

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



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## FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS GRANTS FUNDS FOR SPORTS AND SOCCER COMPLEX

**Centreville, MD (April 22, 2008)** – In a unique partnership designed to benefit area youth, the Foundation for Community Partnerships has partnered with the Queen Anne's County Commissioners and the Parks & Recreation Department to convert open farmland into recreation playing fields.

Bloomfield Farm was purchased by the Queen Anne's County Commissioners from the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy in 2005, with funding provided primarily by the National Land and Water Conservation Fund, Maryland Department of Natural Resources Program Open Space (POS). Permanent preservation plans were developed by the Queen Anne's County Department of Parks and Recreation and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, which included the development of a 70 acre active recreational area which will be called White Marsh Park at Bloomfield Farm. The funding for development of this park was provided in both of the fiscal year 2007 and 2008 budgets, with the primary funding source being POS monies. Funding dollars were limited though, and money for the sodding of the proposed soccer/multipurpose fields was not available.

That's when a donor at the Foundation for Community Partnerships stepped in with a plan to raise private funds to sod the soccer and multipurpose field complex. Queenstown residents Les and Linda Buck knew firsthand of the need for more soccer fields in the County. Having been an all-conference soccer player in college, Mr. Buck volunteered as a coach for the Kent Island Youth Soccer League and was surprised to learn that practice space was not always available for his team. He discovered what many coaches and parents have known



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through their own experience: there is a shortage of athletic playing fields and the facilities that exist are overused and, in some cases, in need of repair.

Interested in making a difference, Mr. Buck approached the County with the idea of organizing an investor group to pay the costs of sodding the fields so they could be utilized sooner and for years to come. County Commission President Eric Wargotz was instrumental in coordinating the efforts to move this venture forward and hopes this will serve as a model for other groups to work in partnership with the County to build needed facilities that cannot be paid for with local tax dollars. "I thought it was very forward thinking on the part of the County," said Buck, "particularly in times of strained financial budgets at all levels of government. I hope this project can serve as an example for other groups including sports teams, arts and music organizations and the like, to raise money to develop the facilities we all want in our community."

In just a few months time Mr. Buck pulled together a group of investors which included donors from the Significance Foundation, a private family foundation and the Foundation for Community Partnerships. Queen Anne's County Department of Parks and Recreation has begun construction of these fields with the intention that they will be ready for sod later this summer and ready for play by August, 2008. Parks and Recreation Department officials estimate that more than 2,000 children of all ages will use these fields annually.

Frank Kratovil, Vice President of the Foundation and a soccer, football and basketball coach commented, "With four boys of my own, I know the importance of open space for children to run and play. The Foundation, through a very generous and committed donor, was able to make this possible in a timely fashion and it demonstrates a successful partnership between local agencies and non-profits."

To learn more about the Foundation for Community Partnerships, please call (410) 758-6677 or e-mail Linda Kohler at [linda@creatinglegacies.org](mailto:linda@creatinglegacies.org).