



DEMOCRAT

Central Baltimore County's Democratic Club Newsletter

KICK OFF 2012 AND TAKE A STAND ON ISSUES IMPORTANT TO YOU JAN. 10TH

IN THIS ISSUE

Putting the Politics Back in Our Political Club

2012 has finally arrived, and with it comes a new legislative session, the excitement of a Presidential Election and more chances to get involved with your friends in the Central Baltimore County Democratic Club.

It's also the time for New Year's Resolutions. As a club, we've resolved to put the "political" back into our political club and get take action on some state and local issues identified as important to our general membership. In this newsletter you will find position statements related to the issues we identified as being most important to us at the October meeting. Take an opportunity to read these statements, collect your own thoughts, and come to the January meeting (Tuesday the 10th at the usual place) ready for some thoughtful discussion.

At the meeting we will be voting to support or amend these statements and what we decide will become the official

position of CBCDC. With the new legislative session beginning this month and the County Council continuing to tackle tough issues, we'll continue exploring new opportunities for club members to advocate for our Democratic values.

Hope to see you there as we kick off an exciting year of political activism and fellowship. Happy New Year to you and yours from your friends on the CBCDC executive board.

IMPORTANT NOTE

To vote on issue positions, you must be a dues-paying member of the club for at least 30 days. But even if you can't vote, you can still participate in the discussion and help chart the future course of our club.



The New 42nd

Delegate Steve Lafferty explains the proposed changes to the 42nd legislative district in the Governor's redistricting plan.

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First Look: Del. Dan Morhaim's Controversial New Book

Looks like Dana Stein isn't the only author in District 11! Dan Morhaim discusses his groundbreaking book about end-of-life care.

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President's Letter

By Anne Neal

Our **Holiday Party** was a huge **success**. There was a great mix of old friends and new friends and we couldn't have asked for more accommodating hosts. Thanks again to **Jon and Carmen Christiana**. I delivered a check (for almost \$400.00 – yay!) and supplies to the Assistance Center of Towson Churches. They are very grateful. They continue to have an unprecedented need for food and supplies so if you haven't given yet, please consider making a donation at www.actconline.info/

Our January 10th meeting is a particularly important one. We will be discussing **issues of importance** to the club. You will find **position statements** in this newsletter. A sponsoring member will read these statements and members will vote on whether to support the statement or not, whether to send it to committee for further evaluation or table it. You must have been a **member in good standing** for the last 30 days in order to vote.

We are finalizing plans for our **February meeting** and will send out the details soon. However, we are very pleased to announce that **Howard County Executive Ken Ulman** will be joining us in **March**. We are excited that he will be sharing some of the cutting edge policies that he is implementing in Howard County. He is clearly a **rising star**, and I think those of you who are interested in the next **Governor's race** may want to put this meeting on your

calendar – hint, hint. Mark it for March 13.

The Board loves to hear your suggestions for upcoming meetings so bend our ears! We want these meetings to be relevant to you **AND** we want to **grow our membership** so we're ready for the 2012 election. We are planning **social events** as well so we can get to know each other better. Please think of



friends and colleagues that may enjoy the club activities or want to get involved in upcoming elections. **Invite** them to a meeting or a social event. We'd love to meet them. The Club worked tirelessly in 2008 and we will do the same in 2012 and beyond, but we cannot do it without your **support**. Ask our local and state politicians and they will tell you that the **CBCDC matters**. Let's keep it that way!

SUBMISSION POLICY

This newsletter is created by a handful of volunteers who make every attempt to publish factual information, and who wish to encourage the free exchange of information and opinions. However, the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by contributors to this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the CBCDC or official policies of the club. All images taken from public domain, press kits or used with permission. Please send submissions to newsletter editor at stegmata@gmail.com. The deadline for all submissions is 14 days before the monthly meeting or the 23rd of each month.

