



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

Issue #355

GPCA Newsletter

March 2016

Next Meeting: Monday, April 11th, 7:30 p.m.

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

Check us out on the web at www.gpca.net

We Welcomed Our New Police Captain

Our speakers for the March general meeting were Officer Kristi Makowiecki and our new Police Capitan, Matthew Gorman. Officer Makowiecki spoke first about the new use of body cameras by Baltimore County police. She explained that not all police will be wearing them but eventually many different departments of police will be wearing cameras. Officer Makowiecki presented some facts about the cameras- they will be equipped with audio, do not follow the same view as the officer's eyes and will not give accurate distance perception. Currently, Officer Makowiecki said that it has not yet been determined where on the officer that the camera will be placed. There are several options such as the center of the chest or the shoulder tab. The plan is to put the first 150 cameras into use in July 2016 and increasing the number in use to 1350 cameras by the year 2017.

Officer Makowiecki explained the Explorer Program which is run under the auspices of the local Boy Scouts and is overseen by a BCPD officer. The Explorer Program gives young people opportunities to build character, encourage leadership development and build appreciation for community services and good citizenship. Information about this program is available at www.baltimorecounty.md.gov.

Officer Makowiecki said that crime in our area mostly consist of stolen cars because folks forget their keys in the car or are warming up their engines. As to traffic related deaths there have been 10 fatal accidents in the Woodlawn area in 2015.

Our new Police Captain Matthew Gorman spoke next. Capt. Gorman related that he has been a life-time resident of Baltimore Co. except when he attended college.

(continued **Police Captain** page 2)

GPCA Annual Clean-up this Saturday, April 9th 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. In case you missed the March newsletter flier—**Meet at St. Alphonsus church parking lot for bags and safety vests.**

Contact **Carol Link**, GPCA Clean-up coordinator at (410) 465-4369 or www.gpca.net for more information. **Food Donations Needed-** call Carol.

Hernwood Landfill Information

Check at GPCA website gpca.net to read letter from Mr. Ed Dexter of the MD Dept. of the Environment regarding the activities that have been observed by GPCA members. We were unable to include it in the newsletter due to the space restrictions.

CZMP March 15th Mtg. Update

By Cathy Wolfson

The District 4 Planning Board Hearing on March 15 was attended by 24 GPCA members and Granite residents opposing Issue No. 4-001 proposing to up-zone 17.63 acres from RC2 to RC5 a change which could yield 9 lots. The Planning Board heard testimony from 38 people on a range of proposed issues and of them 9 spoke opposing issue 4-001. Once again, GPCA presented enthusiastic support to maintain existing zoning within its boundaries. When the Planning Board concludes their hearings in all 7 districts on March 31 they will begin a series of work sessions in April to consider issues (continued CZMP on page 2)

From the President

Happy Spring everyone! Hopefully **No More Snow** for now... Take the opportunity to enjoy the flowers in bloom, start some gardening, or just relax in the warmer weather.

We have some good things coming up. I would like to invite everyone to our **Annual Community Clean-Up on April 9**. Please refer to the full ad in our March newsletter. I hope to see you there to help beautify our Community. I would like to thank our guest speakers at the March meeting. Officer Kristie Makowiecki and Captain Matthew Gorman provided informative presentations.

On March 15. we had our 2016 CZMP Public Meeting for District 4, we had an excellent turn out of about 15, or more GPCA area residents. Our group supported everyone that made a testimony of the issues that affect the tranquility and beauty of our rural environment. And trust me when I say, the planning board took notice as we stood as a Community. Our concerns were voiced and heard, loud and clear. It is important to come together as a Community to make a difference. I would like to thank each and every one, who took the time to represent our area, and concerns. **GOOD JOB.**

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(continued from Page1– **Police Captain**) Gorman said his interest in security work developed while he was in college. He has experience in many units of the Baltimore Co. police department including Auto Theft and Criminal Intelligence which included dealing with gangs and organized crime. Capt. Gorman has been at the Woodlawn precinct since Oct. 2015.

Captain Gorman said that residents should be on the lookout for deception crimes now that spring is here. This is where criminals pretend to be BGE or Comcast type representatives to get inside homes. He stated that there is no gang activity in the Granite area at this time.

Capt. Gorman also spoke about another program that Baltimore Co. police dept. has for community, business or religious leaders called Citizens Police Academy. The participants meet once a week for class for 15 weeks. The Academy helps participants understand why police respond to various situations in a particular way and how they handle those situations. More information is available about this and other programs at www.baltimorecountymd.gov .

