

## Letter from the Editor – A summer of sadness in Calvert

Posted by [TBN Editor](#) On 08/02/2016

### Left to right, Annette Funn, J. Allen Swann and MacArthur Jones

#### From the Editor:

The saying goes bad things happen in threes. That certainly has been the case this summer in Calvert County as three valued citizens passed away in July. It was my honor to have known all three.

MacArthur Jones was known as an educator, who also had another career in the grocery retail business. He also served on the planning commission and was one of five individuals who emerged from a horde of candidates in 1996 to serve on the county's first elected school board. What I will always remember Mac for, however, is his leadership when a group of citizens had their legal right to fish impeded back in 2001 by a landowner, who put up a fence at a dead-end, totally blocking access to the Patuxent River. Mac led the group, several brandishing metal cutters, to the barricade one Saturday morning and with cellphone in hand, calmly called the landowner and politely told her the fence was coming down. The fence eventually went back up after a court decree but at least for a while the citizens had their fishing rights restored.

J. Allen "Sambo" Swann was a farmer who, along with other family members, ran an amazingly productive and diversified farm in northern Calvert. I got to tour the farm about a dozen years ago. The Swanns did what many corporations wish they could do with farmland. The operation recently earned state hall of fame status. While farming is hard work, Mr. Swann still had enough energy to serve several years on the county liquor board. I remember seeing him question one license applicant who wanted to reopen an establishment that had a history of failure. Swann sternly asked the applicant to explain what he was going to do to make the business violation-free. While he realized that the lawful business of selling alcoholic beverages needed to be facilitated, Mr. Swann wasn't about to hand out liquor licenses like they were participation trophies. The county's quality of life was not to be compromised.

Unlike Mr. Jones and Mr. Swann, Annette Funn was not a Calvert County native, and, no, she didn't get here as fast as she could. But when she did finally arrive, she immersed herself in the activities of a number of organizations, most notably, The League of Women Voters. That organization has a tradition of making sure Calvert voters know the candidates and issues, that citizens have a chance to meet the office-seekers and had an opportunity to ask them questions. Candidates' forums and printed voter guides don't just magically materialize. Volunteers work hard to make them happen. Calvert has a solid reputation of voter participation and is politically competitive. The League of Women Voters and leaders like Annette played a key role in those successes. I will always remember how much she loved the local press, too. When she was moderating a candidates' forum, during a break she would always ask members of the press to stand up and be recognized. She would ask the audience to give us some applause. She must have had the audience spellbound because, amazingly, that's just what they did.

To the families of these great individuals, we extend our condolences. They each were important components in the mosaic of a beautiful community and their physical presence will be painfully missed.

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