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Issue #444

GPCA Newsletter

February 2025



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



Social Hall, Granite Presbyterian Church
10637 Old Court Road

Update on Closure of Woodstock Job Corps

If you haven't already heard, the Department of Labor has announced the closure of the Woodstock Job Corp. This month's meeting will present the latest status on the closure and discuss what we know to date about plans moving forward. Come join us and share your thoughts on its future use.

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Upcoming Meetings:

March 10 – To be announced

April 14 – To be announced

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President's Note



Fellow Members, Friends and Neighbors,

With great appreciation and enthusiasm, I step into the role of **GPCA Board President**. I am honored to serve this wonderful community and build upon the strong foundation laid by those who came before me.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to **Kathy Skullney for her years of dedicated service** to GPCA. Kathy's leadership, passion, and unwavering commitment to our community have left a lasting impact. From her instrumental role in reviving GPCA in 1985 to advocating for responsible land use and community preservation, she has been a steadfast champion for all of us. Her guidance has shaped GPCA into the **respected and effective organization** it is today. Kathy, on behalf of the entire community—**thank you** for your tireless dedication, your advocacy, and your belief in the power of community.

As we move forward into this new chapter, I am eager to continue the work of strengthening our community connections, preserving our local heritage, and addressing the needs of our members. Our goal is always to bring informative and engaging speakers who address topics that matter most to our community. We want to keep these meetings engaging and relevant.

One significant topic that will be part of our discussions is the official closure of the Woodstock Job Corps Center. For decades, the Job Corps

has played a key role in Granite's history, providing vocational training, education, and career opportunities to young people. The program, which has been a presence in our community since 1971, has not only served students but has also engaged with GPCA in workforce development and local initiatives. With its closure, we are witnessing the end of an era, and we want to ensure we understand both the immediate and long-term impacts of this change.

Your voices matter, and I encourage everyone to stay engaged, bring ideas to the table, and actively participate in shaping the future of GPCA. We welcome your suggestions—whether it's local history, public safety, environmental concerns, or county development projects. Your input is invaluable as we continue to strengthen our connections and ensure GPCA remains an active, informed, and involved organization.

In the coming months, we have much to look forward to—including **community improvement projects, local advocacy efforts, and new initiatives to enhance communication and participation**. I am excited to work alongside our Board, volunteers, and all of you to ensure GPCA remains a strong, informed, and proactive organization.

Thank you for your trust and support. Let's continue to work together to make our community the best it can be!

We may be small, but we are mighty!

~ Chris Brock

GPCA President

chris_brock@ymail.com

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Last Month's Meeting

January 13, 2025

GPCA Elections - 2025

**Setting 2025 Agenda and Priorities – including those
of Members**

Our annual election was held per our by-laws and the results are in:

President – Chris Brock

Vice President – Butch Oakman

Treasurer – Cathy Wolfson

Secretary – Vacant

Director term expiring January 2027 – Patrik Bavoil

Director term expiring January 2028 – Gabriela Summerer- Herndon

Thanks to our immediate Past-President Kathy Skullney for her capable leadership over the past two years. She will continue her dedication to GPCA's mission serving as our Zoning Chairperson. We welcome Chris Brock as our new President and truly appreciate the commitment of new Directors, Patrik Bavoil and Gabriela Summerer-Herndon have made to serve on the GPCA board.

The meeting was an open session to discuss attendees' priorities for GPCA in 2025. Traffic and speeding continue to be major concerns, particularly heavy truck traffic on Granite Road. The now permanent closure of Woodstock Job Corps Center was also discussed and how the State of MD which is the property owner of record will secure the 64 acre campus from squatting, vandalism, poaching and other malicious uses. On a brighter note there is enthusiastic support for celebrating GPCA's nearly 40 years as our community association with a parade in the fall. Stay tuned!