Swimming the Inner Harbor? It Could Happen!

by Dan Ewald

While the waterways around Baltimore are the worst, the rest of the bay is suffering

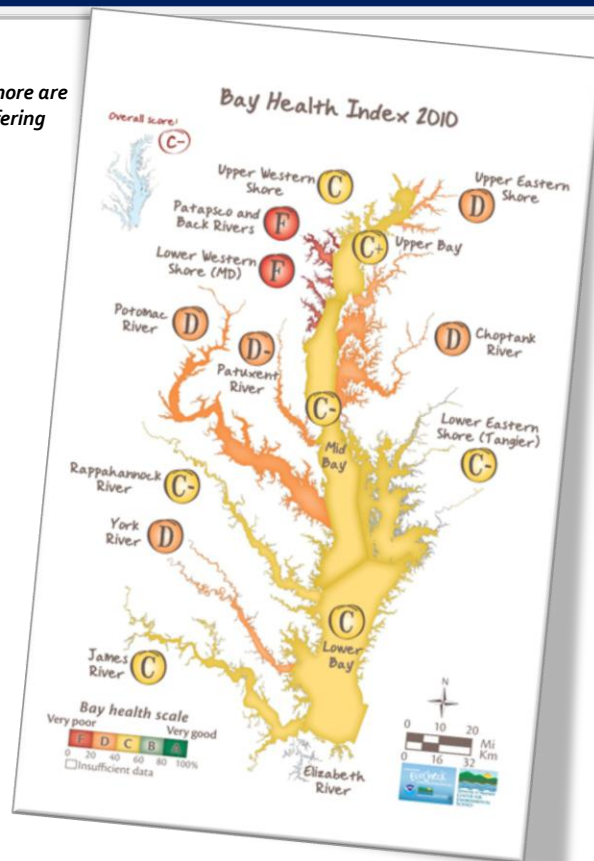
Picture it: The Inner Harbor, 2022. You stroll along the boardwalk, bypassing a stand selling the latest swimwear, on your way to check your crab pot. After throwing back the female, you take the two males over to a mini-Phillips cafe. The cook steams your catch while you watch kids splash about the Aquarium's year old "Dive the Harbor" experience. Ducks, frogs, and myriad of small fish move around the neighboring wetland as you enjoy your lunch.

That scenario may not be too outlandish if the Healthy Harbor campaign is successful. By enforcing and improving regulation, managing stormwater runoff, eliminating sewage, and educating the public, government officials, community leaders, and business hope to have a swimmable and fishable harbor within a decade. While the current water quality is dubious at best, initial tests have proven this is possible. In August 2010, the National Aquarium launched a floating wetland into Baltimore's Inner Harbor. In addition to helping improve water quality, it also provides habitat for various wildlife. This experiment also yielded an unexpected result when ducklings were seen being raised among the reeds and grass. More wetlands have since been built and are being deployed.

The wetlands are made from mostly

reclaimed and recycled materials. Native and pollution tolerant plants planted on the island provide habitat both above and below the surface. While creating a nest for ducks is an attention getter, the more important work is being done via the roots and variety of microfauna hanging out under the wetland. These organisms tackle problems relating to over fertilization of lawns, automobile leaks, and low oxygen water content. The wetlands will be an oasis for biodiversity in the short term, and the foundations of a cleaner future.

Other approaches including solar trash removal, a wetland pier/waterfall, and rain garden are in development. Check out <http://www.healthyharborbaltimore.org/home> for more information. To help at home, consider installing a rainbarrel to create a free water source for your garden while help limit the amount of runoff from your property.



Important Notice from the CBCDC Executive Board



We are sad to report that board member Dan Ewald's term will come to an end in the spring of 2012. He is one of our most active members and the Board will really miss him.

Over the past few months, various club members have stepped up contacted the nominating committee, chaired by Board member Jonathan Schwartz. After much deliberation, The CBCDC Board is proud to welcome **Ben Guthorn** as our newest member. Many of you know Ben as an aide to Del. Stein, but he is also an active member of the club. His term will start this spring.

The Board meets once a month and we are always looking for new ideas and new faces so step up! If you are interested in being considered for future openings, please let contact any Board member and let us know.

UPCOMING EVENTS



January 10th General Meeting

We'll be discussing the issues most important to club members (see Anne's letter) and charting a course of action for the club.



January 28th Campaign 2012 Volunteer Training

Join the Baltimore County Democratic Central Committee and the Goucher College Dems for workshops to help sharpen your activism skills in preparation of the 2012 election season. See flier on next page.



