



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #390

GPCA Newsletter

June 2019

Next Meeting: Monday, September 9, 7:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Wally Lippencott, Baltimore County Department of Planning Northern Sector Coordinator and the 2020 Comprehensive Zoning Map Process.

GPCA General Meetings are held the second Monday of each month, except July & August, at the Granite Presbyterian Church, 10637 Old Court Rd., Woodstock, MD 21163. Everyone is invited to attend.

View our Website at www.gpca.net

Dogwood Road Closures on Quaker Hill

Over the past few weeks, "The Hill" has been closed multiple times due to commercial truck traffic ignoring the weight limits on the Ben's Run bridge as well as the warnings about the 14 percent grade and grossly exceeding the recommended 10 mph speed limit for trucks on the down grade. On May 15, yet another accident closed the hill when a straight box truck tipped over climbing the first curve and fell onto a car. Many residents have expressed their concerns to Baltimore County's highway department and MD Delegate Charles Sydnor of district 44B, where the hill is located. GPCA sent the following message to highways@baltimorecountymd.gov on May 15:

Good afternoon,

Attached is photo of Dogwood Road just west of Hollifield Road, closed again today as a result of a commercial straight truck which could not make the grade, then backed down, became hung up in the ditch then rolled over onto a car. Last week, a tractor trailer was unable to make the grade and the hill was closed until they could disengage. This Monday, a pickup truck with a trailer was hung up here and had to be towed, once again impeding traffic. Just a few weeks ago, a dump truck flipped over the guardrail and caught on fire, again closing the road for several hours.

Delegate Sydnor shared your agency's response to a recent inquiry from a resident regarding this issue:

"Our office has recently upgraded the traffic control devices on Dogwood Rd on the approach to "Quaker Hill". We currently have '14% Grade/10 mph', 'Tractor Trailer Combinations Prohibited', 'Speed Limit 30', and 'Chevron/Curve Warning' signs in place. I ran the accidents over the past 9 years from Wrights Mill Rd down to Hollifield Rd and didn't find any unusual patterns. Overwhelming majority were single vehicle, speed related. Fairly typical for similar type rural roadways in the County. Only 2% were trucks, couple of motorcycle accidents, mostly listed as minor, no fatalities, approx. 4% were snow/ice, no pedestrian related. No additional signing warranted at this time. If the hill/curve is driven at or near the posted 10 mph there should not be a problem."

Is this truly the status quo or are there any other ways this recurrent dilemma can be addressed?

[Continued on Page 3]

What's inside?

President's Message...2 In Our Neighborhood...3 Membership...4 Resources...5 Our Advertisers...6 & 7

President's Message

GPCA board member Maurice Dixon, member Sandy Fallin, and I attended the May meeting of the Chadwick Community Association. Baltimore County Highway Engineer Keith Link addressed traffic calming and long-term solutions for that community's traffic woes resulting from poor planning and the use of Fairbrook Road as a commuter connector between Howard County and Baltimore County and City. This summer, the county will apply striping to Fairbrook Road that will distinguish the parking lane on each side of the road from the travel lanes in the Chadwick community. These actions are expected to slow motorists and reduce the number of impacts with residents' parked vehicles. The long-term solution of extending Security Boulevard to Johnnycake Road is planned pending funding and purchase of right of way from two property owners on Johnnycake Road who propose a 189-unit PUD and a 262-unit townhouse development. Recognizing that GPCA is outside of Chadwick's boundaries but noting we're impacted by many of the same travelers, we requested implementation of right and left turn lanes on Johnnycake at Hollifield Road and on Hollifield at Dogwood Road to provide some relief to the long queues forming at those intersections at peak hours.

Trash, the perpetual anti-resource. What can one person do? Featured in the May 16 edition of *The Jeffersonian* was clean-up activist extraordinaire Jon Merryman, a Catonsville resident. Jon's passion is cleaning local streams and roadways in the Patapsco watershed. Locally, we've enjoyed the result of his efforts along Hollifield, Johnnycake, and Old Frederick Roads. Jon is a one-man clean-up crew and estimates he spends 500 hours per year bagging and staging debris for pick up by county maintenance crews. Wearing his ever-present green safety vest, Jon is a model of diligence in the face of so little regard for his HARD WORK by trash tossing motorists! If you're inspired by Jon Merryman's work and are willing to take to the roadside in a green safety vest, call Baltimore County Public Works at 410-887-3560, and let them know where your collected trash is staged. They will also remove limbs and branches hanging into the roadway.

