



GREATER PATAPSCO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #407

GPCA Newsletter

May 2021

Next Meeting: Western Sector County Planners

Topic: 2030 Master Plan / Patapsco Granite Community Plan

Monday, May 10, 7:30 p.m. – Virtually via Zoom

GPCA General Meetings are held the second Monday of each month, except July and August

Everyone is invited to attend. During the pandemic meetings will be held virtually. Details to join the meetings will be communicated using email. Contact gpcap21163@gmail.com to add your email address to the GPCA group.

View our Website at www.gpca.net

May is Membership Month:

Directions: Please turn to page 7, detach the envelope, fill the envelope with your check made payable to GPCA and pop into the mail. Note that 130 households have already completed this task but at this time last year it was 145 households that joined the mix. Go to GPCA.net and click on the April newsletter to see if you are one of the dedicated paid members.

I've been reviewing older newsletters circa 1980's to see how they worded and encouraged paid renewals and new memberships. I figured I would "borrow" their words and nostalgia would drive the numbers. Wow, in 1988 there were only 800 households within the GPCA boundaries and 205 households were paid members. That's 26% of all households within the GPCA boundaries actively supporting its objectives "to preserve and enhance the tranquility and beauty of our rural environment and to encourage orderly and positive growth of the community within the framework of prescribed regulations and laws." In May 2021 there are approximately 1,600 households within the GPCA boundaries and an active participation rate of just 8%. Yikes!

The pandemic cancelled in person meetings. GPCA invested in Virtual Meeting technology so meetings could be held. New faces joined the virtual meetings and heard presentations such as Precinct 2 update; Life on the Farm with the Pahls (a longtime family supporter of GPCA); a report card on the status of 1 year plus testing of local watersheds and other presentations. There are other new costs in 2021. We need 227 households to become paying (voting) members to break even in 2021. The biggest operating cost remains the publication and mailing of the monthly newsletter. Mailing each issue allows all GPCA households, not just paid members, to receive community news. However, 8% of the households are willing to underwrite the newsletters. Unfortunately, that is not enough. We need 15% of households to become paid members with the right to vote on matters GPCA supports. The newsletter is also posted/archived to GPCA.net website. However, there isn't enough traffic on the website or folks belonging to the email blast list to take the position that a mailing is no longer necessary.

So pretty please, with a cherry on top, do your part and become a paying member today. I have no swag to gift to you but look around at the rural beauty and realize that volunteers go to the county to make our views known, volunteers test watersheds monthly to benchmark changes possibly caused by new development and volunteers continue the stewardship of our area against unwanted commercial/residential development in areas specifically zoned against them.

Thank you!

What's inside?

2030 Masterplan, SWCC ...2 In Our Neighborhood ...3-5 Local Advertisers...5-7

Baltimore County Master Plan 2030

The Patapsco Granite Community Plan Committee met April 8 and identified goals which promote agricultural preservation and conserve our environmental assets through stewardship of open space and natural resources. The updated plan will recognize the adoption and reclassification to RC-6 zoning throughout our area, the county's purchase of the 257-acre former Bethel property and the expansion of the Patapsco Heritage Greenway throughout much of the plan area among other significant land use changes over the past 23 years. Baltimore County's Western Sector Planners will be introducing the 2030 Master Plan process and timeline at our May 10 General Meeting. The committee will meet throughout the Master Plan process and welcomes your participation to create the Patapsco Granite vision of orderly growth through 2030 that will be adopted as an amendment to the Master Plan. Contact committee chairperson Zulma Santiago at 410-750-7279 or zoom49@msn.com for more information.

*Submitted on behalf of the committee, Cathy Wolfson
<http://resources.baltimorecountymd.gov/Documents/Planning/communityplans/patapscograniteplan.pdf>*