~ **Cathy Wolfson**

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In Memoriam



Beverly Griffith, 1940-2024 – Founding member of Granite Historical Society

We sadly announce the passing on November 16th of Beverly Griffith (nee Kriete), Past President and founding member of the Granite Historical Society. A dedicated preservationist – she collected photos of quarry workers at local yard and estate sales and was a careful documentarian of Granite's history. Due to Beverly's diligence the Granite Historic District is recognized on the National Registry of Historic Places for its contribution to industry. Notably, Granite's Waltersville Quarry was the only one in the country with a railroad track connecting directly to the B&O mainline. GPCA's 1998 Patapsco/Granite Area Community Plan, recognized in

Baltimore County's 2030 Master Plan includes Beverly's extensive inventory of Granite's Historic Sites. Beverly was a Baltimore County bus driver for over 30 years. Indeed in the late 1960's she drove the Johnnycake Junior High "Granite bus" to and from Johnnycake and Crosby Rds. in Westview. It was a long route as buses were not permitted to travel Quaker Hill requiring her to run Old Court to Windsor Mill then Rolling Rds in the mornings and back again in the afternoons. Fortunately for us, Beverly grew up in the hills and narrow roads of Granite and drove with determination despite the boisterous goings on of her adolescent passengers, including yours truly. I recall a winter day when we were dismissed early due to snow, even though the back roads through our route weren't yet plowed. Beverly dropped off all the kids from Windsor Mill Rd. through the Acme Ave. stop on Davis Avenue and then crawled cautiously down into the steep valley below the trailer park. She started the climb out, but her wheels did not gain traction and spun and fishtailed on the snow. The unfazed Granite girl that Beverly was, inched back down and around that hill till we reached the bottom. She then ordered all of us to the back of the bus and instructed us to sit over the rear axle. Back up that hill our bus slipped and slid but we climbed out of that valley and she finished her route, dropping us off at our stops along Wrights Mill and Dogwood Roads. All of us made it home that day thanks to Beverly! With gratitude we recognize her contributions to preserving our local history and regret her passing.

~ Cathy Wolfson

GPCA Member Brenda (Hush) Hamilton, 1952-2024

We also sadly announce the passing of Brenda Hamilton on November 14th. Brenda and her husband, Don, are long-time residents of the historic property on Bunker Hill Road.

Brenda was serving as Grand Master of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows for Maryland and was past President of the Rebekah Assembly of MD. At the time of her passing, her project was with the Alzheimer's Association. During the early 90's, Brenda and Don owned and operated Schoolhouse Antiques, the lovely granite stone schoolhouse at 10612 Old Court Road.

The Hamilton's were generous with their time and support, especially of the Granite Presbyterian Church, the Greater Patapsco Community Association, and the Granite Historical Society.

Brenda is survived by her husband, Don Hamilton, Sr., daughter Donna Clark-Koback and husband Cliff Koback, and son Don Hamilton, Jr. and wife Denise.

~ Marty Kelley

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Zoning

Islamic Society of Baltimore Board of Appeals Hearing

February 19, 2025, AT 10:00 A.M.

Case No. 24-058-XA, 2nd Election District; 4th Council District

IN THE MATTER OF: Islamic Society of Baltimore, Inc. – 7525-7545
Windsor Mill Road

The above scheduled hearing will be held in-person.

Location for in-person: Hearing Room #2, Second Floor, Suite 206,
Jefferson Building, 105 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Towson

Any interested person can watch the hearing online or listen by telephone and will not be able to participate. Call-in information and a link to the hearing online will be posted on our web calendar the night before. Our web calendar is located at www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/appeals.

Camp Ground Petition – Kratz Property

Thursday, February 27, 2025, 10:00 AM

Zoning Hearing - In Person/Virtual/Hybrid

Case No: 2024-0243-X, 9043 Old Court Road

Owners: Alan & Sandra Kratz

Contract Purchaser: Freedom 40 Farms, LLC

Location of In Person Hearing: 105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Room 205
Towson, MD 21204

For hearing access:

<https://baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/administrative-hearings/events/zoning-hearings-9043-old-court-road-0>

~ Kathy Skullney

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GPCA's Annual Community Clean-Up

Saturday April 5th, 2025

8 am to 12 noon

St. Alphonsus Church

Lower parking lot

(drive through)

An event to benefit the community

- Join friends and neighbors for our annual roadside clean-up
- GPCA will provide safety vests and trash bags
- 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, VCRs, 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!