Hearty congratulations are extended to our own District 10 Delegate, and now Maryland Speaker of the House, Adrienne Jones. The House recognized

what local residents have appreciated about Speaker Jones since 1997. A lifetime Baltimore County resident, she is a thoughtful listener and a persistent and thorough advocate for her district and committees. A rising tide lifts all boats and the moorings of our community as well as those along the Liberty Road corridor will need extending to accommodate that tide!

Ben Brooks is another District 10 Delegate who makes the time for GPCA. Ben attended our May meeting and noted our concerns including the absence of a drive-up mailbox at the Windsor Mill Post Office. Thanks Ben!

Hope you all enjoy the sweet season of summer. In Granite, it is the best!!

Warm regards, Cathy Wolfson

Changes at GPCA Newsletter

For the past 2.5 years, we have enjoyed the donated professional services of editor Reed Hellman. This will be Reed's final issue and we thank him immensely for his editing expertise. He has raised the bar! This will also be the final issue printed by GPCA past president Paul Dorsey who has run off every issue since August 2014. Thanks to Reed and Paul for dedicating so much of your personal time to fulfilling GPCA's mission to keep our residents, not only our members, informed about matters that impact our community. This newsletter is without question the bedrock of GPCA. Your hard work has been greatly appreciated and will be sorely missed.

There is no July issue, but Maribeth Diemer is stepping in as editor beginning with our August issue and Cathy Wolfson has agreed to take on printing. Thankfully, Marty Kelley and her dedicated team of "folders and stickers" are willing to continue that monthly task. It really does take a lot of helpful folks to get this newsletter into your hands!

Dogwood Road Closures on Quaker Hill

[Continued from Front Page]

Given the amount of commuter traffic local residents are exposed to the community has no interest in changing the geometry of Quaker Hill which would certainly result in

even more commercial and through traffic. Sadly this is no longer just a local 2 lane ditched rural road.

Is there any harm that can result from upgrading signage and warnings to larger and more conspicuous devices? Or striping with wide edge lines such as those on Old Frederick Road in Howard County just over the Patapsco River bridge? Those lines are perceived by drivers to reduce the lane width resulting in slower speeds. Anything to capture the attention of what is an epidemic of distracted commercial and passenger vehicle drivers who are clearly ignoring the prescribed warnings.

Here are a few other suggestions from FHWA for your review: https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/horiculture/fhwasal5084/ch4.cfm

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely, Cathy Wolfson, Acting President Greater Patapsco Community Association

No response from the highway department has been received as of this May 20 writing. However, on May 16 a Dogwood Road resident wrote Sydnor's office requesting a meeting between residents and the department and was advised by his aide they would "get back to you" regarding the meeting. On May 18, yet another tractor trailer approaching the hill from Rolling Road found out it was too big to make the hill and too big to turn onto Hollifield, closing the road once again while the State Police sorted things out. We are working to keep the pressure on to address these ongoing closures. Please contact Baltimore County highways at highways@baltimorecountymd.gov or give them a call

In Our Neighborhood

410-
887-
3560.
Who

knows, you may be involved in an incident with a truck on the hill!

GPCA Spring 2019 Roadside Cleanup

A great community spirit was in evidence on the blustery morning of Saturday April 27, when nearly 40 friends and neighbors came out to spruce up our beautiful rural roads. Our crew included:

Old Court Road – our Adopt-A-Highway Road
Patrik Bavoil, Susie and Bob Reisdorf,
Zulma Santiago, Jim Rastrick, Dana Weant,
Bob Teller, Kurt LaLomia

Mardella Run and Offutt Road
Rhoda Jones, Samuel Morant, Harold Ramsey,
Craig Mullins, Reinhard Grzanna,
Chris and Winnie Piper

Hernwood Road
Catherine Guidry, Phil Leibowitz,
Lisa and Steve Leibowitz, Phill Guarino,
Shelley Cohen

Granite Road
John and Marie Cignatta, Arnie and Matthew Gries

Davis Avenue
Sandy Fryer

Dogwood Road
Carl and Cathy Wolfson, Butch Oakman,
Kevin Bonds, Scott Mauk

Our sincere appreciation to those who provided refreshments:

Jean Higgs, Richard and Gail Collins,
Shirley August, Cathy Wolfson, Zulma Santiago

We are grateful for the ongoing support of St. Alphonsus Church for the use of their property in staging such community events.

