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GPCA
GREATER PATAPSCO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Issue #451 **GPCA Newsletter** **November 2025**

VETERANS' DAY
We honor all Veterans on their special day.
Thank you for your service!

GPCA General Meeting
Monday November 10, 2025, 7:00 pm

Social Hall, Granite Presbyterian Church
10637 Old Court Road

Guest Speaker:

Jessie Thomas-Blate
American Rivers
Topic: Daniels Dam

Upcoming Meetings and Events:
December 8– GPCA Holiday Celebration!
January 13, 2025 – Elections

Please come join us

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President's Note

President’s Note – October 2025

As we enter November, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the incredible momentum we've built together this fall. From legislative insights to local history, our recent meetings have been a testament to the power of community — informed, engaged, and always striving to grow stronger.

Last month, we had the pleasure of hearing from Betty Stewart of the Diggs Johnson Museum, whose research on the deep historical roots of our area left a lasting impression. In September, Senator Ben Brooks provided us with an honest and thoughtful update on Maryland's energy challenges and legislative priorities. I'm proud that our meetings continue to be a space where meaningful conversations take place and where community voices are both heard and valued.

As we approach the holiday season, I encourage everyone to stay connected — whether through our meetings, our growing online presence, or the simple act of checking in on a neighbor. GPCA remains committed to preserving what makes our community special while addressing the changes and opportunities ahead.

Thank you for showing up, speaking out, and working together. Your involvement is what keeps this community vibrant. I'm truly grateful to serve as your president and to walk this path with so many dedicated individuals.

We may be small, but we are mighty.
Warmly,
Chris Brock
President, Greater Patapsco Community Association (GPCA)

chris_brock@ymail.com

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The Future of Daniel's Dam

Overview
An ongoing study is examining the future of Daniel's Dam. Although the dam is located in Howard County, this issue has a direct impact on residents in the GPCA area. The GPCA area borders the Patapsco River for several miles, stretching from the Alberton trailhead to the Woodstock rail

crossing.

Current State of the River

The present condition of the river is largely shaped by Daniel's Dam. The dam plays a significant role in supporting recreational activities, including canoeing, stand-up paddling, and fishing.

Challenges and Considerations

However, Daniel's Dam is aging and will soon require expensive repairs. The owner of the dam, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, has recognized these challenges. In response, they have partnered with American Rivers and NOAA to conduct a feasibility study on the possible removal of the dam. Benefits of removing the dam include restored fish passage: The dam is the last major barrier to fish passage on the main branch of the Patapsco River. Removal would open up over 65 miles of spawning habitat for river herring and American shad.

Community Involvement

To ensure the community is informed and involved, we have invited a guest speaker from American Rivers to our upcoming monthly meeting. The **meeting will be held on Monday November 10th at 7:00 PM at Granite Presbyterian Church.** We encourage all interested residents to attend, learn about the study, ask questions, and share their concerns.

How to Participate

For more information, please use the provided links. You are also invited to complete the community survey, which asks for your input on whether you are in favor of or against removing the dam. Your opinion is important —let your voice be heard!

DANIELS DAM FEASIBILITY STUDY
Community Input on Daniels Dam

~ Gabriela Summerer-Herndon

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Last Month's Meeting
October 13, 2025

Speaker: Ms. Betty Stewart,
President of the Diggs-Johnson Museum

At our October General Meeting, we were honored to welcome Betty Stewart from the Diggs Johnson Museum, who shared a powerful and informative presentation about the museum's origins and historical significance.

Betty explained that the museum was originally a church, attended by many enslaved individuals from the Worthington plantation. Her research highlights the importance of understanding not just the building itself, but the people who once worshiped there and the community they built. She also discussed her broader efforts to locate historical sites and cemeteries throughout the county, emphasizing the need to preserve and accurately share the stories of African American families who shaped the region.

Her commitment to honoring this legacy was deeply moving and offered attendees a meaningful connection to our local history.

Today the museum houses the original worship space and small offices, but does not have regular hours. It is a testament to the history of Granite's African American past. Miss Stewart is always interested in learning more about that history. Please share your story with her at bruthstew@verizon.net.

Photos: Ms. Betty Stewart with GPCA President Chris Brock and with Pam Brock at the October 2025 meeting

September Guest Speaker Summary: Senator Benjamin T. Brooks, Sr.

