mark Twain, would not have been surprised to learn that what we did was to make it worse.

The average world temperature has increased only about 1½ degrees in the last 150 years, and that doesn't sound too serious; but as shown above, averages are not what count in ecology. Ice melts when it gets above 32 degrees, and each year there are more days when it gets that warm. Satellite photographs show that polar icecaps are shrinking, and instruments all over the world show that sea levels are rising and ocean currents are shifting. The evidence is unequivocal, and no informed, reasonable person can doubt it any longer. The trouble is that national policy is not always made by informed, reasonable people.



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EDUCATION

# Local schools open next week

BY SUSAN ALLEN  
Contributing Writer

Summer vacation is nearly over. Students and their families are looking at the calendar toward the first day of the new school year. All Frederick County public schools and Mother Seton School will open on Monday, Aug. 28. Area schools have scheduled the following special events:

**Emmitsburg Elementary School**  
Thursday, Aug. 24, 3-4:15 p.m.-Meet Your Teacher  
Thursday, Sept. 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m.-Back-to-School Night

**Lewistown Elementary School**  
Friday, Aug. 25, 2:30 p.m.-Open House  
Thursday, Sept. 7, 6:30-8 p.m.-Back-to-School Night

**Thurmont Primary School**  
Friday, Aug. 25, 3:30-4:30 p.m.-Open House

**Thurmont Elementary School**  
Friday, Aug. 25, 3:30-4:30 p.m.-Open House

**Sabillasville Elementary School**  
Thursday, Aug. 24, 6-6:30 p.m.-Open House for kindergarten;  
6:30-7 p.m.-PTA Meeting; 7-7:30 p.m.-Open House, grades 1-5

**Thurmont Middle School**  
Thursday, Aug. 17, 7 a.m.-noon, 1-7 p.m.-Orientation for grade 6 and new students in grades 7-8  
Monday, Sept. 11-Back-to-School Night

**Catoctin High School**  
Thursday, Aug. 24, 6-7:30 p.m.-Back-to-School Night

**Mother Seton School**  
Thursday, Aug. 24, 6:30-8 p.m.-Middle school Parent-Student Night  
Friday, Aug. 25, 9-11 a.m. Open House, Pre-K-grade 5  
Monday, Aug. 28-Classes begin for Pre-K-grade 8 and kindergarten students with last names beginning A-H. Early dismissal at 12:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, Aug. 29-Classes for Pre-K-grade 8 and kindergarten students with last names beginning I-Z. Early dismissal at 12:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, Aug. 30-Full school day for all students.

Frederick County Public School and Mother Seton School will be closed on Monday, Sept. 4 (Labor Day). Public schools will be closed on Tuesday, Sept. 12 (primary election day), Friday, Sept. 22 (Frederick Fair day), and dismiss two hours early on Thursday, Sept. 21.

## UpCounty Family Center receives literacy grant

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy has awarded a \$50,000 grant to the UpCounty Family Center in Emmitsburg. The grant will fund development of the Family Literacy Initiative at the center. It will enable staff to provide additional educational programs, introduce English as a Second Language instruction, and will include a literacy component to home visits. Spokesmen at the center could not provide an exact number of ESL clients, but said that there are "growing numbers" of persons in need of this type of literacy training.

The UpCounty Family Center is sponsored by Catholic Charities and provides numerous educational opportunities for families and children. In addition to its ESL program, services include GED and flexible high school instruction, employment readiness, child health and development, computer classes,

basic life skills, and in-home services. All services and transportation to the center are free for participants. The center is open from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., four days each week, at 313 West Lincoln Avenue, Emmitsburg.

The Barbara Bush Foundation was established in 1989. Since then it has awarded over \$17 million to more than 500 family literacy programs throughout the U. S. and the District of Columbia. This year a total of \$437,511 was granted to eleven programs offered through non-profit and public institutions in Maryland. The grants ranged in size from \$10,532 to \$50,000. The local agency received its grant through the Foundation's Second Annual Maryland Grant Competition, one of four statewide initiatives. The others are in Maine, Texas, and Florida.

For more information about the UpCounty Family Center and its services, call (301) 447-2810.

## More than 130 participate in 'Hero's Run'



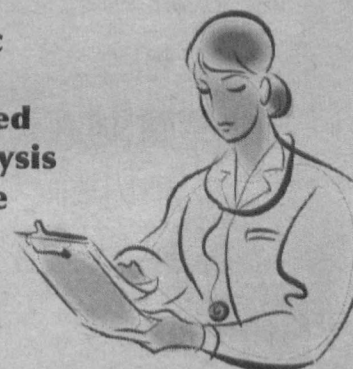
-RICHARD D. L. FULTON / THE DISPATCH

Initiated by Fairfield Area High School student 17-year old Graham Johnson as his senior project, Aug. 12's "Hero's 5k Run/Walk," held at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, attracted more than 130 runners. A number of participants expressed interest in establishing the run as an annual event. Proceeds were earmarked for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.