Thanks also to Cathy Wolfson and Butch Oakman for their early morning public safety efforts in getting the "Be Prepared to Stop" signs out and to F.L. Cooke and Sons of Westminster for provided the sign stands.

We estimate that 45 bags, 9 tires, 20 square yards of carpet and padding, a wide range of car parts and various and sundry other debris were removed from our roadsides. These are the kinds of events that remind me that there are friends nearby to share this beautiful part of the world. Thanks for caring!

[In Our Neighborhood continued Next Page]

[In Our Neighborhood continued]

Special Exception and Variance

Edrich Farms, Inc. has filed a petition for a special exception to permit a landscape business in an RC2 zone, specifically on 1.712 acres of their total 192-acre tract. The exemption was granted on May

8. The site on Old Court Road was formerly used as a produce stand and garden center and is proposed to be offered for lease. No retail sales are permitted.

A request for a variance was filed by Sher Ahmad and Zardana Noori, who purchased the 16.32-acre tract zoned RC6 in the 8300 block of Dogwood Road in January. They requested the variance to permit a dwelling with a setback of 150 feet to the property line of a property that was cultivated or used for pasture land in the last 3 years in lieu of the required 200-foot setback. They are planning a 100 foot by 50 foot residence on the approximately 400 foot wide tract. The neighboring property owner was assured there would be no limitations placed on agricultural practices on his property if the variance was granted and the administrative hearing officer wrote specifically in his opinion, "The adjoining property is in active agricultural use and Petitioners may be subject to noise, odors, fumes, and similar discomforts. Such agricultural operation shall not be considered a public or private nuisance provided it is operated in compliance with federal, state, and/or county requirements." The variance was granted on May 13, 2019.

To see these and other decisions from the county's Administrative Hearing office, visit <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/adminhearings/decisions>

Opportunity Zones

Maryland has a relatively new business investment program, related to the federal 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The program creates investment incentives for "severely (economically) distressed" census tracts in the U.S. and territories. The incentive is a sliding scale of capital gains income tax over 10 years on investments in these designated tracts. An investment held for 7 years gets a 15 percent exclusion, and up to 100 percent for investments held 10 years or longer. The investments must be for creating or expanding business and trade within the designated zones, and can include rental housing as well as manufacturing, retail, hotel, and office activities. More pertinently, "renewable energy" activities in rural areas also qualify. The program is aimed at "developer capital", but does not include any specific requirements or assurances of success or desirability related to where the

project/activity is located. The governor of each state determines the "Opportunity Zones".

Governor Larry Hogan has designated 149 census tracts, including 10 in Baltimore County. Included in these "Zones" are Security Mall, the surrounding area, and an area fanning out from the intersection of Dogwood Road and Rolling Road, extending northwesterly to include the Diamond Ridge Golf Course property and Dogwood Run.

The Maryland Opportunity Zone program has now been legislatively linked per the 2019 General Assembly Session to the Governor's "More Jobs for Marylanders" program, which adds state incentives such as vacant property tax credits to the overall investment inducements. Access more information on the Department of Housing and Community Development website, dhcd.md.gov/ under Opportunity Zones.

Kathy Skullney

GPCA Membership News

As of May 20, GPCA, has 120 renewing members and 13 new members.

Renewing Joint Members: Braxton, Claude and Meredith; Burke, Michael and Family; Jones, Dave and Susan; Kahn, Michael and Cindy; McAllister, Bob and Amy; Merkle, Susan and Arthur; Walden, Dr. Emerson and Nancy

Renewing Single Members: Dixon, Beth; Feidler, Betty; Grant, Anne; Snyder, Charles

The 2019 goal is to have 40 percent of the 1,585 households within the GPCA boundaries as members. The GPCA community has met 8 percent of that goal. Thirteen new households of the 40 new household membership goal have submitted dues. Many thanks to the renewing and new members for your interest in our community.