At our September General Meeting, we were honored to welcome Senator Benjamin T. Brooks, Sr., who provided an insightful overview of the 2025 Maryland legislative session and discussed key issues impacting both the state and our local communities.

Senator Brooks addressed two major challenges Maryland is currently facing — a $3.3 billion budget deficit and an energy crisis driven by rising utility rates and increased demand from data centers. He explained the role of the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland Interconnection (PJM), the regional transmission organization responsible for energy distribution, and discussed how these factors contribute to higher costs for consumers.

The Senator also highlighted several legislative efforts aimed at addressing the state's energy and fiscal challenges, including initiatives to expand battery storage, promote renewable energy, and explore the potential of small modular and micro nuclear reactors to support Maryland's growing energy needs.

In addition, Senator Brooks shared updates on other legislative actions, including bills related to veterans' benefits, economic development, and state revenue stability. His presentation provided valuable context for understanding the balance between sustainability, affordability, and innovation in Maryland's energy future.

The GPCA extends our sincere thanks to Senator Brooks for his continued

partnership and his ongoing support of the Granite and Woodstock communities.

Speaker: Delegate N Scott Phillips

Delegate N Scott Phillips, a Democratic member of the Maryland House of Delegates representing District 10, attended our September meeting to provide an update on several important community matters. Delegate Phillips is known for his focus on juvenile and justice issues, and his contributions continue to impact our district.

Traffic Cameras and Speeding Fines
Delegate Phillips announced that more traffic cameras will be installed, and there will be steeper fines for speeding. This initiative will primarily affect the beltway and surrounding access roads. The decision comes in response to ongoing fatalities among highway workers, as well as increased speeding in neighborhoods leading to the beltway. These measures aim to improve safety for both workers and residents.

Woodstock Job Corps
As most of us know by now the Woodstock Job Corps site has been closed. The program was not meeting metrics established by US Department of Labor. Delegate Jennifer White-Holland reported that all students have been transferred to other facilities to finish their education.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Labor holds the lease for the site until July 2026 and remains responsible for its upkeep, maintenance, and security. Among their commitments is repairing the facility's boiler. Delegate N Scott Phillips will follow up with the Department of Labor in December to ensure that these repairs are completed.

The Woodstock Job Corps site includes a 90-bed dormitory building. Of the total property, 60 acres are owned by the Maryland Department of General Services, while the remaining 600 acres are under the jurisdiction of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Community Involvement
The GPCA Board will reach out to the Secretary to confirm that the site is being properly maintained and does not fall into disrepair, as this is a concern for the entire community. Residents are encouraged to contact

the GPCA if they have any issues or concerns related to the condition of the buildings or grounds. Baltimore County Executive Katherine A. Klausmeier is also actively involved in addressing the future of the site.

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A Message from the Baltimore County Department of Planning

As part of our continued commitment to keeping you informed about local planning activities, the Baltimore County Department of Planning urges you to visit the Zoning and Development Hearings page to stay informed about upcoming hearings that may impact your community. Please note this calendar is updated multiple times a month. These hearings provide important opportunities to understand proposed changes, share your input, and represent the interests of your neighborhoods.

If you plan to participate in a hearing, please note the following: ·

- All interested persons can attend a virtual hearing using the case link in the calendar. You will be required to register with your name, email, phone number and case ID number.
- **Submitting Exhibits:** Send exhibits to administrativehearings@baltimorecountymd.gov Each exhibit must be individually numbered and accompanied by a list that includes the case number, exhibit number, and a brief description.
- **Mail or Drop-off:** Office of Administrative Hearings Jefferson Building 105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 103 Towson, Maryland 21204
- **Requesting In-Person Hearings:** Please call the Office of Administrative Hearings at 410-887-3868, ext. 0.

Your engagement helps ensure that community voices are heard in the decision-making process. Please take a moment to review the schedule and share with your networks as appropriate. Thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to Baltimore County communities.

This message is shared for informational purposes and does not reflect any endorsement or opposition to the cases mentioned. We remain committed to transparent engagement and encourage community participation in the public planning process.

Yolanda Gregory
District 4 Community Planner
Baltimore County Department of Planning
Community Planning Division
Jefferson Building
105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 101
Towson, Maryland 21204
P: 410.887.3480 ext. 7939

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GPCA Holiday Party!