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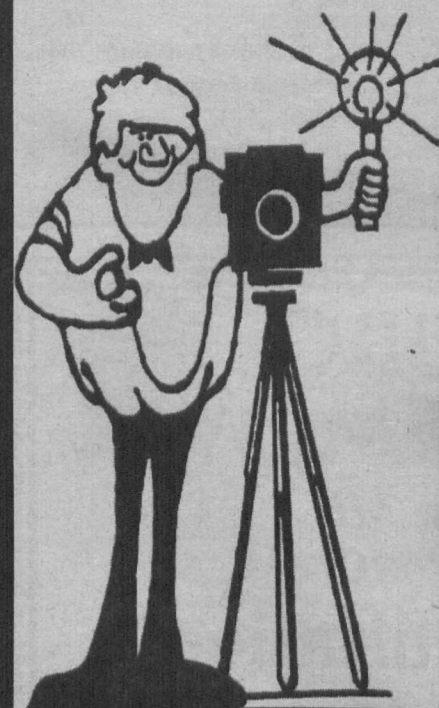
Monday, Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>  
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# Arts & Entertainment

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Links to host Duramed LPGA tour

Duramed Futures Tour will hold its first official LPGA developmental tour at The Links at Gettysburg on Aug. 25-27.

Klein Builders Group and Hanover Honda are presenting the tournament, the eighth of 19 tournaments in the women's 2006 schedule.

The Futures tour, to be held in 14 states, has a season purse of \$1.42 million, an average tournament purse of \$75,000. The Gettysburg tournament brings a \$75,000 purse, a cash prize of \$10,500 for the winner, and \$7,500 to the runner-up. It will be a 54-hole (three rounds) stroke-play finisher, with a full field of 144 players.

While the average player's age is 25, the tour has lowered the age threshold to 17, with several players "right out of high school this season," according to a Futures press release. Women in the tour represent 31 nations and 41 states.

For information, contact the pro shop at The Links at Gettysburg, (717) 359-8000.

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### For Children

**Saturdays in August - Summerfest Family Theatre.** 7 p.m. Free theatrical performances for children and families in Baker Park's Bandshell, 121 N. Bentz St., Frederick. 301-694-2489.

### Stage

**Aug. 15-27 - "Forever Plaid."** Tickets, \$25-32. Back by popular demand. Capture those golden days of the 50s, through the Plaids, a quartet of handsome young singers, reviving such favorites as "Love is a Many Splendored Thing," "Rags to Riches" and "Three Coins in the Fountain." Totem Pole Playhouse. Caledonia State Park, 9555 Golf Course Road, Fayetteville, Pa. 888-805-7056, www.totempoleplayhouse.org.

**Aug. 18, 19, 25, 26 - "Ruthless."** 8 p.m. Unwilling to settle as the understudy for the leading role in a school play, youngster Tina Denmark, knocks off her classmate and begins her ascent toward stardom, aided by an overbearing talent agent and a cast of campy characters. Maryland Ensemble Theatre, 31 W. Patrick St., Frederick. 301-694-4744.

**Through Aug. 26 - "Fiddler on the Roof."** In the little village of Anatevka, Tevye, a poor dairyman, tries to instill in his five daughters the traditions of his tight-knit Jewish community in the face of changing social thought and growing anti-Semitism in Czarist Russia. Tickets \$13-38. Way Off Broadway Dinner Theater, 5 Willowdale Drive, Willowtree Plaza, Frederick. 301-662-6600, www.wayoffbroadway.com.

**Through Sept. 3 - "For the**

**Glory: Civil War Musical."** Show times vary. The acclaimed Broadway musical covers a wide range of emotions including: The Union and Confederate armies singing of their excitement as they prepare to go into war, defending their respective causes; and slaves singing of their pain and misery as they are sold as property. Tickets, \$20-45. Majestic Theater, 25 Carlisle Street, Gettysburg. 717-677-7514.

**Sept. 8-Nov. 4 - "The Odd Couple."** Neil Simon's hit comedy featuring the mismatched pair: Oscar Madison and Felix Unger, sure to have you rolling in the aisles with laughter. Tickets: \$13-\$38. Way Off Broadway Dinner Theater, 5 Willowdale Drive, Willowtree Plaza, Frederick. 301-662-6600, www.wayoffbroadway.com.

### Concerts

**Saturdays in August - "Summer Concert Series."** 7 p.m. Free outdoor musical performances in Baker Park's Bandshell, 121 N. Bentz St., Frederick, 301-694-2489. www.celebratefrederick.com.