February 14th General Meeting

Guest speaker TBD, but trust us... it will probably be one you won't want to miss. Look for updates soon!



March 13th General Meeting

Howard County Executive Ken Ulman joins us to talk about his innovative work in Howard County and (just maybe) his plans for 2014.

Dan Morhaim's *The Better End*

Recently we heard from Dana Stein, who spoke about his recent novel. But Del. Stein isn't the only accomplished author in District 11! Del. Dan Morhaim shares information about his groundbreaking new book *The Better End*, which is already being recognized as a groundbreaking study of end-of-life care.



Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to report that my book *The Better End: Surviving (and Dying) in Today's Modern Medical World* is now available. Ordering information is at the web site <http://thebetterend.com>, and note 25% discount code when ordering from the publisher Hopkins University Press. The Kindle edition will be available soon.

I have been honored and humbled that *The Better End* has earned **endorsements** from, among others, author/poet/educator **Maya Angelou**, neurosurgeon **Dr. Ben Carson**, Hopkins Dean **Dr. Michael Klag**, entertainer **Montel Williams**, and author **Wendell Potter** (*Deadly Spin*).

Through real life stories and practical guidance, *The Better End* gives readers an informative and accessible tool kit for navigating end-of-life care for themselves and their loved ones. The challenge is to get the best outcome not only from new medical possibilities, but also from the emotional, spiritual,

and psychological wisdom of humanity's past and present. How we make these choices depends upon our individual values and our access to information.

End-of-life care is not an easy topic, but it's one we must all confront. Ensuring that our wishes will be respected is a two-step process. First people need to understand their choices and second, complete a simple form that is free and only takes a few minutes. I hope *The Better End* will help people take these steps.

Thanks,
Del. Dan Morhaim, M.D.

What People Are Saying About *The Better End*:

MAYA ANGELOU – AUTHOR, POET, EDUCATOR - In "The Better End", Dr. Morhaim helps the reader to see that while death does have its sting, it need not be bitter and each of us can prepare for the end in better ways.

MONTEL WILLIAMS – ENTERTAINER - With compassion, kindness, and understanding, Dan Morhaim skillfully guides the reader through how to cope with all stages of illness and disease. When so many others shun away from the topic, Morhaim addresses the situation with clarity, insight, and sensitivity.

BEN CARSON, M.D. – INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN HOPKINS NEUROSURGEON - Dr. Dan Morhaim's book, "The Better End", is long overdue. It provides practical and easily understood advice about rational preparation for the end of our lives and those of our loved ones. Over the years of intense neurosurgical practice, I have seen so many families that could have benefited greatly from this book. I hope it will be widely used

A Look Back and a Look Forward

Op-Ed by Jim Kehl

This is an appropriate time to look back on the accomplishments in 2011 and to look forward to what needs to be done in 2012. During 2011, significant progress was made in making the American people more aware that policies supported by the Republican Party are bad for the economy and are anti-middle class. The most recent example of these policies is the derailment by the Republican House of the payroll tax cut. Tax cuts for the middle class put funds into the hands of people who need the money to pay bills and who will spend that money. This spending increases demand for products and services. The increased demand for products and services requires businesses to hire more people and thereby reduces unemployment. This is one of the most effective ways to stimulate the economy.

Despite these obvious axioms, the Republicans have continued to oppose this common sense legislation. Fortunately, polls indicate that voters are becoming aware of these matters.

There were many struggles in 2011 between the people and big moneyed, anti-union, anti-middle class interests represented by the GOP. Fortunately, the people were victorious in many of these struggles. These struggles began in Wisconsin where two state senators who supported anti-education, anti-union and anti-middle class policies were defeated in special recall elections in spite of the injection of massive amounts of special interest money spent on their behalf. A third state senator narrowly survived a recall. There is currently a petition to recall Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker.

Even though Walker is being supported by large amounts of outside money funneled into Wisconsin by special interest groups and by biased coverage from media networks such as Fox News, it is realistically possible that Walker may be recalled in 2012. In Ohio, an anti-union measure sponsored by Republican governor John Kasich was overwhelmingly defeated in a special election. These triumphs were significant



victories that provided a template as to how the people may defeat the powerful in the very important upcoming elections in 2012.