Join us on December 8 at 7:00 PM at Granite Presbyterian Church for the annual GPCA Holiday Party. Everyone is welcome; membership is not required to attend. Joyful music will be provided by saxophonist Dominique Johnson of Devine Sounds, and our State Senator Ben Brooks will be bringing the turkey.

We will provide the refreshments, and we invite you to bring your holiday cheer!

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Election of GPCA Officers and Directors

Do you drive through the GPCA area and notice things? Like trash on the road, a dangerous intersection, relentless speeding or an event that you think is worth supporting? Do you think to yourself, “somebody should do something about this”? Well, guess what, that somebody is YOU. And we

have just the opportunity for you to get involved.

GPCA elections are in January. We are looking for people who notice things and want to get involved. Considering that your house may be your most valuable possession and the value of your house is directly connected to the state of the neighborhood it is in, it makes sense to put your limited free time towards a cause that helps preserve the tranquility and beauty of our community.
We urgently need a candidate for the board of directors. The term is for three years, but if it turns out this is too long for you, you may resign earlier. To be eligible you need to be a member of the GCPA for the last six months and you must have paid your dues.

If all this sounds too daunting, then please at least join us for our monthly meeting at the Granite Presbyterian Church on the 2nd Monday of each month and get an idea of what we do. If you are ready to become a director, please email me at gpcagsh@gmail.net.
Thank you!

~ Gabriela Summerer-Herndon, Director of the Board and Election Committee

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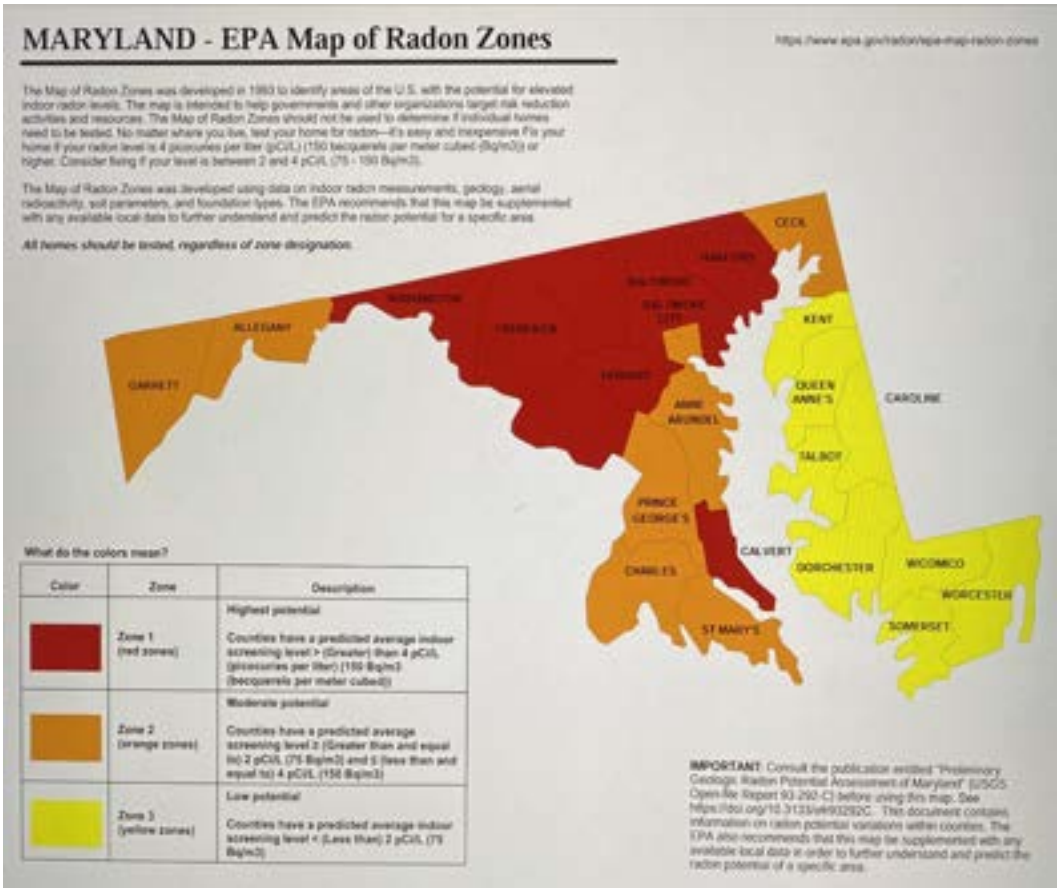
Message From The Small Watershed Conservation Committee...