Volunteer a couple hours to keep our rolling countryside beautiful.

(Certificates available for students needing service hours.)

For your safety go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOe0eFQY0IQ> or use this QR Code to watch the MD State Highway Adopt-a-Highway Safety Video

Be sure to wear your GPCA t-shirts!

Thanks for your support!



~Jim Raistrick

GPCA Cleanup Coordinator

443-838-9887, voxjim@gmail.com

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**GPCA Community
Sign Installation is
Complete!**

Good News! Thanks to the quick turn-around from Fast Signs, the fabrication of the community sign was completed a couple of weeks ago. Given the colder weather and snow, installation was delayed but has now been completed. As previously mentioned, the sign is installed at the corner of Old Court and Davis Avenues. So keep your eyes out the next time you're passing this location!

~Bill Skullney

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Granite Historical Society

The Granite Historical Society Annual Meeting with elections of officers and Board Members for the year will be held at 7 pm, Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at the Granite Presbyterian Church.

A Nominating Committee consisting of Pam Adams and Sue Brantley has proposed the following slate for the 2025-2026 administrative year: (Thank you, Pam and Sue!)

President - Nathan Brantley

Vice President - Roy Danz

Treasurer - John Brantley

Secretary - Emma Lehman

Director - Pam Adams

Director - Reed Hellman

Per the by-laws additional nominations can be accepted, even from the floor during the meeting. If you have any interest in any of the positions, or have any questions about the duties entailed, please feel free to contact:

Pam Adams, pamela.j.adams@comcast.net, 443-802-3734

Sue Brantley, sue@fullduplex.com, 410-922-1908

or myself, royed5@verizon.net, 410-905-2244.

The GHS has established a number of programs to showcase the history of the area, and your continued support is needed to keep the organization fulfill its mission.

Also at the annual meeting on March 18th, as part of the GHS Speaker Series, John Brantley will deliver a presentation entitled "Searching for Granite's First Settler". John will talk about 10 different figures with an early presence in the Granite area in an attempt to figure out who was the first. It will be a chance to engage with Granite's colonial experience, subject matter which has previously been little discussed.

~ Roy Danz
GHS President

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Patapsco Heritage Greenway News

2025 is the start of a new year and an exciting new calendar of events being held by Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG)!

As the Heritage Program Coordinator for PHG, I'm excited to highlight that this upcoming March will be our Seventh Annual Patapsco Days Celebration. Patapsco Days is a roughly month-long thematic event where we host a few programs about the history, environment, and sociopolitical aspects of the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area (PVHA). This year, our theme is "Advocacy & Action": Exploring how people, places, and industries are all vital to pursuing justice and equality in the past and present.

We've got an exciting lineup of speakers ready to talk about a variety of topics ranging from the role of the B&O Railroad during the Civil War to the need for civil rights advocacy in the United States and more!

Featured speakers include:

Matthew Borders, NPS Park Ranger at Monocacy National Battlefield
Jonathon Wood, Naturalist II at the Benjamin Banneker Park and Museum
Willie Flowers, NAACP Howard County Branch President, and former president of the NAACP Maryland State Conference.

You can register to hear our first speaker, Ranger Matthew Borders, on Thursday, March 6th, at 6 pm at the B&O Ellicott City Station Museum [HERE](#).

Our full calendar of events for the Spring season will be posted [HERE](#) in February.

Looking forward to seeing you this spring!

