

Fiscal Year
2013

Rural Maryland Council Annual Report



Message from the Chair and the Executive Director

Fiscal Year 2013 was the year of rebirth for the Rural Maryland Council. After the RMC was defunded in the 2012 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session, a core group of dedicated rural supporters advocated strongly for the reestablishment of the Council. We thank all of our supporters for their efforts in communicating with legislators and appointed officials on behalf of the RMC.

We especially thank Mike Thielke, who served as Interim Executive Director and worked valiantly to keep the RMC running on the barest of margins. Mike has since escaped back to his full-time position as Executive Director of the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center and still sits on the RMC Executive Board. We owe him our deepest gratitude for serving this organization in both capacities this past year.

Finally, we are extremely pleased with the closing of Fiscal Year 2013. We hired two new staffers, the Executive Director and the Administrative and Communications Assistant, and we moved the offices from the Weights and Measures unit of the Maryland Department of Agriculture to the Marketing Suite, where staff can collaborate with and learn from the individuals there. In the near future, we will be unveiling a new look and website and are planning to convene the Rural Action Assembly in the Fall of 2013. Stay tuned!

Sincerely,



Scott Warner
Chair



RMC Executive Committee

Chair:

Mr. Scott Warner
Executive Director
Mid-Shore Regional Council

First Vice Chair:

Mr. Wayne Clark (until January 1, 2013)
Executive Director
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

Ms. Doris Mason (from March 22, 2013)
Executive Director
Upper Shore Regional Council

Second Vice Chair:

Mr. Thomas McLoughlin
(Retired Hospital CEO)

Immediate Past Chair:

Dr. Bonnie Braun, Ph.D.
Professor, Family Science
Family Policy Specialist, Maryland Cooperative
Extension



**RMC Chair Scott Warner (right) with
Lt. Governor Anthony Brown**

(AP Photo/Patrick Semansky)

RMC Executive Board

Mr. Robert Agee
City Administrator
City of Annapolis

Ms. Kathy Beisner
Acting Delaware/Maryland State
Director
USDA Rural Development

The Honorable Don William
Bradley
Former Mayor
Town of Hurlock

The Honorable William M.
Brechner
Former Mayor
City of Hagerstown

Mr. R. Kevin Brooks
Executive Director
Maryland Rural Development
Corporation

Mr. Ralph Bucca
RC&D Coordinator
Eastern Shore Resource,
Conservation and Development
Council

Mr. Greg Cole
Director, Financial Programs
Maryland Department of Business
and Economic Development

The Honorable Gegan T. Crawford
Chair, Board of County
Commissioners Garrett County

The Honorable Addie Eckardt
Maryland House of Delegates
District 37B

Mr. Kurt Fuchs
Assistant Director of Government
Relations
Maryland Farm Bureau

Ms. Carol Gilbert
Assistant Secretary / Director,
Division of Neighborhood
Revitalization
Department of Housing &
Community Development

Mr. Rodney B. Glotfelty, RS, MPH
Health Officer
Garrett County Health Department

The Honorable Louise L. Gulyas
Board of County Commissioners
Worcester County

Mr. Paul Gunther

The Honorable Jeannie Haddaway-
Riccio
Maryland House of Delegates
District 37B

Mr. Earl J. "Buddy" Hance
Secretary
Maryland Department of
Agriculture

Mr. Dave Jordan
Executive Director
Washington County Community
Action Council

The Honorable Cheryl Lewis
Council Member
Town of Trappe

Ms. Doris Mason
Executive Director
Upper Shore Regional Council

Ms. Leanne Mazer
Executive Director
Tri-County Council for Western
Maryland

Mr. S. Patrick McMillan
Assistant Secretary, Office of
Marketing, Animal Industries and
Consumer Services
Maryland Department of
Agriculture

Ms. Sharan Marshall
Administrator
Southern Maryland Regional
Library Association

Ms. Denise Matricciani
Vice President, Government
Relations
Maryland Hospital Association