Understanding Radon in Baltimore County



What Is Radon?

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that forms from the decay of uranium found in soil and rocks. This invisible, odorless gas can seep into homes from the ground, often accumulating indoors without occupants being aware. The primary entry points for radon into a house include cracks in the foundation, dirt floors, pores in block walls, floor drains, and sumps. While it typically enters through basements or lower floors, radon can circulate throughout the entire home.

Radon Levels in Baltimore County

In Baltimore County, the average radon reading is greater than 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter of air). *A map showing radon levels in Baltimore County and counties throughout the State of Maryland is shown above.* The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends mitigation for any home or building in Maryland with radon levels at or above 4.0 pCi/L. The World Health Organization (WHO) advises taking action at an even lower threshold, recommending mitigation for concentrations at or above 2.7 pCi/L. It's important to note that radon levels can vary significantly, even among neighboring houses. These differences are mostly due to variations in the ease with which radon can enter individual homes and the amount of radon present in the ground beneath them.

Why You Should Test for Radon?

Testing for radon is crucial because exposure to elevated radon levels poses significant health risks. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, affecting even non-smokers. For reference, a radon level of 4.0 pCi/L is roughly equivalent to the risk of smoking eight cigarettes a day, while a level of 8.0 pCi/L—levels that have been recorded in areas such as Granite—is comparable to smoking a pack of cigarettes daily. In addition to lung cancer, high radon exposure may cause respiratory issues such as chronic cough and difficulty breathing, and it may increase the risk of other types of cancer.

To determine the radon concentration in your home, you can purchase a radon testing kit for as little as $10 at hardware stores like Home Depot. It is recommended to test both your main floor and the basement if it is finished and frequently used. Since radon levels can fluctuate, testing is the only way to know if your home is safe.

How to Reduce Radon Levels

If your test reveals high radon levels, there are companies that specialize in radon mitigation. Some homeowners have successfully reduced their radon levels themselves for as little as $100. More complex situations may require installing a fan system that removes air from beneath your home, which often requires hiring a contractor. The **U.S. EPA Radon Hotline (1-800-767-7236)** offers advice and information on reducing radon levels. While professional mitigation by a contractor can cost $1,000 or more, investing in mitigation is well worth it for the health and safety of you and your family.

An example of a radon mitigation system as viewed from the outside of the home is shown in the above picture.

~ Laurie Donnelly
GPCA Small Watershed Conservation Committee

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PHG's Partner Profile: Under Armour

Patapsco Heritage Greenway's work is made possible by our volunteers. Whether they are out monthly on the river collecting sample data or helping out at a trash cleanup once or twice a year, we greatly value them all. This month, we want to highlight one of our many dedicated volunteer groups: the Green Team from Under Armour!

In May 2024, Under Armour helped plant over 85 trees with us at the Avalon Area of Patapsco Valley State Park. Together, we created an agroforestry plot of native fruit and nut-bearing trees that draws on indigenous planting practices and offers a free edible food forest for the public to enjoy. Under Armour's Green Team have returned every fall and spring since the planting to help us maintain these trees and ensure they are growing strong. On October 23rd of this year, we were able to clear away lots of invasives crowding our trees and taste Red Chokeberries!

We have partnered with Under Armour to deliver presentations about PHG's work and Patapsco Valley watershed issues during their regular Lunch and Learn sessions at their headquarters. Under Armour has also supported our Groups Program, which is the partnership of PHG and Manor Hill Tavern to offer a private social to volunteer groups after their stewardship work. Our volunteer groups that partake in these socials enjoy a private hour in Manor Hill's Beer Garden with pizzas, beers, and the wonderful company of their colleagues. Under Armour was our first participant in this program and we are thrilled to have seen it grow over the past two years. If you are involved with a local group or company that is interested in group stewardship events, please email community@patapsco.org or visit our "Partner with PHG" page for more information.

We are so grateful for Under Armour's continued support of our trees at the Avalon area and our other environmental programs. We look forward to more events with their team in the Patapsco Valley and hope to see you out there soon too!

~ Aaron Shapiro
PHG Executive Director

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Granite Historical Society

November 18th GHS Speaker Series

The latest Speaker Series presentation sponsored by The Granite Historical Society is scheduled for the evening of November 18th at 7PM in the Granite Presbyterian Church social hall. John Brantley will be the speaker. The topic will be "The Era of Sandlot and Semi-Professional Baseball in Granite". It's likely that most current residents are unaware that high-level amateur and semi-professional ball ever graced the grounds of Granite. John's talk should prove enlightening.

