



# GPCA

**GREATER PATAPSCO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

**Issue #415**

**GPCA Newsletter**

**March 2022**

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

**Guest Speaker – Peter Franchot Comptroller of Maryland  
Maryland Economy, Tax Season and Financial Opportunities**

*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](mailto:gpc21163@gmail.com) to add your email address to the GPCA list.  
Visit our Website at [www.gpc.net](http://www.gpc.net)*

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## From the editors' desk



Dear Readers,

A few of you may have noticed some minor changes in the layout of the February Newsletter. What has not changed are the efforts of a group of volunteers (mostly ladies) to print, fold, apply stickers and post to every household in the GPCA community. As our community has grown, they now manage ~6400 pages, ~13 reams of copy paper, weighing ~64 pounds, month after month. Their dedication has not changed since **1986!** GPCA is committed to keep the whole community informed of new from the legislature and developments important to our beloved neighborhood. Please go online to learn more about the GPCA boundary update. We will need your vote in April. Thanks to Laurie Donnelly for contributing an article informing us how to maintain our septic systems. Please keep sending us your comments, your favorite recipe, tips for recycling or the best type of tomato to plant in the garden. We love to hear from you!

## Do you love taking pictures of wildlife?



**Patapsco State Park offers  
Friends in Focus  
March 18<sup>th</sup>, 3PM @  
Soldiers' Delight Visitors' Center**

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or online at [bit.ly/3wusZ23](https://bit.ly/3wusZ23)



Your Editorial Team  
[EditorGPCANewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:EditorGPCANewsletter@gmail.com).

## **Baltimore County Redistricting**



In the federal lawsuit filed by the NAACP and others, the federal Court has granted the preliminary injunction prohibiting the use of Baltimore County's 2021 redistricting map for any "future elections." The Court also ordered the County to redraw the redistricting map with two "majority-Black Districts", either by redrawing the existing Districts or adding "an additional County District in which Black voters otherwise have an opportunity to elect a representative of their choice...." The new map must be filed by March 8, 2022. The case is identified as *Baltimore County NAACP, et al. v. Baltimore County, Maryland, et al*, Civil Action No. 21-cv-03232-LKG, U. S. District Court for the District of Maryland. More information and a copy of the lawsuit and Order can be found at [www.marylandmatters.org](http://www.marylandmatters.org).

## **Senate Bill 557 – Eminent Domain Proposal**



State Senators Delores Kelley and Charles Sydnor have introduced Bill 557 authorizing Baltimore County to exercise powers to acquire, develop or redevelop, and dispose of certain land or property located in West Baltimore County for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. The bill authorizes the County Executive and County Council of Baltimore County to establish, by law, the West Baltimore County Redevelopment Authority. Targeted at blighted areas within the boundaries of Liberty Road, Rolling Road, Baltimore National Pike and the city line and all contiguous properties with the exception of the county/city boundary, the Bill grants the Authority to exercise the power of eminent domain. If passed, it could end the stalemate we know as Security Square Mall. Go to <https://legiscan.com/MD/bill/SB557/2022> to access the Bill in its entirety or to follow it through the General Assembly. A hearing on the Bill is scheduled for March 15, 2022 at 1 pm in Annapolis.

## **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 publicly deliberated GPCA's Reconsideration Motion for the Plan approval on February 17 at 9:00 am, but has not yet published its decision. The Board of Appeals revised and re-issued its appeal decision on the Variances Petition on January 25, 2022 as its original Opinion and Order had not been correctly stated. The approval affirmation remained per 2-1 vote. GPCA has filed a Motion for Reconsideration. The Board has not responded as yet with a deliberation date.

**Patapsco Fields PUD** on Johnnycake Road - GPCA's Motion for Reconsideration of the Board of Appeals' approval confirmation decision will be publicly deliberated on March 3, 2022 at 9 a.m.

**Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery** on Ridge Rd - In an effort to accurately reflect GPCA's position in the Planning Department's comments, Joe Wiley from the County Planning Dept. visited the site on February 14, 2022 with David Berg, his attorney, and Zoning Chair Kathy Skullney, and was able to take a series of drone pictures. Mr. Wiley shared the pictures and discussed GPCA's participation thus far with the Board at its meeting on February 21, 2022. The pictures, with some identification, will be posted on the GPCA website at [www.gpca.net](http://www.gpca.net).

~Kathy Skullney, GPCA Zoning Chair



**March is Women's History Month**

**Let's thank all the ladies that volunteer their time folding and mailing the four-page GPCA Newsletters to >1600 household every month!**

## GPCA Boundary Update



The GPCA Boundary has been redrawn for the updating of the GPCA Community Plan to be part of the Master Plan 2030. The changed southern boundary is reflected, as well as areas now designated as included in

Patapsco Valley Heritage Area, and the entire boundary description now includes greater specificity.