Mr. Erroll Mattox
Farm Management Specialist
UMD Cooperative Extension

Mr. Michael P. "Mike" Pennington
Executive Director
Tri-County Council for the Lower
Eastern Shore of Maryland

Ms. Colleen T. Peterson
Executive Director
The Greater Cumberland
Committee

Dr. Nick T. Place, Ph.D.
Associate Dean and Associate
Director
Maryland Cooperative Extension

Dr. Robert Schaller, Ph.D.
Director
St. Mary's County Department of
Economic and Community
Development

Mr. Michael Thielke
Executive Director
Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship
Center

Dr. Eric Wargotz

Ms. Emily H. Wilson
Senior Advisor
Maryland Department of Natural
Resources

Who We Are

The Rural Maryland Council, an independent state agency, brings together rural leaders, government officials at all levels, and representatives of the nonprofit and for-profit sectors to identify and craft solutions to the challenges facing rural Maryland. Ultimately, our mission is to improve quality of life while preserving the cultural heritage of Maryland's rural communities.

The RMC is also one of 28 federally recognized State Rural Development Councils in the United States Department of Agriculture's National Rural Development Partnership.

Our mission is accomplished by:

- Providing a neutral sounding board for the development of state and federal policy affecting rural areas and the implementation of state and federal programs;
- Building a collaborative relationship with federal, state, county, and municipal governments, as well as private for-profit and nonprofit organizations, to better serve the public in rural areas of Maryland;
- Considering intergovernmental issues and opportunities shared by the rural regions of the state and enhancing local institutional capacity to address those needs and priorities;
- Conducting policy research and analysis, and sharing ideas and information on innovative techniques for developing leadership;
- Promoting regional cooperation in order to achieve economies of scale in the delivery of public services in rural areas;
- Assisting rural communities in the development of a strategic vision which can mobilize available resources, restore commitment, and lay a foundation for future prosperity;
- Protecting and enhancing the natural resources and cultural heritage of rural Maryland; and
- Advocating the priorities and needs of Maryland's rural communities where a consensus of opinion has been reached.

How Is "Rural" Defined?

Rural jurisdictions share common characteristics that set them apart from their suburban and urban counterparts, such as geographic isolation, lack of transportation, and lack of access to and availability of health care. The state definition of rural is articulated in the Annotated Code of Maryland and includes 18 of the 24 jurisdictions in Maryland, listed at right. Each is represented on the Rural Maryland Council.

Federally-designated rural jurisdictions are:

- Allegany County
- Caroline County
- Dorchester County
- Garrett County
- Kent County
- Somerset County
- St. Mary's County
- Talbot County
- Worcester County

Source: Maryland Statistical Handbook, Maryland Department of Planning, 2013

| 2010 Population | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Urban | |
| Baltimore City | 620,961 |
| Suburban | |
| Montgomery County | 971,777 |
| Prince George's County | 863,420 |
| Baltimore County | 805,029 |
| Anne Arundel County | 537,656 |
| Howard County | 287,085 |
| Total Suburban | 3,464,967 |
| Rural | |
| Harford County | 244,826 |
| Frederick County | 233,385 |
| Carroll County | 167,134 |
| Washington County | 147,430 |
| Charles County | 146,551 |
| St. Mary's County | 105,151 |
| Cecil County | 101,108 |
| Wicomico County | 98,733 |
| Calvert County | 88,737 |
| Allegany County | 75,087 |
| Worcester County | 51,454 |
| Queen Anne's County | 47,798 |
| Talbot County | 37,782 |
| Caroline County | 33,066 |
| Dorchester County | 32,618 |
| Garrett County | 30,097 |
| Somerset County | 26,470 |
| Kent County | 20,197 |
| Total Rural | 1,687,624 |
| Total Maryland | 5,773,552 |

RMC Activities

For Fiscal Year 2013, the RMC received a line item appropriation of \$167,000 through the State's Operating Budget. The Council reported \$170,970 in carried over funding received in Fiscal Year 2012 through the InvestMaryland Initiative. Additional operating funding of approximately \$25,000 was received in horse racing revenues. Total Fiscal Year appropriations were \$383,182.14 with expenses totaling \$246,825.48.