**Aug. 26 - Gettysburg Music Muster.** Begins at 11 a.m. Concludes with special performances at the Pennsylvania Memorial and the Eternal Light Peace Memorial from 5:30 p.m. until sundown. Gettysburg National Military Park. One-of-a-kind performances, played mostly on original instruments, will feature songs of the Irish Union soldiers, balladeers, Victorian dance music and dance performances, along with fife and drum, and more. Free.

**Aug. 27 - The Alesia Band.** 6 p.m. Thurmont Memorial Park, Thurmont.

**Sept. 1 - The Ray Owens Band** (folk music) 7-9 p.m. Emmitsburg Memorial Park, Emmitsburg.

**Sept. 3 - Harmony Band,** 2 p.m. Thurmont Memorial Park, Thurmont.

**Sept. 10 - Gettysburg Chamber Orchestra.** 4 p.m. Chapel of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, 147 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg.

**Sept. 16 - The No Name Band** (classic rock) 5-7 p.m. Emmitsburg Memorial Park, Emmitsburg.

### Galleries, Exhibits, Art Shows

**Through Aug. 27 - "Another Class Act."** The Delaplaine Visual Arts Center exhibit of student-faculty work created by the center's instructors and their students, from children to adults. 40 S. Carroll St., Frederick. 301-698-0656.

**Through Aug. 31 - Frederick's Camera Clique Photographic Competition.** Frederick Community College, Mary Condon Hodgson Art Gallery, 7932 Opossumtown Pike, Frederick. 301-846-2513. www.frederick.edu.

### Festivals

**Aug. 24-27 - Gettysburg Bluegrass Festival.** All-day event. More than 30 bands, many top performers will appear in this well-known festival. Main stage and workshop performances during the four days. Tickets range from \$20 - \$125. Granite Hill Campground, 717-642-8749.

**Sept. 9 & 10 - Gettysburg Wine and Music Festival.** Gettysburg Recreation Park. Tickets: \$10-\$20. Live entertainment, exhibits. www.gettysburgwine.com.

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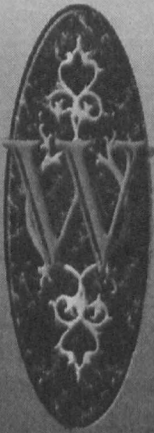
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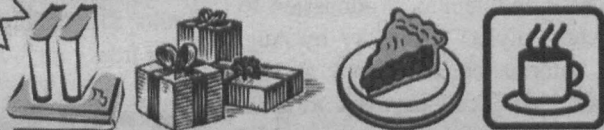
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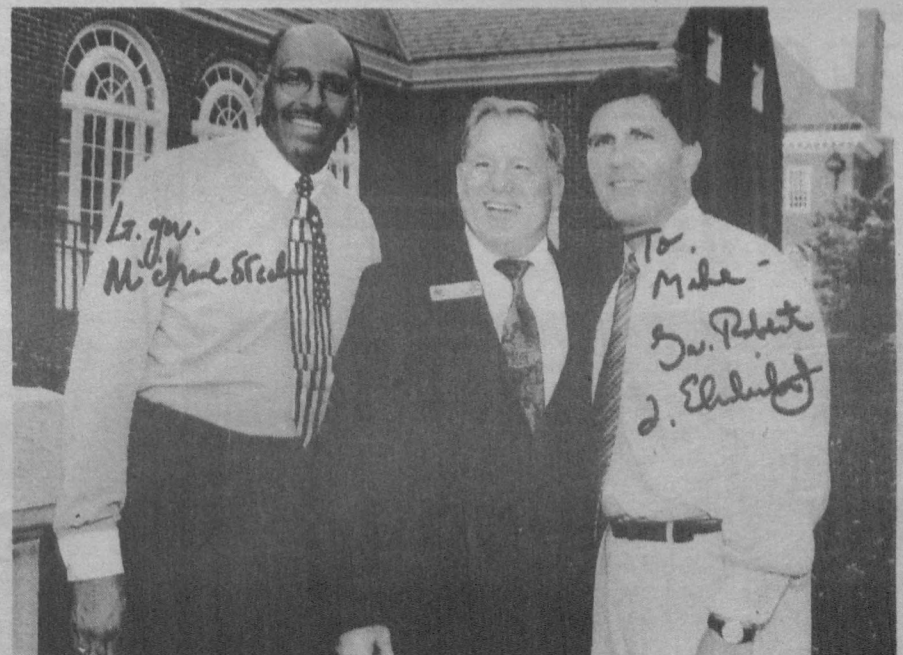


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# Community Calendar

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Aug. 14-18 - Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company Carnival.** Mt. Tabor Park in Rocky Ridge. Entertainment: Thursday 8/17 - Roll The Dice (Classic Rock), Friday 8/18 - Country Plus Band, Saturday 8/19 - Hat Creek Country.

