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What office are you seeking?: Delegate D 15
Where can voters learn more about your positions?: tonypuca.com

2 Someone new to Montgomery County may ask, "What's the Ag Reserve and why is it important?" What's your answer?

The Ag Reserve is our slice of heaven in Montgomery County. It is a magnificent rural, agricultural and recreational area of 93,000 acres that is protected by the Council from development. I have supported it since 1980 as its largest portion is in District 15. You can currently have 1 home per 25 acres and the owners of property in the Reserve are allowed to sell Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) to builders that allows them to build in more dense parts of the county which I support. This helps the owners of the land economically and keeps the land rural. It is amazing to think anyone in this county can get to an area where they can boat, hunt, fish, hike ride and enjoy the beauty of nature in less than 1/2 hour. In addition the area is a major agricultural producer with over 10,000 employees and produces over \$250 million in yearly revenue. It helps our environment by being a "green lung" and an animal habitat. It is a Civil War historical site. There is no place like it in the US.

3 What are your priorities regarding stewardship of the County's natural resources (water, forests, open spaces) and parkland?

Besides more money spent and manpower. We should have rain gardens, green roofs and semi-permeable surfaces to keep rain water and waste from getting into our streams, rivers and other water sources. We must protect our forests from basic crimes like dumping of trash by people and the dumping and emissions of commercial facilities. We need to spend more time cleaning, clearing and husbanding our forests. Simple things like more trash cans and more recycling cans. I would put a moratorium on all open spaces that prohibits any building on them. My above answers can all be used for my protection of parklands also. In 1982 when we were planning our landfill I spoke to Lois Gibbs who said we must have a clay liner. I told this to the Council and they built it without one. So far we have not had any waste in our water table but we could. I opposed the Dickerson incinerator when it was built and now the emissions are hurting our water, forests, air as well as people. We must plan for the future needs.

4 What is your vision for the future of the County's Agricultural Reserve? Briefly, how would you achieve that vision?

I should have run for the council but as a delegate I will make sure we have the money needed to maintain it as it is and even try to make it better. It is important that the rest of the state know both the economic value of the Ag Reserve and also its national prestige. I will provide the necessary environmental programs to protect it. Our state can have programs like NY State to give our farmers Anaerobic digesters to turn any biomass and waste into mulch, biogas and other clean products. My answer in #3 will protect our water and air supply that will protect the Ag Reserve environmentally. My short term and long term vision is to keep it as good as it is now and never let other politicians compromise. I had a Sea Food plant in Costa Rica in the mid 80's and many of my consultants were amazed at being in a plant and then having a rain forest about 10 minutes away. That is how I felt when I would drive from Potomac with my daughters and in 15 minutes be on a boat in the reserve. Amazing.

5 Can you identify some of the top challenges to the Reserve's local agriculture and what actions you would take, if elected, to address them?

Their are many. The cost of running a farm has gone up and the profit from it's product has gone down. A lot of groups have advocated many ways to help such as DSA, CSA, Agricultural Urbanism, Urban Agricultural, etc. but these are not what a farm really is and definitely not what we ever want to happen to our Ag Reserve. It is unique and should be kept as it is. I know we have given the landowners benefits from TDR's but with the cost of real estate increasing so fast in our county and real estate developers making so much money is this really enough of an economic benefit. I would try to pass legislation to provide financial subsidies to farmers for amount of crops or milk provided and justification would be that they would still produce more revenue for state then subsidy granted. The main challenges to the Ag Reserve will come from our own Council members who will work to help developers and Takoma Pk members who will not understand the value of the Reserve. I will be your advocate.

6 What more can be done to support our local farm businesses and rural communities?

Financial support through subsidy will help. Also our county should buy locally from all of our farms. In this way the farmer can be guaranteed both a source for his produce and a good price. It's very difficult when every farmer in the county can get more money by selling his land for development than he makes farming it. I can assure you it would be easier investing a million dollars than milking cows and plowing fields all day. In New York state they have numerous programs where farmers are given grants to use Anaerobic Digesters to convert their waste into mulch, biogas and clean electricity that can be sold. In essence they are creating waste into another profitable product and we should offer that in our county.

7 How should our County manage its solid waste? What role should incineration, composting and recycling play?

We should phase out all combustionable incineration as soon as possible for it's many harmful effects. We should use composting and increase recycling by at least 50%. Many areas recycle all types of paper, glass, metals and other products we don't. We should use Anaerobic digesters not only to make mulch as we do now but to create electricity and biogas also. We should enforce our recycling laws by having inspectors and collectors inspect trash cans and fine people who are nor recycling. When I was applying to DOE in 1979 for the loan guarantees on my Ethanol plants I saw what Haoland did with waste and 40 years ago they were far ahead of where we are now. I believe waste isn't something that should be incinerated to give people cancer but a resource to be made into a product that can create reusable energy and create revenue.

8 How can we expand the role the County's schools play in the support of a healthy local food system and the success of local agriculture? Do you support a rural schools' policy that provides equity for Reserve cluster schools acknowledging the unique nature of schools in region set aside for farmland and open space preservation?

I actually mentioned this in my answer in #6 that our county should buy from our own farms. In this way we will be providing a benefit to our students and to our famers also. I believe all schools in the county should be treated equally and any unique circumstances should be addressed appropriately. I also believe all county schools should have trips to the Ag Reseve and have the opportunity to ride on Whites Ferry, see a dairy farm in action, take a boat ride, a horse ride and just see what our own county has to offer and that

will help them appreciate what nature and the farms and rural life has to offer. They can visit the site of the Underground Railroad and learn Civil War history.

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- 9 **Currently the County is exploring how best to support a strong agricultural economy through agritourism and new farming enterprises such as on farm breweries and wineries. What are your thoughts about how best to advance on farm activities within the context of the master plan?**

I've mentioned above how our farms can have new products and I think breweries and wineries in addition to the ones I mentioned would be great. I also mentioned bringing our students on tours which is agritourism. I was in favor of what we did in 1980 and am in favor of it now staying as it is with the additions of new farm enterprises to help increase farm revenue. The county and my district is a lot different than it was in 1970 when I moved here and quite honestly it was better than. Let's keep and improve the Reserve.

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- 10 **What are your regional transportation priorities? Do you support M83 and an additional Potomac bridge and outer beltway through the Reserve or adjacent rural zones?**

No I don't support any of the above. I support more ride on buses that will use alternative fuel. I support RBT's that use alternative fuel. I would like to see Marc have an express train during rush hour. I would like to see shopping centers and development built where they are served by mass public transit. I believe our transportation future should be clean public mass transit and not building more roads for more cars. I support county and state workers working one day from home where possible.

I enjoyed filling out this questionnaire as I've been on Whites Ferry hundreds of times and been in the Reserve with my family hundreds of times. I've used the energy saving, environmental products I speak of above. My record and feelings about development, incinerators, dumps, traffic etc. is a matter of public record and if I had my way the county would be as it was decades ago and the Reserve will be as it is many decades into the future.

I thank you all for your work and advocacy.