During the summer of 2012, the RMC Executive Board hired Mr. Jim Youngquist with the SouthEast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) to conduct a strategic assessment of the organization and conduct a nationwide executive director search.

The position of executive director was advertised throughout Maryland and nationally. There were 22 applicants for the position. Based on review, nine candidates were chosen to move through the interview levels until the most qualified and best fit for the position was chosen. After this extensive process, the RMC Executive Committee selected Ms. Charlotte Davis as the new Executive Director.

About Our New Executive Director

Ms. Charlotte Davis has over 15 years of professional experience in government, advocacy, and political consulting. She has spent over ten years working within the Maryland General Assembly, most recently as Chief of Staff for a Committee Chairman. She has experience in non-profit management, managing a small organization dedicated to educating and advocating on behalf of Montgomery County, Maryland. In the fall of 2012, Ms. Davis was a part of the successful campaign to change Frederick County's form of government from Commissioner to Charter. She holds a BA in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland and an MA in Government from Johns Hopkins University. She lives in rural Middletown, Maryland with her husband and two sons.

In December 2012, Mr. Youngquist conducted a strategic planning session with the Council and submitted a report to the RMC in January 2013. Listed below are Mr. Youngquist's recommendations.

Recommendation #1: Develop and hold a Rural Maryland Congress

To announce to the entire State that the RMC has indeed survived and is focused on a positive and productive future, the RMC should host a Rural Maryland Congress in the Fall of 2013. The Congress would celebrate Rural Maryland through plenary and track training sessions focused on key issues and opportunities facing Rural Maryland and Maryland as a whole and through the Congress, identify ways to enhance the economic development, environment, and quality of life of Rural Maryland.

Recommendation #2: Structure RMC Policy Governance as Relevant and Effective as possible

The RMC Executive Director will review the enabling legislation and bylaws of the RMC to determine the required make up of the Board of Directors. Probably only 30 of the current 50 Board positions are mandated. The RMC Board should consist of only the required membership and that through standing, advisory, and specific task committees the RMC expand its sphere of participation

Recommendation #3: Develop and hold Issue Forums throughout Maryland

Using the five regional councils and the 10 rural community colleges in the state, the RMC should convene issue forums throughout the state of Maryland. The Forum setting will allow the RMC to reach out to Rural Maryland and for Rural Maryland to provide feedback and suggestions on opportunities, challenges, and issues facing Rural Maryland.



Rural Policy and Programming

Maryland's General Assembly adjourned Sine Die on Monday April 8, 2013. We are pleased to report that RMC and the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistant Fund (MAERDAF) grant program were included in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2014 Operating Budget in the amounts of \$167,000 each. The five regional councils also received funding of \$150,000 each. This important funding will allow our organizations to continue our work in improving rural Maryland. We thank the Governor and the Legislature for their support.

We worked to restore budget funding to the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority and Fund (MEDAAF). MEDAAF provides loans that help create jobs and encourage economic development. While the Senate had accepted a Department of Legislative Services' recommended cut, we worked with Conference Committee members to restore \$3.5 million to the Fund.

Besides the budgetary issues, we focused on workforce development and access to health care. We worked on the Governor's Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) program (HB 227/SB 278) to ensure a regional component to this program. Working with Department of Licensing, Labor and Regulation and the Department of Business and Economic Development, EARN will provide \$4.5 million grant funding to job training programs.

In healthcare, we continued our support of telemedicine. In joint testimony with the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA), we supported HB 931/SB 496 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program - Telemedicine. This new law will allow Medicaid reimbursement for telemedicine used in certain emergency situations.

Hosting Rural Issue Forums

The State Office of Rural Health (SORH), Rural Maryland Council (RMC), and Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) jointly hosted a webinar on May 21, 2013 on an upcoming Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rural Health Care Connect Fund. A presentation was made by Mark Walker of Wireline Competition Bureau of the FCC.

