

Spring, 2008

# IN THE FLOW



PLEASE RENEW YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP  
Donations are tax deductible

1920 Eagle Drive Baltimore, MD 21207 443-429-3183  
Email: Info@gwynnsfalls.net website: www.gwynnsfalls.net

The Gwynns Falls Watershed Association, a non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Gwynns Falls as a community resource, is supported by grants, memberships and contributions.

## GFWA focuses on Rebuilding

The GFWA welcomes you back and anxiously looks forward to partnering with you and community organizations to continue the vital work of cleaning and maintaining the waterways. During the last several years, we have been treading water waiting for an opportunity to revitalize the organization. A generous grant from the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management (DEPRM) provided that opportunity. With the grant we were able to fund a part-time position and hired Scott Pelton as Program Director. His tasks are to develop community programs and projects and to support the Board of Directors (BOD) with rebuilding the organization. Scott is a former board president and a long time volunteer and activist.

The new board members are also volunteers in their own communities. GFWA is building partnerships with these, other community groups and seek additional community groups, especially in the county. Groups who want to clean up their local stream, plant native trees and shrubs that absorb runoff and clean the air, remove invasive plants, build rain barrels or rain gardens and monitor their stream for the Stream Watch Program (see the article in this newsletter). The Stream Watch program encourages groups to adopt

their local stream, to become involved in protection and restoration projects, and survey the stream in order to become the "eyes" in the field that report maintenance problems to the proper jurisdiction for maintenance or repair.

Please contact the GFWA if your community organization, scout group, school group or business is interested in working with us on restoration projects or adopting a section of your local stream and becoming on the "eyes of your watershed".

Also consider renewing your membership using the form in this newsletter. Remember contributions to the GFWA are tax deductible. Your membership and interest in the GFWA will help us rebuild the GFWA and continue to the efforts to protect and restore the Gwynns Falls watershed.

### Board of Directors—2008

Erik Jones - President, Dickeyville  
William Lyles -Treasurer, Howard Park  
Doug Brown - Hunting Ridge  
Joan Marie Gebhardt - Villa Nova  
Dave Hollander - Windsor Hills  
Albert Hess - Pikesville, Owings Mills  
Mas Iwata - Windsor Hills  
Ted Rosenberg – Dickeyville

Meeting are held on the 4th Monday of each month at 7 PM at our office.

## Be on TV Volunteer-a-Thon Chesapeake Bay Week

On March 28, a GFWA volunteer stream cleanup will be taped by WMPT-TV at Milford Mill/ Gwynns Trail Park and broadcast on April 27, 6-8 PM. The cleanup project will one of the volunteer events profiled by WMPT-TV during the "Volunteer-a-Thon", the finale of Chesapeake Bay Week, April 20-27. Chesapeake Bay Week "explores the Chesapeake's challenges, celebrate its triumphs, and discovers what the bay means to all those within its reach". Check the website for details, <http://www.mpt.org/bayweek/home.shtml>

## Project Clean Stream

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay is looking for volunteers to take part in Project Clean Stream, one of Maryland's largest coordinated stream cleanups. Project Clean Stream will take place April 5, from 9am to 12 noon, at over 100 stream cleanup sites in Central Maryland and the Eastern Shore.

Clean up sites in the Gwynns Falls include the communities of Franklinton, Howard Park, Milford Mill, Villa Nova, Hunting Ridge and in Leakin Park. Volunteers are welcome.

Project Clean Stream volunteers improve their community by removing trash, tires and (Continued on page 3)

## Stream Watch Program in NW Baltimore County Park Begins 5<sup>th</sup> Year

By Albert Hess

Beginning 2003, members of the Pikesville Rotary and Pikesville High Interact Clubs implemented a successful, on-going Stream Watch program in a small park on the Gwynns Falls. Off Milford Mill Road by Scotts Level Road, the Milford Mill,



Gwynns Trail Park is a lightly used park that borders the stream and contains a one mile loop trail. On a nice spring day, you can observe regular visitors walking their dogs, jogging or fishing for trout. Each year members of both service clubs along with family and friends visit the park to conduct a variety of Stream Watch activities.

Most recently, this fall about a dozen volunteers celebrated World Water Monitoring Day



at the park by conducting water quality testing, planting native flowers and doing some spot weeding and clean-up. For World Water Monitoring Day,

[www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org), volunteer groups and organizations from around the globe join together to monitor water quality in their local watershed. Two student volunteers wearing hip wadding boots collected water samples. The water samples were tested by the group and results were satisfactory for clarity and dissolved oxygen.

