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GREATER PATAPSCO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC

Issue # 424

GPCA Newsletter

February 2023



GPCA General Meeting
Monday, February 13, 7:00 PM
@

Social Hall, Granite Presbyterian Church
10637 Old Court Road

How to Plant a Pollinator Garden, Q & A

Speakers: **Betty Walke**, Baltimore City Master Gardener

Peggy Cummings, Baltimore City Master Gardener

Designing a pollinator garden doesn't have to be a daunting task! Betty and Peggy will show you how to create a habitat for protecting and providing pollinators and beneficial insects what they need not just in the summer but all year round.

.....
Upcoming Speakers

March - Baltimore County Code Enforcement – How it works in and for the local Community

April - Make Your Own Fruit Wine – Ken Jordan

May - Western District and 4th District Planning Department – overview and CZ MP/ Daphne Daly, Western District Lead Planner and Joe Wiley,

4th District Planner

To be scheduled -Digital, Electronic, Virtual, and all things technical –
How To Manage!

.....

From Last General Meeting

Guest Speaker **Ashleigh Knox, the Co-Owner of [Hexed Honey](#)** gave an informative and fascinating presentation on the challenges producing high grade local honey. Bees in general are threatened by pesticides and lack of sufficient native sources to pollinate. Bees are in decline due to diseases and parasites. Members are encouraged to provide native plants such as Joe-pye weed, bee balm, iron weed and goldenrod. They are further threatened by the stress experienced when trucked in massive quantities around the country to pollinate industrial agriculture operations ranging from Maine blueberries to California almonds.

Ashleigh's presentation can be found on the [GPCA website](#)



GPCA's Annual Community Clean-Up

A Win-Win Community Event

Saturday April 1st, 2023

8 am to 12 noon

St. Alphonsus Church

parking lot

- 4 dumpsters will be on site for your spring cleaning use
- Join with friends and neighbors for our annual roadside clean-up
- GPCA will provide safety vests and trash bags
- 4 dumpsters will be on site for your spring cleaning use
(you will be responsible for unloading your own household trash)

Remember

- no hazardous or flammable materials, no paints or oil, no fridges or air conditioners
- no electronics (computer equipment, TVs, phones etc.)
- no brush/yard waste (recycled separately by the county)

- tires will be collected at the pull out on Old Court Road

- Remember to return your safety vest for proper laundering and reuse!
(Certificates available for students needing service hours.)

Be sure to wear your GPCA t-shirts!

Thanks for your support,

~ **Carol Link,**

GPCA Clean Up Coordinator

443-554-0306 linkgang87@gmail.com

Greater Patapsco Community Association 2023 Slate of Officers and Directors Election Result

- President – Kathy Skullney
- Vice President – Butch Oakman
- Treasurer – Cathy Wolfson
- Secretary – **Vacant**
- Director – Ralph Wright, 3 year term ends 2026
- Director - Zulma Santiago to serve the remaining 2 years of the term vacated by Butch Oakman ending January 2025



THANKS, MAURICE!

Maurice Dixon was a well reasoned and rational voice on the GPCA board and demonstrated great flexibility as GPCA navigated virtual meetings and participated in “hands off” testimony and hearings with our county agencies throughout the pandemic. They were trying times, but Maurice showed up and fulfilled his commitment to GPCA. We are grateful to Maurice for helping us steer into 2023 intact and better prepared to engage with our objectives regardless of the format!

~ **Cathy Wolfson, Past President**

From the Editors' Desk



Our community is buzzing with energy! You will find out in this Newsletter about the many activities and events happening in the coming months. These events not only offer opportunities for social interactions; the proceeds also benefit local charities. We hope that you will come out and support these events. We love to see new faces! You can also now find all these new events and much more on the [GPCA website](#).

Our gardens will soon start to warm up from the deep winter freeze we had during Christmas and late January. Just like the roots will soon start sending nutrients upward, getting ready to awaken the dormant buds into new growth and blossoms, GPCA has also had a burst of new energy with a slate of newly elected officers. Renewed leadership means many new ideas and projects. You can learn about these new activities and topics by attending the monthly GPCA general meetings this year. Everyone is invited! I hope to see you at our next General meeting when two Master Gardeners from the Baltimore City Master Gardeners Program will show us how to start a pollinator garden. As for now, I cannot wait for Spring to come so we can bask in Nature's glory watching the trees bursting with color and life again.

Happy Valentine's Day!

~ Ru-ching Hsia

President's Note



2023 Greetings fellow Members, Friends and Neighbors. As always, we are off to a busy and important new year. First of all, we offer our expressions of appreciation to our outgoing officers and board members, and to those continuing to serve. On that note – we truly are in need of and seeking someone for our Secretary position. This is a low key, but essential position for taking meeting notes, both for general and board meetings, for handling the attendance roster, and similar record keeping functions. It's a great way to be part of GPCA's commitment to our unique and beautiful community. Just let us know!