The GPCA Board has approved submitting the updated description and map to the membership for a vote to approve the updated boundary and include it in the GPCA Constitution, which has not been done before. To do so requires membership approval. The description and the map will be sent out by email and will be posted on the GPCA website at [www.gpca.net](http://www.gpca.net). It will be discussed at the March 14<sup>th</sup> General Meeting, and final approval will be as of the April 11<sup>th</sup> General Meeting.

## Septic Systems and Our Water Quality



As a homeowner, there are several steps you can take to maintain your septic system and prevent it from impacting nearby water sources. If a septic system is not working properly or is located too close to a drinking

water well, contaminants from the wastewater can end up in drinking water. Here are some things we all should be doing:

**Don't use your toilet as a trashcan.** Any chemicals or medicines that you flush down the toilet could end up in surface water and well water. You can drop off any types of medications at any Baltimore County Police Precinct; drug drop boxes are located at all 10 police precincts and offer a safe and environmentally friendly way to dispose of prescription medications. Household chemicals can be dropped off at the Baltimore County Central Acceptance Facility in Cockeysville. Check [gpca.net](http://gpca.net) under Resources for links to more disposal sites.

**Properly maintain your septic system.** Your tank should be pumped every 1-3 years (depending on usage). Regularly inspecting and pumping your septic

tank protects your system and minimizes the risk of failure. Consider that all of the water a household sends down its pipes winds up in its septic system. The more water a household conserves, the less water enters the septic system. Efficient water use improves the operation of a septic system and reduces the risk of failure. Septic system failure is one of the leading sources of surface water pollution, contributing to **reduced oxygen levels**, creating dead zones in local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

**Protect your drain field** (the component of your septic system that removes contaminants from the liquid that emerges from your septic tank). Never park or drive on your drain field. Plant trees at least 25 feet from your drain field to keep roots from growing into your septic system.

**Use phosphate-free cleaning products.** Today's **phosphate-free cleaners** demonstrate the same level of cleaning ability and performance as the older formulas without environmental concerns. Using household cleaning products that are phosphate-free reduces the total amount of phosphorus in wastewater. While phosphates themselves aren't toxic, the accumulation of phosphorus in the environment has been shown to contribute to algae bloom or a rapid overgrowth of algae. These algae blooms can produce toxins that can pose health risks to aquatic wildlife, terrestrial animals, and even humans.

~Laurie Donnelly, *Small Watershed Committee*

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## Reflections from Offutt Ridge Farm



### One Degree

In the winter some things are more difficult in the cold weather. Some days are worse than others. Because I have many water buckets and containers for chickens and horses, if the water freezes my life becomes more demanding.

I have noticed that there is a big difference in temperature between 32 degrees F and 33 degrees F. If the temperature is below freezing overnight, but warms up during the day it is not too bad. I just need to clear or empty the ice from the buckets and put fresh water and it is OK. However, if I have a day when the temperature is below freezing all day as well as overnight life becomes complicated. Horses and poultry really need to have access to water to be healthy.

It is surprising that one degree of anything can make so much difference in my life. If I lived in a climate that was consistently below freezing, I would upgrade to heated buckets and better equipment, but because of our mild winters it is hard to justify.

When we moved to the Granite/Woodstock area from Columbia, I would put out garden plants at the same time in spring as I did in Howard County. Plants were consistently frosted. At some point, I realized that the microclimate that I am in is colder. When the temperature drops overnight, it is 5-10 degrees colder at my house than when I drive up to Liberty Road and see the temperatures there. The daily high temperatures are not much different, but it seems the lows overnight are able to drop down more at our location.

I also notice that temperatures are 5-10 degrees lower outside of an outbuilding like a barn than inside. I know that much of the cooling at night is caused by heat radiating from surfaces to the sky. So on a cold clear night outside, objects like windshield on cars or plants lose heat upwards to the sky. That is why nurseries or orchards use smoke pots or misters to interfere with the radiation loss and prevent plants from frosting.

Living in heated and air-conditioned houses and traveling in climate controlled cars, we do not have to think about the weather too much. Heavy snow, freezing rain, and freezing surfaces make us pay attention to the forecast. In general, it seems that our

lives become more separated from nature, from our outside surroundings and our world. There is value in feeling our outside world. I am slow to get outside some cold mornings, but then I realize that it is a gift to be able to do that -to see and feel the world and how the light, the temperature, the wind, and the smells all change. When I let my chickens, ducks, and horses out in the morning, they go charging outside to attack the world. That is the kind of attitude that we should have.