Typically, Rotary and Interact groups plan two to three morning outings each school year to survey the site, clean-up trash,

plant native flowers and shrubs, and conduct water quality testing. As an opening activity to begin the Stream

Watch program, the group conducted a comprehensive stream survey which included completing checklists related to conditions such as a trash dump area, evidence of erosion, and fish migration barriers.

Also, permission from the Baltimore County Dept. of Recreation and Parks was needed prior to the initial planting. Each

spring, usually on the first Saturday of April, Rotary and Interact club members clean-up trash in the park as part of the state-wide effort, Project Clean Stream.



Over the years, volunteers have planted two, large native flower gardens surrounded by native shrubs which both beautify the park and improve the habitat. On volunteer mornings at the park, community members and regular visitors who use the park often complement the fine efforts of volunteers and comment on the Stream Watch program's positive effect on the park. The project has received financial support from the local Rotary club, Chesapeake Bay Trust and Youth Service America.

The Gwynns Falls runs directly through the neighborhood. Many neighbors, including entire families with their children and grandchildren, gather together to clear the stream of trash and debris.

Villa Nova is proof that small communities can make a big difference, not only within their own environment, but with the larger ecosystem as well.

## A small community benefits the Gwynns Falls Watershed

By Joan Marie Gebhardt

In September, 1972, Villa Nova was, for a few days, the center of attention in Baltimore. Strong winds and heavy rains brought flooding and destruction to an area outside the city limits, and just inside the Baltimore Beltway. This small, modest community, located close to Liberty Road, was flooded during Hurricane Agnes. Houses and other buildings destroyed by the hurricane were purchased and torn down by Baltimore County, never to be rebuilt. Only the land, and the lovely, unpredictable stream, the Gwynns Falls, remained. The result is a lovely area of woods, stream, wetlands, and meadow, an area this community works hard to keep clean and beautiful.

On any given day, on a walk through the wooded park and by the Gwynns Falls a great variety of wildlife can be seen. Great blue heron are often seen, as well as the smaller orange-capped heron, mallards, wood ducks, and geese. Signs or actual sightings of deer, beaver, foxes, raccoons, ground hogs, and snakes are common. There are red-winged blackbirds, downy woodpeckers, and other, more common birds. There is at least one very large, old turtle that lays her round, ping-pong sized eggs in our park.

Residents walk the path that follows the stream. Most are careful not to disturb the wildlife or ferns and wildflowers. The community maintains an active association that sponsors a variety of projects, many of which support the environment.

In the spring, 'Dumpster Day' is a favorite community event. Residents take their large unwanted household items to one of two dumpsters that have been placed at convenient locations in the neighborhood. An annual stream clean-up is another spring event. (Continued Column 2)

**Developing the Educational and Outreach Program**  
**By Doug Brown**

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The Gwynns Falls Watershed Association (GFWA) has launched its Education and Outreach program effort with a rain garden project at Thomas Jefferson Elementary (TJES) in the west Baltimore neighborhood of Hunting Ridge.

The project will build on past and on-going efforts at the school. The GFWA will collaborate with the Irvine Nature Center (INC) and the Hunting Ridge Community Assembly (HRCA), who are continuing to work with TJES staff under the capable leadership of Principal Wendy Leishear. The rain garden project has received the endorsement of the principal and the Parent Teacher Association.

Working with partners, like the Irvine Nature Center and the Hunting Ridge Community Assembly, and with the guidance of the principal and school staff will help facilitate GFWA efforts to become a contributor to the school curriculum and the children's education.

The INC will return to Thomas Jefferson next year, following-up their environmental studies curriculum efforts involving students from the nearby Edmondson-West Side High School with TJES students. The INC also has a long history of School Yard Habitat environmental education programs.

The HRCA has a long term relationship with TJES in facilities and program development. The HRCA's environmental projects include building and planting the instructional gardens at school, maintaining the nature trail, and developing a new rain garden. A prior rain garden developed with the INC was lost due to construction of new portable class room structures and revised school fire exit plans.

To develop the Education and Outreach Program and projects, the GFWA will visit model schools, consult and collaborate with water and environmental professionals in Baltimore City and County government and other watershed associations. In addition we will seek advice from the Department of Natural Resources

Green School Program, Master Gardeners at the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service, and school programs of the Chesapeake Bay Trust and Chesapeake Bay Foundation among other organizations.

