

# Currents

*The newsletter of the Four Rivers Heritage Area*

ANNAPOLIS

LONDON TOWN

SOUTH COUNTY

## Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grants \$310,000 to Local Heritage Organizations

On July 8, the Hogan Administration announced 52 matching grants totaling \$2,699,532 were awarded to Maryland non-profits, local jurisdictions and non-profits, local jurisdictions and other heritage tourism organizations including museums, and historic preservation, natural resources, cultural, and educational organizations through the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA). MHAA oversees Maryland's system of 13 locally-administered, State-certified Heritage Areas, which are places to experience – see, hear and even taste – the authentic heritage of Maryland in a unique way that cannot be experienced anywhere else. The list includes 5 new grants totaling \$310,000 to local Annapolis and Anne Arundel County non-profit organizations in the Four Rivers Heritage Area.

These grants, given for the last 19 years, produce economic activity in areas that contribute to Maryland's cultural heritage. By supporting capital projects and educational activities, the grants stimulate interest, pride, and preservation efforts related to irreplaceable historical, cultural, and natural resources. "Maryland's Heritage Areas help celebrate and preserve the best of our history, cultural traditions, and natural areas," said Governor Larry Hogan. "This important funding makes our communities more livable and vibrant, while fostering economic activity and growth through our rich tourism industry."

Projects in the Four Rivers Heritage Area include:

- Capital grant to Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Inc., "Improved Public Access for the Arts – Exterior Doors and Entranceways," \$80,000
- Capital grant to Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, "Sellman House Rehabilitation for Visitor Orientation Center," \$80,000
- Non-Capital grant to Annapolis Maritime Museum, Inc., "AMM's Exhibit: 'White Gold: Fishing and Farming the Maryland Oyster'," \$25,000



Aerial view of Sellman House (SERC)

- Marketing grant to Four Rivers Heritage Area, in partnership with Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, for website redevelopment and marketing, \$25,000

In addition, Four Rivers received a Management grant for \$100,000, making a total of \$310,000 in state funding to the Four Rivers Heritage Area in FY17, for projects totaling more than \$1.8 million. The Management grant to the Four Rivers Heritage Area supports activities such as the mini-grants program, the annual heritage awards, networking meetings for site directors and managers, educational workshops, online resources, and new collaborative initiatives.

According to Four Rivers' Executive Director, Carol Benson, "Every new project adds to the sustainability and authenticity of the visitor experience here. As Four Rivers approaches its fifteenth anniversary since certification, we can all celebrate the long list of successful projects that this important source of funding has made possible."

The grant information for FY18 will be announced by early January 2017. It is not too early to start planning future projects now! Please call our office at 410-222-1805 to discuss your potential project.

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THE HERITAGE AREA OF  
ANNAPOLIS,  
LONDON TOWN,  
AND SOUTH COUNTY

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**Carol Benson, Ph.D.**

*Executive Director*

**Christina Csaszar**

*Heritage Programs Coordinator*

## DIRECTORS CORNER: Four Rivers in the Community



Summer is a great time to get outside and get involved with the community! Four Rivers was pleased to be part of a collaborative booth at the Anne Arundel County Fair this summer with several partner organizations, including the Lost Towns Project, Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Ann Arrundell County Historical Society, Anne Arundel Genealogical Society, and Hancock's Resolution. We made new friends and even forged a new partnership or two! Thank you to Coordinating Council member Jane Cox of Anne Arundel County Planning and Zoning for heading up the collaboration, and Amelia Chisholm for organizing the activities. We hope to do it again next year!

## SPOTLIGHT ON: Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center

Our colleagues at the Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center celebrated the Center's 10th Anniversary on September 17th with new exhibits, live music, a "Class Roll Call" for alumni of the Bates High School, and a ceremony that "revisited the journey" that transformed the former school library and gym into a heritage center that is open to the public for exhibits, workshops, event rentals, and more.

The Wiley H. Bates High School is a cultural landmark in Annapolis that sat vacant for 25 years. The school was built in 1933 on land donated by Mr. Bates, a prominent African American businessman. Prior to desegregation, it was the only high school for African Americans in the Annapolis area. Because of its cultural significance, the school was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building served as the high school for African Americans in Anne Arundel County until 1966, when county schools were integrated. It then served as a middle school until being closed in 1981 due to deteriorating conditions.

Extensive community efforts to "bring back Bates" led to the renovation of the former school, converting it into a \$27-million multi-use complex called the Wiley H. Bates Heritage Park, which



Alma Cropper, Event Coordinator at the Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center.

reopened in a public celebration in September 2006. The Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center is part of the complex; its mission is to honor and give substance to the contributions of the founder, faculty, staff, and students of the former Wiley H. Bates High School. The Center holds artifacts, historical documents, and memorabilia related to African American history in Anne Arundel County, offers permanent and traveling exhibits, conducts oral history interviews, and promotes research opportunities to the general public using its extensive resource holdings. The Bates Legacy Center is open to the public Wednesday through Friday, 11a.m. to 2p.m., and by appointment. Visit [www.whbateslegacycenter.org](http://www.whbateslegacycenter.org) to learn more.