~ Kyla Cools

PHG Heritage Program Coordinator

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Baltimore County and Beyond



BALTIMORE COUNTY DISTRICT 4 FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET TOWN HALL MEETING

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

Randallstown Community Center

3505 Resource Drive, Randallstown, MD 21133

Community Cabinet Open House 6:00-7:00 pm

Community Cabinet Open House: Baltimore County departments will host individual tables where residents are able to engage directly department leadership about individual issues and concerns, learn about resources, and share suggestions.

Budget Town Hall Meeting 7:00 to 8:00 pm

Following the Open House County Executive Kathy Klausmeier and Office of Budget and Finance Director Kevin Reed will present the county's 2026 budget after which attendees are invited to share their ideas and priorities for consideration for Baltimore County's FY26 budget. Speakers are limited to 90 seconds and participants with similar requests are encouraged to present their priorities together. Those unable to provide their testimony in-person by the end of the Town Hall may still submit requests for consideration by emailing townhall@baltimorecountymd.gov.

SCAM ALERT! – The Baltimore County Police Department would like the public to be aware of a phone scam in which the caller is posing as a member of law enforcement. These callers may use urgent language to pressure the resident into making an immediate payment via wire transfers or other means. Through fraudulent means the name of a legitimate police department may appear on caller ID. The criminal may also use the name of an officer legitimately employed with the Department. If you receive such a call, hang up immediately and report it. As a reminder, the Baltimore County Police Department does not solicit monetary funds.

Safety Recommendations:

- Don't answer calls from unknown numbers.
- If you answer and it's not who you expected, don't hang on, hang

up.

- If a caller asks you to hit a button to stop getting calls, hang up.
- Never assume an unexpected call is legitimate. Hang up and call back using a number you can verify on a bill, a statement, or an official website.
- Be suspicious. Scammers can be persuasive: They may ask innocuous questions, sound threatening, or sometimes seem too good to be true
- Ask your phone company about call-blocking tools for landlines or apps for mobile devices.
- Report spoofing scams to law enforcement, the FCC, and the FTC.

~Officer Makowiecki

Two Important dates to note:

NOTE:

GPCA is not directly involved, but these are a larger community issue.

Wylie Funeral Home - The hearing regarding the proposed expansion of Wylie Funeral Home to include a crematorium, scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the Office of Administrative Hearings located at 105 West Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 103, Towson, Maryland 21204. If you are unable to attend in person, you can still participate by submitting testimony via email to administrativehearings@baltimorecountymd.gov or calling 410-887-3868. For online participation, visit this link: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.webex.com/baltimorecountymd/j.php?MTID=https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/administrative-hearings/events/zoning-hearings-9200-9206-liberty-road> and use Access Code: 231 613 37762.

Baltimore County Redistricting - The 2025 Baltimore County Councilmanic Redistricting Commission will hold its first public input hearing this month. The meeting is on February 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the County Council Chambers located at 400 Washington Avenue, Towson. During this hearing, you can testify in person or virtually, with testimony limited to 2-3 minutes per speaker. If you cannot attend, you can submit written testimony in advance by emailing councilmanicredistricting@baltimorecountymd.gov. For more information and to register to testify, visit www.baltimorecountymd.gov/countycouncil/virtualmeetings.html.

~Kathy Skullney



eDNA: A Technique for Figuring Out What Organisms are Present in a Variety of Ecosystems

A summary of presentations made during an eDNA conference held December 8, 2023

Animals, insects, plants, bacteria, fungi and more coexist with us and yet may be unseen or go unnoticed by the casual observer or the professional ecologist. e(environmental)DNA is a technique to broaden our knowledge of the complex web of life we share with other organisms.