Library Resources at April Meeting

At our April meeting we welcomed Sarah Smith, Branch Manager at the Randallstown Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library, who brought us up to date about the wide range of services and resources available at the beautiful, renovated Randallstown Library and the other library branches in Baltimore County. Checking out materials is now self-service, enabling librarians to assist with technology and technological materials, as well as the traditional library materials. Programs have kept

pace with current issues and needs. The library provides activities and a noontime meal for children during the summer, teen workshops on video games and drones this summer, and individual and group instruction in technology year round. Anyone with a device, such as a phone or tablet, or technological issue, can ask a librarian or make an hour-long appointment for individual help. The library continues to prepare children for school, provide after school snacks during the school year, and connect patrons with community resources. The Randallstown Library even provided a prom closet for high schoolers this spring.

Library services have embraced computers and technology. Chromebooks and portable DVD players can be checked out. Group instruction covers needs like resumes. Free Wi-Fi and public computers are available at all branches. Printing can be done from library computers or from your laptop. Three D printing is available at Randallstown, three branches have passport services, and a Lawyer in the Library service provides legal advice. Telescope kits are available at Catonsville, science kits at Woodlawn, and nature kits at Reisterstown. Brainfest is available from 2:00 PM until midnight, 7 days a week, for tutoring for all ages. Multiple digital collections such as Overdrive, Libby, Lynda, Cloud Library, and Kanopy provide feature films, documentaries, and professional and personal development. Renovations at Randallstown Library cost 1.3 million dollars and feature an enclosed children's area and a dedicated enclosed teen area. Many thanks to Ms. Sarah Smith for this informative and helpful presentation.

Denise Maranto

In Patapsco Valley State Park

Enjoy a Patapsco Valley summer at our local state park. Unless otherwise noted, events are held rain or shine, free and fun for all ages; donations are always welcome. Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Dress for the weather/activity, wear sunscreen and insect repellent, bring plenty of water and snacks, and remember to check for ticks.

Please call 410-461-5005 for additional information or to register.



Patapsco Valley staff also manages Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area.

June 1: History of Orange Grove Hike & Learn, Salamander Quest, Water Canaries, Solar Viewing, The Incredible Journey, Stargazing

June 2: Secrets of Wildflowers, Storytelling

June 5: Water Wonder Wednesday

June 8 & 9: If Trees Could Talk

June 12: History of Orange Grove Hike & Learn

June 14: Wildflowers Jelly and other Edibles

June 16: Invasive Species Task Force, Pups in the Park, Storytelling, Fly a Kite with Dad

June 22-23: Great American Campout

June 23: Grandparent & Me Fishing

June 25: Painting Nature

June 27: History of Avalon Hike & Learn

Annual State Parks & Trails Passport Available

\$75 for Marylanders; \$100 for out-of-state visitors

Our annual State Parks & Trails Passport grants unlimited day-use admission and boat launching at state parks, and a 10 percent discount on state-operated concessions and boat rentals.

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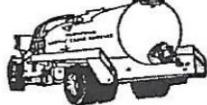
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YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE:

- Eid begins at sundown – June 4, 2019
- Flag Day – June 14
- Father’s Day – June 16
- Summer Solstice – June 21

GPCA Membership Application
We Need Your Voice!

Please Print:

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Yearly membership dues:
Joint - \$30 Individual - \$20

___ I’m new in the community or ___ Renewal

Mail completed application and check to:
GPCA, PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

GPCA Officers and Board of Directors

President: Open
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GPCA ADVERTISING/ARTICLE/LETTER POLICY

GPCA reserves the right to accept, edit, or refuse advertising.

To place an ad: Send the ad copy by email as a **pdf attachment to the Treasurer and Editor by the 20th of the month prior to publishing. Include information on the size desired.**

Payments for ads: Make check payable to GPCA and send to GPCA, P.O. Box 31, Woodstock, MD 21163 **prior to publication deadline.** Checks must indicate ad size and months to be published. **No payment received = no ad placement.**

Rates and ad sizes: 1/8 page = \$15; 1/4 page = \$30; 1/2 page = \$50; full page = \$80. Personal ads up to one column inch = \$3 for GPCA members and \$5 for non-members. Ads should avoid excessive dark areas that do not copy well. Hard copy ads appear in black and white.

For articles and letters: Submissions to the newsletter become the property of GPCA unless otherwise agreed upon. Deadline for these is the 20th of the month previous to publication. The submission of any ad or article to the GPCA means you agree GPCA reserves the rights to accept, reject, edit, or hold submission for a future newsletter.