



Town of Highland Beach Newsletter

Greetings from Mayor Bill Sanders

Friends and neighbors, I am happy to share with you the start of the Spring Season, a time when we are able to enjoy, even more, our time in Highland Beach on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. There continues to be much activity here even during the colder months, as we celebrated the holidays. Of course, perhaps the most prominent event in Highland Beach is one we shared with the world—the historic election of our new president, Barack Obama. Many friends here celebrated both the swearing in ceremony, as well as the celebratory parade that followed. What a tremendous way to start the New Year, with hope and optimism as we confront a series of the most challenging problems we have faced in our lifetimes. Spring brings with it that hope and optimism for the future, and we are honored to continue a tradition of progress here, that indeed our Nation is embracing.

We hope to see you all on the beach soon. Please enjoy reading this newsletter to keep you abreast of some of the happenings in Highland Beach.

*Please note that Our Annual
Budget Hearing/Town Meeting
is scheduled for Saturday, May 30th.*

VACANCIES ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Vacancies on boards and commissions provide opportunities to maintain the vitality of our community. If you are interested in volunteering to serve, please contact the mayor. Current and upcoming vacancies are on the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Public Ethics Commission.

HIGHLAND BEACH ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

The Highland Beach Historical Commission is currently filling orders for “Highland Beach on the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland’s First African-African Incorporated Town.” The volume relates the history of The Beach, and is a tribute to the 115th anniversary of the founding of the Town. The historic book has proven to be very popular, and only a limited number of the limited-run, first edition remains. Residents and friends of The Beach are urged to buy a copy before this limited-edition opportunity is depleted.



BOOK SIGNING AT DOUGLASS MUSEUM

Saturday, February 21st, was a great day for a book signing at the Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center. Authors Ray Langston and Margo Pinson joined a host of family and friends to celebrate completion of the historic “Highland Beach on the Chesapeake Bay: Maryland’s First African American Chartered Town.” The authors’ signatures on the historic volume added a special touch to an already treasured tome on the histo-

ry of Highland Beach. The signing coincided with the opening of a new exhibit at the museum, so visitors were greeted that day with a double treat. Congratulations to authors Raymond Langston, Jack Nelson, and Margo Pinson for completing this milestone, a true labor of love.

ELECTION DAY IN HIGHLAND BEACH SATURDAY, JULY 25TH

2009 is an election year for Highland Beach. This year, we will be electing two Commissioners for four-year terms, for the positions now held by Town Treasurer Linda Aikens, and Commissioner Sterling Seay. Those interested in running for Commissioner are reminded to submit a nominating petition by July 5th, 20 days before the election, as required by our Charter.

Non-full time residents are also reminded of the change to our Charter that was in place for our election two years ago—re-registration is required 30 days prior to the election, by June 5th. For nominating petitions or registration forms, please contact our town clerk, or any of the members of the Board of Elections. A registration form is also enclosed.

REFLECTIONS ON OUR HERITAGE: PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION OPENS

In what is fast becoming a tradition in Highland Beach, residents and guests were again awarded a rare treat on February 21st—at the Frederick Douglass Museum and Cultural Center—with a new exhibit presented by the Highland Beach Historical Commission.

The Commission presented an Exhibit on the Life and Times of Col. Frederick Gregory, the first African-American astronaut to pilot an American spacecraft. As stated eloquently in the invitation to the opening of the exhibit, “When the space shuttle Discovery returned from space



and swooped over California’s Mojave Desert to a flawless landing at Edwards Air Force Base in 1989, the astronaut at the controls of the \$2 billion spacecraft was 49-year-old Col. Frederick Gregory, the first African American to command a space shuttle mission. This was one of many firsts for this native Washingtonian who excelled at an early age and continued to achieve throughout his career in the Air Force and at NASA. After logging 455 hours in space, Col. Gregory retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1993. He continued to serve at NASA, becoming the Deputy Administrator before his retirement.”

The exhibit, including a picture of Col. And Mrs. Gregory (shown above for those that missed it), was a smashing success, and we were pleased to share the exhibit with Highland Beach residents and friends.



**TOWN MEETING & BUDGET HEARING
SATURDAY, MAY 30TH, AT 10:30 AM**

**All residents are encouraged
to attend.**

**“ECO-BILLS COME DUE AT
BAY’S BEACHES”**

That is the title of a Washington Post article written by David A. Fahrenthold that appeared in the March 19, 2009 edition of the Post. The article, subtitled “Region Pays Dearly For Climate Change in Erosion, Abatement”, included a description of the efforts of Highland Beach to protect our own shoreline on the Bay. The article began “While the nation debates the cost of climate change—whether the price of electricity and gasoline should increase because of their greenhouse gas emissions—the problem already has a price tag on the Chesapeake Bay.” He goes on to describe the plight of area beaches dealing with erosion and rising sea levels, with many communities spending tremendous amounts of money to retain or replace beach sand on a yearly basis. But for Highland Beach, he notes our successful efforts:

“But around the Chesapeake, smaller beaches—often the places that vacationers stopped visiting when the Chesapeake Bay Bridge opened the way to Ocean City in mid-century—needed cheaper fixes.”

“In Highland Beach, just south of Annapolis, residents got a \$22,000 grant to install a “living shoreline” where sand-loving plants anchor the beach. Maryland changed its laws last year to encourage more communities to build this kind of project instead of bulkheads and awards \$1.5 million in no-interest loans for the projects every year.”

It is indeed gratifying to see our leadership efforts to protect our environment and the Bay recognized so prominently.

**BI-ANNUAL FAMILY REUNION SET FOR
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5TH**

Preparations have begun for our bi-annual family reunion and picnic under tent, on the beach. This highly anticipated celebration occurs every two years, and is sure to be a sell-out again this year. We hope that you will be able to join residents and friends of The Beach for our affair this year.

**COMMUNICATIONS & TRANSPARENCY
OF GOVERNMENT: TOWN MEETING ON
SATURDAY, MAY 30TH, AT 10:30 AM**

Our first town meeting of the year will be combined with our annual budget hearing, and will be held at the town hall. The Town Treasurer will present a draft of the town budget for the coming fiscal year. Our town hall sessions are principally listening sessions for the Board of Commissioners to hear directly from citizens on concerns and recommendations for town business. All are invited and encouraged to attend.



DATES FOR COMMUNITY DUMPSTER

The community dumpster will be in town at noon on Wednesday, April 29th, until 8 a.m. on Friday, May 1st. This provides an excellent opportunity to avoid individual trips to the county dump, as well as to toss unwanted material. For a small fee, residents needing help in arrangements may contact Charlie Smith at 410 263-5974.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR

William H. Sanders III

COMMISSIONERS

Linda A. Aikens, Treasurer
Raymond L. Langston
Sterling Perry Seay
Benjamin Secundy

CLERK/SECRETARY

Nikki West

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Web Site (hosted by the Maryland
Municipal League):
[http://www.mdmunicipal.org/cities/index.cfm?
townname=HighlandBeach&page=home](http://www.mdmunicipal.org/cities/index.cfm?townname=HighlandBeach&page=home)

Quotable Quote

“This country will only flourish once we consistently learn to applaud and encourage young people who have to work harder just to achieve balance on the unequal playing field.”

—Gwen Ifill, moderator of Washington Week



Town of Highland Beach
3243 Walnut Drive
Highland Beach, MD 21403