Join us next month at the April 11th meeting when our speakers will be the following entrepreneurs representing new or existing businesses: Jamie Condon, Dave Goldsmith, Wilbur Kuo, M.D., Pam Pahl and Jen Pahl-Early, Bob Spezzano and Jennette Young.

(continued CZMP Page 1) sequestered for further consideration. The public is welcome to attend and listen, but no further testimony will be taken. On completion of the work sessions the Planning Board will submit their recommendations to the County Council. In June, the Council Hearings will be held in each district. The hearing for the 4th district will be held on June 9 at New Town High School beginning at 6:00, sign in starts at 5:00. The Council is required to issue their decisions before Sept. 16, 2016. Cathy Wolfson

Patapsco Glen Hearing Officer Decision

Baltimore County Administrative Law Judge, John Beverungen issued his decision on February 24, disapproving the development plan for Patapsco Glen, the 368 townhouses proposed for Johnnycake Road within the Patapsco Granite Area Community Plan boundary. In his decision, Judge Beverungen notes, "On cross-examination, Mr. Matz [the developer's engineer] reviewed each of the eight (8) variance requests, and confirmed that (at least with respect to variance #1) all 368 units would require zoning relief. The witness thereafter conceded that all 368 lots or units, rather than the overall 58 acre site, must be shown to be unique. In response to a question posed by Ms. Skullney (who is an attorney), the witness agreed that "each variance needs to be approved individually." In light of this testimony, and considering the substantial evidentiary burden which must be satisfied to obtain variance relief, I believe the zoning Petition [for the variances] must be denied. Maryland courts have emphasized that variances are "rarely appropriate" and should be granted "sparingly," and only when a Petitioner is able to prove his property is unique or different in some way from surrounding properties." And so, thanks to Kathy Skullney, the development plan is on hold. Subsequently, the developer's attorney, Patricia Malone of Venable, LLP filed a Motion for

Patapsco Glen continued- Reconsideration for Mr. Beverungen to reverse his decision based on rebuttal arguments submitted in their Motion.

In turn, Baltimore County People's Counsel Attorney, Peter Zimmerman filed an Opinion supporting Mr. Beverungen's decision to deny the Petition for Variances. Mr. Beverungen will decide whether to reconsider his denial of that Petition after March 25. For up to date (most of the time) information on this or any other Baltimore County Land Issues, go to <https://citizenaccess.baltimorecountymd.gov/CitizenAccess/> Select the Land Management Tab and follow the prompts for information about the status of specific development plans. C. Wolfson

Heron Watch

I am fascinated by the Great Blue Heron. Over the years here on Offutt Road, I have seen it, or should I say them, a good number of times. But it is always random, unexpected and surprising. The heron is either standing solidly still, its gray color blending it into its surrounding or lifting suddenly up out of the stream or already in flight over head; always aborting my attempts at capturing it with the camera.

One morning recently, I was doing the morning feeding in the chicken barn. The guineas were down along the bottom fence line toward the stream and they repeatedly sounded the alarm. Now, when living with guineas, one gets used to their hysterically loud carrying on over something they perceive as an intruder. Sometimes it is just the orange cat, or a plastic bag moved by a breeze. But just in case it is a fox in the yard, or a hawk sitting in a tree, I check. And so I checked again and again coming in and out of the barn as they stood along the fence with their guinea clattering. Clearly, they were focused on the stream. Was maybe a raccoon out late in the morning? Totally did not see anything. Moments later, I saw the heron in flight crossing over the bridge flying to the other end of the stream.

A couple of years ago I was standing in the equipment shed waiting for the rain to let up so I could make my way back to the house without getting soaked. And there the heron went flying overhead in the rain. I thought just that, "the heron flies in the rain." The things you can discover by just standing around outside. Perhaps that should not be a surprise, it is a wading bird. The heron lives in marshy wet areas, pulls fish, frogs, and snapping turtle babies out of the water. I know the ducks love a rainy day. To see this monstrous bird elegantly coasting along in the rain was just a moment of capturing an unexpected truth.