A tour of the TJES grounds with Darin Crew of the Herring Run Watershed Association (HRWA) along with Linda Brill of the School staff and Scott Pelton and Doug Brown of the GFWA quickly narrowed seven potential to two sites that would have the greatest effect reducing the negative impact of stormwater runoff on the watershed. The most compelling site was in the rear of the school adjacent to a paved parking area where new portable class room structures, parking and slope changes was contributing to material runoff and erosion.

Future newsletter articles will deal with the more technical issues involved in planning, design and construction of rain gardens. A short description of a rain garden is a man-made depression that collects stormwater runoff and stores it, permitting it be filtered, slowly absorbed by the soil and returned naturally to the waterways.

For more information on this project or our other programs contact the GFWA.

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**Project Clean Stream,  
(continued from Page 1)**

other discarded items from area streams and nearby roadsides. In 2007, over 2,500 volunteers removed more than 90,000 pounds of trash from area streams!

Help us make our local streams and shorelines safer, cleaner, and more beautiful.

To volunteer, contact the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Kate Dowling at 410-377-6270 or [kdowling@acb-online.org](mailto:kdowling@acb-online.org). Additional information is also available at [www.acb-online.org](http://www.acb-online.org).

**Calendar of Events**

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**3/28,10-12, Volunteer-a-thon**, (see accompanying article) WMPT-TV will tape a stream cleanup at Gwynns Trail, Milford Mill Park.

**4/5, 9-12, Project Clean Stream** (see accompanying article).

Wear your work clothes and boots to help clean-up several stream locations throughout the watershed. Your help is needed at these sites:

3/28, Milford Mill, Gwynns Falls  
4/5, Franklinton, Dead Run

Howard Park, Powder Mill  
4/19, Hunting Ridge, HR Run  
Contact GFWA for site locations

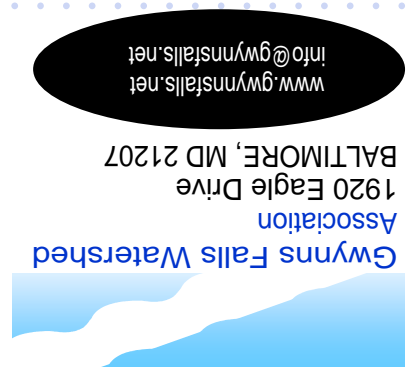
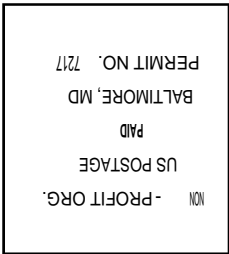
**4/13, 2-4 PM, Gwynns Falls Trail Council Annual Meeting**, Ross R. Winans Mansion, 1217 St. Paul St., Contact: Kate F. Mack, 410-448-5663, x. 113.

**4/26, 12-5 PM Baltimore Eco-Festival Celebrate** Sustainable Living with Food, Music, Information and Fun for the Family and Everyone! Druid Hill Park by the Reservoir. For more information, see [Baltimore GreenWeek's](http://BaltimoreGreenWeek's).

**4/27 at 6-8PM, WMPT-TV** broadcast of *Volunteer-a-thon* events during *Chesapeake Bay Week* telecast.

**5/18, 10-2, 5th Annual Wade-in and Celebration and Joe Stewart's Swim** to raise awareness of regional water quality issues. Proceeds donated to Herring Run WA. For directions to Rocky Point Park call 410-887-3873

**6/7, 9-12, Gwynns Falls Trail Grand Opening**. Ceremony at I-70 Park & Ride. Hikes, bike rides on trail, exhibits and demonstrations at Winans Meadow on Franklinton Road and canoeing on the Middle Branch, The GFWA will do fly fishing and bug testing demonstrations.



### Join the Gwynns Falls Watershed Association for 2008!

COMPLETE AND RETURN TO: 1920 EAGLE DRIVE, BALTIMORE, MD 21207-7353

(Make checks payable to: GFWA)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION (IF ANY): \_\_\_\_\_

#### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (CHECK ONE):

- Individual (\$15.00)
- Household (\$25.00) List household members: \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-profit Organizations (\$25.00) Name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_
- Business Sponsor (\$100.00) Name of business: \_\_\_\_\_

**DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE — GFWA is an IRS tax-exempt 501(c)(3) Organization**

I'D LIKE TO HELP WITH THE FOLLOWING GFWA ACTIVITIES:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Monitoring my local stream ___        | Community outreach and publicity ___             |
| Stream-based education/recreation ___ | Organizing local stream restoration projects ___ |
| Regular water quality monitoring ___  | Research/advocacy on water quality issues ___    |
| Organizational management ___         | Other _____                                      |

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