## Four Rivers plans multi-faceted marketing initiative

Four Rivers has a new heritage marketing initiative in the works, with our partner, Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (VAAAC). Supported by funding from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority and matching funds from VAAAC, the new initiative will include an upgraded website ([www.fourriversheritage.org](http://www.fourriversheritage.org)); a collaborative marketing focus on heritage-related events in our area; an updated "App" for both iPhone and Android that will guide visitors to heritage attractions along the "Roots & Tides Byway" in South County; and online and print advertising directing readers to the "Historian Annapolis" sections of the Visit Annapolis website ([www.visitannapolis.org](http://www.visitannapolis.org)), which feature blogs, stories, photos and interactive



Waterfront photo by Bob Peterson

maps to connect visitors with the history and heritage experiences in our destination. In addition, we'll continue our active Social Media marketing efforts – do you follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter? Watch for our updated products to roll out over the coming months!

## Alice Estrada joins Board of Directors



Alice Estrada currently serves as Executive Director of the Annapolis Maritime Museum, having recently moved back to her hometown of Annapolis. A motivated community leader, Estrada served on the Town Council for the historic town of Gettysburg, PA, and has worked with a variety of non-profit organizations to maximize revenue and improve overall productivity. In addition to her work with non-profits, Estrada has extensive experience in the private sector, including marketing Disney's town of Celebration

Florida and as Vice President and Director of Marketing for two commercial developers. Estrada is a Certified Marketing Director (*a designation from the International Council of Shopping Centers*) and a recent graduate of Leadership Anne Arundel. She received a degree in Business from the University of Maryland College Park.

Alice has two daughters, Chloe and Madeline, and enjoys nothing more than being out on the beautiful Chesapeake Bay. Welcome, Alice!

## Four Rivers workshops educate, inform, and inspire

The month of September brought the return of stakeholder workshops and discussions of new ideas. On September 15, Four Rivers hosted a half-day workshop at Historic London Town and Gardens led by museum specialist Robert Forloney, entitled **"Program Accessibility – Accessibility Matters!"** Participants learned best practices and new approaches for making public programs more welcoming and accessible for a broad variety of visitors with special needs.

Four Rivers staff also led the annual mandatory **Mini-Grant Workshop** on September 21 at the Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center. This workshop was required for applicants for this year's FY17 Fall grant round, and is also highly recommended for anyone wanting to brush up on grant-writing skills or administering a grant in progress. Topics of discussion included tips on how to approach project planning, critical grant agreement details, best practices on keeping grant project records, and the procedures for closing the grant.

On Tuesday, October 25, at Historic London Town and Gardens, there will be a third, highly informative workshop of interest to all of our non-profit partners. The workshop is entitled **"Getting Started with Planned Giving."** Four Rivers will bring back guest speaker Patricia Bender, Director of Planned Giving at the United States Naval Academy Foundation, to repeat a workshop last given in June 2015, directed at anyone responsible for "keeping the doors open" at a nonprofit organization. The workshop will introduce participants to everything they need to know to start up a planned giving program at their own organizations. A Q&A will follow. Call 410-222-1805 or e-mail [heritage\\_area@aacounty.org](mailto:heritage_area@aacounty.org) to reserve your space!

# Stewardship initiatives bring stakeholders together

## Area Partners Earn Bee City USA® Designation



On July 14, three local governments and several local partner organizations announced that our region has been designated as a Bee City USA®. This arrangement was heralded as an unprecedented partnership between Anne Arundel County, the City of Annapolis, the Town of Highland Beach, and supporting allied partners, including the Four Rivers Heritage Area. Bee City USA® is a nonprofit national organization that fosters ongoing dialogue in urban areas to raise awareness of the role pollinators play in sustaining three-quarters of the world's plant species and what each of us can do to provide them with healthy habitat. All groups involved in this partnership recognize the importance of sustaining pollinators, and plan to lead the region to become more pollinator-friendly.

Ongoing collaborative efforts to sponsor new pollinator-friendly initiatives that will include community outreach and education will be announced in the upcoming months.

## Best Practices Workshop at Hopewell Farm

On June 22, Four Rivers partnered with Lisa Barge of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to host a "Best Practices Workshop" that focused on sustainable agricultural practices at Hopewell Farm, located in Friendship, Maryland. Hopewell Farm has been in the Wayson family for over 180 years. For most of that time, the farm produced tobacco; many of the barns and outbuildings have now been repurposed to accommodate the demands of raising grass-fed cattle and a dairy cow and its



Participants enjoyed a tour of the farm.



Carolyn Wayson feeds a calf.

calf. The Waysons' farm management practices include rotational and prescribed grazing and heavy use area protection. In addition to their beef cattle, the Waysons are raising a Jersey dairy cow that provides milk, and chickens that provide them with eggs. A high-tunnel is used to extend the growing season, and a small fruit orchard was added in 2011. On the day of the workshop, twenty-five attendees gathered for a guided tour of the farm and overview of their sustainable practices.



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Four Rivers is a 501 (c) 3, charitable non-profit organization. Your contribution supports the heritage sites and organizations that make a difference to our region's quality of life.