The principle behind eDNA is that all organisms shed cells to the environment throughout their lifetime. A water sample from a stream or other body of water should contain pieces of DNA peculiar to a single organism. These stretches of DNA, informally known as the organism's genetic barcode, indicate the presence of that organism in the community. DNA of organisms is now well known enough that there are "genetic barcodes" that can be used to identify all species in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. eDNA is a method for detecting these genetic barcodes and can be used to monitor the environment for the presence of pathogens, the health of fisheries, the presence of threatened or endangered species, or the presence of invasive species.

eDNA sampling can be used in two ways: it can be used to detect the presence of a single species, or it can be used to determine all the members present in a community. eDNA is faster, cheaper, and more sensitive than traditional methods of community censusing.

eDNA is not limited to aquatic sampling. This technique can be applied to sampling terrestrial communities as well. The presence of organisms in a community can be detected by sampling flowers, runoff, guano, leeches, soil, air and spiderwebs.

eDNA can be used to infer seasonal fluctuations in the activity of members of the local community. If the presence of eDNA is low in winter, it can be inferred that the organism is experiencing a period of low metabolism or

low movement. If the amount of eDNA is high in a sample in the spring, the presence of hatchlings or the release of larvae into the community may be inferred.

This technology does have its limitations. Cellular material in the environment degrades over time. The action of enzymes and decomposition breaks DNA into smaller and smaller bits. Eventually the material is small enough to pass through the filters designed to catch genetic material. Samples of eDNA collected from streams may be transported great distances during times of high-water flow. There are lab protocols in place to standardize samples and avoid a false positive. In addition, netting and electrofishing are used to confirm the presence or absence of organisms of interest.

eDNA has been used to look for benthic macroinvertebrates in streams. Benthic macroinvertebrates are a key indicator of water quality (the SWCC conducts surveys in the spring and fall, we welcome volunteers!). In one study the eDNA found three times the taxa (groups) as compared to netting.

Locally, the use of eDNA has been used to detect the presence of river herring (*Alosa pseudoharengus* and *Alosa aestivalis*) in the Patapsco River watershed. These fish, the blueback herring and the alewife are a type of anadromous fish that rely on freshwater streams to reproduce. Their numbers have declined 90% from historic levels of hundreds of millions because of overharvesting, dams and other obstructions or river development. These fish are an important commercial fishery and are an important prey species for cod, haddock, and striped bass. Water samples have been evaluated for the presence of these important fish below the Daniels dam in the former town of Daniels in Howard County, Maryland. The sampling shows that the river herring have yet to reach Daniels, however the presence of these fish has been detected at the former site of the Bloede dam, not far downstream.

~ Judy Plaskowitz
SWCC Member

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Flying Squirrels



Way back in the early 1960's my late brother Bob Beal, older than me by 15 years was a tree climber for A&A Tree Experts. To my 6-year-old nose he always smelled of oily green sawdust mixed with 2 cycle gas from his giant McCulloch chainsaw. Especially memorable were days when he came home with a special prize for his little sister; a flying squirrel hidden away inside his shirt that he had "rescued" in advance of felling its treetop home. Sixty some years later Southern flying squirrels remain fairly common in our local hardwood forests, but being nocturnal are not typically seen like gray squirrels. While they don't actually fly, they do glide up to 250 ft! They



have a varied diet including nuts, berries, lichens and insects. And like other squirrels, birdseed which I can attest to on discovering our cat had "tree-ed" this one clinging to the pole for our feeder. Needless to say, Frosty is spending the nights indoors, now.

Want to know more about these charming forest dwellers? Check out <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/woodland-wildlife-spotlight-southern-flying-squirrel/>.

~ *Cathy Wolfson*

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Around the Neighborhood

Granite Presbyterian Church – GPC will be hosting community food truck events once again this spring and fall. The date are Wednesdays 4/23, 5/21, 6/18, 9/17 & 10/15.

Thank You Independent Order of Odd Fellows!

Once again the Brothers and Sisters of the Baltimore City Lodge #57 of the IOOF has recognized GPCA for its contributions to the community with a gift of \$250.00. We truly appreciate your support of mission to preserve and protect our rural character! To learn more about the good work accomplished by our local IOOF visit them on Facebook at IOOF Baltimore City Lodge #57.

Woodlawn Police, Woodlawn Precinct – Keep up with what else is happening:

<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/police/community/pr/ecincts/2-woodlawn>

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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