One of the most important efforts of the new year, and now underway, is 2023 GPCA Membership. If you are, or have been a member, now is the time to [RENEW](#). If you have not been a member, now is time to [JOIN US](#). It is easy, convenient, and important for our future. As you read this,

Membership letters are being mailed to all our residents via every mailbox within our boundaries. The enclosed form is simple and a return envelope is included. And of course, online renewal and joining is always available at www.gpca.net.

This year we will be involved in finalizing our Community Plan Update, to be part of the final 2030 Master Plan, both of which further our preservation and enhancement goals. We also will be attuned to the 2024 Comprehensive Zoning Map Process, which commences in September and sets the legal uses for properties for the next four years. In addition, there are important issues in the larger 4th District which impact us as well, such as significant improvement for our local schools and revitalization of adjoining local business areas.

One last important note – we are working on being able to have combined in-person and virtual meetings. The more ways we can all get together, the better! We hope to have this in place for our March meeting.

We are all part of the same community and we look forward to a very good year.

~ Kathy Skullney, GPCA President

443-838-0861

ksskullney@verizon.net



About Our Neighborhood

**Update on Baltimore County's Proposed
Solar Facility at Hernwood Landfill**



You may recall in 2021 County Executive Olszewski announced that portions of the former Parkton and Hernwood Landfills would be dedicated to solar power facilities to generate up to 35% the energy consumed by the county's buildings and facilities. Of the total 32.13 MegaWatt capacity, 75% would be generated by our Hernwood site. The projects were expected to be fully operational in 2023. The Parkton facility is on track but our Hernwood site has hit a snag. It has been determined that the existing electric infrastructure (aka wires) on Hernwood Road lacks the capacity to deliver the power generated by the facility. Negotiations are underway to route the power through Bluegrass Materials Company quarry (formerly LaFarge, formerly Genstar, formerly Cambell's) to tie into those lines which while not sufficient at this time to carry 32.13 MW of electricity, exceed those on Hernwood Road. Short story, the Hernwood site won't be reducing our county's reliance on fossil fuel this year! Stay tuned.

~ Cathy Wolfson



Ridge Road Update

The remarkable saga of blatant code violations continues at this property. On 12/20/22, the day after the second \$10,000 fine for unpermitted uses became final, a second construction inspection resulted in another complaint, being listed as "12/20/2022, 2ND COMPL - BUILDING AN ADDITION WITH ELEC GOING TO TELEPHONE POLE /CP***". No disposition of this complaint is yet listed. A subsequent inspection generated yet another citation for unpermitted uses, stating: "1/11/23: This property seems to be a chop shop – there are car parts and engine parts all over, but they operate mainly at night bc they know wer (sic) usually aren't out at night. They made a burning pit of sorts to burn (sic) all the plastic parts of the vehicles that they can't use or sell." A hearing date of 3/14/2023 was listed. Additional remedies may include the County restoring the property with costs operating as a lien with the right of tax sale.

~ Kathy Skullney

Plastic Bags Ban



After much discussion and numerous amendments, the Baltimore County Council has adopted a ban on retail plastic bags in the County, effective as of November 1, 2023. There will be a 5 cent per bag charge for customers without their own bags. GPCA has supported the ban, given the impact of such bags in our community. The text of the new law may be found [HERE](#) under passed legislation.

~ Kathy Skullney



Randallstown – Liberty Road Revitalization

The Randallstown branch of the NAACP has a task force on revitalization that released a report focusing on improvements along the Liberty Road corridor from the Baltimore City line to the Carroll County line. The plan includes turning open space into a city-county park; making much-needed improvements to the Gwynn Oak Post Office, which the group said hasn't had major renovations in 70 years; transforming the Liberty Court Shopping Center into the Randallstown Town Center with commercial development, homes and high-end apartments; and bringing in grocery stores.

The report can be found [HERE](#)

~ Kathy Skullney



Legislative Update from Senator Benjamin Brooks

We are off and running in Annapolis. I am spearheading many legislative initiatives brought to me by my constituents, District 10 small businesses, community activists, and grassroots organizations. With 5 bill hearings completed, I am happy to report that 2 have already passed out of committee. One of these measures seeks to streamline the process for Veterans to secure a property tax credit and the other assists the trades by addressing the licensing requirements necessary to secure a HVACR journeyman's license in Maryland. Other initiatives I am working on include measures aimed at reducing our carbon footprint and providing a tax credit for upgrading one's home to the Passive Home Standards. A bill incentivizing the improvement of indoor air quality in residences and small businesses was also introduced. For a complete list of my legislation, you

can visit [my_page_on_the_MGA_Website](#) . If you are interested in providing written or oral testimony on any of these measures, please contact my Chief of Staff, [Kimberly Shiloh](#),

~ Benjamin Brooks

! STAY TUNED!

Woodstock Job Corp is restarting its Community Outreach programs and GPCA looks forward to participating.

! IMPORTANT NOTE!