The Democratic Party must return to its roots and enthusiastically embrace policies that will revive the middle class and will benefit the economy. In 2012, the middle class must re-elect President Obama and must also elect sufficient Democrats to the House of Representatives and Senate so that Democrats regain control of the House and expand their majority in the Senate. The Republican-controlled House has become a dysfunctional institution that is either unable or unwilling to pass legislation that benefits the American people.

This ineffectiveness will continue unless Democrats regain control of that legislative body. I realize that, despite his significant foreign policy victories and domestic achievements, many people had hoped that President Obama and the Democrats would have achieved more. However, the 2010 elections proved that electing tea party candidates and radical Republican governors and legislators has just worsened conditions for the middle class.

To correct the mistakes made in 2010, these tea-baggers and radical Republicans must either be voted out or rendered powerless in the 2012 elections. The Occupy movement and progressive talk radio has drawn attention to issues facing the middle class. The victories in Wisconsin and Ohio have proven that when Democrats are supported by labor, students, teachers, women and other middle class constituencies, the big money, special interest candidates can be defeated and the people can triumph over the powerful. Our mission for 2012 is to make this happen in the upcoming elections. Let's get it done!

The New 42nd

by Del. Steve Lafferty

Every ten years, the Governor is required to present a plan that lays out the state's legislative districts based upon the latest census figures. Last week, Governor O'Malley released his plan for Maryland's legislative redistricting. These new districts go into effect at the next election in 2014.

I have received a number of questions about the impact of this proposal on the voters in the 42nd District. So, let me describe what it involves. Currently, the 42nd includes part of Pikesville (Pikesville-Greenspring area), Loch Raven, Lutherville, Timonium and Towson. Like all districts we have a single Senator and three Delegates.

Under the Governor's proposal, all of Pikesville and part of Ruxton (voters at Riderwood and Brooklandville FD) will be part of the 11th District. Those who live in Loch Raven and Ridgeleigh, east of Loch Raven Boulevard, will be in the 8th Legislative District.

The 42nd District will be split into two sub-districts, 42A and 42B. 42A will be entirely inside the Beltway, keeping the vast majority of Towson together represented by a single Delegate. 42B will be represented by two Delegates. 42B will continue to include Lutherville and Timonium but will stretch from the Harford County line to the Carroll County line with Harford Road as the eastern boundary. The northern boundary is above Mt. Carmel Road and touches the Prettyboy Reservoir. The Maryland Department of Planning's web site, www.mdp.state.md.us, has a good map and shows the precincts in each legislative district for you to look at.

I hope this helps clarify the proposed redistricting plan. I am disappointed that the Pikesville and Loch Raven/Ridgeleigh communities are not proposed to be part of the 42nd district. If you have any questions, please email me at Stephen.Lafferty@house.state.md.us. I look forward to continuing to represent the entire 42nd district until the next election.

Issue Positions

School Board Reform – presented by Laurie Taylor-Mitchell and Julie Sugar

The Central Baltimore County Democratic Club (CBCDC) supports a change in the selection process of the Baltimore County Board of Education. The current method of selection by *appointment only* has resulted in a school board that is neither accountable nor responsive to the public they serve.

Below are examples of the lack of accountability and responsiveness of the Board of Education. Each issue resulted in extensive testimony by the public at Board meetings; however, the Board continuously refused to acknowledge or correct these problems or to use its authority to demand appropriate action from the Superintendent. None of the problems below was corrected until our **elected** legislators demanded action:

- 1) Rule 1300 – the Superintendent’s rule that prohibited PTAs and community groups from using school buildings, a violation of state law. Nearly two years ago, this issue was discussed at hearings in Annapolis, and BCPS refused to change this rule until outraged legislators and the public put in countless hours to force the Board to rescind the rule.
- 2) AIM (Articulated Instruction Module): a system of student evaluation copyrighted by a former BCPS employee, which would have resulted in hundreds of extra hours of filling out evaluation forms by teachers, resulting in the loss of valuable instruction time. AIM resulted in hearings in Annapolis before the evaluation process was removed.
- 3) Lack of adequate climate control in schools: Less than half of the public schools in Baltimore County have adequate climate control. After temperatures in one school soared into the 100s for weeks directly after a multi-million dollar renovation in which air conditioning was cut from the budget, it took four years, and the intervention of several legislators, for BCPS to fix the problem.
- 4) Overcrowding and planning for growth in public schools: Elementary schools in Towson remain 565 students over capacity. West Towson Elementary, which was only built through the huge efforts of Towson Families United, is projected to be 150 students over capacity by the fall of 2012; the additions at Hampton and Stoneleigh will not open until 2013. BCPS did not plan adequately for the present population, or for the influx of students expected in the next few years.