April 12th Meeting Presentation by the Small Watershed Community Committee

Watershed Findings Report

GPCA welcomed Dave Scheurer from our Small Watershed Community Committee (SWCC) to the April Meeting. He presented a talk and PowerPoint presentation on "Why We Measure What We Measure." SWCC began to test our streams (Granite Run, Brice Run with Mardella Run, Ben's Run, and Dogwood Run) in 2018 on a journey to become certified in stream testing so the SWCC can obtain grants and present official information to Baltimore County government and other authorities in order to help the environment. SWCC members are Austin Cohen, Laurie Donnelly, Andy Grosko, Murf Moorefield, Jim Raistrick, Bob Reisdorf, Carol Link, Dave Scheurer, Bob Teller, Cathy Wolfson, and Carl Wolfson. These volunteers have conducted one and a half years of sampling four locations a month, one site per stream, using Bob Teller's basement darkroom as a lab for analysis of results. The overall health of our streams is good, and SWCC has documented a true baseline as they go forward. Brice Run could be a candidate for trout reintroduction, while Granite Run is also healthy. Ben's Run has been impacted by fairly heavy development along with the

impervious surface that comes along with development. At some point in the summer all four streams exceed the temperature that supports aquatic life, a temperature of no more than 68 degrees Fahrenheit which is the upper limit for most aquatic life.

Besides temperature, the streams are tested for nitrates, orthophosphates, pH, salinity, and conductivity. Nitrates come from septic systems, animal waste, and fertilizer, and reduce the oxygen levels in the blood of infants and young livestock. Nitrates reduce respiration efficiency in aquatic invertebrates causing a decline in aquatic diversity.

Orthophosphates cause algae blooms which use up oxygen in water and kill aquatic life. They also emit toxins which cause skin rashes and liver damage in humans. Orthophosphates are caused by septic systems, animal waste, fertilizer, erosion, and exhaust from cars and other motor vehicles.

Water with an extremely high or low pH is deadly to fish, can affect the hatching of their eggs, or damage their membranes. Water with an extremely high pH can also dissolve heavy metals, making the water toxic. Exhaust from car engines or the burning of coal causes acid rain, very high and harmful pH that winds up in streams. Snow melt may lower pH values.

Excessive salinity can be toxic to freshwater plants and animals. It can be unsafe for drinking, irrigation, or watering livestock. Excessive salinity can be caused by road de-icing, land development, clearing vegetation, agriculture, irrigation, leaking pipes, pools, and septic systems.

Conductivity tests detect the presence of contaminants such as sodium, chloride, nitrate, or sulphate. A change in levels of these dissolved elements over time can signal a change in water quality. These elements come from naturally dissolved minerals or human-made substances. Our thanks go out to Mr. Scheurer for his helpful and informative presentation, and to the SWCC for their dedication to our community and to the earth.

Barn and Pasture Rental in Woodstock MD

Selfcare barn & pasture for rent for up to 3 horses. Includes stalls, tack room, hay loft and run in area. Next to Patapsco State Park and river. Water and power included. Available late May 2021. Email Austin at jaybar50@yahoo.com

In Our Neighborhood

The Great 2021 Annual Clean Up

The annual Clean Up was a lot of fun this year, thanks to all of you who showed up masked, gloved and ready to work! The drive thru sign-up and supply pick-up worked well. Maybe we'll adapt this for future clean up events. It saves time and gets the workers out of the blocks fast! But we'll have to re-institute the refreshment table just for the value of the good old time visiting that happens after the work is done!

Our sincere thanks to St. Alphonsus Church for decades of support. Saturday April 10th was a quadruple event morning at the church. We were grateful for the use of the lower parking area when two services had to be scheduled at short notice. The fourth event involved a Boy Scout troop working at the preschool. After months of isolation, I was buoyed by the spirit of cooperation and community. Thank you St. Alphonsus Church for making this possible!

A shout out of appreciation to Officer Kristie Makowiecki and the Baltimore County Police Precinct 2 team that patrolled the roads to our keep volunteers safe. It was a noticeable presence that contributed greatly to the success of the event.

Heartfelt thanks to Laurie Schleicher, sister of our illustrious president Butch Oakman, for designing and producing the large attractive signs advertising our Clean Up. Laurie grew up here and we are grateful for her continued interest in the area and contribution to its preservation.

The community was able to give a concentrated effort for the removal of excessive accumulated trash along Ridge Road thanks to the F L Cooke and Sons flagging operation. This wouldn't have been at all successful apart from the hard work of these volunteers:

Jamie Cermak, Kevin Godfrey, Eric Hite, Phil Guarino,

Carl Wolfson, Merlowe Henry and Stephen Ferrandi

Old Court Adopt-A-Highway Team: Patrick Bavoil, Jim Raistrick, Renee Frank, Brigitte Hisky, Dana Weant, Jan and Kurt LaLomia, Grace LaLomia, Bob and Susie Reisdorf, Dave Cook, Jeannie Finnegan, Sophia DeGois and family, Greg Siekins