**Aug. 19 - Strawberry Hill Nature Center Community Day.** Strawberry Hill Nature Center, 1537 Mount Hope Road, Fairfield, Pa. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Family activities, educational programs, door prizes, celebratory cake. Free. Co-hosted by Fairfield HS student Cortney Farace, for her senior project.

**Aug. 20 - Thurmont Economic Development Committee meeting.** Cozy Restaurant, Thurmont. Dinner at 6 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m.

**Aug. 21 - Emmitsburg Area Historical Society.** 7 p.m. Community Center, Emmitsburg.

**Aug. 23 - Cacophonous Katydid Walk.** 7-8:30 p.m. Strawberry Hill Nature Center, 1537 Mount Hope Road, Fairfield, Pa. Concert by resident musicians: katydids, long-horned grasshoppers and a few guest artists. Register by Aug. 22: members free, non-members \$3. For adults and children 7 and older. Information: 717 642-5840 or visit [www.strawberryhill.org](http://www.strawberryhill.org).

**Aug. 23-27 - Back to School Tax-Free Shopping.** UpCounty Family Center, Emmitsburg. Call for information: 301 447-2810.

**Aug. 25 - Family Pool Party.** 7-9 p.m. Emmitsburg Pool. Featuring Pink'n & Grin'n entertainment.

**Aug. 26 - Catoclin High School Class of 2001 five-year reunion.** 6 p.m. to midnight, Thurmont American Legion. Social hour at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., followed by dancing and entertainment. Cost for graduate and one guest: \$25. Please RSVP and send \$25 admission to Penny (Eyer) Stonesifer by Aug. 7. Information: call Penny at 301-447-6864. Send payment to 1002 Flat Run Court, Emmitsburg, MD 21727.

**Aug. 27 - ThorpeWood Community Dinner.** 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. ThorpeWood Environmental Center, Thurmont. Recycling and how you can help.

**Sept. 1 - Mass and Spiritual Conference on "The Eucharist and Confession, The Healing Sacraments."** 7 p.m. National Shrine Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, Emmitsburg. Fr. McCarthy will also celebrate noon Mass on Sunday, Sept. 3.

**Sept. 2 - Wayne Weible**

**Booksigning.** World-renowned author and speaker on Our Lady's Apparitions in Medjugorje. St. Peter's Bookstore, Emmitsburg, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. followed by a talk at Ski Liberty Resort and Conference Center, Fairfield, Pa. at 7 p.m. Information: 301-447-1901.

**Sept. 4 - Annual Labor Day Festival.** Noon to 5 p.m. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish, Church Street, Thurmont. Live music by the Home Comfort Bluegrass Band, bingo, white elephant sale, bake sale, raffle, country store and kiddie games. Adults: \$10; children 6-12 \$5; 5 and under free.

**Sept. 8 and 9 - Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show.** Catoclin High School.

**Sept. 30 - St. Joseph's High School class of 1981 annual reunion dance.** Mother Seton School auditorium, Emmitsburg. Details: <http://www.voxcomsolutions.com/sjhs/>. Contact Mike Forrence at 301 447-6758 with questions.

**Sept. 30 - Second Annual Color Your Night Pink 1960s Sock Hop.** 6 p.m. to midnight. American Legion, Gettysburg. Sponsored by Adams County Breast Cancer Coalition. Call 717 339-2018.

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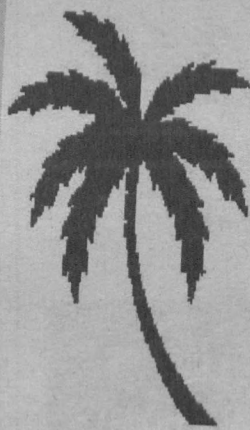
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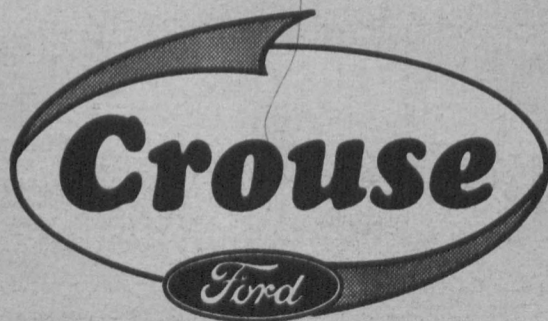


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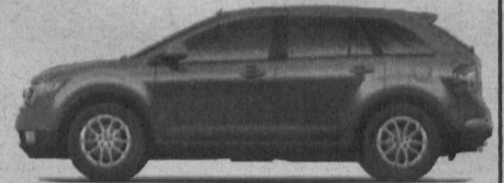


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