



GPCA

GREATER PATAPSCO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #377

GPCA Newsletter

April 2018

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

Stan Kollar of Kollar Nursery: The Value of Native Plants for Managing Rainwater and Creating Habitat

GPCA General Meetings are held the second Monday of each month, except July & August, at the Granite Presbyterian Church. Everyone is invited to attend.

GPCA's Annual Community Cleanup Scheduled for April 7

Join your neighbors from 8:00 AM until Noon at the St. Alphonsus Church parking lot to help make Granite Patapsco sparkle! Safety vests and bags provided. Thanks go to Odd Fellows Lodge 52 for providing refreshments. Thanks also go to Maryland's Department of Natural Resources for awarding a grant to GPCA to help fund safety measures during the cleanup. Follow these suggestions from the Maryland State Highway Adopt a Highway Program:

- Avoid areas where there is not adequate space to stay off the roadway.
- Park all vehicles clear of the roadway.
- Wear high visibility clothing; vests are available at the sign in table at St. Alphonsus.
- Walk on the shoulder, facing oncoming traffic at all times.
- Provide supervision for all youths.
- Do not remove any hazardous substances.
- Wear light colored clothing and long sleeves., heavy waterproof gloves and sturdy soled footwear.
- Avoid overexertion.
- Try to work with a spotter who can let you know when traffic is approaching.



Dogwood Run Bridge

Kinsley Construction won the bid to replace this bridge on Dogwood Road east of Hollifield Rd. Preliminary work began on March 17 with relocation of utility poles. Expect to see staging of equipment and materials after June 1. Because Dogwood Run is classified as a Class 1 stream by Maryland Department of Environment, the stream cannot be disturbed until after June 15. You can reasonably expect the road to be closed on or about that date and not reopen until work is completed in about 6 months.

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From the President:

School Board Election

We know our local schools struggle to meet state standards, and we have an opportunity this year to elect a school board member from our own councilmanic district to represent us. But what does the school board do and what impact can they have on student outcomes? According to Maryland law, the board is must "...determine, with the advice of the county Superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system". How is that accomplished? The board must develop school policies, submit an annual budget to the county executive, and is responsible for determining the purchase and sale of sites for schools and facilities. The board typically meets twice a month and considers recommendations from school staff and administrators, then votes on those contracts and policies.

Last year, the county allocated \$115,984,974 of its capital budget to our schools. The capital budget includes everything that "can't be shaken out" of the building. The operating budget addresses all other expenditures such as salaries, instructional materials, transportation, and maintenance. Safety in schools is a further demand that is rapidly evolving and straining economic and personnel resources. Last year, \$1,837,865,158 was allocated to operating costs.

With almost \$2 billion in tax revenue dedicated to education, even residents without school age children should consider carefully who represents our district on the board. Because all school board candidates are non-partisan, the two candidates from each district winning the most votes in the primary on June 26 will be on the general election ballot on November 6.

As of this writing, there are six candidates in our District 4. They are:

*Gaston Horne, Owings Mills
Tara Huffman, Windsor Mill
Regina Ann Smith, Gwynn Oak
Makeda Scott, Owings Mills
Autrese Thorton, Randallstown
Kathleen White, Reisterstown*

We will invite these candidates to our May meeting to tell us how they can improve performance at our schools.

Traffic Count at Hollifield and Dogwood

At GPCA's request, a traffic count was conducted at this intersection. Dogwood approaching from Ridge was approximately 3,500 ADT (Average Daily Traffic). Hollifield coming into Dogwood was approximately 3,100 ADT. Dogwood approaching from Quaker Hill was approximately 1,900 ADT. Had this number been closer to 3,000 ADT, it would have been a prime location for a roundabout that would have greatly relieved the daily backups on Hollifield. It's staggering to know that 8,500 vehicles use this intersection daily.

*Be careful out there, and remember to VOTE!
Primary June 26, 2018; General Nov. 6, 2018.*

Cathy Wolfson, President, 410-245-8708

Special Thanks To:

Paul Dorsey for printing the Newsletter each month.

Collators Maribeth Diemer, Bob Teller, Lisa Libowitz, and Evalyn Garvin.

The Rowdy Folders Eileen Ciechanowski, Sandy Fallin, Denise Maranto, Murf Moorefield, Kathy Skullney, Bobbie Stanfield, and Jackie Webster

THANK YOU FOR THE GIGGLE

As you round the bend on Old Court Road, across from St. Alphonsus Church, you see a man's discarded black boot on a post. I first noticed it in mid-December. As the holiday approached, the boot was decorated with a big red bow...then red lights. February arrived, and a red heart and roses. St. Patrick's Day, and there were green decorations

Keep an eye out, as Easter is approaching.

This past Sunday, I noticed the addition of a red boot. To Whomever: Thank you for the giggle and your wonderful imagination.

Marty Kelley

Mark Your Calendar

Representatives of the GPCA have reserved the same pavilion as last year for 2018 GPCA Picnic. Mark **Saturday, October 6**, on your calendar and plan to attend the annual festivity at the McKeldin Area of the Patapsco Valley State Park.