Hernwood Road Team: Laurie Donnelly, Corinne Chmel, Austin and Shelley Cohen, Billy Frizzell, Lisa and Steve Libowitz, Richard Strohmer, Dawn Randall, Brenda Strohmer, Bud Strohmer, Dee Strohmer

Granite Road Team: Julian Jones, Peter Malinovsky and Liz Lamping, Carol Byrd

Offutt Road Team: David Peterson, Andrew Grosko, Joyce and Jackie Myster, DeE Ha Roberson-Carter, John Creighton

Mardella Run Team: Terrence Shields, David Peteson, Sam Morant, Joyce and Jackie Myster, Reinhard Grzanna, Craig Mullins, Rhoda L Jones

Park Vista Team: Zulma Santiago, Tony and Kate Nueslein (picking up on Dogwood)

Davis Ave Team: Sandy Fryer, Dan Leibert, Tim Tucker

Wrights Mill Road Team: Richard and Gail Collins, who take care of this picturesque horseshoe road year round!

Boundless thanks to Butch Oakman and Cathy Wolfson for the heavy lifting! They were out at the crack of dawn installing 10 Prepare to Stop signs loaned to GPCA from F L Cooke and Sons. All morning they worked picking up the bags left along the roadside. Thanks to the drivers with pickup trucks who worked so hard!! Next year I'll be recruiting jumpers to relieve your burdens and improve on safety. Thanks to Bill Scullney, Patrik Bavoil, Cathy Wolfson, Butch Oakman and the wonderful neighbor in the red truck whose name I can't recall.

Special thanks to Zulma Santiago who welcomed everyone and handed out supplies to all who showed up. Our appreciation goes out to Bill Scullney who monitored the in-coming loads for prohibited or restricted items! On behalf of GPCA I want to say thanks for showing up and it was great to see you all again... face to face, albeit masked!

~Carol Link, Clean Up Chair

Reflections from Offutt Ridge Farm The Elusive, The Reclusive, The Silent

According to any of our neighbors there have always been great blue herons living in the stream. We see them fly over with their huge wingspan, but it is hard to see them in the stream. When they take off from the stream it seems that they rise vertically like the phoenix from the ashes, and when they land they circle and glide like a paraglider dropping down in a spiral.

Brenda had always wanted us to get a picture of one of them. How do you do it? Taking a picture of a flying bird is very difficult. Even if you have a camera with you, by the time you raise it, the bird is gone. There are only a few moments of opportunity to catch a picture of a blue heron flying over. I expect that they walk the

length of the stream, and then fly back home at the end of the day. I have taken many pictures of the sky.

Most birds are noisy. I wake up in the morning to hear the doves cooing. Cardinals, robins, wrens, bluebirds, and even hawks are loud. Of course, our domestic chickens and ducks get crazy rowdy at times. Not so much the herons. I don't think I have heard one. On YouTube you can see them making noise, but I have not heard them here. Maybe it is a defense since they are kind of helpless being in the water and exposed to predators that roam the stream edge.

Interestingly, the whole year that RES Company and others were working on the stream restoration, they never saw a heron. It as though the herons moved out while all the noise and commotion was going on. After RES was almost done I finally saw a heron back in the stream. We expect that the stream improvements will be beneficial for the herons.

The contractors did a biological stream survey by walking the stream, zapping electrical current to stun the critters, and then categorizing them. The results showed 6 different types of fish, all being tolerant in polluted waters, except for one, the sculpin variety. Feeding the information into the MD Indices of Biological Integrity gave the stream a rating of fair. The benthic macroinvertebrates, A.K.A. bugs, showed 7 different species and resulted in a poor rating on the MD IBI scale. Future such stream surveys will show if conditions are improving.

The stream is rated as acceptable for trout because of its temperature and other attributes. With the major project of removing the Bloede Dam in Catonsville in 2018, now fish can migrate up the Patapsco River. Our stream, Mardella Run, flows into Brice Run, which feeds into the Patapsco River in the Wright's Mill area. Historically, fish like shad have migrated up into the Patapsco River Valley from the Chesapeake Bay prior to dams stopping them. We now have the potential of fish migrating from the Chesapeake Bay all the way into Mardella Run.

All of this is encouraging for the herons living in Mardella Run. With so much of the flora out of the way at our stream, it is easier to catch a glimpse of the herons in the stream. With surrounding weeds and plants, the heron blend into the background, and it is often like "where's Waldo" to try to see them, even when you know they are there. All in all, the evasive and secretive habits

of the herons make it that much more exciting when we get to actually see one.

