



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #416

GPCA Newsletter

April 2022

**Next Meeting: Monday, April 11th, 7:00 P.M. – Virtually via Zoom**

**Guest Speaker – Dr. Howard Berg**

**Serenity Ridge: Proposed Natural Burial Cemetery and Arboretum on Ridge Road.**

**What's next?**

*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.gpca.net](http://www.gpca.net)*

### Important! For April General Meeting



The GPCA Boundary (map and description) has been updated and is now posted on the GPCA website. A proposal to include the Boundary in the GPCA Constitution as Article 1A will be presented to the membership for discussion and vote at the meeting on April 11. We need and urge all current (dues paid) members to vote. Please visit our [website](#), look under **Who We Are**, click on **Boundaries Definition**.

### What's inside?

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### From the editors' desk



April is National Volunteers Month. How fitting that we have Marty Kelley's and Bob Teller's article describing their volunteering experiences working for our community. This month, some of you would have received an additional copy of a completely different looking GPCA Newsletter in your email box. You will be able to read this digital Newsletter on your mobile, computer or tablet anywhere. You will also have the option to print if you prefer to read it on paper. Do you know you can always find current and past GPCA Newsletters at [GPCA.net](http://GPCA.net)? We believe this is a more sustainable and environmentally conscious way to deliver GPCA Newsletters to you. If you have not done so, **please submit your email address at [www.GPCA.net](http://www.GPCA.net) or email [GPCA21163@gmail.com](mailto:GPCA21163@gmail.com)**. If you have new neighbors, please encourage them to join online to be kept informed about what is happening in our community. As always, feel free to send your comments to [EditorGPCANewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:EditorGPCANewsletter@gmail.com). We love to hear from you!!

~ Editorial Team

### From the GPCA President



In response to your many requests, the GPCA Newsletter will be going digital after the June edition. We have our Editors, Ru-ching Hsia and Patrik Bavoil to thank for creating the new format which will be available on our website. It provides an interactive experience with the newsletter which provides links to related topics and is posted in a scrolling format that makes reading from your phone or tablet a breeze. Thanks to the many hands who worked to get our print Newsletters into 1,600+ households month after month, year after year, for 30+ years. As you can see from Marty Kelley's article herein, it was quite an undertaking but well worth the effort to keep you informed about issues in our community. Now you can keep abreast of our activities through our [website](#) and [facebook page](#).

Very sadly, we share the news that our long serving Secretary, Denise Maranto has serious health issues which require her to retire from her service on the GPCA board. She has recorded the minutes of our meetings diligently for the past 6 years. Denise is also Rice's Lane's community activist and works determinedly to maintain the tranquility of her neighborhood which borders the Urban Rural Demarcation Line (URDL). Her absence is sorely felt and board members have been rotating recording duties. Consequently, we are searching for someone to assume Denise's duties. If you are interested in serving on the board, please [contact me](#) or any member listed on the last page of this newsletter. Denise got a good deal of satisfaction from her service and so will you.

And FINALLY on **June 13**, we will resume hosting our general meetings at the Granite Presbyterian Church. Stay tuned for more details about our program for that evening. We look forward to seeing you again, live and in person at last!! Happy Spring!

~ *Cathy Wolfson, President*



**THANK YOU** for your support of our community and funding the mission of our organization. There are 113 paid members compared to 106 at this time in 2021.

Please find the current GPCA member's list on **page 7**. [Join online](#) at GPCA.net.

### Baltimore County Redistricting



As of the date of this Newsletter, the federal Court has not yet ruled on the redrawn map submitted by Baltimore County. The plaintiffs have challenged the redrawn map as only marginally changed, and thereby failing to meet the Court's order. They have asked the Court to reject it in favor of more substantial changes. 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).

### 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 on Johnnycake Road:**

Development Plan – Opinion and Order of approval as affirmed by the Board of Appeals per the February 17 deliberations. Any further actions would have to be filed in the Baltimore County Circuit Court within 30 days of the date of the written opinion, not yet received.

