

Quid Est Veritas



The Two Marylands

By Patrick Weadon

The first time I heard of Severna Park was in the summer of 1975. I was 15 years old and my mother, who knew little or nothing about the sport of lacrosse, agreed to drive me the 10 miles from Chevy Chase to College Park to attend Buddy Beardmore's Lacrosse Camp.

When we checked in one of the assistants noticed I was from Montgomery County and called Buddy over to the table. Coach Beardmore looked at the address on my registration and laughed. "Montgomery County... What the heck are you doing here? They don't have lacrosse there." He went on to kindly explain that his dream was to one day see lacrosse being played in the area some refer to as "Greater Washington."

During that week Coach Beardmore referred frequently to the many wonderful things about his hometown of Severna Park. Having never been there, at the end of camp I left envisioning a quiet bucolic village on the banks of the Severn where everyone spent their days playing lacrosse and attending crab feasts (in the spring and summer this is not far from the truth.) I also left with an understanding that, although I had been raised in what H.L. Menken called the "Great Free State of

Maryland," I was really only familiar with the part that looked toward D.C. and not Baltimore. In short, even at age 15 I realized there were really "Two Marylands," each with its own culture and priorities.

Thirty years later this situation has been altered a bit, but not really that much. Over time the two regions have slowly started to develop common interests, but even with all the changes that have taken place, I still find myself re-explaining to my childhood friends where I live.

To a man they are Redskin fans - Baltimore to them is a place to watch Orioles games. And when they tell you they are going to the city, they mean they will soon be driving down Connecticut Avenue, not Russell Street.

I tell you this because I believe the next occupant of the State House must make a more concerted effort to bring these two disparate worlds together. To paraphrase Lincoln, our state cannot remain half Baltimore, half Washington if it is to ever reach its potential.

Growing up in Montgomery County I had the pleasure of talking frequently with the now retired Delegate Donald Robertson, the former majority leader of the Maryland House under then speaker Ben Cardin. Don would often make the point that it was important for Montgomery County to take an active interest in helping Baltimore City to thrive and prosper. His unique ability to see the state as an entity in which each region was interdependent on the others was an inspiration to me.

Today, Robertson's views are even more important to the future of our state. As Paul Krugman of the *New York Times* points out: "America is a much richer country than it was 30 years ago, but since the early 70s the hourly wage of the typical worker has barely kept up with inflation."

Continued on page A13