A hybrid method of selecting nonpartisan school board members will result in increased interaction and responsiveness to the public regarding problems in our public schools such as those enumerated above. A hybrid board would result in a school system that can self-correct when problems arise, rather than requiring the constant intervention of local and state legislators.

A hybrid Board would consist of elected and appointed members. We propose that the Board of Education in Baltimore County consist of seven elected members, one from each Councilmanic District, four members appointed at large by the Governor, and one student member. All board members would be compensated equally and all would have equal powers.

Marriage Equality – presented by Matthew F. Stegman

The Central Baltimore County Democratic Club (CBCDC) supports the right of gays and lesbians to enjoy all the same civil rights available to their fellow Marylanders. Further, we encourage our federal, state and local elected officials to support policies that ensure all Marylanders are able to receive the rights and benefits of marriage.

Marylanders are fair-minded people and our state has been a national leader in extending many of the concrete benefits of marriage to same-sex couples. However, it is the belief of the CBCDC that we must take the following actions to ensure all of our citizens are protected equally under the law:

- 1) This year, Baltimore County will extend health insurance benefits to same-sex spouses of county employees that have been married out of state. CBCDC encourages Baltimore County and other Maryland jurisdictions to pursue policies that recognize the rights of couples legally married in other states.
- 2) CBCDC encourages Baltimore County officials to advocate for policies that extend the rights and privileges of marriage to all same-sex couples in Maryland. We further encourage all Baltimore County members of the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates to co-sponsor marriage equality legislation during the 2012 session.

Marriage is a fundamental right and an important legal institution. In addition to being a symbolic bond of a couple’s commitment to one another, many important rights are tied to marital status. For moral and legal reasons, the CBCDC believes that Maryland should extend marriage rights to same-sex couples.

Renewable Energy Goals – presented by Daniel L. Ewald

The Central Baltimore County Democratic Club (CBCDC) supports any and all efforts to attain Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) of 20% renewable energy production by 2022. This is possible through programs that increase energy efficiency, encouraging renewable energy, public awareness, and promotion of green industry in Maryland outlined as follows:

- 1) **Emulate California's Cap and Trade program from the "Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006"** - Starting 1/1/2012, CA will start the nation's first carbon trading market in an effort to lower 2020 emissions to 1990 levels, a 25% reduction. By utilizing market forces, the state will promote development of clean energy while creating funds to be used to reimburse state residents facing higher energy costs. *Legislators, regulators, and energy companies in MD should be in discussion with CA counterparts to examine which parts can be replicated in our state.*
- 2) **Supporting development of offshore wind farm** - Developing wind farms in MD will not only help to attain our RPS goal, but can also create a large manufacturing base for turbines and other components in the region. Current US offshore wind industry is still developing, and a commitment to this sector can help secure MD's position as a leader in both jobs and technological developments. *Pass Gov. O'Malley's Offshore Wind Program. The legislature should attempt to incentivize the manufacturing of turbine parts and components in MD.*
- 3) **Increase MD's RPS and/or the amount obtained from solar** - As currently written, the RPS for MD requires at least 20% of all energy must be from renewable energy sources, 2% of which must be solar, by 2020. [Other states have higher percentages and/or faster timelines.](#) *Efforts should be made to look into increasing renewable energy percentage or implementing a faster timeline.*
- 4) **Have the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) and power companies aggressively promote energy efficiency and renewable tax credits** - MD currently offers [7 different rebates](#) to homeowners who increase their energy efficiency. Increasing a building's energy efficiency is the easiest, cheapest, and quickest way to lower the power demands and offers the highest return on investment over any other improvement. *Efforts should be made to look into increasing public awareness of available rebates and potential cost savings.*
- 5) **Promote "cool" roofs and pavement** - [A study conducted by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the Davis Energy Group](#) found that installing a cool roof reduced roof surface temperature by 20-40°F and reduce cooling equipment usage up to 52%. [Cool pavements improve](#) water quality, safety, and nighttime visibility in addition to lowering ambient heat. Implementing cool roofs, roads, and pavement throughout the nation could become the equivalent of "taking every car in the world off the road for 11 years" [according to Energy Secretary Steven Chu](#) as well as combating the heat island effects in cities and improving air quality. *The legislature should attempt to extend energy efficiency tax credits to cover installation of roofs. The legislature should mandate all future road work to implement cool pavement techniques.*
- 6) **Extend solar tax credit to match federal** - MD's current solar tax rebate expires in 2014, while the federal tax rebate is in effect until 2016, creating potential uncertainty for homeowners and businesses considering purchasing solar. *The legislature should extend the state's tax credit to match the federal tax credit.*