Variances Petition - GPCA has filed a Motion for Reconsideration of the Opinion and Order revised on January 25, 2022. The Board will publicly deliberate the Motion on March 29, 9:00 – 9:30 am. More info: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/appeals/hearings-decisions-minutes>, or call 410-887-3180.

**Patapsco Fields PUD** on Johnnycake Road – GPCA's Motion for Reconsideration of the Board of Appeals' approval confirmation decision was deliberated on March 3, 2022 at 9 am. After a consideration lasting 12 minutes and dismissing GPCA's legal argument, the Board verbally reaffirmed the Administrative Judge's approval. The written decision is not yet published.

**Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery (Berg property)** on Ridge Rd – Petition for Special Exception Case No. 2022-0007 X, will have an administrative hearing on April 4, 2022, 1:30-3:30 pm. with virtual public participation. Call 410-887-3391

or visit <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/adminhearings/devzoninghearings.html>.

Site drone pictures, each with map of shot, are posted on the GPCA website at [www.gpca.net](http://www.gpca.net).

### **Changing Zoning Regulations**

It is important to note that numerous zoning changes are being proposed by the County Council, e.g., a “local distillery” permitted in Ruxton, live music and performance use for former theaters and “food preparation facilities”, both as part of commercial revitalization, and most notable – Board of Appeals making virtual hearings permanent as a matter of discretion by the Board. Staying tuned....

~Kathy Skullney, GPCA Zoning Chair

### **Thoughts from your Neighbor**



#### **The monthly making of the GPCA Newsletter**

HOW'D I GET HERE? You'll find it interesting or bor-r-r-r-ing!

I begin with a deadline: the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, precisely. Once the Editor has completed the layout, with articles and ads, I am passed onto the Publisher. Approximately 1,614 copies of each page are run-off on the duplicator and sorted into zip codes: 530 copies for RR#1 and 503 for RR#5 in Granite; 458 copies for RR#5 and 93 for RR#6 in Windsor Mill. Approximately 30 are mailed 1<sup>st</sup> class. Meanwhile, the Coordinator sends an email reminding the volunteers of the prep date, the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month. They, in turn RSVP. It's good to have 4 people per table, and there are 4 work-tables.

9:00 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month, the Publisher delivers the Newsletters to the Granite Church Hall. The volunteers arrive @ 9:30 and begin to collate, fold, and place 2 stickers at the top of each Newsletter, sealing it, as required by the Postal Service. The Coordinator fills out the PS Form 3602-R, places the appropriate label on each bulk mail tray. Everyone gets to work, ...they all help one another, ...they are a dedicated group of volunteers!

Once completed, the call is made to another volunteer who delivers the 4 trays and the paperwork to the Ellicott City Post Office, where bulk mail is accepted 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. However, they go to lunch

between 1:00 and 2:00, and do not accept bulk mail then! Translation: accepted 3 hours only. With the completion of the above, we anticipate the Newsletter arriving in your home in time for the monthly GPCA meeting. Now that you are aware, please thank those dedicated folks when you see them: Patrik Bavoil, Eileen Ciechanowski, Gail & Richard Collins, Wayne Dell, Maribeth Diemer, Sandy Fallin, Evalyn Garvin, Erin & Phil Guarino, Merlowe Henry, Ru-ching Hsia, Karen Koebel, Jan Lalomia, Lisa Libowitz, Sue Meekins, Nadine Merkle, Murf Moorfield, Zulma Santiago-Ortiz, Kathy & Bill Skullney, Arlene Wilder, and Cathy Wolfson. Dear Gussy, I hope I have not forgotten anyone.

Now, it's up to you! Please read the GPCA Newsletter, pay the dues, ...participate. Thank You!

~ Marty Kelley, Newsletter Coordinator



### **Would you... volunteer?**

I grew up and went to college in the Midwest. Folks there are fairly accepting of silence at social gatherings. And I never got to be comfortable at polite conversation or small talk. Most of my interests require only relatively brief periods of social interaction – reading, woodworking, photography, and watercolor painting. I'm an introvert – I'll admit it.