The Fund will provide \$400,000,000 annually with a goal to increase access to broadband for health care providers (HCPs), especially those serving rural areas. The funds will provide 65% of cost of broadband; upgrading existing facilities to higher bandwidth; and equipment necessary to create networks of Health Care Providers. The fund could support last mile connections and upgrades to HCPs to enable the adoption of wide range of telehealth applications and rapid distribution of large images.

A competitive call for applications is anticipated to be released this summer and can be submitted through a consortium with urban partners.

RMC Grant Programs

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF)

Established in 2000, the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistant Fund (MAERDAF) offers important financial support to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development, and agricultural and forestry education efforts. The Fund also provides targeted financial assistance to community colleges that support small and agricultural businesses through enhanced training and technical assistance offerings.



Heritage Hoop House funded through a FY 2013 MAERDAF Grant to Evergreen Heritage Foundation, Mt. Savage, Maryland

During Fiscal Year 2013, a total of 22 rural-serving organizations submitted applications, requesting more than \$417,000 in grants from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund. This year, however, \$195,956 was available which was distributed to 11 rural-serving nonprofits.

Recipients were:

- **Allegany College of Maryland: \$16,812**
- **Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center: \$14,098**
- **Evergreen Heritage Foundation: \$18,749**
- **Lead Maryland Foundation: \$25,000**
- **Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council: \$18,610**
- **MAC, Inc. (Area Agency on Aging, Lower Shore): \$25,000**
- **Maryland Capital Enterprises, Inc.: \$12,556**
- **Maryland Rural Health Association: \$10,000**
- **Mid-Shore Regional Council (Shore Gourmet): \$18,731**
- **Southern Maryland Agricultural Commission: \$17,400**
- **Upper Shore Regional Council (Harvest Directory): \$19,000**

Between FY 2001 and FY 2013, the MAERDAF program awarded more than \$3.25 million in grants to 47 organizations. Many rural-serving organizations have been able to establish or continue programs and projects that have had a significant and positive impact on Rural Maryland because of the MAERDAF program. Moreover, the Fund has helped many nonprofits develop institutional capacity, improve grant-writing skills, and enhance the internal development of volunteer boards and staff.

The Rural Maryland Council administers MAERDAF in partnership with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, and Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Fiscal Year 2013 RMC Grants

As a result of funding received through InvestMaryland funds, RMC distributed \$170,790 in grants to six organizations: the five regional councils and the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center. These grants were intended to support the day-to-day operations of the regional councils to address regional issues. The regional councils operate as cooperative regional planning and development agencies to foster physical, economic, and social development. The Councils initiate and coordinate plans and projects for the development of human and economic resources.

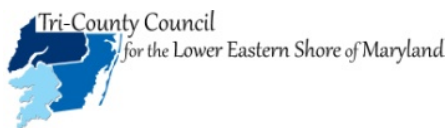
RMC Grants distributed in Fiscal Year 2013:

- **Upper Shore Regional Council, \$25,000**
- **Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, \$15,000**
- **Tri-County Council for Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, \$28,000**
- **Mid-Shore Regional Council, \$47,790**
- **Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, \$35,000**
- **Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, \$20,000**



The **Upper Shore Regional Council** worked on a number of projects, including transportation, support of small business, and extending access to broadband along the "last mile," all the way to homes and businesses. USRC worked to enhance and publish their Harvest Directory, a guide of local farms and agribusinesses, and shoreVines, an informational/video driven website designed to provide information and guidance to the farmer, landowner, or viticulturist.

The **Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center** focused on a "hotdesks" coworking initiative. In April 2013, the Center opened the first of two centers in Salisbury. Hotdesks support entrepreneurs and their efforts to bring innovation and technology to the Eastern Shore. Currently, 10 members are supported through the Salisbury facility impacting approximately 50 businesses.



The **Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland** directs Shore Transit, an intercounty bus service, and the local workforce investment board, Lower Shore Workforce Alliance. During FY 2013, the Council facilitated meetings to help Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties Health Departments with a Health Enterprise Zone (HEZ) application for the region.

