



Catoctin News

Newsletter of the Catoctin Group
Serving Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties

Volume 2, Issue 2

Summer 2015

Maryland Sierra Club - John Muir Scholarship Awards

by Lee Popkin

On June 1, 2015, the Catoctin Group awarded our first scholarships to two graduating seniors at Catoctin High School. Both of these students were enrolled in the **Frederick County Public School Environmental and Conservation Academy** located at Catoctin High School. Our total scholarship award for our first year was \$1,250, divided into one \$750 and another \$500 award. The awards were delivered in person on June 1st at the Catoctin High School Senior Awards Ceremony.

One of the winners intends to study undergraduate chemistry in order to create more environmentally friendly consumer products, and the other is enrolling in an undergraduate wildlife and fisheries program.

For the 2015/2016 school year, we are looking to expand on our participation in the Environmental and Conservation Academy Program. The hope is to have a student representative from the program attend our monthly meetings and to include members in our various events. We are also discussing expansion of the scholarship program next year to another school while reserving one scholarship for a senior enrolled in the Environmental and Conservation program at Catoctin High School.

To contribute to the scholarship see <http://maryland.sierraclub.org/groups/catoctin-group/catoctin-group>.

Wild starring Reese Witherspoon

Catoctin Group to sponsor viewing in August

When: Friday, August 21, 2015, 1 pm (captioned) and 7:30 pm.

Where: Carroll County Arts Council, 91 W. Main St., Westminster, MD 21157.

The Carroll County Arts Council is located in the magnificently renovated Carroll Arts Center, formerly the Carroll Theatre in downtown Westminster. Catoctin Group members will speak before the 7:30 showing on the book by Cheryl Strayed, Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail and the virtues of hiking in nature.

For information including ticket sales, visit www.carrollcountyartscouncil.org/ or call (410)848-7272. For a review of the movie visit http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/wild_2014/.

We look forward to seeing you on August 21st.

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Positive Happenings in Frederick County

by Ronnie Poklemba

Within the last year, Frederick County government concluded that a waste incinerator due to environmental, logistical, and financial concerns was an undesirable approach to resolve waste issues. Jan Gardner, the current County Executive, has now appointed a steering committee to determine what approaches will be used to manage waste in the future; and overall she appears to be interested in community input.

The **No-Incinerator-Alliance**, a volunteer community group, worked tirelessly for ten years against the incinerator and now has decided to switch focus. The group hopes to educate the community on the many options that exist to decrease waste: i.e. increased recycling, back yard composting, large-scale commercial composting, resource recovery, construction & demolition recovery, and Save-As-You-Recycle hauler pick-up options.

Selecting its new name, **Frederick Zero Waste Alliance**, was the first step in this transition. The group is clearly in its beginning stages, and is open to ideas from interested individuals.

If you would like to become part of a group working towards environmentally sustainable solutions to a real world problem, **Frederick Zero Waste Alliance** may be worth considering.

For more information, visit their current website, www.no-incinerator.org.

Did You Know?

by Dan Andrews

Many cigarettes butts don't biodegrade easily.

I discovered this while researching a cigarette litter bill that was introduced into the Maryland legislature in 2014.

Most cigarette butts are made of cellulose acetate, a form of plastic that can take as long to degrade as other plastics. Few, if any, of the white fibers in a cigarette butt are cotton.

The other day, I watched a fellow use his boot to grind his discarded cigarette butt into the highway asphalt and thought; what will happen to that butt?

It's very likely wind and rain will carry it into a nearby stream course where it will degrade the quality of the water and could affect aquatic lifeforms. Butts have been found in the stomachs of fish, birds, whales and other marine creatures who mistake them for food.

If people must smoke, they should discard their cigarette litter in an appropriate receptacle — smoking and littering don't have to go hand and hand.

By the way, the cigarette litter bill in the Maryland legislature didn't advance.



Urban Youth Ecoliteracy Initiative

by J.P. Muhly

A number of active members, Ronnie Poklemba, Lew Sherman and I, have been meeting since April to determine how the Catoctin Group can expand its local projects. The result has been the creation of the **Urban Youth Ecoliteracy Initiative**. The **Initiative** is researching partnering with community groups to increase youth awareness of their natural world, and the role youth can play in changing the human relationship to our environment.

Several prospects are being considered. I have met with eight out of the eleven **Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NAC's)** in Frederick, and some individuals interested in environmental issues that work within the **NAC's** are willing to collaborate with the Catoctin Group on educational projects.

I have also contacted Ginni Brace, President of the **Friends of Waterford Park** <http://www.friendsofwaterfordpark.org/>. This group has spent the last 10 years restoring the Park to a more natural state by removing invasive species and planting natives in their place. Ginni, being an educator and having a background in environmental education, was willing to discuss an educational program during the winter months on the native plant restoration work being done at the Park.