But I discovered another side to myself. I worked 37 years in healthcare. Lots of patients and families to interact with. Then literally hundreds of coworkers with various skill sets and range of personalities. But if one is open and a little lucky, a very special form of teamwork comes into existence. The last 8 years I worked in the Emergency Department. A patient's urgent needs often required the coming together of various professionals with special skills - NOW! I often observed the team effort usually resulted in an outcome much better than the sum of all our individual efforts. It is a very special feeling to be a part of and see what good flourishes from “us” coming together for a purpose. This positive emotion is hard to define – but I'll try with “it's a feeling of an inner glow and awe at what WE just made possible”. I miss that feeling more than anything after retiring.

But after stepping it up in my volunteer activities I sometimes get that inner glow feeling again. When I first started to form the Small Watershed Conservation Committee (SWCC) – I didn't know if it would be possible or that we could gather the skill sets

needed to make it successful. The request went out a few times in meetings and the Newsletter. A few people expressed interest and shared what they might be able to do. I was truly amazed to say the least; here is a short list of what they brought to the committee:

- Advanced research, writing, and editing skills
- Advanced knowledge of aquatic life
- Intimate on the ground knowledge of our watersheds and potential sampling sites
- Fabrication of underwater probe containers with fastening systems
- Data collection then, extensive analysis and reporting
- Grant application skills
- Organizational skills, and so much more!

Amazing! Who knew there were community members with such skills? And just for the asking.

Most of us support causes we believe in. We make donations. Which is a good thing that makes us feel good. But being a volunteer in the GPCA can kick that up higher. You'll not only do something for yourself, but you will be doing it for your community. It'll turn you from being in a "them" situation into an "us" situation. Help making your community better for everyone. <https://www.gpca.net/volunteer-opportunities/> lists some volunteers possibilities. If nothing strikes your interest, reach out to the communications chair or a board member to discuss what skills you have to offer or what you might like to try. Investigating doesn't mean a commitment.

The GPCA only exists because of volunteers. These volunteers have all the many demands in their lives you have. They, like you, must decide the time and effort they can give to volunteering.

I can't guarantee you'll get the "inner glow" but you won't know unless you give it a try. Investigate!

~ *Bob Teller, SWCC Chairperson*

## The Science Corner



### **Herd Immunity**

A century ago, a vet in Kansas by the name of George Potter was concerned by waves of spontaneous miscarriage in livestock, still today a major industry in the state. This was caused

by a highly transmissible infection that he likened to "a fire, which, if fuel is not constantly added, soon dies

down." He reasoned that livestock growers should keep cows that had been infected (immune to reinfection), slaughter all others, and not bring in new cows. Newly born calves would then be raised to healthy adults and the Kansas cattle industry would be saved. It worked and the concept of 'herd immunity' was born!

The idea reached Europe during WWII, at a time when epidemic waves of deadly diseases such as diphtheria, polio, smallpox and typhoid were causing many deaths throughout Europe. There were striking parallels between how these diseases progressed in humans and how miscarriage waves had progressed in Kansas livestock. So the term 'herd immunity' stuck, not because scientists had a low opinion of their fellow humans, but simply because it was first conceived by vets.

How does it work? Think of a continent-size pinball machine where the silver ball is the infectious microbe and the bumpers represent susceptible individuals. Once hit by the ball, a bumper is infected and magically disappears below the surface, and to kill all the fun, you are not allowed to use the flippers. If you shoot the ball hard enough, it will hit many bumpers that immediately disappear until the silver ball goes out of play. If you shoot again and again, at some point, hitting the remaining bumpers will become less and less frequent. When a bumper is hardly ever hit, you will have reached "herd immunity" to the silver ball! The number of bumpers matters most: more bumpers equal more hits by the ball, more opportunities for infection. And the speed of the ball matters too: a faster ball is more likely to bounce into more bumpers, like a more transmissible microbe is likely to infect more people.