~John Creighton

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Local Zoning Updates:

Hernwood land fill:

By Order of the County Executive Hernwood Landfill has been designated as one of two closed Baltimore County landfills for solar arrays which are expected to generate 35% of county government's buildings and facilities electricity. SunPower Corp will supply the infrastructure and install and maintain it at a flat rate per kilowatt hour (kWh) over 25 years. The projects should be operational by 2023 are expected to generate 43 million kWh produced per year, sequestering an amount of carbon dioxide equal to 40,000 acres of forest. GPCA has a tentative commitment from the County Executive's office for a speaker at our June 14 meeting to address questions and concerns about a large scale solar facility in our back yard.

~Cathy Wolfson

There are also a number of current, significant development and land use activities occurring in our community and surrounding areas.

Mars-Lion One, LLC (Ridge Road Solar Facility) – Special Exception granted by Adm. Law Judge on 4/13.

Matterhorn Solar facility 2938 Hernwood Road – virtual Special Exception hearing held on April 20th, 10 AM. Too soon for decision at time of completing newsletter.

Assisted living facility at 9917 Liberty Road - Special Exception denied by Adm Law Judge 3/18

Patapsco Glen II Johnnycake Road 255 Townhouse units – virtual Special Exception hearing 4/29, 10 AM

Dogwood Rd/Lord Baltimore Dr (8+ acres) major condo & retail business development proposed – not yet filed with Baltimore County

Additional information can be found through Baltimore County Department of Permits, Approvals, and Inspections (PAI), Baltimore County Department of Planning, and Baltimore County Office of Administrative Hearings.

For zoning review and enforcement related to ongoing activities and/or property conditions, call 410-887-3391 for review inquiry or 410-887-3351 to file a complaint. Or visit: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Contact/permitszoning> And/or: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/permits/codeenforcement>.

~Kathy Skullney

I was reading past issues to see what was written to encourage residents to become GPCA members. See below for a poetic plea for people to “make their voices heard” by becoming a member.

What Kind of Member are You?

(originally published Sept 9, 1988 Issue #30)

Are you just content to have your name on the list,
Or are you active and the kind that would be
missed?

Do you stay at home and criticize and knock,
Or do you attend the meetings and mingle with
the flock?

Are you satisfied to be the kind that “just belong”,
Or do you take an active part to help the work
along?

Do you leave the work to just a few,
Or do you help the cause along and make things
click?

Joanne Dietz, (1931 – 2021)

President GPCA

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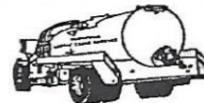
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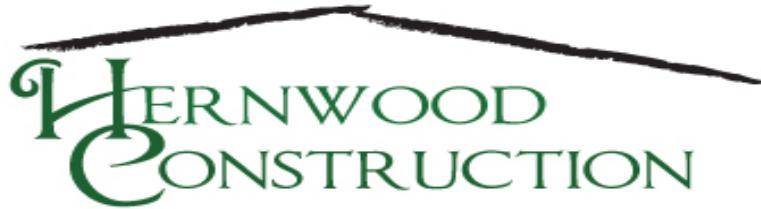
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Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Yearly membership dues:

Family - \$30 Individual - \$20

(Associate memberships are available for folks outside the GPCA boundaries and organizations)

I'm new in the community or, Renewal
Please make checks payable to GPCA and note the year of membership in the memo line

Mail completed application form and check to:

GPCA, PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163 or,

drop off/mail to Maribeth Diemer, 10625 St Paul Ave, Woodstock MD 21163



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

**April 10 - Community Cleanup 8am- noon
Pick up your vest and trash bags via drive-thru at St. Alphonsus and be SAFE!**

UPCOMING VIRTUAL MEETINGS SPEAKERS:

**April 12 @ 7:30 Small Watershed Committee Topic:
Why we measure what we measure.**

**May 10 @ 7:30 Western Sector County Planners
2030 Master Plan / Patapsco Granite Comm. Plan**

Details about how to join the virtual calls will be sent to the GPCA email group. To be added to the group and receive the agenda and zoom call in link Email: gpcap21163@gmail.com You can unsubscribe at any time.

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 Editor by the 20th of the month prior to publishing.

Payments for ads: Make check payable to GPCA and mail 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 for future publication.

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