One of my favorite authors is Malcolm Gladwell. He wrote a book called "The Tipping Point." He studied people that excelled in certain areas like sports, science, business or music. In those cases, persons work at it for years diligently, and at some point suddenly they reach a record breaking level of performance. Ernest Hemingway in "The Sun Also Rises", wrote- "Things happen two ways, gradually and suddenly." We all have tipping points in our lives, where a small difference suddenly changes something for us. In my little world of farm animals, one of my tipping points is the one degree of temperature between liquid and solid water.

~John Creighton

## The Science Corner



### 'ome, sweet 'ome!

Yes, you have read right. 'ome. No. No, it's not my murderous tendencies toward the English language. It is not my funky French accent either. 'ome is a very popular suffix these days that scientists like to append to any word they run across, or so it seems. 'ome means a 'complete set of [fill-the-blank] within a defined boundary. So the genome of an individual human is the complete set of his/her genes, about 25,000 in the average human. The proteome is the complete set of proteins, at least 20,000 in a human, anywhere from 500 to 5,000 in bacteria, only 29 in SARS-CoV2, the virus that causes COVID-19. There is also the transcriptome, metabolome, lipidome, glycome, ...et ceterome.

And then there is the human microbiome, the complete set of microbes living in an individual human. No two humans have the same microbiome.

In fact, the microbiome of a human changes continuously, day to day, within a day, depending on what you breathe, what you eat, who you kiss, and more. And it varies depending on where you look in the human body. There is an oral microbiome, a skin microbiome, a genital microbiome and a gut microbiome, by far the most numerous and the most important to human health. All in all, on average, there are about 10 times more microbes in any human than there are human cells. We are not majority owners of our own body! So next time you talk with Joe or Jane, you actually may not know who you are talking to: is it Joe facing me or *Bacteroides fragilis*? Jane or *Lactobacillus crispatus*?

Joke aside, our microbiome is one of our most important defense against infections. To infect any of us, pathogenic microbes need to first outcompete our resident microbiome, even before they have to contend with our immune system. Most importantly, our microbiome helps us to digest food and provide nutrients that we could not acquire any other way. It is a happy marriage: the microbes benefit from living in

us as much as we do living with them. Microbes are truly our best friends. All a microbe 'wants' to do is to make two microbes. Only a stressed microbe can potentially become dangerous. This commonly happens when a microbe somehow is away from its natural home. For instance, the infamous Jack-in-the-box *E. coli* strain that killed kids back in 1993, is very friendly when in the gut of a cow. But when it contaminates an undercooked hamburger, it can kill you. Please respect and care for your microbiome by eating and living healthy. Use antibiotics only when needed as prescribed by your physician. Antibiotics save lives on a daily basis. However, when you take antibiotics, you also wipe out a large part of your good microbiome, which then needs to reconstitute itself over time. That window of microbial wipe-out is sometimes an opportunity for other microbes which are naturally antibiotic resistant, to emerge out of seemingly nowhere and cause serious disease. Please be kind to your microbiome!

~ Patrik Bavoil

### You have an air fryer?



Make these **SPICED CASHEWS** for a healthy snack.

#### Ingredient:

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp lime zest
- 1 Tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp garlic salt
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- pinch cayenne pepper (optional)
- 2 cups raw cashews

1. Preheat air fryer to 300°F. Whisk together the first 7 ingredients and cayenne (if using). Add cashews; toss to coat. Pour mixture into air-fryer basket. Air-fry 12 minutes or until golden brown, stirring once halfway through.
2. Spread cashews on a baking sheet or large plate. Let stand 20 minutes to cool and crisp up. Store cashews in an airtight container at room temperature up to 1 week. Serves 8.

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Annual membership dues:  
Joint (2 members in same household) - \$30 Individual - \$20  
Associate (non-voting membership) - \$10  
(Available to those outside the membership area and businesses)

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Please make checks payable to GPCA and note the year of membership in the memo line  
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PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



**NEW FOR 2022 JOIN ONLINE at [www.gpca.net](http://www.gpca.net)**

**Attend our meeting March 14, 2022 at 7 pm via Zoom**

***Topic: Maryland Economy, Tax Season, Financial Opportunities***

***Guest Speaker: Peter Franchot, MD Comptroller***

**Details about how to join the virtual call will be sent to the GPCA email group. To be added to the group and receive the agenda and zoom call-in link, email [gpca21163@gmail.com](mailto:gpca21163@gmail.com). You can unsubscribe at any time.**

*GPCA 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. The Association shall provide a forum for all residents to express their concerns and interests and shall attempt to provide informative and interesting programs that will keep members informed and better able to address any of their concerns or problems. The Association's objective is also to foster a spirit of community among the residents. The Association will only become directly involved in matters which affect the safety and welfare of the community as a whole. This involvement will be directed at actions which violate existing laws or regulations or which will assist in implementing new laws or regulations to further and achieve our objectives.*

#### **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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