What worked well with cows in Kansas and with my imaginary pinball machine was never going to work with humans and COVID. This virus is too easily transmitted and there are far too many non-immune targets for the virus to choose from. Meanwhile at your next barbecue, please tip your cap to the good Dr Potter for saving Kansas livestock!

~*Patrik Bavoil*



**Starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, Plastic bags will no longer be accepted for yard waste material collection.**

### **The Granite Historical Society Spring Hike**

The Granite Historical Society would like to invite you to our spring hike for 2022. The destination for the hike will be the Dorsey Railroad Tunnel, a wonderful piece of stonework dating from 1906. We will hike from



Wright’s Mill Road to the Patapsco River along Brice Run and then follow state park trails north to the tunnel, a total distance of about a mile and a half. Along the way, we’ll see the Brice Run railroad bridge, another great piece of stonework, and time permitting, we’ll tour the remains of the millrace that powered Wright’s Mill in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and before that, Evan’s Mill). We then drive to Wright’s Mill Road where parking has been arranged on the private property of one of our members.

If you would like to join us, please email [john.ghs@fullduplex.com](mailto:john.ghs@fullduplex.com). Those who plan to hike with us will receive some background information on our destinations.   
~ *John Brantley*

### **Reflections from Offutt Ridge Farm**



#### **Relationships**

Animals around me relate to other living things in different ways. Our terrier alerts me when horses come in or out of the field. When the swallows have returned from their winter vacation, they fly around the barnyard eating insects. The owls sit up on the barns at night looking for mice to swoop down on. Even the mosquitos have value as the bats fly around grabbing them. I don’t harm the snakes when I see them because they too have varmint hunting jobs on the farm. I feed my chickens and they give me eggs. I feed our guineas and they wander around as sentry birds to warn us of hawks or foxes. We see this mutually beneficial relationship in nature all of the time.

Our oak and black walnut trees provide food for deer and squirrels, but the animals are not really harming the trees. Some relationships in the ecosystem may seem harmful on the surface. A fox kills one of my chickens and the wolves feed on the moose in the prairie. But predators often kill the weaker and older animals and actually lead to a healthier herd population.

Some fungi grow on trees and may cause disease but they also speed up the decaying process of rotten wood or vegetation and are the true champion recycling the

earth’s nutrients. Many plants and garden species that we introduce into our gardens because their fast-growing properties turn out to be invasive species. They overtake and push out what we call native plants. Multiflora rose, kudzu, bittersweet vines, and Bradford pear trees are examples of these.

Mankind has messed up many eco-systems because we do not understand the delicate balance between various relationships. This also remind me of our human interactions. Most of our relations with others are in the realm of mutual benefits where we cooperate with each other. Our charitable efforts or self-sacrificial kindness to others blends with the relationship we see in nature since in many altruistic actions both the giver and the receiver benefit in some way.

A very early sign of spring is the croaking/peeping of all the small frogs coming out of hibernation. The amphibians are supposed to be an indication of the health of an ecosystem, kind of a “canary in the coalmine.” So every March they both remind me what time of the year it is, but also that the wetlands around us are still relatively healthy- a mutual relationship we have with our tiny neighbors.   
~*John Creighton*

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**2022 GPCA paid members through March 2022**

A to F	G to N	O to W
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# GPCA

PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163



YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

NEW FOR 2022 JOIN ONLINE @ [www.GPCA.net](http://www.GPCA.net)

Attend our meeting **April 11, 2022 @ 7 PM**  
via Zoom

**Topic: *Serenity Ridge: Proposed Natural Burial Cemetery and Arboretum on Ridge Road. What's next?***

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Howard Berg**

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 [gpc21163@gmail.com](mailto:gpc21163@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. GPCA reserves the rights to accept, reject, edit, or hold submitted articles/letters for future publication.  
Submission Deadline the 20th of the month previous to publication.

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