



# MARYLAND MAYORS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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**MMA**  
Helping its members to better serve their municipalities

## Civility

Let us take time to consider **civility** and how we live our lives and interact with others.

By the age of sixteen, George Washington had copied out by hand, *110 Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation* which are based on a set of rules composed by French Jesuits in 1595. Many of those rules today would sound downright silly and outdated, but they represent more than just manners. They are the small sacrifices that we all should be willing to make for the good of all and the sake of living (and working) together.

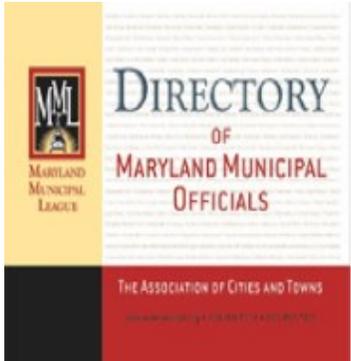
Although we won't list all 110 of The Rules, here are some of the most important ones that we all should consider:

- ◆ Treat everyone with respect.
- ◆ Be considerate of others.
- ◆ Do not embarrass others.
- ◆ When you must give advice or criticism, consider the timing, whether it should be given in public or private, the manner and above all be gentle.
- ◆ Do not correct others when it is not your place to do so.
- ◆ Do not be quick to talk about something when you don't have all the facts.
- ◆ And in Washington's words: 7) Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.

Let's all focus on tolerance toward others rather than focusing on our own self-interests that we find so prevalent today. And remember that **civility is a conscious awareness of the impact of one's thoughts, actions, words and intentions on others.** So do as we've been taught and treat others as we would ourselves like to be treated.

Reprinted from *Cindy R. Unangst*

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## Meet the Mayor

# Jim Eberhardt of Perryville



**2017 MMA WINTER CONFERENCE**

Being Mayor of Perryville is an absolute privilege. I believe my only job is to fulfill, current and future needs of the citizens of the Town. In the role I get to see the worst of the community and the best of the community. When I am approached with a problem by a citizen, (we're not talking Town meetings, we are talking post office, grocery, golf course, etc.) I feel a great satisfaction in being able to help resolve problems. Sometimes it's, "they told me I couldn't do that", or "they said it will take two weeks" and sometimes that's right. But, in some I may also be able to grease bureaucratic normalcy to expedite a problems solution.

A primary issue is economic development. Try as we might with zoning changes and incentives, no development has occurred for several years. That's no commercial, no industrial, no residential...flat. Many economists have said; its location: you can't get into Perryville without paying the State a toll on Rt. 40 and I-95.

Prior to becoming Mayor, I worked as a Civilian Financial Manager for Army Corps. of Engineers. I now teach part time for Graduate School USA in D.C. I believe that many aspects of my job, education, and training did prepare me for many of the Mayor duties. Certainly, preparation and execution of the Town budget; managing people; and speaking to the public. Other aspects such as the need to compromise with a Board; and the need to deal with citizens who passionately oppose what you want to do. There were and continue to be certain aspects that are learned on the job.

I took this job after I had retired from full time employment. I felt it was my time to give back to the community and that I had some skills I might be able to put to use in my home town. I have lived in Perryville most of my life. That means Perryville Elementary, Little League, Perryville Boy Scouts, and Perryville High School. I will mention that as Mayor for more than 12 years, I have never received a penny of salary. I believe what makes the community great is the many, many volunteers who serve to better their community in many different ways. To name a few; fire and ambulance, football, softball, and baseball coaches, scout leaders and faith based leaders all serving at no salary. I, and our Board, are also volunteering helping at something we can bring our abilities to.

On a recent trip to the grocery store I had a young child run up and hug me, the mother immediately came running over to explain to the child that you don't hug strangers. The child said "this is not a stranger, this is the Mayor." The child was familiar with me from events at school, Halloween and Christmas activities but the parent had no idea who I was.

I would love to say that Perryville is utopia but the fact is we probably face all of the issues facing other Towns. We have the crime, we have speeding, we have slowing of economic development, and we have struggled to fund infrastructure. But, we have an outstanding Police Department that aggressively addresses law enforcement issues. We are a river front community with recreational opportunities. We have I-95 access in Town and MARC train service for daily commutes to Baltimore and D.C. We have all levels of schools in Town; High School, Elementary School, Middle School and a parochial school. We have an outstanding volunteer Fire Department and EMS personnel with a hospital just across the river in Harford County.