

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

Carroll's Yesteryears
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Students share their ideas for county's future
by Joe Getty

Each year the historical society sponsors an education program for seventh-graders. This program is named the Miss Lillian Shipley Heritage Education Awards in honor of a former curator of the historical society.

Lillian Shipley was at the center of the historical society's activities through our first three decades. She had the foresight in 1939 to propose the formation of the historical society to save the Shellman House as a historical and community center.

She worked very closely with Test Kimmey to give birth to this organization. In 1953, she became the first History House curator, a position in which she developed education programs and worked with other organizations in local history activities.

Her work was a legacy in the community. Her leadership provided for the development of an excellent decorative arts collection. The many activities and education programs under her supervision made the organization one of the best in Maryland.

After Shipley's death in 1989, the Historical Society board crated an annual school age awards program named in her memory. The program includes extracurricular reading and tests. The 1991 education program included an essay entitled, "Past, Present and Future of Carroll County."

There were 32 seventh-graders participating who represented seven middle schools from throughout the county. Awards were presented based on the scoring of the test portion and the content of the essay.

The themes presented by these seventh-graders show a strong interest in Carroll County's heritage and its preservation for the future. The essays of the top scoring students are reprinted below:

**First Place: Chris Truffer
Mt. Airy Middle School**

I have grown up in Carroll County and am constantly amazed at the fast-paced growth. It seems the housing industry moves faster than the county is ready for. I understand the desire for growth. Having the community planning areas as the center of growth seems logical since each community could plan for water supply and open areas.

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However, Carroll County is rich in agricultural land and history. We need to respect the natural resources such as water, trees, wildlife, and farmlands.

Perhaps we should offer a better incentive to the farmers to enroll in the Agricultural Land Preservation program. We need to encourage our farmers to grow crops using the best methods in erosion prevention.

The county needs to control the growth so that in years to come, we can all still enjoy the farmlands, the small towns, the open space, and our heritage.

We look to our history for a sense in direction, learning from our past, profiting from those who came before us and mindful of the chapters yet to be written by those who follow us.

Second Place: Jessica Snoots Mt. Airy Middle School

Many people seem to think that Carroll County is very convenient to Baltimore and Washington. This is true, but I believe, as citizens of Carroll County, we need to make people realize that it's not just a connecting link between them.

I believe that the preservation of the land is most important. Our ancestors sought and treasured it for its rich farmland and breathtaking beauty. We should too. The land should be kept clean and free of trash. Our county shouldn't become another big shopping mall like so many others. After all Carroll County's character and future lies in its land.

Education is another important factor. If our county is to succeed our children need to succeed. More teachers should be hired to cut down on class size and give students the attention they need. So many times have I seen students ask simple questions that they should have known the answer to but don't.

Finally, I think there should be a greater emphasis on parks. If people can relieve their stress in a relaxing way, they'll be able to think better, which will benefit us all.

Once these points are carried out, we can move ahead into a greater future.

Third Place: Mike Shay Mt. Airy Middle School

To: Carroll County Commissioners
Re: Keeping the Heritage of Carroll County.

We need farming to keep the heritage of our county. In 1837 the Maryland General Assembly formed Carroll County. Because of the good soil and precipitation, it became a farming county.

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Now 152 years later, there are 1,238 farms and 166,000 acres of farmland; but some of that land will need to be developed as our county grows. Our county didn't start growing very much until the middle 1960s but now the population has been increasing drastically. If the population keeps growing, it should reach the 150,000 mark just after the year 2000. As the population grows so will the economy. More and more restaurants, hotels and malls will sprout up to suit the people's needs. But where will we put the new homes and businesses? Experts say you need a minimum of 100,000 tillable acres to keep agribusiness a viable industry. We already have 166,000 acres devoted to agriculture. I think we could use a small part of the farmland to build new communities and towns. If the population is going to rise, Carroll County will have to have somewhere to build houses for the people. So...the future of Carroll County relies on the area we have to build on!

**Honorable Mention:
Shelley Platte
Sykesville Middle School**

Carroll County is my home and the home for many other people. I have some recommendations that I think will help the growth of the county in the near future.

The first problem that we all know about is waste. To remedy this situation we could send recycling trucks around the development houses to pick up recyclable items. This will cut down the waste and help more people to recycle, because all they would have to do is take it to the curb.

Next we shouldn't allow too many homes to be built. This removes too much useful farmland from cultivation and production. Also destroys trees that provide useful oxygen. Another thing we should do is build more schools and hire more teachers to cut down the size of classrooms. This will give more individual attention to the children.

Finally to improve Carroll County, you should add more recreation facilities for young people. This will keep kids out of trouble and off the streets.

I hope the county takes these recommendations into consideration to improve Carroll County life.

**Honorable Mention:
Jessica Guynn
Northwest Middle School**

If I was asked to give recommendations on Carroll County's future I would tell the commissioners that they need to get more farmers or land owners to put their land in Agricultural Preservation. We need seventy thousand, five hundred acres to reach the goal of one hundred

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thousand to keep agribusiness a productive industry. If this is made known to the landowners about the situation they might be more willing to put their money in Agricultural Preservation, but if you let them remain ignorant on the subject they'll never know. I suggest you mail a letter to all of the qualified landowners in Carroll County, informing them on the subject.

Unfortunately, there is also the problem of the growing population. By the year 2000 the county will have reached the one hundred, fifty thousand mark. My only suggestion would be to set aside certain pieces of land, like the Westminster or Eldersburg areas, for development and keep others for farming.

Those are the suggestions I would give to the Carroll County commissioners, if they asked me.

Photo caption: Participants and teachers in the Miss Lillian Shipley Heritage Education program: front row, from left, Mildred Shipley, Kelley Hoffman, Shelley Platte, William Niner, Mike Shay, Chris Truffer; second row, Mike McDearmon, Jim Gerwig, Mike Klingenberg and Paul Engle.