Many of us are receiving mail from companies related to wind and solar power access as alternative sources for electricity, and referencing BG&E. Such communications may be characterized as seeking “authorization” and asking you to simply sign and return a form. Be very sure you understand whatever the requested form is and that you actually want whatever is being offered before you sign! The form may be a binding contract which you may not be able to withdraw from without cost beyond three days after you sign.

~ Kathy Skullney

Small Watershed Conservation Committee



Salt-wise

Winter is the season of salt. Many of us use salt (NaCl) to make our outdoor paved surfaces safer. Residents, state and local governments, property managers, and private contractors all use salt to ensure public safety during a winter weather event. There are no current guidelines for salt application in Baltimore County or in the State of Maryland.

The salt we apply makes its way from road and driveway surfaces into

streams. Salt collects in surface reservoirs and groundwater. Data presented by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), indicates that between 1992 and 2022, the concentration of salt in the Patuxent Reservoir has increased 260%, in the Potomac River the concentration of salt has increased 200%. In Central Maryland, a study conducted by Kyle Hurley of Towson University demonstrates that there has been a doubling of salt concentrations in the tributaries of Liberty, Prettyboy, and Loch Raven reservoirs since 1980. While all levels are below EPA levels for chronic exposure, the trend is concerning. A conclusion from the study is that there is increased use of salt per unit road surface.

Why should we be concerned about increasing concentrations of salt in our surface water, reservoir storage, and groundwater? Once salt is released into the environment, it is difficult to remove. The use of salt is necessary for public safety, but trends indicate over application. Overuse of salt in the environment has four major impacts.

1. Public Health: Hypertension

Salt concentrations are rising in surface and groundwater supplies

Salt in drinking water affects people with salt-restricted diets.

2. Wildlife

Increased salt concentrations stresses freshwater benthic macroinvertebrates, and fish.

3. Infrastructure

Salt damages public and private infrastructure including bridges, roads, cars, and stormwater facilities.

4. Freshwater salinization syndrome

Increased chloride from salt impacts water chemistry encouraging the release of harmful metals among other chemical into the streams and groundwater.²

What are recommendations for salt-wise use during a winter event?

- Start early. Clear pavement and driveway before snow turns to ice.
- Use less salt. If you must use salt, a 12 oz mug holds enough salt for a 20 foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares.
- Sweep and Reuse. Keep unneeded salt out of our waterways by sweeping and collecting salt for reuse.

Below are some extra readings if you would like to learn more:

[Chloride, Salinity and Dissolved Solids: Common Water Problem.](#)
[The Impacts of Freshwater Salinization Syndrome.](#)

~ Judy Plaskowitz

Download pdf of Salt-Wise article

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Community Events



**Shrove Tuesday
Pancake supper
and Jazz
Vespers**

@

Social Hall

As part of the GHS Bi-Monthly Speaker Series, John Brantley will speak on the “Civil War in Granite” at **7PM on the evening of February 28th** at Granite Presbyterian Church. His talk will focus on the Union Army occupation of the Patapsco River Valley, JEB Stuart’s cavalry operations in the valley, the war’s consequence for Granite’s slaveholding families and pay tribute to the 30 young men from Granite and Woodstock who fought on both the blue and the gray sides. You might also be surprised to learn that two of Granite’s most prominent residents were held as “political prisoners” during the war. Everyone is invited to attend. Please contact the GHS ahead of time at john.ghs@fullduplex.com in order to receive a pdf file of background material for the event.



St. Patrick's Day **Celebration**



Saturday, March 18, 2023

5:30pm—8:30pm

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Church Hall

10800 Old Court Rd, Woodstock, MD

Cost: \$25 per Adult or \$60 per Family with children under 18

Includes:

Corned Beef Dinner w/Dessert, Light Snacks, Drinks

Games of Chance *50/50* *Game wheels*

Music by DJ

Tickets:

Byron Arnold byron.arnold@adesigngroup.com 443-745-0115

Chris Jermann cjermann@verizon.net

Walt Chahanovich wbchahanovich@yahoo.com

Sponsored by the St. Alphonsus Knights of Columbus



Net proceeds go towards charities supported by
this council including Lazarus Caucus, a men's
homeless shelter in Catonsville, MD





Baltimore County Budget Town Hall – District 4

When: Wed. Mar 22, 2023 6:30pm - 7:00pm

Location: Randallstown Community Center, 3505 Resource Dr,
Randallstown, MD 21133

Detail: The Community Cabinet Open House begins at 6:00 p.m. and the
Town Hall will begin at 6:30 p.m.

These events will be held in-person and will be livestreamed on Baltimore
County Government's [YouTube](#) page. Closed captioning and translation
services are available on YouTube.



Saturday March 25, 2023 Shredded Hardwood Mulch

3-cubic feet bag - \$ 6.00

Black, 2-cubic feet bag-\$6.00

2-cubic feet bag \$4.50

FREE DELIVERY!

15 bag minimum and 8-mile radius

**Small order pick-up: Saturday, March 25, 2023,
8:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Mulch sales support community needs, including
Westside Homeless Shelter.;**

For [MORE INFORMATION](#) and [ORDERING FORM](#)

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