Maryland Patriot Ride for Veterans

In the last 3 years, Maryland has been working toward providing greater legal assistance to veterans and members of the military and their families. Veterans have been facing numerous challenges when seeking benefits and services, especially when dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other combat related impacts.

The Veterans Affairs and Military Law Section of the Maryland Bar Association bring together lawyers, organizations, students, and other volunteers to assist veterans and military members seeking help. Such help includes upgrading discharges for benefit eligibility, dealing with VA requirements, housing, and drug abuse. In addition, Maryland has initiated "Veterans Dockets" in several jurisdictions that offer an alternative to criminal proceedings for veterans in need of rehabilitation instead of incarceration, pairing them with mentors and support services to get their lives back on track.

This important work needs financial support. The VA and Military Law Section are sponsoring a beautiful spring motorcycle ride on April 28 to Antietam Battlefield to raise money. The ride officially gathers and leaves from Harley Davidson of Frederick at 2:00 PM. For more information, email msbapatriotride@gamil.com, or to join us for a \$10 donation register online at <https://sections.msba.org/maryland-patriot-ride/>.

Any local riders who want to ride together from Granite can call the Skullneys at 410-465-9116. This is a great ride for a good cause.

Kathy Skullney

Small Watershed Community Committee (SWCC)

Skeeter Eaters

Have you ever looked at the underside of a rock located in a stream ripple, or at the critters living in the leaf litter stuck in the stream? The streambed is teeming with life ranging from aquatic insects, often in their larval form, to crayfish and snails. All of these little critters living at the bottom of the stream that can be seen with the naked eye are called *macroinvertebrates*: *macro* meaning large, and *invertebrate* meaning no backbone.

Macroinvertebrates are indicators of a stream's health, but some are more sensitive to pollution than others. Caddisfly larvae and hellgrammites are sensitive to pollution; dragonfly larvae are more tolerant. Leeches and aquatic worms are tolerant of pollution.

Hellgrammites resemble an aquatic centipede and make good fishing bait, but beware of its powerful pincer-like jaws. The caddisfly larvae make their own cocoon-like structure of the pebbles and rocks around them and adhere to the bottom of rocks, especially in ripples. Dragonfly larvae eat mosquito larvae and adult dragonflies eat adult mosquitoes. They are "skeeter eaters", along with bats, fish, and birds.

Many macroinvertebrates that play an important role in the food chain depend on clean streams to survive. What can we do to help keep the streams clean?

- * Pick up litter. Be sure to wear high visibility clothing and face traffic if you do so along roadways. April 7th is the GPCA Community Clean-up.
- * Prevent or reduce stormwater runoff with rain barrels, rain gardens, and semi-permeable surfaces in place of impermeable surfaces.
- * Fix leaks and clean up spills of petroleum products before they reach bodies of water.
- * Bag and properly dispose of dog poop.
- * Plant native trees and plants to absorb rainwater and reduce erosion. Look for a variety of plants to ensure blooms from spring until fall, providing a food source to the bees and other pollinators.

Go out, explore your local stream this spring, and take at least one action to help make it healthier.

Anna Schrad, SWCC

March Meeting Focused on BGE's New Approach to Managing Right-of-Ways

At our March meeting, Bill Rees, a retired BGE forester, explained the Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) program in the Baltimore Gas and Electric right-of-ways in Maryland state parks. BGE has created wildlife habitats along its right-of-ways that improve conditions for birds, butterflies, frogs, and other wildlife by providing essential elements: natural food sources, clean water, cover, and places to raise young. Several sites have been certified as National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitats and Bird Friendly Habitats.

BGE has implemented a technique for managing vegetation in its power line right-of ways that restores native plant communities, providing for wildlife habitat that is much improved over traditional, non-selective mowing techniques. IVM works to develop sustainable plant communities compatible with safe and reliable operation of the electrical facilities while controlling non-native invasive plants, and improving wildlife and pollinator habitat. Mechanical and manual cutting are minimized and herbicides are used only when necessary.

Within 3 years, the seed bank containing the seeds of native plants can emerge, invasive vegetation management mitigation enhances foraging opportunities and nesting sources; native plants provide seeds, berries, and herbs for wildlife; and cover, nesting, and egg laying locations emerge. Even dead brush provides nesting sites. Seeds are already contained in the seed bank and can emerge with selective use of herbicides and elimination of non-native plants. Meadowland can then be created to provide habitat and an efficient method of stormwater management, helping to prevent pollution and recharging groundwater.

It takes 3 years to encourage the right kind of growth directly under the conductors, growth of native plants that are no more than 5 feet high and up to 20 feet out. Further out in the vegetation plan are 20- to 25-foot trees that can be higher in areas with steep slopes or wetlands. IVM provides environmentally sound vegetation management. The meadow concept is expanding into many other areas as a means to help the environment.

Locations of notable habitat sites created by BGE include Patuxent Wildlife Refuge, South River Greenway Partnership, Columbia/Elkhorn Vicinity, Liberty Reservoir, Flag Ponds near Calvert Cliffs, and American Chestnut Land Trust in Calvert County.

