

Town of Highland Beach

MARYLAND



Fall 2009 Newsletter

Fabulous. That aptly describes the spring and summer we have greatly enjoyed in Highland Beach. There have been a host of activities and events during these seasons to engage, entertain, educate, and otherwise connect full time and part time residents alike to our community. In May, we officially launched our new Highland Beach web site, developed to connect all our residents to the history and planned events. The web site provides a calendar feature that presents information on all upcoming events, extensive information on our Platinum Green Town Hall, the Douglass Museum and Cultural Center, and much more. Please visit if you have not yet logged on to keep abreast of town activities. I am pleased to report that our Town Hall, Douglass Museum, and beachfront have been used extensively during the Spring and Summer. In addition to meetings of the Citizens Associations of both Highland Beach and Venice Beach, Fabulous Friday Movie Nights for both adults and kids, our "Art at the Bay" Gallery Community Art Display, we also hosted the annual meeting of the Sierra Club, a green organization that wanted to meet in a green facility, amongst other events. The Beach saw the return of our biannual Family and Friends Reunion and Picnic, another sold-out production that

brought together 500 friends and visitors to enjoy dinner, old and new friends, entertainment, and overall great fun. And during these months we also hosted the Fourth of July Picnic on the Beach, Book Club on the Beach, Camp Out on the Beach, and Music in the Moonlight. At the Douglass Museum, we held the dedication ceremony and official opening of the Gladys Bush Gift Shop. And our resident authors—Jack Nelson, Margo Pinson, and Raymond L. Langston—published *Highland Beach on the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland's First African American Incorporated Town*. Wow. What a spring and summer.

Newly Elected Sworn In

On August 1st, Mayor Sanders swore into office newly elected Commissioners Linda A. Aikens and Sonja E. Swygert. Linda Aikens



is returning for another term, and will again serve the community as Treasurer. This is the first term for Sonja Swygert, Commissioner for

Intergovernmental Relations. Congratulations to both!

Representative John P. Sarbanes Visits Highland Beach



This summer, the Mayor and

Commissioners were delighted to host U.S. Representative John P. Sarbanes at our Town Hall. Congressman Sarbanes visited our facility to see Green Building in practice, and to meet with local representatives. Although the visit was cut short due to a change in his schedule, we were able to point out some of the features of our facility, discuss some of our community needs, and to invite the Congressman back for a visit to the Douglass Museum and Cultural Center.

Crowd Speaks Out on Bay Cleanup



Mayor Sanders and wife Zora represented Highland Beach at a town meeting held to capacity at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Annapolis. According to the Capitals' top story on August 12th, "Crowd speaks out on bay cleanup, Forum gives feds input on plan to restore estuary", over 300 attended. We witnessed many of the standing-room only crowd standing in the hallways. The meeting, organized by environmental advocacy groups, was billed as an opportunity to influence a new federal plan for clean-

up of the Chesapeake Bay. Federal and state representatives, and attendees, heard from government representatives and others during the 90-minute session on priorities for Bay clean-up.

Fourth of July Parade & Picnic on the Beach

Our annual Fourth of July Parade & Picnic on the Beach event was great fun for all. We started this year's activity with the dedication of the American Flag newly installed at our Town Hall. The parade followed, with a host of

residents and friends in cars, golf carts decorated for the occasion, bikes and other vehicles, and marchers, parading around our town to the delight of observers. We ended the event with a picnic on the beach, another opportunity to connect and re-connect with family and friends.



Residents and guests made good use of the new bench seats, purchased this summer thanks to the efforts of Commissioner Ben Secundy. We have seen a significant increase in the enjoyment of our beach since providing seating and other amenities.



Summer Fun at the Beach

Hello Everyone,

What a wonderful summer at the Beach. The weekend activities just capped it off. Music in the Moonlight on Friday evening was a phenomenal success. Thanks to Rich Healy for conceiving and coordinating this event, to Norma Hunton, her Granddaughter Rayly, the guest musicians, "Tina Turner", and our own Beach performers for a great evening.

The Saturday Family and Friends Reunion Picnic, beginning with the Raw Bar, brought out hundreds of friends, family and guests for a beautiful day on the beachfront, perfect weather, great food, warm fellowship, and amazing entertainment by Jacques Johnson, Bobby Felder, and Margie Clark, with a return appearance by "Tina Turner." The souvenir tent seemed to have been a popular spot under Jean Langston's able leadership and direction. Congratulations to Highland Beach Citizens Association's award recipients, Linda Aikens and Bill Sanders. Thanks to Judy Biagas, and Margo Pinson; co-chairs, all of the planning committee members, and the volunteers for the hard work that went into preparing for the day's events and to Venice Beach for its support. A shout-out to the caterer, Frank Branch and his crew for preparing and serving a most delicious meal.

Sunday morning found weary yet energetic revelers under the tent cleaning up and enjoying bagels, Bloody Marys and other treats, thanks to Sonja Swygert. The activities continued in the afternoon with an Art Exhibit at Town Hall featuring works by Beach artists, coordinated and arranged by Betty Murchison, and Geneva & Ted Hudson, and a visit to Lilian Burwell's Open Studio. There was more merriment on Labor Day as many gathered for an impromptu brunch on Venice Beach and more visitors came to view the Exhibit at Town Hall.

On behalf of The Highland Beach Citizens Association, **A BIG THANK YOU** to everyone who contributed and/or participated in the wonderful summer activities. It has truly been a group effort with so many getting involved it's difficult to thank each one individually, but you know who you are. You've been great.

The summer ends, but the activities will continue with some surprises in store.

Blessings to All!

Geneva Hudson

“A Welcoming Enclave With Roots in a Snub”

That was the title of an article on Highland Beach that appeared in the New York Times. The article by author Eugene L. Meyer, was published on September 3rd. It featured our own Ray Langston, and told the story of our connection to Frederick Douglass, Douglass' son Charles Douglass who was the founder of Highland Beach, and the African-American notables that retreated to Highland Beach "...to escape the city heat and humiliation of racially oppressive customs and

laws in the capital. Well known guests included the early civil rights leaders W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington; the singer-activist Paul Robeson; the poets Langston Hughes and Paul Laurence Dunbar; Thurgood Marshall, the first black Supreme Court justice; the author Alex Haley; and Robert C. Weaver, the first cabinet secretary.” It is encouraging to see this recognition of the wonderful history of our community.

Fire Station No. 8 Dedicated...



... on August 12th, to serve communities on the Peninsula. The facility has been a long time in the planning and construction, and we are grateful for the added safety it provides to residents.

**BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

MAYOR

William H. Sanders III

COMMISSIONERS

Linda A. Aikens, Treasurer

Raymond L. Langston

Benjamin Secundy

Sonja E. Swygert

CLERK/SECRETARY

Nikki West

**CONTACT
INFORMATION**

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Quotable Quote

“Human history becomes more
& more a race between
education and catastrophe.”

--H.G. Wells,
1920

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