Another heron spotting was when a juvenile landed on the roof of the front barn, and just stayed there, long enough for me to try to take a dozen pictures. Since herons lay five to seven eggs, I would hope this young one had siblings. I guess the time had come to leave home and he or she was just getting his bearings on what the choices were going to be. They are solitary birds. I cannot assume that because I only see one at a time that there is only one, though. Clearly, there has to be two for there to be babies. The babies leave home and make their way somewhere, but eventually find another one to make the next generation.

There have been times when John spots the heron (continued on page 3)

What's Happening in the Area**At the Howard County Conservancy:**

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www.hcconservancy.org

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9pm

April 30 Sat. Arbor Play 12pm-2pm

April 30 Sat. Spring Wild Images 11am-2pm

More Information? Phone 410-396-0808

www.carriemurraynaturecenter.org

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Chinese Bible Church of Howard County

The church, located on the southeast corner of Davis Ave. and Old Court is proposing a 4,500 sq.ft. Community Center on their 7.73 acre property. The zoning on the property is split; about 60% RC5 on the front and 40% RC2 at the rear where it borders Patapsco State Park. RC5 permits a house of worship by right. The proposal was reviewed by county agencies on March 8, 2016 when it was determined that due to the scale of the project engineered drawings would be required and a subsequent hearing scheduled. Again, stay tuned.

Cathy Wolfson

Granite Presbyterian Church, located at 10637 Old Court Rd in Granite, will be holding a Jazz Vespers service on Sunday April 17 at 5pm. This service will feature the John Lamkin Sacred Jazz Quintet. Great food will be available for sale during the intermission. For more information please contact Frank Owens at fjowens@hotmail.com.

Heron Watch (continued)

When I think this is a pattern, I go down behind the barn with my camera to find him, and he is never there. I captured one standing on a fallen log back in the marsh behind the riding ring one winter. I wished then that I had a stronger zoom on my little digital camera.

I have tried to take a picture of the heron in flight but I am always too slow. By the third wing flap, the bird is virtually out of sight. I have read they fly at 20 to 30 miles an hour. The speed people are supposed to drive past my house, but seldom do.

I imagine, in my wakeful moments at night when thinking about the things I want to do, I will sit out in a lawn chair in the side yard. The camera poised, and the bird will fly over and I will be ready. Either morning or late afternoon, the heron will show up and I will get that picture. I am a little obsessed with the idea. In practice though, morning or late afternoon are chore times. I am either inside the chicken barn tending to things there, or I am in the horse barn. Or I am in the house feeding pets and cooking dinner. It remains in my imagination then, that one day I will be sitting in wait for the appearance of the heron with camera in hand and I will get that picture. Brenda Creighton

Membership Report

Thanks for the support of your membership dues received from February 20, 2016 to March 20,2016. We appreciate renewals and welcome our new members. The following have renewed: Ted Geisler, Joe and Kathy Jenkins, Carolyn Huff, Jim and Ruth Farmer, Joel and Andrea Garcia, Paul and Nanette Stesch, Kenyon and Christina Lewis, Colleen Shea and Greg Smith, Ron and Debbie Peters, Carl Yowell, Sue Geiman and Judy Downing, John and Marjorie Warden, Russell and Margaret Reed, Joe and Kathy Jenkins, Maurice and Evelyn Dixon, Terrence and Lois Shields, T.J. and Irvina Mallory, Otho and Dorothy Brown, Jr.,

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Special Thanks to Paul Dorsey for printing the newsletter and to Marty Kelley, Marcia Brown, Eileen Ciechanowski, Jackie Webster, Kathy Skullney, Alice Kloetzil and Gail Collings for folding and collating the newsletter.

PERSONAL ADS:

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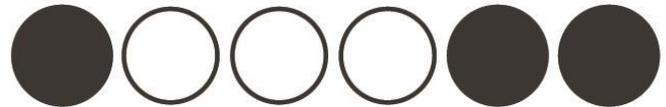
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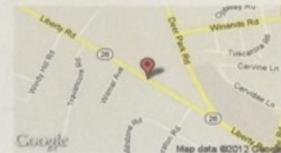
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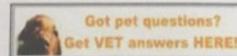
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YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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Meeting: Monday, April 11th- Entrepreneur
Night
Spring Cleanup-SATURDAY April 9th

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Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

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

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Mail completed application and check to:
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GPCA Officers and Board of Directors

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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 Editor, Marie Cignatta, 5 Morning Mist Court, Woodstock, MD 21163 prior to publication deadline. Checks should indicate ad size and months to be published.
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.
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.