



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #414

GPCA Newsletter

February 2022

Next Meeting: Monday, February 14th, 7:00 P.M. – Virtually via Zoom

**Guest Speaker – Robert O’Connor Baltimore County Chief Information Officer
Baltimore County’s My Neighborhood Mapping App. What is it and how to navigate it.**

*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 gpc21163@gmail.com to add your email address to the GPCA list.
Visit our Website at www.gpca.net*

GPCA 2022 Election Result

President – Cathy Wolfson
Vice President – Zulma Santiago
Treasurer – Maribeth Diemer
Secretary – Denise Maranto
Director – Butch Oakman (3-year term ending 2025)
Director Maurice Dixon (3-year term ending 2023)
Director Lisa Charyszn (3-year term ending 2024)

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From the editor’s desk



Dear Readers, we hope you enjoy reading this issue of the GPCA Newsletter. We want to bring you as much information as we could in the Newsletter. But hyperlinks do not work very well in printed media. Look out for the QR codes we provided for you to access the GPCA website and membership form. Please download the pdf of the newsletter from the GPCA website to access the hyperlinked text. Please feel free to send comments/suggestions to EditorGPCANewsletter@gmail.com. We love to hear from you. HAPPY 2022 & HAPPY YEAR OF THE TIGER!

Greater Patapsco Community Association 2022 Membership Campaign



We ask for your membership but you may wonder what does GPCA do for you?

Here's a short list:

- GPCA is your watchdog for land use issues that are in conflict with the GPCA mission (as stated on the back page of each newsletter). Do you know about the county's quadrennial zoning cycle, the Master Plan or what is a request for a Special Zoning Exception? We do! Should you need to testify at public hearings and advocate for our community? We do that for you too!!
- GPCA provides speakers at our monthly meetings on topics ranging from invasive plants to local history, and a lot more.
- GPCA's Small Watershed Conservation Committee (SWCC) supports the health of our wells through monthly testing of our local streams which can provide early evidence of contaminants that could percolate into your drinking water. Bacteria from contaminated soil or sewage are the most concerning. Using borrowed equipment, analyses conducted periodically by the SWCC have revealed the presence of unwanted bacteria in Brice Run which flows from Offutt Rd. near Liberty Rd. to the Patapsco River. With your membership support, the SWCC will soon be able to afford to test for bacteria on a monthly basis with its own equipment and identify their source!
- GPCA publishes this monthly newsletter to keep all residents aware of issues that impact our community.

We are pleased to announce that ***YOU FINALLY HAVE THE OPTION OF JOINING OR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE AT WWW.GPCA.NET***. Alternatively, enclosed with this issue is an envelope to send with your dues and membership coupon on page 7.

Property sold briskly in our area in 2021 and we want to extend a warm welcome to all our new residents.

Our association is only as strong as its members make it. We hope you will see the value in joining GPCA!

~Cathy Wolfson, *President*

Small Watershed Conservation Committee (SWCC)



The SWCC invited Diana Devers, Environmental Program Manager of the Patapsco Heritage Greenway (PHG), to give a presentation on invasive plants at the January 10, General Meeting of the GPCA.

Note: Ms. Devers has given us permission to post her presentation slides on the GPCA website. This is a concise introduction to many invasive plants you'll encounter on or near your property.

Ms. Devers' presentation illustrated how individual invasive plants outcompete our native plants and the impact it has on wildlife. Ms. Devers suggested tools and methods to remove invasive plants safely and effectively. Finally, she recommended some native plants to replant in the area where invasive plants have been removed. She recommended that the cleared invasive plants be bagged for trash removal as most seeds will survive composting.

It can be a somewhat slow and frustrating task to remove invasive plants but it is worth the effort to maintain the diversity and beauty of our native plants and wildlife. This time of the year is an excellent opportunity to remove English Ivy from trees. In winter, it is one of the few green plants you will see. Over time the ivy will weaken and kill the tree. To kill the English Ivy cut out a section of the vine at chest height, then cut again a foot lower to create a gap and then allow it to die (See slides). Please do not pull the ivy out of the tree as you may damage the tree or bring a limb down on yourself!

PHG has a volunteer invasive removal program. It is a great resource for the GPCA area. More information can be obtained and Ms. Devers can be contacted

directly through the PHG website at <https://patapsco.org/>.

Remember: An excellent online resource for all things to do with plants and gardening in Maryland is the [University of MD Extension - Home and Garden Center website](#).

~Bob Teller, *Small Watershed Committee*

Land Use/Zoning Update



The current status of active development cases affecting our community and in which GPCA has participated is as follows:

Patapsco Glen II Development on Johnnycake Road – the Board of Appeals (BoA) has scheduled the public deliberation of the Reconsideration Motion for February 17 at 9:00 a.m. Access will be posted on the BoA website the night before.

The BoA variances appeal decision was issued on January 5, and approval was affirmed by a 2-1 vote. The significant legal objections raised by GPCA were not directly addressed, and GPCA has filed a Motion for Reconsideration.

Patapsco Fields PUD on Johnnycake Road – GPCA has filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the approval confirmation decision issued by the Board, for which there has not yet been a response.

Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery on Ridge Rd. The Plan for the proposed cemetery has been submitted for a public Administrative Hearing, with the expected date to be early to mid-March. GPCA intends to participate and will publish the date as soon as it is known, and urges all interested members to do so as well.

One Heart, Inc. Mental Health Services on Dogwood Road – no further action taken on petition or any change to report.

~Kathy Skullney, *GPCA Zoning Chair*

Community Cleanup



GPCA annual roadside clean-up is scheduled on

Saturday April 2nd

8 am to 12 noon @ St. Alphonsus Church Lower parking lot.