Ridership for Shore Transit:

- July 1 to September 30, 2012: 83,001 (actual)
- October 1 to December 31, 2012: 96,687 (actual)
- January 1 to March 31, 2013: 89,734 (actual)
- April 1 to June 30, 2013: 110,196 (estimated)

The **Mid-Shore Regional Council** partners with the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center to support local entrepreneurs, and Shore Gourmet, a business



development initiative that focuses on food and agriculture, among a number of other projects. The Council's priority is the establishment of broadband throughout the State and coordinated efforts to facilitate the installation of broadband through the Maryland Broadband Cooperative. The Council also serves as the grant administrator for Maryland Upper Shore Transit. As an EDA Economic Development District, MSRC recently assisted in the award of a \$1.65 million federal grant for infrastructure to support the planned Regional Medical Facility on the Eastern Shore.



The **Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland** oversees the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, which supports farmers and encourages sustainability in the industry, as well as Southern Maryland Job Source, an intercounty initiative connecting job seekers to available positions.

The **Tri-County Council for Western Maryland** administers a revolving loan fund that supports small businesses expanding in or moving into Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties. TCCWMD also partners with MTA Maryland and EDA to ensure the region is served appropriately by state and federal government. Council Staff worked with the Maryland Department of Planning and the Appalachian Regional Commission to develop and update the State Strategy that will serve as a demographic foundation for the upcoming Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.



The Council assisted with the development of many projects over the last 9 months including but not limited to:

Project

Airport Marketing Plan
Allconet Backbone Upgrades
ASCI Infrastructure Improvements
Municipal Fiber Extension
Energy House Technicians
Allegany Museum Renovations
Last Mile Wireless
Manufacturers Supply Chain
WCL Development Program
Wastewater Collection System
Cherry Glade Access Road
ASCI Access Improvements
Professional Drive Extension
Cushwa Basin Project

Applicant

Washington County Commissioners
Allegany County Commissioners
Garrett County Commissioners
Town of Hancock
Hagerstown Community College
Allegany Museum
Garrett County Commissioners
Washington County Commissioners
LWC
City of Hagerstown
Garrett County Commissioners
Garrett County Commissioners
Washington County Commissioners
Town of Williamsport

Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund

The General Assembly established the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund in 2006 to provide grants to entities for economic and community development projects that would help bring Rural Maryland's standards of living up to statewide averages by 2020. Grants would be awarded in four divisions:

- Rural regional planning and development;
- Regional infrastructure enhancement;
- Rural entrepreneurship development; and
- Rural programmatic support, including MAERDAF.

As of FY 2013, however, no funds have ever been appropriated for Rural Prosperity. Obtaining this critical support for rural development projects remains a top priority of the Rural Maryland Council Executive Board.

Rural Stat

A project of the Rural Maryland Council and the GeoDASH Initiative (a collaboration with BEACON and ESRGC in partnership with the Mid-Shore Regional Council and the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland), RuralStat helps track the general health of individual rural counties and regions in Maryland. RuralStat uses basic quality-of-life indicators compiled from reliable state and federal sources and organizes that data to show change over time and comparison between areas. RuralStat does not analyze data, but it is a useful tool for understanding trends across Maryland.



Providing a Rural Perspective on State Boards

The Rural Maryland Council is often directed by legislation to appoint members to boards and task forces to represent the rural interests and perspectives.

The RMC Executive Director sits on the Board of Directors of the **Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation**, which helps Maryland's farm, forestry, seafood and recreation-based businesses become profitable and sustainable. Since its inception in 2007, MARBIDCO has funded nearly 250 farm and rural business projects in almost every county in Maryland. Additionally, MARBIDCO has assisted more than 100 young and beginning farmers (many with purchasing their first farms); supported the implementation of nearly 100 on-farm value added processing projects; and has helped State and county governments preserve rural working land through its bond finance programs. In FY 2013, MARBIDCO approved 42 loans worth about \$4.5 million, often by partnering with commercial banks to make difficult-to-finance projects a reality. MARBIDCO also made 22 small grant awards last year totaling nearly \$250,000.