At the **Youth Resources Fair** in Frederick in April, I talked with sixteen different youth-support groups; some of which indicated a desire to explore ways that young people could be involved in environmental training programs for which they would get credit toward community service requirements.

Ronnie Poklemba has met with Michael and Michelle Dickson of **Seed of Life Nurseries (SoL)**, <http://solnurseries.info/>. **SoL** hopes to expand its community service by creating school gardens in as many Frederick County schools as possible. Ronnie is interested in the prospect of the Catoctin Group sponsoring one of the school garden projects. I am pursuing the possibility of a similar sponsorship with the **Housing Authority of the City of Frederick** youth garden program. At the most recent Catoctin Group general meeting, it was noted that such projects have an ongoing need for volunteers especially during the summer months when students are out of school. As the Catoctin Group moves forward with potential projects, we need to recognize that a lack of volunteers could jeopardize even the best intentioned programs and make sure that we have member commitment to our efforts.

Finally, Lew Sherman has contacted Shannon Moore, Manager of the Sustainability Office, **Frederick County Office of Sustainability**. Ms. Moore also seems interested in working with the Catoctin Group in some type of collaboration.

This outreach is in the early stages but has already yielded some positive signs of potential cooperation on youth educational programs. We have also discussed developing a training initiative, focused on youth not on a college track, through the already existing contacts made for the Catoctin Group Scholarship Program. If you have ideas of your own or would like to be a part of making these ideas for projects a reality, you are welcome to attend our general meetings or you can contact Dan Andrews at dooze@gis.net for further details.

Shagbark Hickory

by Dan Andrews



Vern Wilkins, Indiana University, bugwood.org

Last year, I attended an outdoor nature awareness class that was held beneath the canopy of a beautiful, tall tree with an interesting bark pattern. I inquired about the tree and was told it was a **Shagbark Hickory**.

I ultimately read about Shagbarks and discovered they're found in the eastern half of the United States, excepting the extreme southern coastlines and Florida. They have feather-compound teathed leaves with 5-7 leaflets, and bear egg-shaped hickory nuts (1 3/8"-3" diameter), with a thick four sectioned husk. The nuts usually fall in September and October and are eaten by swine, squirrels, opossums, wild turkeys and sometimes ducks. The mature tree's bark is very easy to recognize, once you know it, as it is light-colored and very shaggy in loose, long strips.

On rare occasions, I'm sometimes referred to as a "tree hugger" due to my participation in the Sierra Club and several other environmental groups, and I usually respond by telling others how much gratitude humans owe to trees and forests.

As you may know, trees provide habitat for wildlife, dissipate rainfall and winds, absorb storm-water, stabilize soil, intake carbon dioxide, output oxygen

and offer cooling shade. They also provide wonderful beauty - as opposed to often stark, man-made areas.

I remind people that office workers usually have nature scenes on their computer wallpaper rather than scenes of structures and/or pavement. I'm sure office people are trying to re-connect with their true roots: nature.

One of my goals in life is to plant a Shagbark Hickory and watch it grow. Then place its picture on my computer screen.

Using Your Yard to Help Nature

by Carolyn Puckett

Would you like to do your part to improve the quality of our waterways and to support our pollinators and other wildlife? A book recently published in association with Maryland's Adkins Arboretum will give you lots of information on what you can do with your yard that will achieve both of these goals. Barbara W. Ellis' **Chesapeake Gardening & Landscaping: The Essential Green Guide** is a first-rate resource on how to improve your landscape, whether you are a complete novice or an experienced gardener. It covers both design considerations and profiles of desirable native plants for your garden. Your local library may have a copy that you can borrow. Check it out!

Save the dates
Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter Jamboree!

When: Friday, October 16, 2015 thru Sunday, October 18, 2015

Where: Catoctin Mountain Park, Frederick County

Come join a community of nature loving people while enjoying live music and environmental workshops!

For more information visit www.maryland.sierraclub.org or call (301)277-7111.

Officers/Committee Chairs

Chairman & Energy
Dan Andrews

Treasurer
Anthony Iacovelli

Secretary & Outreach/Social Media
Amy Andrews

Conservation
Lew Sherman
Anthony Iacovelli

Invasive Plant Removal Stewardship
Carolyn Puckett

Outings
Harry George
Anthony Iacovelli

Membership & Newsletter
Teresa Baker

For further information visit [http://
maryland.sierraclub.org/groups/catoctin-group/
catoctin-group](http://maryland.sierraclub.org/groups/catoctin-group/catoctin-group)

**The next Executive Committee/
General Meeting is scheduled for
Saturday, July 18, 2015 from
10:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the
Urbana Regional Library, 9020
Amelung Street, Frederick,
Maryland 21704 in Frederick
County.**

**Executive Committee/General
Meetings are usually held the
first Saturday of every month.
Location varies.**

**All are welcome, members and
non-members alike.**

**Contact Dan Andrews at
dooze@qis.net for exact date,
times and location.**