We will set up drive-through sign up again this year. Certificates will be available for students needing service hours. GPCA will provide safety vests and trash bags. 4 dumpsters will be on site to collect household trash.

- NO hazardous or flammable materials,
- NO paints or oil,
- NO refrigerators or air conditioners,
- NO electronics (computer equipment, TVs, VCRs, phones etc.)
- NO brush/yard waste
- YES to drop off old tires at the pull out on Old Court Road (across from Edrich Lumber yard)

Remember to show our colors by wearing a GPCA T-shirt! Please return your safety vest when done. If you don't have a GPCA T-shirt yet, they will be available on the day of cleanup!

~Carol Link, *Community Cleanup*

Reflections from Offutt Ridge Farm



Old Mother Hubbard

Lately when I go to stores I have been asking workers what shortages they are experiencing. Like what things are they having trouble getting? When I was at Tractor Supply, the clerk told me that they had waited a long time for deer corn and that certain kinds of cat food were not available. During COVID last year, Costco was very limited in the kind of Gatorade they had. They used to have a variety of Gatorade, but last year most of the time they just had the orange stuff. Costco people told me that the factory was having trouble making it due to the pandemic.

One of the issues is that we have been spoiled for so long that we are surprised at not getting exactly what we want. We want a certain brand and a certain size and a certain flavor. A while ago, I had the desire to get some Oreo cookies, which I had not eaten in a long time. I went to the cookie section and was amazed at how many different types of Oreos there were. It was like I was Rip van Winkle and had been asleep for 100 years and just walked into the Oreo section. I had no idea.

There are different reasons for why there could be shortages. When supply chain problems really appeared in the last few months, the first story was that since COVID lockdowns were over, a surge in demand created shortages. The next story was that all of those things were out in container ships off the coast of California. Truckers were not working or had changed jobs. Another explanation is that wherever the product is made or processed is short of labor. Another is that the raw materials needed for something are not available. Then when new COVID variants came out it was because so many workers were out sick that things were drastically slowed. No, maybe it was all the unvaccinated people who were being fired for not taking the vaccine. Wait, wait, it was because people had lost jobs or stayed home with their children when zoom classes were going on and then they never came back to work. How about all the government money that was given out for unemployment or stimulus? There is obviously no shortage of excuses for why we have supply chain issues.

Inflation is a shortage of value in our money. I heard a very smart person say that when you print trillions of dollars everyone except the Fed chairman knows that it will cause inflation. Shrinkflation is another trick to fool consumers, where the price of a package stays the same but the package is just smaller or contains less. I keep waiting for someone to change the volume of a gallon so that we think the price of gasoline is not really going up.

The one thing that I have not suffered from is a shortage of good neighbors. Neighbors bring me food,

and other things. My neighbors watch out for my two dogs and let me know if there is a problem. If a neighbor sends me a text and I do not respond reasonably soon, I am checked upon to make sure that I have not been kicked in the head by a horse. And those around me are always willing to help whenever I ask for it. I guess I can put up with all those other less important shortages.

~John Creighton

The Science Corner



Scientists speak a funny language. My first encounter with the language of science was one I fortunately quickly recovered from. As a microbiology student, I had to learn the Latin names of innumerable bacterial species to be able to progress in my studies. High school Latin had not endeared me to the ancient language one bit. *Rosa, rosa, rosam...*, went the first Latin declension and Jacques Brel's song on the radio. *Aggregatibacter actinomycetemcomitans*, *Clostridiodes difficile...*, went my microbiology instructors about bacteria familiar with both ends of our digestive tract.

Although I am now better versed in the language of science, many others who have not warmed the benches of university amphitheatres for a few decades, have trouble understanding the plethora of scientific terms simply because they are not scientists. Add to that the complexity of the scientific methods that use these terms, and you have a recipe for very poor communication between scientists and the general public. Scientific research is mostly funded by dollars from taxpayers unfamiliar with the language of science who very often do not understand what they are paying for. It is thus a responsibility of scientists to explain in plain words the science they perform especially when it has direct implications on public life, for instance public health. The pandemic has perhaps more than ever before highlighted the communication gap that exists between scientists and the general public and it has eroded the trust between the two.

One example that comes to mind is the different meanings scientists give to the words 'infection' and 'disease'. For the general public, these two words are often interchangeable. However, they are not the same to scientists who study infectious diseases. To a scientist, infection represents the growth of a pathogenic microbe in an anatomical site in a human (or animal). Disease occurs only when infection is accompanied by symptoms: for instance, lesions that are visible to the patient, or pain, or both. However, many infections are asymptomatic as the pandemic has so well illustrated.

A very good example of why the scientific language matters is the confusion that reigned soon after the coronavirus vaccines were certified. Why did so many vaccinated people still get infected if the vaccines truly worked? The urgency to develop a vaccine against this virus was such that scientists did not spend time looking for a vaccine that would protect against infection. They looked for a vaccine that could protect against disease, and particularly against the worst COVID-19 symptoms that required ICU, intubation, ventilation. Sterilizing immunity, as it is called, that entirely cures an infection, is rather difficult to achieve with any vaccine anyway. The endpoints of the clinical studies for all COVID vaccines were protection against disease, with protection against infection a bonus if it happened. What anti-COVID vaccination does effectively is that it either eliminates COVID symptoms or greatly reduces them, i.e., it does what it was primarily designed to achieve. Any question you have about the language of science please send to the GPCA Newsletter editorial staff!

~Patrik Bavoil

Bulk Item Collection

Baltimore County is initiating a semi-annual collection of bulk items such as furniture appliances and electronics. For instructions on what is acceptable and to determine your bulk pickup dates visit

https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/publicworks/solid_waste/bulkitems.html

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

Small order pick-up: Saturday, April 2, 2022, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.

2 ways to order:
1. Fill out the form below and return with payment to the address listed below.
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