The CBCDC urges the Maryland legislature to support and/or pass bills promoting the efforts outlined above.

Death Penalty Repeal – presented by I. Scott Sokol

The Central Baltimore County Democratic Club supports the repeal of the death penalty in Maryland. In support of this proposal, we present the following:

The Death Penalty Does Not Fight Crime. Over the last couple of decades, death penalty states have significantly outpaced non-death penalty states in murder rates. In 1990, death penalty states averaged a 4% higher murder rate than non-death penalty states. That gap grew to 35% by the year 2000, and 46% by 2005.

The Death Penalty Risks Lives Having the death penalty means we risk executing a person who is innocent. Over the past 25 years, more than 120 innocent men and women sentenced to death were freed after evidence showed they were innocent of the crimes for which they were convicted. We know that mistakes happen in Maryland. *Kirk Bloodsworth* was sentenced to death in Baltimore County for the rape and murder of nine-year-old Dawn Hamilton. DNA testing proved he didn't commit the crime and he was released after nearly a decade behind bars. Mr. Bloodsworth was lucky, but we cannot depend on luck. DNA evidence is available in only about 10% of all murder cases.

The 2009 Compromise Bill Is Not the Answer. In 2009, the Maryland General Assembly narrowed our state's death penalty law to require specific evidence to seek death: DNA evidence, a videotaped interrogation and confession, or a videotape of the murder. The legislature's singular intent was to reduce the risk of executing an innocent person. Repeal of the death penalty is the only way to *eliminate* the risk of executing an innocent person. Maryland's new reforms only narrow that risk. The 2009 law has only made the process more *complex* – adding a second phase to the sentencing trial, an additional phase unique to capital trials that follows if the guilt-innocence phase results in a first degree murder conviction. The new law extends the already decades-long process that is so detrimental to the families of murder victims. Maryland's new law is vague and confusing and legal experts predict years more litigation ahead. The new law has already delayed capital trials. The 2009 law only makes the death penalty more arbitrary – death eligibility is determined by the type of evidence available instead to nature of the murder.

A Form of Punishment for Heinous Crimes Exists and Works. Maryland can and does sentence heinous murderers to life without the possibility of parole --- a swift and severe punishment that guarantees we will never execute the wrong person. Repealing the death penalty would make this the maximum sentence in our state.

For the reasons stated, we ask the Maryland legislature to repeal the death penalty in 2012.

Central Baltimore County Democratic Club Annual Membership Form

ANNUAL DUES ARE ONLY \$20 PER MEMBER

Renew online at: <http://www.cbcdc.org/membership.php>

Make Check Payable to the the CBCDC

Mail to: CBCDC, Inc., P.O. Box 5194 Lutherville, MD 21094

Note: Dues and donations to CBCDC, Inc. are not tax deductible



___ I (we) would like to help support the CBCDC by renewing my (our) annual dues. Enclosed, please find my (our) annual dues of \$___.

___ I (we) have also included an additional \$___ as a donation to the club and/or the Political Action Committee.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

(CBCDC Sends out its monthly newsletter by email to reduce our carbon footprint and save much-needed funds. If you want to receive your copy by mail, please let Judy Harris know: jharris341@aol.com or 410-853-7717.)

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