Thanks to Bill Rees for this very helpful environmental presentation.

Denise Maranto

Membership Renewals

2018 Joint Renewals: Allen, Patrick & Linda; Bavoil, Patrik M & Ru-Ching HSIA; Beam Chuck & Sandy; Berghmans, Andre' & Mary; Braxton, Claude & Meredith; Conaway, JD & Melissa; Deitz, Wayne & Suzanne; Dixon, Maurice & Evelyn; Ensor, Maurice & Linda; Evans, Meredith & Ellen D; Farmer, Jim & Kevin; Featherstone, Wm H. & Charlene S.; Fowlkes, Debbi & Stacey; France, Thomas & Denise; Guidry, Catherine & Phil Leibowitz; Haddaway, Lee & Patricia; Harrigan, Dean & Mamie; Heit, Wm & Joan daSilva; Huffman, Tara & Brian; Janoskie, Toney & Tammy; Lowe, David & Dawna; Malinovsky, Peter & Elizabeth L.; Marszal, Mark & Dawn; Mathena, Bremen & Doris; Mathena, Charles & Mary Jo; Mathena, Larry, Sr & Sarah; McCall, Carthage & Margaret; McDermott, Mark & Donna; McNamara, James & Carol; Merkle, Skip & Nadine; Myster, Jackie & Joyce; Peters, Jim & Pamela S.; Rainier, Tom, Jr & Krissy; Reitz, Dennis & Cathy; Skullney, Bill & Kathy; Sniadach, Gary & Harriet; Tatarewicz, MD., Joseph & Joyce Bedi; Thomas, Charles & Evora; Tucker, Timothy & Karen; Walden, MD., Emerson & Nancy; Weber, Bob & Jennifer; Young, Charles & Jeanette.

2018 New Joint Members: de Boer, Melanie & Weant, Dana M.; Hamilton, Don & Brenda; Hopkins, John & Alyson Pye.

2018 Single Renewals: Anbarchian, Sako/Julie; Boskin, Maureen; Cignatta, Marie; Desser, Rona; Dorman, Kathy; Farley, Betty J.; Feidler, Betty; Grant, Anne; Lacey, SJ., The Rev. Joseph P.; Ramsey, MD., Harold E.; Stompler, Ben; Wilder, Arlene; Yowell, Carl A.

2018 New Single Members: Hayes, Faye; Nichols, William.

In the Neighborhood

Did You Lose a Log (or Two)?

Incidents of logs falling off trucks going up Quaker Hill have increased. If you, or someone you know hauls logs, consider using Old Court Road instead of “climbing” Quaker Hill via Dogwood Road. Also, always secure your load before scaling the hill. Additionally, observe the weight limits on Dogwood Road. Ensure that your combined weight is less than the limit to cross the Bens Run Bridge.

Where’s My Mail?

Wondering where that package or that check you’re expecting is? Have you tried the free Informed Delivery service offered by the Post Office? The service delivers images of your household’s letter-sized mail to your inbox, typically by 9:00 AM. Waiting for a package? The service also enables you to view tracking information, leave delivery instructions, and/or re-schedule delivery. For more information, visit www.informedelivery.usps.com

Getting Ready for Rain Gardens

Get ready for our April meeting by investigating Rain Gardens. The Bay-Wise Master Gardeners, in conjunction with Howard County, have installed a demonstration Rain Garden at the Alpha Ridge Landfill. Rain Gardens collect and absorb runoff thereby improving water quality, reducing flooding, and increasing property value with an attractive landscape element. For educational information and garden designs suitable for home landscapes, check out these documents and presentations: Rain Gardens - Do I Want One, How to Build One, Maintaining your Rain Garden.

Here is some information about Maryland Rain Gardens, including a 52-page booklet that looks great: https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/_docs/articles/Rain_Gardens_Across_MD.pdf

Here is a link where you can get your yard certified as "Bay Wise": http://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/_docs/programs/baywise/Baywise_5pager_06_17_14_FINAL.pdf



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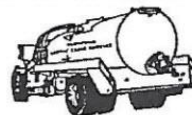
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GRANITE P.O. BOX 31 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

**P.O. Box 31
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YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE:

- Easter Sunday – April 1, 2018
- GPCA Annual Spring Cleanup – April 7
- GPCA Meeting – April 9
- Earth Day -- April 22

**GPCA
Membership Application**

Please Print Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

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

___ I'm new in the community.

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

GPCA Officers and Board of Directors

President: Cathy Wolfson 410-245-8708, oakknob@comcast.net
Vice President: George Jones 410-655-8307
tessier100@hotmail.com
Secretary: Denise Maranto 443-695-5409
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GPCA ADVERTISING/ARTICLE/LETTER POLICY

GPCA reserves the right to accept or refuse advertising.
To place an ad: Send the ad copy by email as a pdf attachment where possible to the 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 should 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. 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.
For articles and letters: These 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. GPCA reserves the right to accept, reject, edit, or hold for a subsequent newsletter any submission.

Due to scheduling requirements, submissions for the May newsletter are due to the editor and Maribeth Diemer no later than April 13th.