During FY 2013, the new Executive Director replaced John Dillman, the former Executive Director of the Upper Shore Regional Council, to represent rural interests on the **Sustainable Growth Commission**. The Commission was established during the FY 2010 legislative session where it replaced the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland with a 36-member commission. It will remain in effect until 2020. For more information visit: <http://www.mdp.state.md.us/yourpart/773/sustainablegrowthcomm.shtml>

In 2013, Governor Martin O'Malley appointed RMC Executive Board member, **Erroll Mattox**, to serve on the **Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture**. GICA promotes the economic viability of agriculture in the state by ensuring that local, state and other agricultural agencies work together to use available resources effectively. The Commission is charged with developing and implementing a consistent systematic method to coordinate Maryland's agricultural economic development, and specific protocols that improve regulatory processes for agriculture and promote a business-friendly climate.

RMC served on two health related task forces created by the General Assembly during the 2013 Legislative Session. HB 934/SB 776 – **Telemedicine Task Force** – Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) reinstates its previous task force to study the use of telehealth throughout the State. The task force is to identify opportunities to use telehealth to improve health status and health care delivery and, in addition, identify strategies for telehealth deployment in rural areas of the State. MHCC is to submit an interim report to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2014, and a final report by December 1, 2014.

The Maryland Health Care Commission also convened a group of interested stakeholders to evaluate regional health delivery and health planning in rural areas. The evaluation includes: the appropriateness of current health planning region designations; the adequacy of the health care workforce in rural areas; barriers to accessing health care services caused by distance; adequacy of transportation to health care services; the impact of recent hospital consolidation on the availability of services in rural areas; and recommendations for change. The stakeholder group includes experts who can provide unique perspectives on rural health delivery and services and speak to the impacts of consolidation on rural areas in Maryland. The **Rural Area Health Delivery and Planning Stakeholder Group** is expected to deliver a final report by December 1, 2013.

As a member of the National Rural Development Partnership, the RMC once had a formal partnership with USDA, which included an approved work plan and a corresponding federal appropriation, with a state match. No formal partnership with USDA has existed since 2005 when federal priorities shifted; however, the State of Maryland has, to date, continued to support the RMC – its State Rural Development Council. The **Partners for Rural America (PRA)**, a national nonprofit which represents SRDCs, has been working with USDA to re-establish that relationship. The RMC's Executive Director is a member of the PRA Board.



Muddy Creek, Swallow Falls State Park, Garrett County

The Rural Maryland Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization, formed in 2001 to support the work of the Rural Maryland Council and the efforts of knowledgeable rural leaders and economic and community development practitioners around the state who work tirelessly to help meet the needs of the 1.6 million residents in 18 rural counties.

The Foundation is governed by an independent Board of Trustees. They are: **Robert Agee**, President; **R. Kevin Brooks**, Treasurer. Trustees: **Colby Ferguson**, Agriculture Marketing Specialist, Frederick County; **Stephen McHenry**, Executive Director, Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation; **Robin McKinney**, Director, Maryland CASH Campaign; **Joanne Richart-Young**, Agriculture Coordinator, Cecil County Office of Economic Development; **Dan Rider**, Forest Stewardship & Utilization Program Manager, DNR; **Duane Yoder**, President, Garrett County Community Action Committee. Ex-officio, non-voting members are: **Scott Warner**, chairman, RMC; **Charlotte Davis**, Executive Director, RMC.

All contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible and may be sent to: The Rural Maryland Foundation, P.O. Box 2087, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter!



The RMC launched its Facebook page in May 2010 and has reactivated its Twitter account, bringing its rural development message to a new audience. It is our hope that social media will help us build a more diverse community of rural leaders. Like our page Facebook.com/RuralMaryland and follow us on Twitter @RuralMaryland!

Join us! Visit our website to become a member of the Council at www.rural.state.md.us and sign up for our quarterly newsletter. Membership is free.



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