November 16th GHS History Hike

The Granite Historical Society Fall History Hike is tentatively planned for Sunday November 16th. The destination will be one of the smaller, forgotten granite quarries along Hernwood Rd. Plans currently are to meet at the Granite Church parking lot at 1PM and then consolidate into a few cars for a short drive to our parking destination.

Be advised that plans for this hike are tentative at the time of the GPCA newsletter publication. You should register your interest in attending by contacting the GHS website at www.graitehistoricalsociety.org or by emailing our Treasurer, John Brantley, at treasurer@granitehistoricalsociety.org. You will then be contacted once plans are finalized.

~ John Brantley
Granite Historical Society

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Wreaths Across America at Granite Presbyterian Church

Remember the Fallen. Honor Those who Served

Saturday December 13, 2025

Where:10637 Old Court Road, Woodstock, MD, Maryland 21163

Please arrive no later than 11:30. A ceremony honoring veterans laid to rest at the cemetery will begin promptly at noon
Information on Facebook at: Wreaths Across America at Granite Presbyterian Church

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Know Someone New to the Community?

Please share this newsletter and let them know they can sign up for their own free subscription at gpca.net No membership required. Thanks to all of you who have joined GPCA this year. Membership is open year-round and you can join anytime at gpca.net or just use this QR code

Not sure if you joined, or if your membership is up to date? Just contact me, Cathy Wolfson Treasurer / Membership Chair at gpca.treasurer@gmail.com and I'll be glad to let you know!

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Around The Neighborhood

Granite Historical Society Fall Hike--Tentatively planned for Sunday November 16th. The destination will be one of the smaller granite quarries along Hernwood Rd. Meet at GPC Parking lot at 1PM.

Advent Festival of Lessons & Carols
St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Church
Friday December 5, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Gingerbread House Decorating! Lots of Fun!
Granite Presbyterian Church Social Hall
Sunday December 7, 2025 at 11:30 AM
Information on Facebook at Gingerbread House Decorating

Woodlawn Police, Woodlawn Precinct
For latest Precinct news and information, visit:
www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/police/community/precincts/2-woodlaw

Randallstown NAACP – Dr. Tekemia Dorsey was recently appointed president of Randallstown NAACP Branch 7032B. New officers have also been installed. (See https://randnaacp.org/ for latest updates)

What's happening in your HOA? What's going on around the neighborhood, along the roads or near you?

Let your community know!

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ADVENT
Festival of Lessons & Carols
December 5 | 2025 | 7PM
MUSICIANS OF ST. ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ AND GRANITE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES
A BEAUTIFUL, REFLECTIVE EVENING OF MUSIC AND SCRIPTURE
TO ENTER INTO THE TRUE MEANING OF THE SEASON!
FREE WILL OFFERING | RECEPTION AND FELLOWSHIP TO FOLLOW
ST. ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ CHURCH
10800 OLD COURT RD. | WOODSTOCK
WWW.STALCHURCH.ORG

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Knights of Columbus

18th Annual Bull & Oyster Roast

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council #13294
St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Parish, 10800 Old Court Rd, 21163

November 15, 2025
5:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Catered by Monaghan's

$65 per person or Table of 8 for $480

Purchase tickets:
Go to http://www.kofc13294.org/fundraiser.html
Or contact Ed Pelsinsky (410) 313-8808 or epelsinsky1@verizon.net
Or Chris Jermann cjermann@verizon.net

Music & Dancing **Games of Chance & Door Prizes**

Menu includes Top Round of Beef , Turkey Breast, and Ham from the Pit: Oysters from the Raw Bar; Hand-breaded Fried Oysters, Maryland Crab Soup, Pulled-pork BBQ, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy,
Fresh Green Beans, Coleslaw, Garden Salad, Macaroni with Shrimp Salad, Potato Salad from the Buffet, with Sheet Cake for Dessert. Drinks include Ice Cold Draft Beer, Non-Alcoholic Beer, Wine, Soda, and Coffee.

Proceeds benefit St. Alphonsus Parish, Lazarus Homeless Shelter, Fr. Kongari's Missions and Scholarships, Columbia Pregnancy Center, as well as our many other charities.

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